

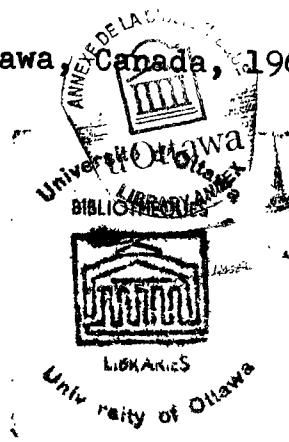
UNITED STATES POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

1945 - 1958

by William B. Roop

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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	v
II.- THE BACKGROUND	1
1. The Decline of British Power	2
2. New Forces and the Changing Mood	10
3. The Russian Menace	16
4. Evolution of American Interest	24
III.- THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION	35
1. Aid to Greece and Turkey	35
2. The United States and Palestine	46
3. The Tripartite Declaration of 1950	52
4. The Allied Middle East Command Proposal	54
IV.- THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION	68
1. The Baghdad Pact	69
2. The Crisis of 1956	87
3. The Eisenhower Doctrine	115
4. The Crisis of 1958	127
V.- UNITED STATES AID TO THE MIDDLE EAST	135
1. The Scope of United States Foreign Aid	135
2. A Glimpse of the Record	139
3. Facts and Figures 1945-1957	146
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	154
BIBLIOGRAPHY	160

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1.- Map of the Middle East	vi
2.- Map of Palestine	49a
3.- Map of Middle Eastern Hostilities, 1956	110

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I.- Proven Oil Reserves	ix
II.- Crude Oil Production	x
III.- Imports of Crude Oil Pre-Suez and Post-Suez	106a
IV.- United States Foreign Aid Grants and Credits . . .	149
V.- United States Grants - by Country and Program . .	150 151
VI.- United States Credits - by Country and Program . .	152
VII.- International Cooperation Administration Obligations and Expenditures - by Country	153
VIII.- International Cooperation Administration Obligations and Expenditures - by Program	153a

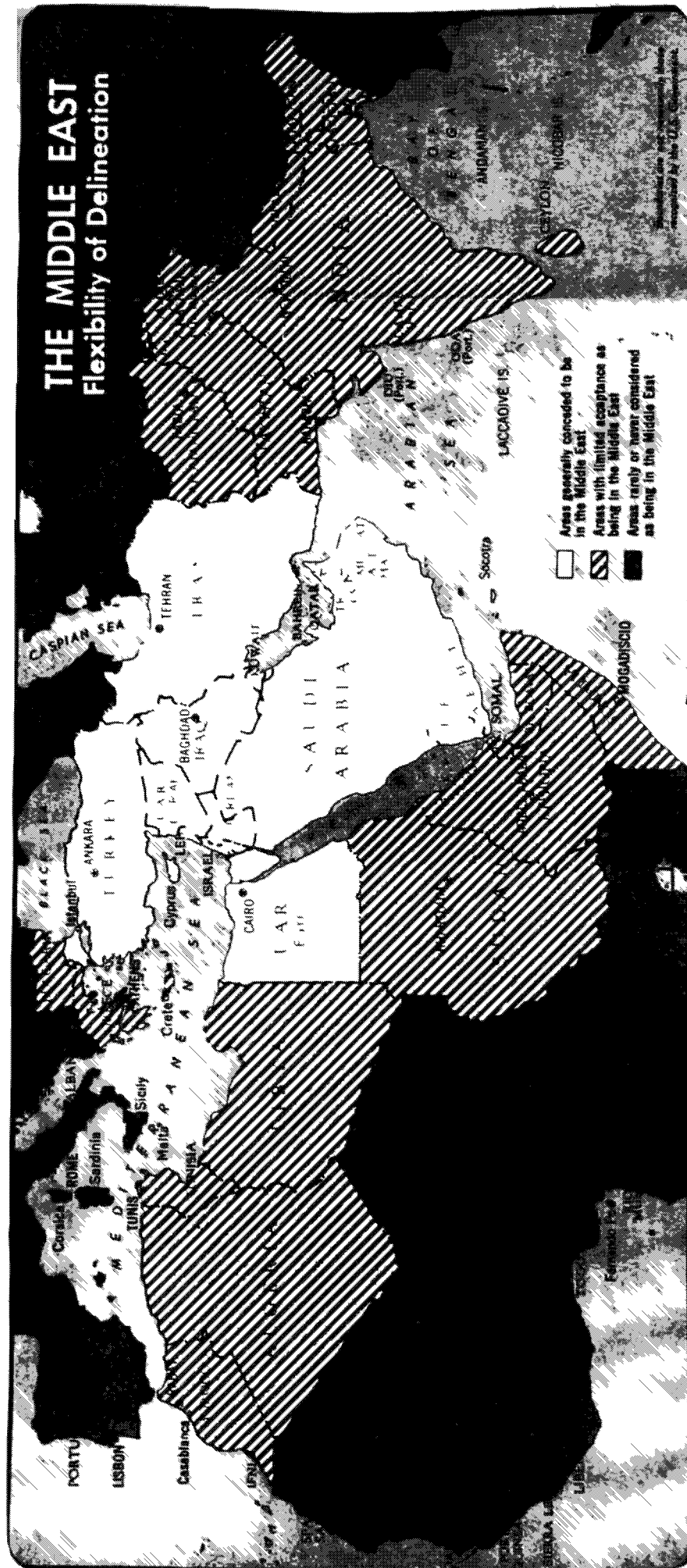
INTRODUCTION

The involvement of the United States in situations arising in the Middle East¹ is of relatively recent origin. Almost none of the responsibilities that now call for the shaping and implementing of policy antedates World War II and their present gravity is to be measured more in terms of United States and free world security interests than in terms of more specific interests, including Middle East oil. In such circumstances, it is quite understandable that United States policy relative to the area, at least until lately, has been characterized as much by temporary expediency as by foresight and long-range planning.

Prior to the close of 1956, United States policy making for the Middle East was the more tentative because it had to take into account not only situations which had

¹There is no general agreement on a geographical definition of the expression "Middle East." As now widely employed the term appears to be political rather than geographical and a byproduct of World War II. It is an elastic definition of an undetermined area and lacks geographical meaning except as is more or less arbitrarily employed. G. Etzel Percy, Geographer of the Department of State, includes Turkey, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Cyprus within the area generally conceded to be the Middle East. For the purpose of this thesis, the same countries will be included within the meaning of the term "Middle East." (See Figure 1, p. vi). Mention of other countries in the general area will be for emphasis or illustration. See G. Etzel Percy, "The Middle East, An Indefinable Region," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XL, No. 1030, March 23, 1959, pp. 407-416; see also Roderic H. Davison, "Where is the Middle East?" Foreign Affairs, Vol. 38, No 4, July 1960, pp. 665-675.

FIGURE 1
MAP OF THE MIDDLE EAST
EFFICIENCY OF DETECTION



developed over a considerable period of time but also the prior interests of two other great powers - Great Britain and France - with whom the United States has long been closely associated. But since the global contact between the West and the Soviet bloc came into focus in the Middle East in a threatening manner, the United States, as leading power and principle architect of the security structure of the Western world, has found it necessary to deal with problems arising from various pressures and international relationships in this area with which it has had little or nothing to do until lately.

The Middle East enters into Western security considerations for two prime reasons. It is the area in which three continents, Europe, Asia and Africa closely approach each other. It is the corridor through which the Western nations, including the United States, normally pass by water, by land or by air in reaching most of the shores of the Indian Ocean: those of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the Persian Gulf sheikhdoms, or Iran, the oil producing countries; most of the eastern parts of Africa; India and other parts of South and Southeast Africa; and Australia. At the same time it embraces the natural routes by which Russia has long aspired to reach the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf and more recently Africa.

While access to and through the Middle East is important to the West in time of peace, experience has shown it to be even more consequential in time of war. It follows that one of the most insistent questions confronting United States policy makers is the extent to which the political orientation of the indigenous states of the Middle East bears upon the long-range outlook for the nations of the West.

Within the Middle East are sub-surface oil deposits constituting not less than two-thirds of the world's petroleum reserves.² In an age which depends so largely on petroleum products, the political orientation of these oil-producing countries is of greater consequence because they can neither exploit nor confidently protect their resources unassisted. Until atomic power can be made available on a broad commercial scale, Middle East petroleum can be regarded as indispensable to Western European industry. The European NATO powers, with the possible exception of Western Germany, are deficient in fuels of domestic origin and must depend in considerable part, for both their normal industrial and their defense requirements on fuel imports. Since the Americas can supply on a long-term basis little oil beyond their hemispheric needs without undue strain on the producing fields, any long stoppage or diversion of the Middle East oil flow to Europe, from the point of view of free world defense, might prove to be catastrophic.

²See Tables I and II, p. ix-x.

TABLE I

PROVED OIL RESERVES, PRODUCING WELLS AND DRILLINGS

Country	Reserves		Wells	
	(in million barrels)		Producing	Drillings
	1957 ^a	1958 ^a	7-1-58	12-1-58
Bahrain	200	230	147	1
Egypt	275	400	206	5
Iran	32,000	33,000	88	8
Iraq	25,000	25,000	82	8
Israel	50	50	20	6
Jordan	0	0	0	1
Kuwait	60,000	60,000	276	6
Lebanon	0	0	0	0
Libya	0	50	0	8
Neutral Zone	5,000	6,000	82	5
Qatar	1,750	2,500	40	1
Saudi Arabia	45,000	47,000	194	3
Southern Arabia	500	100	0	3
Syria	1	1	0	2
Turkey	65	70	32	5
Total, Middle East	169,841	174,401	1,167	54
Total, World ^b	264,466	275,701	624,495	4,353

^a End of year estimates.
^b Sino-Soviet area (27,705 million barrels) included in data on reserves; data on wells not available.

The Oil and Gas Journal, Dec. 30, 1957; Dec. 29, 1958

TABLE II

CRUDE OIL PRODUCTION

Country	Annual (million metric tons)		Daily Average (thousand barrels)		Per Cent Increase from 1957
	1957	1958 ^a	1957	1958 ^a	
Kuwait	57.3	70.2	1,110.0	1,376.0	24.0
Saudi Arabia	49.0	50.2	990.0	991.3	10.9
Iran	35.5	40.6	725.0	808.2	11.4
Iraq	21.9	35.7	440.0	756.2	71.7
Qatar	6.6	8.2	136.0	162.0	19.0
Neutral Zone	3.3	4.0	65.0	84.1	29.4
Egypt	2.3	3.0	42.5	65.2	53.4
Bahrain	1.6	2.0	32.0	40.6	24.9
Turkey	0.3	0.3	6.1	6.5	6.5
Israel	0.07	0.09	1.2	2.0	66.6
Total, Middle East ..	177.9	214.3	3,547.8	4,292.1	20.9
Total, World ..	882.2	905.2	17,530.8	17,712.3	1.0

^a Estimated.

Petroleum Press Service (London), Jan., Mar., 1959; *The Oil and Gas Journal* (Tulsa), Dec. 30, 1957; Dec. 29, 1958

The situation presently confronting the United States in the Middle East calls for the more careful analysis because the decline of Western influence and prestige in that area coincides with the early penetration of Russian influence. Traditionally, this area has been a British sphere of influence for perhaps a century and a quarter. The sphere has been shrinking, however, since shortly after the close of World War I. Although Great Britain under treaty continues to supervise the foreign relations of a group of small sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf area and, until lately, still retained special treaty rights in Egypt, Iraq and Jordan, it now holds actual sovereignty only at Aden and adjacent regions at the base of the Arabian Peninsula and has lost its sovereignty in Cyprus. The last claim on Egyptian territory, in the Suez Canal Zone, was surrendered in 1954 and the value of remaining treaties with other states in the area is problematical.

In an area such as the Middle East, where local governments are relatively weak, the decline of any established great power influence inevitably tends to create a power vacuum. Into such a vacuum, power, or influence, which may be much the same thing, is sure to flow from the most immediately available source. The latter stages of the withdrawal of British influence from the Middle East - that of the French having previously been liquidated - although accompanied by

the assumption of some responsibilities by the United States, still left a low-pressure there. This was primarily due to the fact that United States policy was innocent of motives of an imperialistic nature and looked toward the "orderly withdrawal" of Western supervisory authority and because the indigenous states, while ambitious to fill the political vacuum with their own power, lacked the resources in wealth, manpower and armed strength fully to provide for their own security.

Contemporary issues arising in the Middle East thus have resulted principally from the withdrawal of Western influence from the area, in the face of growing nationalistic pressures and in keeping with the growth of anti-imperialistic sentiment in the West, at a rate faster than the resulting vacuum could be filled by the slowly growing strength of the indigenous states themselves. Russian influence, has tended in some measure to replace that of Great Britain, France and the United States. The principal current problem for the United States (and its allies) has to do with the further spread of Russian power in the area.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND

The classic "Eastern Question" has existed in one form or another ever since England, France and Russia began, centuries ago, to reach out to seek advantage or to protect national and imperial interests in the strategic areas of the Near and Middle East.¹ Marked by occasional wars, large and small and by the almost continuous exercise of diplomacy the struggle has continued as empires disappeared in wars and revolutions, as societies were transformed by technological and social change and as the world's greatest stores of oil were found to be resting under vast stretches of desert lands.² Three factors have largely determined the changing character of the Eastern Question: the southward descent of the peoples of Russia, around the Black Sea, the efforts of Britain, strongly dependent on the maintenance of freedom of passage in the area, to preserve a world empire and the growing nationalism and spirit of independence among the peoples of the Middle East itself. It was the impact of the second World War on these three elements and on the inter-relationship among them that set the scene for the new phase of the drama, which opened as the war came to an end

¹ See Figure 1, p. vi.

² See Tables I and II, p. ix-x

as America, for the first time, found itself directly involved.³

1. Decline of British Power.

No element in the Middle Eastern picture after World War II was so fraught with revolutionary implications as the decline of British power. This power had given the area what stability it had. The historic controlling system of peace maintenance in the Near and Middle East through diplomacy, political manipulation, economic influence and military arrangements had rested in the final analysis on Britain's ability to bring substantial power to bear in the Middle East. Unable, after 1945, to exert such power, the British Government found that its traditional policies could not meet the threats to its interests from both inside and outside the region.

The "British System" (as it is sometimes called) in the Middle East, going back over a century and a half, had been aimed at securing the routes to India and the Far East and keeping the area out of the hands of any hostile great power. Throughout the nineteenth century Britain constantly barred the way to Russian expansion toward the eastern Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. Its rivalry with France,

³The history of the "Eastern Question" before World War II is assumed to be known for the purpose of the present thesis.

though less violent than the opposition to Russia, was almost uninterrupted. Twice in the twentieth century Britain also thwarted the armed efforts of Germany to seize the strategic Middle East as the key to world power. The means of that protective policy changed with circumstances but the objective of a stable Middle East, willing to cooperate or subject to control, remained unchanging.⁴

So long as the Sultans reigned at Constantinople, British policy could be based, with rare exceptions, on maintaining the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Though admittedly weak and unable to protect and reform itself, old Turkey did have sovereignty over the whole area from the Balkans to the Persian Gulf and had a common interest with Britain in opposing Russian expansion. Despite progressive losses in Europe, it continued until World War I to hold Middle East, Asian and African territories except Egypt, which came under British occupation in 1882. But when, in World War II, the Ottoman rulers, finding England on the side of Russia, gambled on a German victory, the breakup of their empire became an object of British political and military strategy and, at the end of the war, an accomplished fact which necessitated a new "system" to safeguard British interests.

⁴George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, New York, Cornell University Press, 1956, p. 517-522.

The nationalist Turkey of Mustafa Kemal turned to Soviet Russia in order to oppose partition and domination by the victorious Western powers as provided by the treaty of Sevres (1920).⁵ At the same time, however, the British were able to keep an influential position in Iran and to maintain their presence throughout most of the Arab lands. They controlled the new mandated territories of Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq and maintained their protectorate over Egypt, France receiving the mandate for Syria and for Lebanon when it was formed.

The "Western" security system for the Middle East remained substantially intact during the inter-war period. Soviet Russia was unable to extend its influence into the Middle East, although Mussolini did succeed in conquering Ethiopia, the permanence of his conquest depended very much on British tolerance. Turkey accepted the treaties of Lausanne (1923) and of Montreux (1936) giving the big Western Powers an important position in the control of the Bosphorous-Dardanelles and by October 1939 she had even become their ally.⁶

⁵Ibid. p. 3-27 and p. 101-103.

⁶The treaty was directed against any European power committing aggression, but a protocol excepted Turkey from taking any action involving entry into armed conflict with the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the Soviet Government, then aligned with Germany and seeking a special position for itself in Turkey, was not pleased with this formal alignment of Turkey with the West. See George Kirk, The Middle East in the War, London, Oxford University Press, 1952, p. 443-446.

Nevertheless, the system had shown certain signs of weakness such as the inevitable rise of a strong and troublesome nationalism in Egypt and a growing Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine to which Britain could find no solution. Egypt was given greater independence in 1922 and 1936 and the mandate for Iraq was ended in 1932, but in each case Britain substituted new relationships for the old, treaty arrangements safeguarding her essential military positions and the rights to their use.⁷ Full use of these privileges were made during World War II.

Great Britain came out of World War II with its hold on the Middle East outwardly stronger than ever. Since the victory at El Alamein it had dominated virtually the whole Arab area with British armed forces and controlled economic life through the Middle East Supply Center. Realizing that the mandate system was outdated, London showed its adaptability in shifting from direction of to cooperation with the newly formed independent Arab states. To this end it gave its blessing to the new League of Arab States (March 1945) and helped to ease the French out of Syria and Lebanon (1945-1946). The new Labour Government in London gave every indication of

⁷Lenczowski, Op. Cit., Egypt; p. 395-396, 399-401, Iraq; p. 241-242.

of its intention to hold on to Britain's traditional positions. This was evident in the sharpness of its reaction to Russian attempts to get a foothold in the area and to American public statements and private actions with respect to Palestine, which threatened to alienate the Arabs from the West.⁸

Appearances were deceptive, however, for Britain's world position had undergone fundamental changes. The war had gravely weakened its financial power. The Middle Eastern Supply Centre was given up (1946). The British could no longer pay the costs of maintaining troops all along the routes of the empire. Indeed, great pieces of the empire itself were breaking away.⁹ Even in the small area of Palestine, the task of merely keeping order while caught between the fierce nationalism of Jew and Arab was proving too great a drain on British resources and the patience of the British people. The Arab League, moreover, proved to be no docile instrument or willing partner of British policy. When it became apparent that Britain was not prepared to go all the way toward appeasement of Arab demands, issues such as Palestine and Suez inevitably ranged the strongest forces of Arab nationalism

⁸See p. 23-24, 29, 47.

⁹For example, India (1947) and Ceylon (1948)

against British interests. The prewar policy of giving up political controls in exchange for military bases did not work, for the "unequal treaties" and the bases themselves came under nationalist attack.

Britain simply could not carry along the burden of maintaining a position of strength in the Middle East. The crucial decisions came in 1947. The question was what to do in Greece, Turkey and in Palestine. In the first case, the British were able to hand over the responsibility for Greece and Turkey to the United States.¹⁰ In the second, they deposited Palestine in the lap of the United Nations and the following year, they simply withdrew their forces and administration leaving the fate of Palestine to be decided in fact by an Arab-Jewish war.¹¹ This precipitous withdrawal of British power from positions long deemed vital was a measure of the unexpected weakness of Britain's postwar economy and also of the willingness of the Labour Government to see the facts of international life and accept their consequences.

By 1950 the Middle East still had a large place in British calculations. Some positions could be given up if

¹⁰See Chapter II, p. 35-36

¹¹See Chapter II, p. 47 ff.

that made it easier to hold on to others, especially if American power could fill the critical vacuums with no loss of overall Western strength in the area. The British Government still hoped to keep the leadership of a Western effort toward world stabilization and, especially after the Communist aggression in Korea, toward an organized defense. Western strength was to rest partly on the new commitments of American power to Greece and Turkey; partly on the assumed cooperation or at least cooperative neutrality of Egypt and other Arab states, and partly on what remained of the old British imperial positions: a combination of directly held strong points, special treaty arrangements, and long established political influence. Britain held Cyprus and Aden as crown colonies. It exercised ultimate authority in a series of protectorates on the southern and eastern rim of the Arabian peninsula. It still held its major base at Suez and its control over Sudan, though both had been formally challenged by Egypt. It had a special treaty relationship with Iraq (1946) including provision for the use of two important military bases, although the failure of attempts to revise this treaty in 1948 raised doubts whether it could be extended beyond its termination date of 1956. With Transjordan¹²

¹²Renamed Jordan on April 26, 1949.

Britain had a treaty of alliance (1948) base rights and a position of primary influence through its special role in the establishment, maintenance and command of Jordan's army, the Arab Legion.¹³

The totality of these strong points and treaty arrangements made Britain still a formidable power in the area. But the British were not, by 1950, trying to play a lone hand. They were aware of the uncertainty hanging over their bases at Suez, Iraq, Cyprus and even in Jordan. They felt that other Western powers must be associated with them in their efforts to defend the Middle East. Accordingly, the two major Western initiatives taken at this stage were multilateral rather than purely British: The Tripartite Declaration on Palestine, to which the United States and France were also parties (1950), and the four-power proposal for an Allied Middle East Command (1951), which Turkey joined with the three Western powers. The fact of those initiatives would show how far the whole future of Western influence in the area would depend not on the West itself but on the trend of new and vigorous forces arising within the Middle East.¹⁴

¹³Lenczowski, Op.Cit., Iraq; p. 349-250, Jordan; p.375.

¹⁴John C. Campbell, Defense of the Middle East, New York, Harper and Brother, 1958, p. 40-42.

2. New Forces and the Changing Mood

The Middle East itself, after the second World War, presented a very different picture. The most significant changes flowed neither from the results of the military campaigns nor from the influence of the great political and moral issues of the world struggle that had just taken place. They were not discernable on the map or in the political institutions of the states so much as in the spirit and temper of the people. It was the coming to fruition of a longer historical process marked above all by the rise of nationalism. The war had speeded up this process. During the fighting the belligerent powers naturally gave precedence to their own urgent military requirements over the sensitivities of the peoples who happened to live in this strategically located region. The natives of Asia and Africa had seen great powers like Great Britain and France humiliated by Germany. A harvest of protest and violent self-expression against formerly dominant nations was only to be expected, and the postwar adjustments required in those nations themselves, exhausted as they were by war and absorbed in their own more immediate problems, invited such an upheaval.

In some parts of the Middle East, the trend of nationalism had begun more than a century before with the disruptive impact of the West on a weaker and more static

Eastern society. The pattern of reaction was not always the same. Some "Westernizers" sought full-scale adoption of Western ideas and methods. Others sought to preserve the essential values of their generally Islamic society while borrowing from the West the most modern means to resist its domination. Still other political and religious leaders preached simple rejection of Western influence as alien and unwanted. All had in common the desire for national self-assertion. Nationalism had been the driving force behind the states of central and eastern Europe at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Nationalism had been the key to the historic victory of the Kemalist movement and the reconquest of Turkish national territory after the first World War. It lay behind the steady and stubborn resistance of Iran to the encroachments of Russia and Britain on Iranian national independence and integrity between the two world wars. It sparked the periodic Arab outbursts against the British occupation of Egypt or French rule in Syria.¹⁵

The mood of the Middle East after World War II, however, showed marked variations. Nationalism was not at the same stage in all countries. In some areas where tribal loyalties

¹⁵Herman Finer, "Reflections on the Nature of Arab Nationalism", Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. IX, No. 10, October 1958, p. 302-313.

were paramount or the peasantry remained inert, the idea of self-conscious nationhood had little reality. In the Arab world the line was often far from clear between loyalty to individual "nation" such as Egypt or Iraq and the wider loyalty to the pan-Arab idea. Meanwhile the now more powerful challenge of a vigorous Jewish nationalism in Palestine added new explosive elements. Nationalism thus presented for Western policy no single clear issue but a number of complex problems.

Iran's position was quite different. At the end of the war Iran found itself with military forces of the three major allied powers on its soil and, true to its historic position, dependent on Anglo-Russian rivalry as a means of preventing domination by one or the other. When the Western forces were withdrawn and the Soviet forces were not, Iranian nationalism and Western policy had a common aim in forcing the withdrawal of the Russians and in frustrating Soviet attempts either to hold on to Iranian Azerbaijan or to subvert the national government in Tehran. This aim was achieved in the crisis of 1946. But all was not smooth sailing for the West thereafter, for the British, their position symbolized by the powerful Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, remained an inviting target for Iranian nationalism. It was soon evident that this nationalism was more deeply felt and firmly based than before

the war as a result of increased contacts with the outside world and social change within. And Iran, though well aware of the Russian danger and willing to accept Western aid, clung to its traditional policy of non-alignment as the best guarantee of its independence.¹⁶

Nationalism in the Arab world took still different forms. In the Arab world the Russian threat was not a matter of real concern to the nationalists. The full force of their agitation was directed rather at the remnants of British and French rule and at the "Zionist invasion" of the Arab world. Although the Arab states in many ways were not yet modern nations, containing many disparate elements and ways of life, there was no question of their ability to apply continuing pressure on Western positions in their territories. The rising middle and professional classes, often educated in Europe and America or in the Middle East by Western educators, constituted a force with which the European powers could not deal so easily as with the sheikhs, pashas and beys on whom their control had so largely rested in the past. The new leadership was in many ways an unknown and feared quantity.¹⁷

¹⁶Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 17-18.

¹⁷Nissim Rejwan, "Arab Nationalism"; The Middle East in Transition, Walter Z. Laqueur, Ed., New York, Fredrick A. Praeger Inc., 1958, p. 147-152.

The Western governments were plagued by the uncertainties of a situation they could not easily diagnose or oppose. They could not count on the gradual and orderly development of nationalism in the Middle East under the guidance of responsible national leaders. "Collaborating" rulers could be assassinated; governments could be overthrown; power could fall into the hands of irrational fanatics; a treaty laboriously negotiated with a Middle Eastern government could disappear overnight as the result of street riots and mob scenes organized by that government's political enemies. The tremendous power that could be wielded by those who controlled "the street" put a premium on fanaticism, or demagoguery, and on conspiratorial organization. As this fanaticism was almost always directed at "imperialism," "colonialism" and "foreign exploitation," the Communists and the extreme nationalists had little difficulty in using it for their own purposes. The Western powers, as the easily identifiable villains of the piece, became the scapegoats for almost all the ills and troubles afflicting Middle Eastern society, the objects of resentment for all they had done and much they had not done.

The strength and intransigence of Arab nationalism was evident in its inexorable pressure on British positions and in the ceaseless agitation of the Arab League on the questions of Palestine, Suez, Sudan and North Africa. Arab political leaders who wanted to stay in office could not slight

or ignore the pressure. Egypt remained unreconciled to the existing treaties covering the British position at Suez and in the Sudan; an Egyptian Prime Minister who tried to negotiate a new agreement with the British in 1946 found himself out of a job. Iraq remained bound to Britain by a treaty of 1930, but the shakiness of the relationship was dramatically revealed by the riots of 1948 which overthrew a government that had negotiated a new treaty to replace it. Even Jordan, still a ward of the British though given its nominal independence in 1946, was no longer a dependable pied-a-terre for Britain in the Middle East after the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951.¹⁸

If the decline of Britain's position in the face of this nationalist upsurge had not affected the world balance of power, it might have been accepted with equanimity. But the bastions that were falling had among others ^{THE} purpose of holding off the power of Russia. What were the aims of Russian policy, for which new opportunities seemed to be in the offing? If a "vacuum" was being created, would the Soviet Union attempt to fill it?

¹⁸Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 18-19.

3. The Russian Menace

Russian aspirations to an outlet in the warm waters of the Mediterranean through the straits and the Persian Gulf through Iran have been part of Russian history and of the "Eastern Question" for over two hundred years. These aspirations have been strengthened during the last forty odd years by Soviet endeavors to spread its Communist doctrine and to bring more people and countries under its liberating sway. The cold war added a further incentive to Russia's efforts to gain a foothold in the Middle East or at least to deny the Middle East's oil, political-military support and the friendship of its peoples to the Western powers.

Russian policy in the Middle East has gone through a number of phases since the revolution of 1917, in a changing combination of doctrinaire communist internationalism and coldly calculated requirements of Russian imperialism, with swings of the pendulum between aggressive expansion and cooperation with others for collective security. The record includes dramatic shifts and many inconsistencies, but through it all the continuing Russian objectives in this region are apparent.

The first period after the Bolshevik revolution was marked by the public repudiation of the old Russian

imperialism and strident calls for a vast revolt of "Mohammedan toilers of the East" against the Western imperialist oppressors and the local pashas and profiteers. However, at the very time that Comintern leader Zinoviev was summoning the "peoples of the East" to a holy proletarian war at the Baku Congress of 1920, Lenin and Foreign Commissar Chicherin were already very practically coming to terms with non-Communist governments and national movements on Soviet Russia's southern frontiers. In 1921 they concluded a treaty with Mustafa Kemal and helped him in his national struggle. Even the fact that the Turkish Communists returning from the Baku Congress were arrested and thrown into the sea by Kemal's police did not mar the new friendship which was so convenient to both sides. With Iran, the Soviets similarly recognized the existing regime, concluded a treaty, and then withdrew their forces from northern areas of that country, leaving the "Soviet Republic of Gilan" and separatist movements in Azerbaijan to be suppressed by the Iranian Government. Keeping the border states out of the British camp and securing the Soviet frontiers was more important than minor territorial gains or the uncertain prospects of Communist revolution.¹⁹ This is not peculiar to the Middle East. It is well known

¹⁹Lenczowski, Op. Cit., p. 164-165.

that a similar policy was carried out in the Far East, notably in China.

Throughout the interwar period the duality of Soviet policy continued. Comintern and GPU agents did their best to build up an apparatus of subversion within the countries of the Middle East. Party congresses debated such questions as the degree of cooperation permissible with bourgeois national movements and proclaimed principles to guide the revolutionary effort in "colonial and semi-colonial" countries. A famous set of "theses" adopted by the Comintern in 1928 permitted only temporary collaboration with nationalist elements, insisting on the independent role of the revolutionary proletarian movement and its drive for the seizure of state power.²⁰ Russian and Communist propaganda continued to denounce the anti-Communist governments of Ataturk and Reza Shah along with the "Western imperialists." But this revolutionary strategy bore little resemblance to what the Soviet State Government was actually doing in its relations with its neighboring governments in the Middle East.

The official theme of the Kremlin in these inter-state relations was peaceful coexistence, buttressed by a series

²⁰George Lenczowski, Russia and the West in Iran 1918-1948, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1949, p. 328-376.

of treaties in 1925-1927 which established a pattern of non-interference in internal matters and neutrality in case of war. The more complex and extensive security system devised by Litvinov in the 1930's to protect the Soviet Union against Hitler included new treaties with Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan (1933), as well as ties with various European powers and support of the League of Nations, which it joined in 1934. Faith in the U.S.S.R. was not total on the part of neighbor states and some multilateral regional arrangements concluded on the initiative of the local governments themselves did not include the U.S.S.R. Such were the Balkan Pact of 1934 (Yugoslavia, Rumania, Greece and Turkey) and the Middle Eastern or Saadabad Pact of 1937 (Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan). At a time when the Soviet Union was preaching collective security against Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, it raised no objection to these pacts.²¹ But it was notably cautious and could hardly have viewed with indifference the formation of two blocs which, linked by Turkey's membership in both, stretched along its southern frontiers from the

²¹The only Soviet intervention in the Balkan Pact negotiations concerned the possibility that Turkey would be drawn into hostilities against the U.S.S.R. in case of trouble between the latter and Rumania. As a result, Rumania specifically agreed that in that circumstance Turkey would have no obligations under the Pact. See Survey of International Affairs, 1934, London, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1935. p. 527-528.

Balkans to the Himalayas. While these groupings were relatively weak and were not dominated by outside powers then hostile to the Soviet Union, the fact that Moscow accepted them at all is out of line with Russian policy both before 1917 and since.

With the general breakdown of the Versailles system in Europe, Stalin became convinced of the bankruptcy of collective security and turned to a policy of collusion with Hitler. Then World War II presented him with a series of new situations holding great opportunities as well as great dangers. What the Soviet Government said and did with respect to the Middle East in the immediate prewar and war periods is particularly revealing of continuing Soviet aims and objectives; at the same time it should be taken with some reservations because of the very uncertainties of the time. In the 1939-1941 period the Soviet leadership tried to use its bargaining position as a nonbelligerent to set limits to the advance of German power through the Balkans to the Middle East, to establish Soviet predominance in Turkey, and also to prevent the Western powers from using their position in the Middle East for an attack on the Soviet Union. The Nazi victories of 1940 in the West largely removed the latter danger, but they posed in even more pressing fashion the question of the balance of German and Russian power. Stalin and Molotov showed a lively interest in Hitler's proposal

that the area "south of the national territory of the Soviet Union in the direction of the Indian Ocean" should be a Russian sphere of interest. The trouble with the proposal from Moscow's viewpoint, was that if Germany controlled the Balkans and Turkey, then the Russian position in the Middle East and even the security of the Soviet Union itself would be greatly exposed. The Russian counterproposal accordingly specified conclusion of an alliance between the U.S.S.R. and Bulgaria, the occupation of a Russian land and naval base at the Turkish Straits, in addition to recognition of "the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf. . . as the center of aspirations of the Soviet Union."²² The clash of interest was clear to both sides, and the German decision for war was not long delayed.

The German attack in June of 1941 forced Stalin to concentrate on the fight for survival and on getting Western help in that fight, rather than on dividing up the British Empire. Yet the consistency of his views on the Middle East is apparent from the demands he put forward with respect to Turkey and the Straits in negotiations with his Western Allies and the preparations he made for the extension of Russian control into Southeastern Europe. The Soviet Government also

²²"Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-1941", Department of State Publication 3023, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1948, p. 234-259.

established diplomatic relations with Iraq (1941), Egypt (1942) and the Levant states (1942),²³ an indication of its intention to assert its influence in the Arab world. Closer to home, Russian conduct in Iran during the war provided a remarkable preview of postwar policy. The northern zone of the country under Russian occupation by agreement with Great Britain (August 1941), was cut off from the rest of the country; meanwhile the Soviet Union vastly increased its propaganda and other activities throughout Iran under the protection of its privileged wartime position as an ally and a joint occupying power. Much of that propaganda was aimed not at Germany but at the Western Allies in general.²⁴

With the allied victory over the Axis powers in Europe (1945), Stalin embarked on a gigantic gamble to seize, in the confusion and war-weariness of the immediate postwar period, a strategic position enabling the Soviet Union to dominate the whole Eastern Hemisphere. The main thrusts into Europe and into Eastern Asia were accompanied by a calculated offensive toward the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Military victories in the Balkans and the advent of Communist

²³Syria and Lebanon.

²⁴Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 23.

power in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania brought Russian Power to the Adriatic and the borders of Greece. The very existence of an independent Greece was then menaced by a Communist rebellion supported from the Soviet bloc. The Soviet Government sought a base in the Dodecanese, put forward a formal claim to a trusteeship over Tripolitania, and expressed interest in areas as remote as Eritrea and Ethiopia. It denounced its long-standing treaty with Turkey and demanded a new regime for the Straits, "joint Soviet-Turkish" bases for their defense, and territorial cessions in eastern Turkey.²⁵ A revolution was engineered in Iranian Azerbaijan, where Soviet forces prevented the Teheran Government from suppressing it. The Soviets then applied pressure to secure an oil concession covering the five northern provinces of Iran, while building up the Tudeh (Communist) Party as an instrument of the seizure of power in the whole country.²⁶

This was a serious and many sided offensive for which the Western powers and the nations immediately threatened were not entirely prepared, but they were able ultimately to check it. Greece was saved by British and later by American support.²⁷ The West summarily turned down Soviet claims

²⁵See Chapter I, p. 29.

²⁶Lenczowski, Op. Cit., p. 178.

²⁷See Chapter II, p. 35 ff.

in the Mediterranean. The Turks would listen to no demands for territory or for bases on the Straits and sought the guarantee of Western powers.²⁸ Western opposition and Iranian resiliency combined to induce the withdrawal of Soviet forces (May 1946) and ultimately bring about the collapse of the Communist regime in Iranian Azerbaijan (December 1946).²⁹ Thus the Soviets failed after World War II in their attempts to push forward into the Middle East by force and pressure, just as they had failed after World War I to advance under the banner of world revolution. Their choice of means, moreover, had deliberately ruled out re-creation of the system of pacts and alliances which had once "neutralized" the border area in some degree and kept it free of potentially hostile bases. Now, though their own position in the Balkans was stronger, they provoked the extension of Western military power and commitments right up to the frontiers of the Soviet Union itself through the American programs of military aid to Greece, Turkey and Iran from 1947 on and the adherence of Greece and Turkey to NATO in 1952.

4. Evolution of American Interest

Until the first World War the American interest in the Middle East was largely cultural. American diplomacy

²⁸See Chapter II, p. 29 ff.

²⁹Lenczowski, Op. Cit., p. 182-183.

concerned itself with the protection of American citizens and of their rights to preach, to teach and to trade. American missionaries, though they made few conversions to Christianity, had a significant and beneficial influence in bringing Western thought, ideals and educational methods into the Middle East. They made no small contribution to the growth of nationalism. American opinion, periodically, expressed itself in favor of freedom and against those governments which ignored and suppressed it. The picture of America in the public mind, where it existed at all, was of a benevolent but distant friend. As a government and as a nation, however, the United States took no stand and had no policy.³⁰

At the peace table after World War I the United States delegation participated actively in the negotiations and looked forward to a settlement based on the principle of national self-determination in the Middle East as in Europe. President Wilson sent a commission to investigate the situation in Syria, and a proposal for an American mandate over Armenia, fantastic as that idea was, was even presented to the Congress, which declined to approve it.³¹ Wilson's

³⁰Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 29.

³¹Charles E. Hughes, "Recent Questions and Negotiations," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 2, December 1923 (Special Supplement), p. xii-xiii.

defeats in the Senate, and at the polls in 1920 killed not only American participation in the League of Nations but also any chance of the assumption of responsibilities in the Middle East. In the turbulent developments that marked the tearing up of the treaty of Sevres and the birth of nationalist Turkey, the United States took no part other than to speak up for maintenance of the open door, freedom of navigation in the Straits and the protection of American property and institutions. It signed neither the Lausanne Convention on the Straits in 1923 nor that of Montreux which replaced it in 1936. As for Palestine, Wilson had given his blessing to the Balfour Declaration (1917) and later a joint resolution put Congress on record in favor of the Jewish national home in Palestine, but the specific reservation of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs that the resolution "Commits us to no foreign obligations or entanglements" was indicative of the temper of the times. The United States formally approved the British mandate on Palestine in 1924; for the next two decades Palestine, in American eyes, was a British problem.³²

During the interwar period, American activity in the Middle East was largely that of oil companies in search of concessions. American companies were able to get a share of the oil industry in Iraq and Kuwait, and to gain exclusive

³²J.C. Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine, New York, Norton, 1950, p. 20-21.

concessions in Bahrein and Saudi Arabia. The official position of the United States in the welter of public and private diplomacy surrounding the scramble for oil was based on the Far Eastern principle of "open door." Aside from this natural concern to see American firms get their "fair share" of a promising business, Washington already had in mind the depletion of domestic oil reserves and the desirability of having alternative sources of supply which would not be in foreign hands. No comprehensive national policy emerged, as the United States played no role in the relations between the Western European powers and the increasingly restive peoples under their rule, or in the developing three-way contest among the Axis powers, the Western democracies and the Soviet Union for the control of strategic areas and the support of Middle Eastern governments and peoples. The growing American involvement in Middle Eastern oil, however, and knowledge of the crucial importance of oil in the war that was approaching pointed the way to the greatly increased interest in the Middle East that appeared once the war began.³³

It was the war itself that actually brought the United States into the Middle East. American engineers and troops were sent to Iran to maintain the lend-lease supply

³³Lenczowski, Op. Cit., p. 530-531.

line to Russia. Economic and other experts were sent there to advise and assist the Iranian Government. American arms and goods flowed into Egypt to build up the strength of the Allied Middle East Command. The United States was a partner of Britain in the work of the Middle East Supply Centre, a sort of economic directorate which planned and controlled the economic life of the whole region in the interest of the Allied military effort. In all the wartime diplomacy concerning such matters as Turkey's possible entry into the war, the position of Egypt and the assurance of Iran's independence, the United States found itself playing a major part by reason of its role as a leading Allied power intent on winning the war and laying the foundations of a stable peace. President Roosevelt generally went along with Mr. Churchill's idea that Britain should "play the hand" in the Middle East, just as the United States played it in the Pacific, but this did not mean disinterest in the future of the region. The President indeed had a very lively interest in the future of the Arab world, which he demonstrated by his visit with King Ibn Saud in Egyptian waters in February 1945 on his way back from Yalta.³⁴

Anglo-American relations in the Middle East, as the war came to an end, were not marked by complete harmony.

³⁴Lenczowski, *Op. Cit.*, p. 531-532.

Joint policies had not been worked out beyond the immediate war problems, with the consequence that the occasional American forays in this field often led to friction with well established British policies and interests as in the matter of oil concessions, competition for influence in Saude Arabia, and above all the question of Jewish immigration into Palestine. On many counts the major problems for the United States in the immediate postwar period seemed to revolve around rivalry with Great Britain. But these issues serious as they were, were soon to be dwarfed by the Soviet challenge to the vital interests of both powers.

As seen earlier, the Soviet Union had been exerting pressure on Turkey since March 1945, when it refused to renew a 20-year-old Soviet-Turkish pact of friendship. The Soviets demanded (1) that Turkey agree to joint Soviet-Turkish military defense of the Turkish Straits of the Dardanelles and (2) that Turkey negotiate bilaterally on the Soviet annexation claims to parts of eastern Turkey (Kars-Ardahan region) and (3) drafting of an alliance of the type which was then becoming familiar in eastern and southeastern Europe, and by which the states of that area were already being converted into Soviet Satellites.³⁵

³⁵Harry N. Howard, "The Development of United States Policy in the Near East, 1945-1951 - An Historical Note, Part I", Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXV, No 647, November 19, 1951, p. 811.

The Turkish Government refused on all issues. Compliance could only mean the eventual reduction of Turkey to a satellite status, an aim already apparent in Soviet public demands for a "friendly" government in Ankara. Coming in the period when the Western powers were doing their utmost to lay the basis for long term cooperation in spite of Soviet duplicity and strong arm methods, these demands provided a clear test of the will and ability of the West to call a halt to further Soviet expansion, and also of the importance which they attached to the Middle East. At Potsdam both conceded that the Montreux Convention on the Straits (1936) should be revised by its signatories but gave no concurrence to the demands for bases and territory: On November 2, 1945, the United States proposed a set of principles for an equitable revision of the Montreaux Convention (1936), suggesting that (1) the Straits be open to the merchant vessels of all nations at all times; (2) the Straits be open to the transit of the warships of the Black Sea Powers at all times; (3) except for an agreed limited tonnage in time of peace, passage through the Straits of non-Black Sea powers be permitted only with the specific consent of the Black Sea powers or under the authority of the United Nations; and (4) certain changes be made in the Montreux Convention for purposes of modernization. The Soviet Union rejected this suggestion and refused to

take part in a conference to discuss the problem at the time.³⁶

Russian pressure on Turkey continued, however, and was matched by parallel pressure on Iran. The experiment of the "democratic national autonomous government" in Iranian Azerbaijan in 1945 and 1946, sustained by the presence of Russian troops kept in Iran beyond the ex^vacuation date fixed by the treaty, threatened the integrity and the very existence of Iran as an independent state.

President Truman and his principal advisers, particularly Secretary Forrestal, saw the Russian moves as a direct threat to American security. In the year 1946 they made several crucial decisions that gave proof of the determination not to let Russian power move into the Middle East: the sending of the battleship Missouri to Istanbul (August 1946); the strong stand on Iran, which led to the withdrawal of Russian forces^f (May 1946) and the eventual collapse of the Russian-Sponsored regime in Azerbaijan (December 1946); and the rejection of Moscow's formal demands for a new regime of the Turkish Straits including their "joint defense" by the U.S.S.R. and Turkey.^{37,38}

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.
Vikar

³⁸Harry S. Truman, Memoirs, New York, Doubleday, 1956, Vol. 2, Years of Trial and Hope, p. 94-95.

These American reactions were generally in line with those of Britain, naturally concerned with what Ernest Bevin called a thrust across the throat of the British Empire. But the United States was not just following the British lead. It was making decisions on its own. These decisions were made in the context of global relations with the Soviet Union; they were the reflections of a hardening American policy against Soviet encroachment in Europe, the Far East and elsewhere. At a meeting with his advisers called to consider whether the United States, in view of the demands on Turkey, should take a firm attitude or "do as we have in the past - protest, but ultimately give in," the President chose firmness with the full realization that if the Soviet Union did not back down it might mean armed conflict. ". . . We might as well find out," Secretary Forrestal reports Mr. Truman as saying, "whether the Russians are bent on world conquest now as in five or ten years."³⁹

American firmness also reflected a definite conception of the importance of the Middle East itself to the United States. The Soviet moves in Greece, Turkey and Iran were interpreted as an attempt to penetrate and gain control of those countries and then thrust on to those that lay beyond.

³⁹Walter Mills, ed., The Forrestal Diaries, New York, Viking Press, 1951, p. 191-192.

That was a threat not just to the lifeline of the British Empire but to the security of the whole non-Russian world.

The policy of firmness took shape during 1946 as a series of reactions to specific Russian demands and threats in the Middle East. It was not consciously adopted or presented to the public as a basic continuing policy until the inability of Britain to keep on supporting Greece and Turkey put the question directly in the spring of 1947. The decision of the United States to take over that responsibility, after full public debate and passage of the necessary legislation by the Congress, marked the definite adoption of a national policy. Henceforward, the United States was virtually committed to taking all necessary measures to prevent the intrusion of Russian power into the Middle East. For though the specific commitment covered only Greece and Turkey and was limited to the provision of military equipment and economic aid, the general statements of the famous "Truman Doctrine" message went much further. Should Greece or Turkey lose their independence, Secretary Acheson pointed out in his testimony to Congressional committees, other states would soon lose theirs; the West had to keep those countries out of Russian hands - or be prepared to accept the subsequent loss of the strategic bases, lines of communication and resources of the Middle East. The progressive decline of British strength in the Arab world, moreover, forced the United States to consider the organization

of joint defense and therefore to face the difficult problems involved in reconciling close association with Britain and a traditionally sympathetic attitude toward Middle Eastern nationalism.

CHAPTER II

THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION

As critical situations arose in the Middle East, the first rough outline of a basic scheme for countering Russian designs was sketched out in the so-called "Truman Doctrine." While tentative in some respects, this program, as set forth in a Presidential message to Congress on March 12, 1947, embraced the significant principle that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside powers."¹ This proposition, carried to the point of action in meeting the critical needs of Greece and Turkey and, in lesser measures, Iran, rapidly evolved into the doctrine of containment. This concept, deriving international sanction for its implementation from the United Nations Charter, found expression in the North Atlantic Pact and its implementing apparatus, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

1. Aid to Greece and Turkey

The immediate event which precipitated the Truman Doctrine and the United States program of aid to Greece and Turkey in March 1947 was the delivery of two notes from the British Government to the President of the United States on

¹"Recommendations on Greece and Turkey, message of the President to the Congress," Speech delivered by President Truman before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XVI, No. 403, March 23, 1947, p. 534-537.

February 24, indicating that Britain would have to stop almost all aid to Greece and Turkey after March 31, because of increasing financial difficulties. The notes recalled the 1946 Anglo-American agreements declaring that for "military and strategic reasons" Turkey and Greece should not be allowed to fall under Soviet control and that the United States would provide economic aid to these two countries while Britain provided military aid. The British notes expressed the hope that the United States would be able to provide the assistance that would be required to maintain the security of these two governments after March 31.²

Greece had been a poor country even before World War II, but in the course of the war had suffered great destruction. By 1945 its people were reduced to a state of abject poverty. The very existence of the Greek government was placed in jeopardy by the refusal of the Communist-dominated Greek resistance movements to lay down their arms and accept the authority of the National Government at Athens. After a temporary armistice between the Government and guerrilla forces, it became apparent late in 1946 that the guerrillas were increasing in strength and receiving equipment, food and services from the neighboring Communist states of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania.

²Joseph M. Jones, The Fifteen Weeks, New York, Viking Press, 1955, p. 3-13.

Since the beginning of World War II, the United States had made available to Turkey \$130,979,811 in economic aid³ and Great Britain had provided extensive military and financial assistance. The United States demonstrated its support of the Turkish position by ordering a substantial naval force to the Mediterranean in August 1946, just after the Soviet Union made its demands for joint military bases on the Turkish Straits.⁴ However, since these measures had not proved sufficient to deter the Soviet Union, the Turkish Government seriously feared armed intervention and sought further assistance.

President Truman went before a joint session of Congress on March 12, 1947, to call for an appropriation of \$400 million for military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey. He said that the integrity of these two countries was essential to preserving order in the Middle East. Only the United States could supply the indispensable aid. This was but one aspect of a grave world situation in which many nations were falling under totalitarian rule imposed by a minority.⁵

³United States Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Assistance to Greece and Turkey, Rept. No. 314 on H.R. 2616, 80th Congress, 1st Session, 1947, p. 16.

⁴See Chapter I, p. 31.

⁵Message of the President to Congress, March 12, 1947 Op. Cit., p. 535.

In the course of the Congressional hearings the Administration witnesses made it clear that this was a crisis situation and that it did not expect the United States would make this particular kind of response to every instance in which free peoples were threatened with subjugation. They consistently drew back from naming the Soviet Union as the source of the crisis and kept the approach on an ideological plane; i.e., freedom versus totalitarianism. It was expected that \$300 million would be spent on Greece, about equally divided between supporting Greek armed forces and providing the minimum civilian construction necessary for stability. The Turkish share of the aid was to be \$100 million, which was to be used exclusively for strengthening the Turkish military forces.⁶

As finally amended and passed, the bill provided for aid in the form of loans or grants, and for detailing to Greece and Turkey, United States civilian and military advisers to help those governments in making effective use of the aid. The President was directed to withdraw the aid if requested to do so by Greece or Turkey or if the United Nation should

⁶United States Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, "Assistance to Greece and Turkey," Hearings on H.R. 2616, 80th Congress, 1st Session, 1947; and United States Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, "Assistance to Greece and Turkey," Hearings on S. 938, 80th Congress, 1st Session, 1947, passim.

find continuance of the aid unnecessary or undesirable, or if the President found the purposes of the aid had been accomplished by other organs or were incapable of accomplishment.⁷

The strategic and military justifications for the Greek-Turkish aid program were largely omitted in the public discussion, but the available records indicate that in the estimation of the administration planners these were the primary reasons for the entire program. They regarded Turkey as the key to the defense of the eastern Mediterranean and thus to the defense of three continents. Greece had great strategic importance in her own right, but even more in relation to Turkey because it lay on Turkey's flank. Turkey itself was unable to both strengthen her economy and finance her defenses. Joseph Jones, a participant in formulating the presentation of the aid policy says that these military considerations were played down because it was feared the American people were not accustomed to think in strategic military terms in peacetime and that too much emphasis on military aid might be so alarming as to defeat the whole bill. Moreover, the administration did not want to provoke a Russian

⁷"Passage of Bill Authorizing Assistance to Greece and Turkey," (Text of An Act to Provide Assistance to Greece and Turkey; Public Law 75, 80th Congress, 1st Session, 1947), The State Department Bulletin, Vol. XVI, No. 413, June 1, 1947, p. 1070-1074.

charge that military aid to Turkey constituted "encirclement."⁸

Consequently, some members of Congress criticized the administration for not stating the case full and frankly, while the public in general received only inklings and half-formed ideas as to the full purpose of the new aid program. While it must be recognized that there was considerable public apprehension on the question of military aid, it must also be questioned whether it is practical in the long run for the administration to expect responsible public support and understanding of major foreign policies unless the actual bases of policy are explained.

The importance of the Greek-Turkish aid program lies not in the \$400 million which President Truman requested that Congress appropriate to aid the two countries. The importance lies in the fact that this inaugurated the post-war United States foreign aid program as a means of opposing indirect Russian aggression through the use of American money and material. Therefore, the decision to aid Greece and Turkey in 1947 raised a number of fundamental questions for the administration and Congress.

Had the Soviet Union embarked upon a program of world domination? By 1947 the answer seemed to be a

⁸Jones, Op. Cit., p. 162.

reluctant but definite, "Yes." Relations had been deteriorating between the United States and Soviet Russia since the end of World War II, but probably it was not until March 1946 that the first major crisis arose when the United States protested against the continued presence of Soviet Russian troops in Iran. By the end of the year, allied unity had collapsed in Germany and the Russian grip was tightening on Eastern Europe. At the same time the developing situations in Greece and Turkey seemed to force the United States either to commit its resources openly in opposition to Russian expansion or to accept the annexation of these two strategically located countries to the growing Russian empire. Since there already seemed to be no limit to the Russian ambitions it became apparent that the United States would have to adopt a policy recognizing this new reality. President Truman sounded this note in his March 12 message to Congress when he said that a number of countries "have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will" and that the crises in Greece and Turkey were but one aspect of this general situation.⁹

Should the United States actively oppose Russian expansion into Europe and the Middle East? The available

⁹Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XVII, No. 403, March 23, 1947, Op. Cit., p. 534.

records indicate there was little doubt within the administration and no serious question that Congress would also answer with a firm "Yes." It was widely recognized that risks were involved, perhaps even the risk of war. But after having fought World War II to prevent world conquest by the Axis powers it seemed unlikely that the United States would passively acquiesce in a Russian drive for world domination.¹⁰

Would the United States have to assume the major responsibility for resisting the Soviet Union in its expansionist drive? The answer again seems to be "Yes." Britain and France appeared to have been so weakened by the war that any significant expenditure by them for this purpose would be merely a transmission of aid which they would have to receive from the United States. Moreover, Britain was being forced from these very circumstances to withdraw gradually from the positions she formerly held in Asia and the Mediterranean area. The United Nations did not seem to be an effective instrument in the cold war. Nor did it have any military strength or sufficient resources to provide the large amount of economic aid that would be required at once. It is apparent, however, that there was considerable feeling in Congress and among the public at large that the United

¹⁰86th Congress, 1st Session, House Document No. 116, United States Foreign Aid, Its Purpose, Scope, Administration and Related Information, Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, June 11, 1959, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1959, p. 32.

States should make greater use of the United Nations and not resort to unilateral actions to keep the peace.¹¹

How should the United States exert its power to prevent Russian indirect aggression? Until the spring of 1947, the United States had opposed the direct Russian drive for control of Europe and the Middle East at the conference table, in diplomatic notes, and by the presence of United States naval forces in the Mediterranean demonstrating support of Turkey. The question was whether to replace the military assistance which Britain had extended to Greece and Turkey to help them defend themselves. The United States already was extending economic aid.

In many ways the Greek-Turkish situation seems similar to the 1940 crisis in Western Europe which brought forth the American response of lend-lease. In both cases the United States Government determined that American security was involved in the threat to survival of the countries under attack. In neither case did it seem necessary or possible for the United States to undertake support of the allied powers by use of American Armed Forces. In each case the United States provided what seemed, at the moment, to be the most vital need - credits, economic and military supplies. In this manner the United States exerted its strength without

¹¹Jones, Op. Cit., p. 148-170.

becoming a belligerent or engaging in direct combat with the enemy or presumed enemy governments.

The Greek-Turkish aid program, however, went considerably beyond Lend-Lease. It not only provided the equipment or military security, but in the case of Greece, it also sought to restore internal political stability by providing major assistance in the general economic reconstruction and development of the country.

Military aid was extended to Turkey at the end of 1947 after a United States military mission had spent some months in Turkey investigating the specific needs of the Turkish forces and how the United States could best help. The Turkish forces lacked battle training, modern equipment, communications facilities, and were dependent on railroads since the country lacked a modern road and harbor system. It was reported that by 1950 the Turkish Army had been outfitted with modern equipment, streamlined in size and supplemented with a defensive navy and a tactical air force. But the cost of maintaining Turkish forces did not decline as expected, since it was more expensive to maintain a mechanized armed force than the old-fashioned one of 1947. Little information and analysis is publicly available on the program of military aid to Turkey. From the scattered and incomplete comments of responsible scholars, however, one can conclude that this was a successful program, both

in terms of developing the Turkish armed forces and maintaining excellent relations with the Turkish Government.^{12,13}

Probably the most important and obvious result of the Greek-Turkish aid program before it became part of the Marshall Plan was that it helped Greece and Turkey to remain independent. The Russian drive was stopped at their borders by the new military strength made possible, in large measure, by United States aid, the moral commitment of the United States power which the aid program implied and also, in the case of Greece, by the Yugoslav defection from the Cominform (1948). This was conceived as a crisis program in keeping with the Truman Doctrine, to do a particular job - to defend, in the broadest sense of the word, two countries whose security was considered vital to the security of the United States.

¹²John C. Hurewitz, Middle East Dilemmas, New York, Harper and Bros., 1953, p. 200-204.

¹³Halford L. Hoskins, The Middle East, New York, Macmillan, 1954, p. 37.

2. The United States and Palestine

America, like Britain, was ostensibly seeking a "solution" in Palestine that would safeguard the rights of both Jews and Arabs. But there was a difference of approach between the two Western powers which prevented any joint action. Britain was motivated primarily by concern for safeguarding its relations with the Arab world and its strategic position in the Middle East. American policy, while cognizant of those considerations, reflected also a strong humanitarian feeling that a haven in Palestine must be opened to the remnants of the persecuted European Jewry. Considerable pressure was exercised by Zionist groups in this direction. As a consequence of these conflicting views and of the incompatibility of Arab and Jewish aims, neither London nor Washington, singly or together, was able to develop a consistent or effective policy.

Perhaps, also there never was any way out of the Palestine problem once the Balfour Declaration (1917) had been issued and large-scale Jewish immigration had begun. Whatever possibilities for a settlement there were - both when it was purely a British problem and later when the United States injected itself into the picture and took part in numerous commissions while avoiding any real responsibility - were missed, at a cost which is still being paid. The British

though trying generally in the early postwar period to be conciliatory toward the Arab League, could not meet Arab demands so extreme as to require complete abandonment of the Jews; they had to consider not only their moral obligations and the actual situation in Palestine but also their relations with the United States. The American contribution to the increasing intractability of the problem took the form largely of periodic presidential statements urging the admission of more Jews to Palestine¹⁴ and private aid to immigration, all of which irked the British and added to the local pressures on them in Palestine itself.

Britain's position was slowly becoming untenable. Subjected to official American pressure, at odds with the Zionists and with the Arabs, facing growing disorders in its mandated territory, the British Government decided to put the question of Palestine before the United Nations. On April 12, 1947, Britain requested the calling of a special session of the General Assembly to consider the problem.¹⁵ Shifting the problem to the United Nations added new

¹⁴For example the appeal of President Truman to British Prime Minister Clement Attlee (August 31, 1945), asking for immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine. Lenczowski, Op. Cit., p. 330.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 332.

factors to the equation, such as the expanded opportunities for Russian intervention and the new invitation to other nations - many with no real interest in Palestine but strongly anti-colonial - to get into the act through their collective voting power in the General Assembly. These factors in any case would have gravely complicated any efforts of Great Britain and the United States to find a way out compatible with their own security interests and on the basis of some reasonable compromise between Arab and Jew. But the very fact that the United Nations was seized of the question bore witness that Britain had given up. Britain evidently felt there was no choice, it had to terminate the mandate and get out. The United States refused to pick up the tab as in Greece and Turkey confirming that it had neither a consistent policy nor a willingness to enforce the solutions which it had proposed from time to time.

United States uncertainty continued throughout the United Nations debate. The American delegation took a leading role in getting the partition resolution through the General Assembly in November 1947.¹⁶ It then declined to contribute any forces to assist in making the resolution effective. A few months later, when it became evident

¹⁶ Harry N. Howard. The Development of United States Policy in the Near East 1945-1951, Department of State

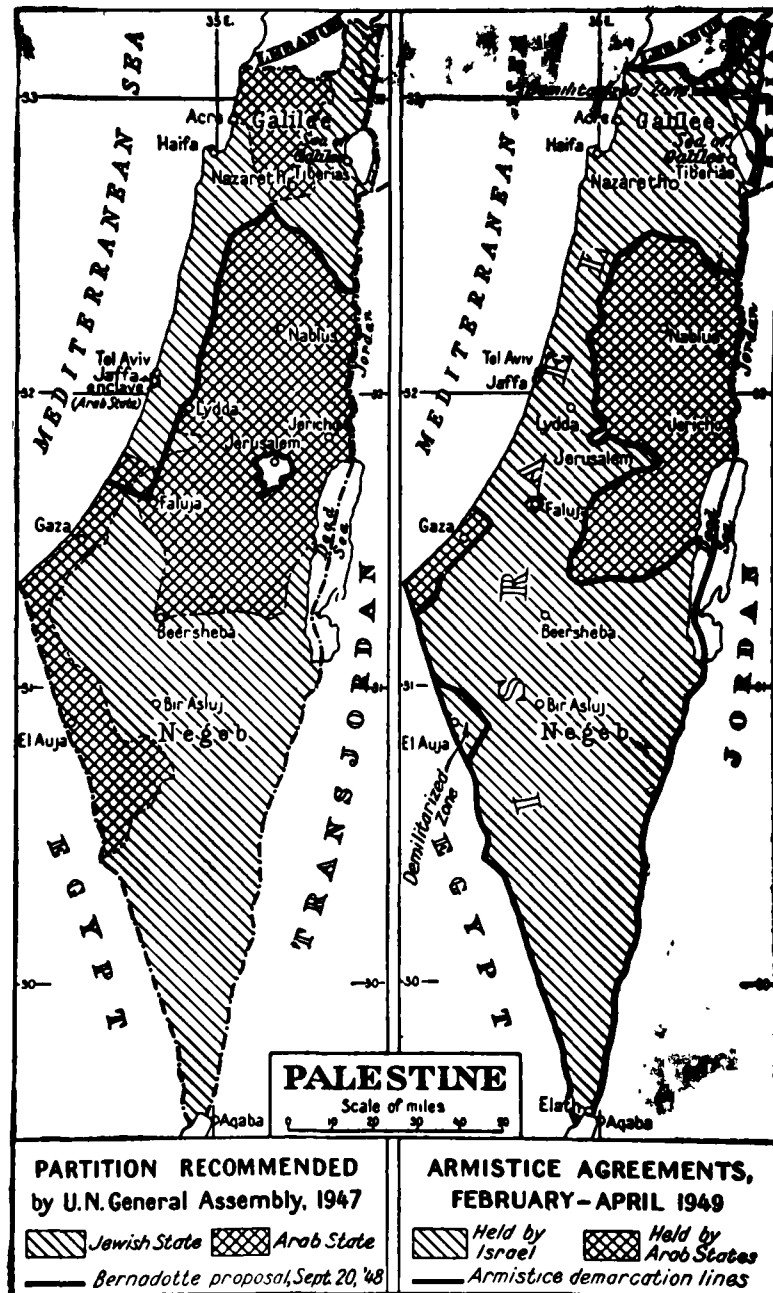
that the Arabs would not acquiesce and that Britain was not prepared to enforce a decision, alarmed by the prospects of what would happen when Britain withdrew upon the termination of the mandate, the United States came forward with a proposal for an international trusteeship for Palestine (March 1948).¹⁷ When this proposal failed to gain acceptance, American policy reverted with startling rapidity to partition through de facto recognition of Israel's independence on the date it was proclaimed (May 14, 1948).¹⁸ In the Arab-Jewish war which ensued, American attention was naturally directed toward the overriding aim of keeping the peace. Accordingly, the United Nations efforts to line up a series of truces had strong American support. But the truce efforts tended to limp behind the fighting, and it was the fighting itself that shaped the situation that was to emerge when the final armistice agreements were signed (July 1949). What emerged was an Israel much larger than that of the original United Nations partition resolution,¹⁹ and with it the frustration of Arab hopes to the point where the whole Arab world was bound to

¹⁷"United States Position on Palestine Question," Statement by Secretary Marshall and U.S. Ambassador Warren K. Austin to U.N., Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XVIII, No. 456, March 28, 1948, p. 402-408.

¹⁸Howard, Op. Cit., p. 839, The United States entered de jure recognition on January 31, 1949.

¹⁹See Figure 2, Palestine; Partition recommended and Armistice Agreements, p. 49a.

FIGURE 2



be lastingly bitter not only towards Israel but also towards the powers the Arabs held responsible for their spoliation, humiliation and defeat.

American policy in Palestine was inconsistent and ineffective largely because it was tied to no broad concept of national interest. It was the product of a number of currents which at one time or another produced a variety of political acts and statements. The State Department, in general, stressed the importance of continuing good relations with the Arab world and of cooperation with the British. The Defense Department, especially Secretary Forrestal, was mainly concerned about the future availability of Middle Eastern oil. Both were worried about how the Soviet leadership might profit from what was going on.²⁰ Both underrated Zionism's political strength in the United States and its military strength in Palestine. President Truman, on the other hand, was so sympathetic to the Zionist side, by personal conviction and for apparent domestic political reasons, that he did not consistently relate his thinking and actions on Palestine to the broader Middle Eastern policy which on other matters he so courageously followed. In the absence of an agreed estimate of the forces at work and of the impact on American interests of the various possibilities - independent Jewish state,

²⁰Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 37.

trusteeship or whatever - there was no firm standard against which to measure specific policy decisions. Hence the instability, the unpredictability and the dramatic reversals that marked the course of American conduct.

America strongly supported Israel's successful application for membership in the United Nations (May 1949)²¹ and in the years that followed sought to preserve peace along the armistice lines, while trying to promote a final settlement of the dispute which would ensure the survival of Israel and at the same time do something to allay the bitterness of the Arabs over what they regarded as theft of Arab territory.

American activities during the Truman administration were somewhat more favorable to Israel than those under the Eisenhower administration with its formal emphasis upon "impartiality" and its willingness to rap Israel's knuckles either by censure in the Security Council or by withholding financial aid (as in Israel's dispute with Syria over a diversionary canal in the demilitarized frontier area in 1953; in the Libya and other retaliatory raid incidents; and in the Sinai invasion in 1956). Both Republican and Democratic regimes, however, were committed to support the existence of Israel, though neither dared adopt a sufficiently

²¹Howard, Op. Cit., p. 839

firm line to make this clear to the Arab states. The Anglo-French-American declaration of 1950 in support of the armistice lines was never entirely convincing. Secretary of State Dulles' statement in 1955 that the United States would be willing to guarantee permanent frontiers once they had been agreed upon between Israel and neighbors seemed merely to intensify Arab intransigence.²² Meanwhile throughout the years, substantial amounts of economic aid flowed from the United States to Israel.²³

3. The Tripartite Declaration of 1950

The United States and its Western allies, in pursuing the aim of keeping peace in Palestine, had not, however, put all their faith in the United Nations. By May 1950, a year after the conclusion of the armistice agreements, it was evident that no peace settlement was in sight. The United States then took the initiative to put a Western guarantee behind the armistice settlement. After consultation among American, British and French representatives, a tripartite declaration was issued. Its main pledge was that the three Western powers would not permit any armed aggression across the existing armistice lines in Palestine, and if

²²Paul L. Hanna, "America in the Middle East," Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. X, No. 5, May 1959.

²³See Chapter IV, p. 149-153a.

it took place they would take appropriate action against the aggressor "both within and outside the United Nations." A second pledge was that they would strive to maintain a balance in the supply of arms to Israel and the Arab states in order to prevent the creation of any "imbalance" that would endanger the peace.²⁴ The Tripartite Declaration may have made some contribution to stability, especially by slowing down the arms race. So long as they could count on Israel and the Arab states to take it seriously, the Western powers at least had the opportunity to work toward their other aim, a more permanent settlement.

In retrospect, one may point to these years, before Russia was prominently in the picture, as the period when the West lost its chance to bring about a settlement which may have closed the door to Russian penetration. Yet it is a real question whether the chance ever existed. The United States and British Governments were well aware of the importance of tackling the interrelated questions that must form the bedrock of any settlement: boundaries, Arab refugees, the status of Jerusalem, use of water resources. These were not just items for some future peace treaty but matters of immediate moment that were poisoning the atmosphere and threatening to erupt in violence. The Arab refugees were not only

²⁴Text in Department of State Bulletin, Vol., XXII, No. 570, June 5, 1950, p. 886.

a burden on the international community and a challenge to the moral sense of mankind, but also a source of continuous border incidents and a breeding ground for communism. The dispute over the waters of the Jordan begged to be settled by international agreement with both sides being likely to take action by their own terms. As for Jerusalem, the inability of the United Nations to do anything about its resolutions calling for an international status for the city and surrounding area left the situation right where it was when the war stopped, with the Holy City itself cut in two by the truce line and enveloped by continuing tensions as one bloody incident followed another.

4. The Allied Middle East Command Proposal.

The apparent success of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in counteracting Russian power in Europe, followed by the Communist threat in Korea, apparently led the United States to several conclusions which influenced its activities in the Middle East. One of these was that Russia was prepared to employ military aggression along its peripheries wherever it was not opposed by adequate military force and therefore it might be expected to seek to outflank NATO through the Middle East. Another was that a cordon of defensive alliances might be constructed around the Soviet Union perimeter. It was, of course, recognized that Israel

and the Arab states would not easily become partners in a common alliance, that Egypt (attempting to escape from the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 and to eject Britain from its Suez base and the Sudan) would not readily cooperate with the British, and that Iran (discontented over the amount of American aid and just launched on its effort to nationalize the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company) (1951) was in no mood or condition to join a Western alliance system. Yet it was hoped in Washington and London that an Allied Middle Eastern Command on rather vague outlines might come into existence and lead the way toward a more cohesive arrangement in the future.²⁵

Although the Soviet Union was by 1951 an "atomic" power, defense of the Middle East was thought of in the West largely in the "conventional" terms of World War II. The problem was one of planning a strategy by which an invading Russian land army might be checked and thrown back, while simultaneously building up the military capabilities necessary to carry out that strategy. Traditionally, in two world wars, "allied" defense of the Middle East had been entrusted largely to British and Commonwealth forces. It was natural that they should again form the backbone of any defense supplemented as might be possible by indigenous forces and by the

²⁵Hanna, Op. Cit., p. 181-182.

combined sea and air power which the West could bring to bear in the Middle Eastern theater. The Supreme Commander would be British.²⁶ Any plan would obviously have to have a necessary minimum of cooperation and good will on the part of the nations which were to be defended. It would have to be a "collective" defense in the sense that they would help or at least not hinder the necessary steps that would have to be taken. Some of them, for political and geographical reasons, obviously would have to be included in strategic planning.'

Great Britain, despite the many blows to its old position of predominance in the Middle East, still held the key points and facilities on which defense of the region would logically rest.²⁷ Above all, it still held at Suez, on the basis of the treaty of 1936, the great base considered indispensable for such defense by both British and American military men.

Britain had hoped, as Egypt grew more restive²⁸ and assertive after World War II, to be able to negotiate a revised treaty that would leave the base in British hands, but Egyptian opinion and policies were moving toward more extreme positions, not toward compromise. Neither direct negotiations nor an appeal by Egypt to the Security Council

²⁶Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 39.

in the United Nations produced a settlement. The British thus found themselves faced with a "hot potato" on the diplomatic front and with increasing Egyptian violence in the Suez area itself. In the summer of 1951 the moment seemed opportune, to both London and Washington, for a new approach whereby the Suez base could be "internationalized" within the framework of a regional defense organization. A solution that would have solved saving the pride of both Britain and Egypt.

Out of these considerations came the concept of an Allied Middle East Command. A formal alliance like the North Atlantic Treaty was hardly possible in the present state of relations among the Middle Eastern nations and between these nations and the West. The idea of a purely military "command" seemed more practical. The idea was to create something like the British Middle East Command of World War II, with the local governments voluntarily providing the necessary minimum of cooperation and facilities as partners. An "allied" organization, presumably, would be open to less objection from the Middle Eastern opinion than would the network of purely British bases and bilateral arrangements that had come under such strong attack.

That was the general approach. When it came to specifics, some difficult questions arose: What form would the new organization take, what nations would be in it, how would it be proposed, and how would it be affected by the

disputed and hatreds that were keeping the Middle East in ferment? The United States and Britain asked France and Turkey to join them as sponsors of the proposal (October 1951): France as one of the "Big Three" with interests in the Middle East even though no longer in possession of territory there; Turkey as a nation whose strength and geographical location were essential to any defense of the region, and a Middle Eastern and Moslem nation whose participation would take the purely Western label off the proposal. Turkey's prime objective had been membership in NATO, and the Turk's had resisted the idea that they should belong only to a Middle East defense grouping linked to NATO's command arrangements. But once the decision was taken in the autumn of 1951 to accept Turkey in NATO, the Turkish Government was quite willing to join also in arrangements for the Middle East.²⁷

What was expected of the other nations? Iran, a major gateway to the Middle East from the north, already had taken the step of signing a military aid agreement with the United States and had begun to receive some equipment.²⁸ The army of Israel, with some of the best trained forces in the area, might be useful in case of Russian attack. The Arab states could hardly provide any significant effective

²⁷Howard, Op. Cit., p. 842.

²⁸Ibid., p. 812-813.

forces, save perhaps Jordan's Arab Legion, but it was essential to have access to their oil and to the important strategic ground under their sovereignty. The year of 1951 was one of spectacular manifestations of the nationalist revolt against the West. The crisis in Iran over nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (May 1951), meant for the immediate future a gravely damaged relationship with the West and the prospect of chaos at home. The Wafd government in Egypt was becoming ever more intransigent and committed to policies which left little or no possibility of finding any peaceful outcome of the conflict with Britain over Suez and the Sudan. The Arab states and Israel continued to be at swords' points, with no sign of accommodation on either side. Of all the Middle Eastern states, and this is vitally important to observe, only Turkey looked at the military problem primarily from the standpoint of defense against Russia.

Into this confused situation the Western powers tossed their proposal for a Middle East Command. Feeling that they had to start somewhere, they decided to approach Egypt and only Egypt. The idea was that Egypt held the key position because of the Suez base and its leadership of the Arab League. If Cairo agreed, the other Arab states could be expected to follow. They would be kept informed, but invitations to them was deferred pending Egypt's reaction.

Israel was also to be informed and reassured that the scheme would in no way injure Israeli interests. The whole fate of the proposal depended on Egypt.²⁹

The avowed purpose of the plan as presented was to defend Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries against aggression from the outside; i.e., The U.S.S.R. If Egypt were prepared to participate "as funder member". . . on a basis of equality and partnership," its security would be enhanced, its officers would hold posts of high responsibility in the Command, and its forces would receive necessary training and equipment from other members. As part of the bargain, however, Egypt would agree to furnish to the Command "such strategic defense and other facilities on her soil as are indispensable for the organization in peacetime of the defense of the Middle East," and would grant "all necessary facilities and assistance in the event of war, imminent menace of war, or apprehended international emergency. . . ." The British base at Suez would be formally handed over to Egypt "on the understanding that it would simultaneously become an Allied Base within the Allied Middle East Command with full Egyptian participation in the running of this base in peace and war." Britain, in return, would give up the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 and withdraw such British forces as were not allocated to the Command by agreement of its founding members.

²⁹Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 42.

At the same time Britain made a new proposal on the Sudan under which an international commission, including Egypt, should be established there to watch over constitutional development and tender advice to the British and Egyptian Governments which shared the "condominium."³⁰

If there was any real confidence in the West that Egypt would accept the new proposal, it was gravely misplaced. Apparently no attempt was made in advance to sound out the Egyptian Government, already deeply committed to a strongly nationalistic stand on Suez and the Sudan, a stand which for domestic reasons it could not modify. Thus the timing of the proposal could have hardly been more unfortunate. The Egyptian Government did not even give it the courtesy of careful study. Two days after its receipt it was rejected, and the Egyptian parliament adopted decrees denouncing the treaty of 1936 and the Sudan treaty of 1899.³¹

These moves killed the whole Anglo-American plan for organizing the defense of the Middle East. Anglo-Egyptian relations deteriorated as the British denounced Egypt's unilateral repudiation of treaty obligations and prepared to hold firm at Suez against provocation and violence.

³⁰For Text of Four-Power Proposal, see Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXV, No. 643, October 22, 1951, p. 647-648.

³¹Howard, Op. Cit., p. 842

The United States felt compelled to back the British on the issue of the sanctity of treaties.³² Thus the Western powers, instead of getting Egyptian cooperation to defend Suez, Egypt and the Middle East, found themselves faced with open Egyptian hostility and increasing violence in the canal zone.

In an explanatory statement issued a few weeks later the the Western powers toned down their original proposal and tried to answer some of Egypt's arguments. They stressed that no derogation of sovereignty was intended; that Egypt would be an equal partner; that arrangements for bases and facilities were a matter for subsequent specific agreements; that the main task at first would be the provision of military aid to the Middle Eastern states.³³ These points may have had some effect on other Arab states but they made no impression on Egypt. The West persisted in the line that Egypt did not "understand" the Middle East Command proposal. The Egyptian Government merely chose not to understand it as a proposal for cooperation among equals but rather as a device to prolong the British occupation of Egyptian territory with the added backing of the United States. The Middle East Command,

³²Howard, Op. Cit., p. 843.

³³ "Four-Power Statement on Middle East Command," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXV, No. 647, November 19, 1951, p. 817-818.

accordingly, was stillborn.

The whole effort to build some kind of collective defense against the Russian threat to the Middle East thus ended in failure. What went wrong? Certainly the tactics and timing of the approaches left something to be desired. Most fundamentally, the real difficulty lay in the attempt to create a military command and base structure without sufficient underpinning of political understanding and agreement. Even the promise of arms and "social and economic advancement" was not enough to overcome the effects of the deep political cleavages separating some of the Middle Eastern nations from each other and from the West or the general disbelief among the Arab governments in the reality of a Russian military threat.

The most obvious miscalculation concerned the attitude of Egypt. The Western powers made the proposal in terms which they thought reasonable, but if they had correctly gauged the Egyptian mood they could hardly have thought it worthwhile at all. Egyptian nationalism made it virtually impossible for the government in Cairo to accept anything but the evacuation of British troops from the Suez, certainly not a proposal which looked like a plan to keep them there under an "Allied" label. The miscalculation in Egypt, moreover, practically eliminated the chance of winning over any other Arab states to military cooperation with the West. Iraq was

favorably inclined toward just such an arrangement, to substitute a multilateral undertaking for the existing bilateral treaty (1946) under which Britain held two bases in Iraq.³⁴ Lebanon was generally sympathetic to the Western powers, as was Ibn Saud. Syria, though divided on the issue, and Jordan, closely tied to Britain by treaty and subsidy, might well have gone along. But none of them could be expected to defy Egypt on a decision taken against the "imperialists" in the name of nationalism and the sacred sovereignty of an Arab state.³⁵

The principal object of Arab concern was Israel. While the American and British Governments were well aware of that fact, they saw that they could not do much about it at the moment whereas the need for an organized defense against the Soviet Union was urgent. They therefore did their best to keep the Arab-Israeli conflict to one side while they proceeded with the business at hand. Merely to avoid trying to get Israel and the Arab states under the same roof to plan military strategy with the West, however, did not solve the problem. The difficulty lay in the very attempt to organize any defense organization covering this area when the Arab states still considered themselves at war with Israel. On the other

³⁴See Chapter III, p. 80-81.

³⁵Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 46

hand, the United States and Great Britain could not sacrifice Israel to the Arab states for the sake of the Middle East Command.

Israel was turning more and more from a neutral to a pro-Western line in the cold war and was convinced of its own value as a possible ally. But could it be expected to take its eyes off the main objective, that of forcing the Arabs to make peace, or to look on the idea of a regional defense organization other than a means of achieving that objective; or on the actual Western proposals as anything but "appeasement" of the Arabs at Israel's expense? Could the Arab states regard them as anything but an attempt to divert them from their own main objective of exacting revenge for the disaster of 1948 and to force their acceptance of the status quo with Israel? Owing to Egypt's quick rejection of the Middle East Command and its consistently negative attitude thereafter, these attitudes were not put to the test. Yet it was clear from the reaction of both sides that, quite aside from Suez and all the tangled problems of Anglo-Egyptian relations, the great unsettled question of Palestine stood as a mountainous barrier in the way of all Western efforts to win the cooperation and support of the peoples of that part of the Middle East.

Finally, there was the absence of Iran. Geographically, Iran was the first line of defense. If it were lost, Turkey could be flanked from the east and south; probably even Suez

could not be held. From a military standpoint it was obvious that any Middle East defense organization ought to include Iran, but in this case as in others, the years 1951 and 1952 presented political conditions which made its inclusion out of the question. With moderate elements in eclipse, Iranian nationalism was being whipped up to fever pitch and directed entirely against Britain. The United States, while continuing its efforts in vain to mediate, was trying to preserve some small measure of influence in Iran and to keep its military mission there.³⁶ But until a settlement could be reached on the oil dispute, Iran had to be left out of consideration of Middle East defense. Indeed, as the internal situation went from bad to worse, it was a real question whether the combination of fanatic anti-British nationalism and growing Communist propaganda might lead the whole country into the Soviet Union orbit.

In sum, one may conclude that the conditions for the success of Anglo-American efforts in these years (1951-1952) could hardly have been less favorable. Any progress on arrangements for defense of the Middle East had to await progress toward settlement of the major political disputes. Second, clearer understanding was necessary as to the interests

³⁶Henry A. Byroade, United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East, Department of State Publication 4852, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1953, R. 933.

and political commitments of the nations concerned, so that the limitations as well as the possibilities of defense would be apparent. In the Middle East the Western powers had tried to reverse the sequence of what had been done in Europe.

There a solid alliance based on a community of attitudes and interests had been established, then a joint military organization created; here the military command structure and planning arrangements were brought into being first and superimposed on a welter of political conflicts. It simply would not work. If anything could be concluded by American policy-makers from the experience of those years, it was that the old roads led nowhere and that some new approach would have to be tried.

CHAPTER III

THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION

The new Republican Administration came into office (1953) ready to take a "new look" at all existing policies for national security, both in the strictly military field and in foreign relations generally. Some of the existing policies, such as support for NATO, obviously would be carried on without basic change. In an area such as the Middle East, where no comparable position of military strength had been built, the new look was bound to be far more searching. Secretary of State Dulles decided to do the looking himself in a fact finding expedition that took him to the principal Middle Eastern countries in the spring of 1953.

The Secretary's trip marked the beginning of some new directions of American policy. While the basic purpose of strengthening the area against Russian pressures and possible aggression remained unchanged, some of the approaches and methods were altered. The Secretary's conclusions, similar to those reached by others who had been working closely with the problem, may be summarized as follows: that any sound regional defense organization must spring from the desire of the peoples and governments of the area in question; that most of the Middle Eastern peoples and governments, as of that time, were unwilling to be associated with the West in such a defense organization; that the states of the "northern

tier"¹ of the Middle East were most aware of the Russian menace, the most likely to do something about it and the best situated to provide protection to the area as a whole.²

1. The Baghdad Pact.

The "northern tier concept" seemed to offer the opportunity to strengthen those nations that wanted to be strengthened, without permitting troublesome problems like Suez and Palestine to hold up progress where it could be made. The step-by-step approach would mean putting aside for a time any comprehensive joint planning for regional defense, but cooperation could be expanded when and as individual states made their choice for it.

The cornerstone of any northern tier alignment could only be in Turkey, by all appearances, militarily the strongest state in the Middle East. Already a member of NATO, Turkey had committed armed forces to the NATO command. Together with Greece and Yugoslavia, with which it had signed a treaty of friendship in February 1953, it provided indispensable territory and man-power for the defense of the eastern Mediterranean area. Turkey happened to be, also, the only

¹ Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan.

² John Foster Dulles, "Report on the Near East," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXVII, No. 729, June 15, 1953, p. 813-835.

firm base from which the Western alliance system and Western power could be extended into the Middle East. The Turks were willing to take the initiative, for they apparently saw as clearly as American strategic planners that their own country and with it the entire NATO position, could be outflanked by a Russian encircling move through the distressingly vulnerable countries farther to the east. Beyond the weaker immediate neighbors, Iran and Iraq, lay Pakistan.

For some months Washington had been eying Pakistan as another potential position of strength, and eastern cornerstone for a Middle East defense system. With a population of some 70,000,000, almost half of them in the western part of the country, with its strong military traditions and with its reservoir of fighting men, Pakistan might conceivably play the military role that British India had played before partition, providing manpower and supplies for the defense of the Middle East. Its leaders had, moreover, shown as interest in aligning their country with the West and in securing arms from the United States. Their reasons were eminently practical. They wished to strengthen their country's international position (especially against India).³

By the end of 1953 the general knowledge that the

³Mohammed Ahsen Chaudhri, "Pakistan and the United States," Pakistan Horizon, Vol. IX, December 1956, p. 200-206.

United States and Pakistan were negotiating some kind of military agreement had provoked protests from Afghanistan and a veritable storm in India where many voices were raised decrying any step that would upset the existing ratio of forces between Pakistan and India, "bring the cold war to India's doorstep" and undermine the policy of neutrality for South Asia. These protests, though largely discounted in advance, gave Washington some cause for concern as evidenced by President Eisenhower's letter of 24 February 1954, in which he advised Prime Minister Nehru of the decision to extend military assistance to Pakistan, before it became public knowledge. He also reassured the Indian Prime Minister that this step was not in any way directed against India and that if the assistance was misused and "directed against another in aggression," he would take appropriate action immediately, both within and outside the United Nations, to thwart such aggression.⁴ In May 1954, a military assistance agreement was signed with Pakistan. It was a regular arms aid agreement, with no provision for United States bases in Pakistan and no alliance obligations. But one part of the arrangement was the understanding, which the United States regarded as linked

⁴Letter from President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Nehru, February 24, 1954, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXX, No. 768, March 15, 1954, p. 400.

to the aid, that Pakistan would cooperate in regional defense.⁵ Pakistan was already negotiating with Turkey.

On April 2, 1954, Turkey and Pakistan signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation for security.⁶ It was no military alliance, providing only that the parties would study the means and extent of their cooperation for collective defense to meet an attack from outside. It was actually intended, as American diplomacy had envisaged as a constructive step toward better ensuring the security of the whole Middle East and was specifically open to accession by other states.⁷ Not bearing the stigma of Western participation that had marked the proposed Middle East Command, it might eventually attract Arab support. By itself the pact had an element of incongruity, the two countries being so widely separated geographically with no means of being of much help to each

⁵Statement of President Eisenhower, February 25, 1954, in Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1954, New York, Harper, for the Council on Foreign Relations, 1955, p. 373-374; for text of agreement, see Department of State, "Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement between the United States of America and Pakistan," Treaties and Other International Acts Series, No. 2976, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1955.

⁶Text of agreement in Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1954, Op. Cit., p. 376-378.

⁷Harry N. Howard, United States Policy in the Near East, South Asia and Africa - 1954, Department of State Publication 5801, Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1955, P. 39-40.

other in case of war. That very fact drew attention to the invitation to others to join and to the states which might do so. The logical land bridge, Iran, now rid of the anti-Western Mosaddegh regime and working its way slowly toward political stability and a settlement of the controversy with the West on oil, was not yet ready to consider adherence. Iraq seemed a more likely candidate.

The United States concluded a military assistance agreement with Iraq in April 1954. While the Iraq government made no formal commitment with respect to regional defense, it was understood between the two governments that Iraq would play its part in regional defense.⁸ As in the case of Pakistan, the Turks were ready to take the lead in negotiations for a bilateral treaty. For Iraq, however, the decision to ally with Turkey and thus indirectly with the West was one of great moment to take, for it raised the whole question of relations with the other Arab states and the possible breaking of the "solidarity" of the Arab League. It was almost sure to provoke opposition from anti-Western forces throughout the Arab world and possibly riotous protest at home. However, General Nuri es-Said, who was then serving as Prime Minister (1954) secured the assent of eight former premiers in the presence of the King and hoped to be able to

⁸Ibid., p.40.

control any domestic opposition. The main problem then was to make the decision palatable to Egypt, whose press and radio were already stirring up opinion, in the Arab world including Baghdad and Iraq cities, against the new course.

Iraq's leaders had good reasons for wanting to strengthen their country. The Russian threat had acute meaning for them. Russian air bases were but a few minutes' flight from Iraqi territory; the large Kurdish minority made Iraq vulnerable to Russian subversion; the Tudeh (Communist) Party of Iraq, though outlawed, was a source of potential trouble. Besides its fear of the U.S.S.R., Iraq had other reasons for seeking arms and other aid: to consolidate its own political stability and further its economic progress with Western help, to aid the Arab cause against Israel and, even more significant, to play a leading role in the Arab world.

Within the Arab League as then constituted Egypt had always had the strongest voice. Iraq had vainly contended, since the negotiations preceding the League's birth in 1945, for a federal relationship among the Arab states, particularly those closely linked by geography and economic interest. As a trial balloon Iraq had proposed an Arab federation at the meeting of the Arab League Council in 1954. It met no positive response from the sister Arab states. Premier Jamali then revived the old idea of unity of the Fertile Crescent,

to begin with a federation of Iraq with Syria and Jordan.⁹ The United States Government, when asked for support, would do nothing in the absence of an express desire for union on the part of the peoples concerned and was no doubt upset over the effect of Israel whose reaction was bound to be negative and might prove explosive. Despite these negative results, Iraq did not lose its zeal for Arab federation, nor did it wish to weaken the bonds of the Arab League; but it felt the time had come boldly to pursue the idea of alignment with Turkey, Pakistan and the Western powers.

In 1954, shortly after Nuri es-Said took office as Prime Minister of Iraq, he talked with Salah Salem of Egypt in Baghdad and later with Abdel Nasser in Cairo. The reports on what took place do not agree, but according to the Iraqi version Nuri clearly announced what he intended to do; Egypt agreed but urged him to hold off until the agreement with Britain on the evacuation of Suez was concluded. When that agreement was signed in October 1954, Iraq began negotiations with Turkey. The matter came up again at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Arab League in December 1954, when further misunderstandings developed. Iraq's intentions, again according to the Iraqi side of the story, were made

⁹George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, New York Cornell University Press, 1956, p. 513-514.

clear; it could not postpone indefinitely just to please Egypt, steps for its own security. According to Egypt, however, it was agreed that no Arab state would make an alliance with a non-Arab state. At any rate, when Iraq and Turkey announced in January 1955 that they were about to conclude such a pact, the lid blew off in Cairo. Egypt denounced Iraq as a traitor to the Arab cause and did everything possible to rally Arab opinion against Nuri-es-Said. Abdel Nasser claimed also that the Western powers had agreed to let Egypt take the lead in building a stronger Arab regional organization not linked to the West; now they had set about wrecking that possibility.¹⁰

Misunderstanding or deception, Iraq's course brought out into the open a real conflict of interest. Egypt, itself was not prepared to line up with Turkey and the West, could not resign itself to seeing any other Arab state defy Egyptian leadership by doing so; there could be but one collective defense pact and that was the Arab League Collective Security Pact. In its own bargaining with the West, the Egyptian leadership wanted the weight of the whole Arab world behind it. Now Iraq had broken ranks and threatened to carry other Arab states with it.

¹⁰Interview, New York Times, April 4, 1955, p. 9, Col. 1; See also p. 7, Col., 3-4.

The Turkish-Iraqi pact, signed at Baghdad on February 24, 1955, pledged the two nations to cooperation "for their security and their defense."¹¹ Just how they would cooperate was left to later more detailed arrangements. Appropriate language to mollify Egyptian and Arab nationalist sensibilities was included in references to other international obligations and in a separate exchange of letters supporting United Nations resolutions on Palestine. It was the fact of the conclusion of the pact, not its terms, that broke the solidarity of the Arab League and threatened Egyptian supremacy. It appeared for a time that Egypt would break up the League by insisting on Iraq's expulsion or by withdrawing itself. In the end the League survived because neither rival wished to take the responsibility for its breakup, but behind its transparent facade each bent its energies to lining up the other Arab states. Iraq, with the heavy handed cooperation of Turkey, tried to extend the new pact to the Fertile Crescent;¹² Egypt organized a new grouping in which the common defense was to be organized under common, i. e., Egyptian, command. In this contest the Egyptians scored all the successes. Saudi Arabia, following its traditional anti-Hashemite policy, supported the Egyptian

¹¹Text in Middle East Journal, Vol. 9, No. 1, Spring 1955, p. 177-178.

¹²Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Iraq.

campaign politically and financially. No other Arab state decided to take advantage of the clause in the Turkish-Iraqi pact inviting the accession of "any member of the Arab League or any other state effectively interested in the peace and security of this region." Meanwhile Cairo's radio "Voice of the Arabs" was filling the air with abuse of Nuri- es-Said and calling upon the people of Iraq to oust him. Iraq was now on the defensive. The attempt to combine a pro-Western policy with leadership in the Arab world was not succeeding.

Once again, a Western initiative to organize the defense of the Middle East had run afoul of Arab nationalism and Arab politics. The American decision to grant arms aid to Iraq and to encourage its participation in regional defense had involved the risk that in gaining Iraq the West might have to write off the rest of the Arab world.¹³ But there was at least the chance that Iraq's "realism" would find an echo in other Arab capitals. On this point it is possible that more careful preparation and execution might have brought Lebanon, Syria and Jordan into the arrangement along with Iraq. The initiative for collective security, Mr. Dulles

¹³ Harry N. Howard, United States Policy in the Near East, South Asia and Africa - 1955, Department of State Publication 6330, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1956, p. 29-30.

had said, must come from the Middle Eastern nations themselves.¹⁴ Premiers Menderes and Nuri es-Said took the initiative on this occasion. Following the conclusion of the pact, it was Menderes who undertook to sell it to Lebanon and to press it strongly, even threateningly, upon Syria. Lebanon, however, stuck to its traditional middle position. Syria discarded its relatively moderate government for a new one more susceptible to Egyptian influence and more suspicious of the West. An American decision to join the alliance at the start might have made the difference in persuading Lebanon, Syria or Jordan to come in, but Washington chose caution.

What opportunity there may have been to strengthen Iraq's relative position and influence over those of Egypt was partly because the violence of Egypt's reaction was not entirely anticipated. Abdel Nasser moved rapidly to form an informal Egypt-Syria-Saudi Arabia-Yemen alignment that later took the form of a series of bilateral and multilateral pacts under Egypt's leadership and military command.¹⁵

¹⁴John Foster Dulles, "Report on the Near East," Op. Cit., p. 832.

¹⁵Egyptian-Syrian treaty, October 20, 1955; Egyptian-Saudi Arabian treaty, October 27, 1955; joint Egyptian-Saudi Arabian-Yemen treaty, April 21, 1956. For unofficial translation of texts of first two treaties, see Middle East Journal, Vol. 10, No. 1, Winter 1956, p. 77-79.

Any consideration of the entry of Iraq into the northern tier alignment requires a look at the role of Great Britain. The British Government had not shown any great enthusiasm for the northern tier concept or for the Turkish-Pakistan agreement, with its damaging effect on Western relations with India. British ideas on defense of the Middle East still revolved around Suez and the various bases in the area which Britain held by treaty. It was because of the relationship with Iraq, where two of the most important British bases (Habbaniya and Sh'aiba) were located, that the growing set of northern tier agreements suddenly took on more attraction for London. These two bases were held under a ten year treaty due to expire in 1956 and not likely to be renewed. After agreeing in 1954 to evacuate Suez by 1956, it would be tempting fate for Britain merely to continue using her existing arrangements with Iraq.

The Baghdad Pact between Turkey and Iraq offered the kind of opportunity the British needed.¹⁶ It was open to all states "interested in the peace and security of the region."² Nuri es-Said, long a friend of the British was quite

¹⁶ For terms and operative clauses of the Baghdad Pact (renamed Central Treaty Organization on August 19, 1959), see United Kingdom Information Service, Canada, The Central Treaty Organisation, Document R. 4304, Central Office of Information, London, August, 1959, p. 5 and Appendix I, p. 13.

willing to have them join. On April 4, 1955, Great Britain adhered to the Baghdad Pact and signed at the same time with Iraq a bilateral treaty, under which Iraq assumed responsibility for its own defense and eventually took over, from the British, the two bases previously mentioned. The British promised help in maintaining the bases and equipping the Iraqi air force and British aircraft would have landing and over-flight rights in Iraq.¹⁷ It seemed a happy solution for all concerned.

Great Britain's accession to the Baghdad Pact put a new face on the picture. Whereas at the start the initiative and sponsorship had been largely American, hereafter, the United Kingdom as the only Western member of the pact naturally assumed a role of leadership. With Suez being evacuated and with only Egypt's promise on which to depend for its use in case of war, Britain looked all the more to its position in Iraq as a means of protecting the security of British interests in the Middle East, especially in the Persian Gulf area. Membership in the Baghdad Pact seemed also the best available means of protecting the oil supplies so necessary to Britain's economy. It might also check the erosion of British positions throughout the Middle East, especially if Jordan were brought in.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 6.

Jordan's fate became a test of strength between the British and the anti-pact forces in the Arab world led by Abdel Nasser of Egypt. The British Government was prepared to offer Jordan, as a price for joining the pact, a revision of the treaty of 1946 and an increased subsidy. Success was expected and the first official reactions were favorable. But Egyptian influence and the embittered outlook of a large number of Palestinians incorporated into the population of Jordan following the armistice of 1949, concerned exclusively with hostility to Israel and not forgetful of Turkish recognition of that country were working against this policy. Stimulated by Egyptian agitation and propaganda and by Saudi money, local nationalists and the "mob" sounded the knell of Britain's tutelage in Amman. On January 9, 1956 Samir al Rifai took office as Prime Minister and announced that his government would not adhere to "any new pacts."¹⁸ It was the end of all hope that the Baghdad Pact might soon be extended to include other Arab states besides Iraq.¹⁹ Lebanon was confirmed in its middle position and stayed out, while Jordan seemed destined to follow Syria into Abdel

¹⁸Ibid., p. 6-7.

¹⁹Following the Iraqi revolution of July 14, 1958, Iraq ceased to participate in the work of the pact. Announcement of formal withdrawal was announced by Prime Minister General Qasim on March 24, 1959.

Nasser's camp.

Counterbalancing these setbacks in the Arab world had been success in completing the alliance across the northern tier. Pakistan acceded to the Baghdad Pact in September 1955 and Iran joined in October of the same year. The first decision was expected, since Pakistan and Turkey had started the whole thing; the Pakistan Government was apparently waiting for the best possible moment from the standpoint of its domestic situation and the arrangements for arms aid from the United States. For Iran, on the other hand, it was a major new decision. Historically, Iran had sought security in neutrality, in trying to preserve a balance between predatory great powers by nonalignment and non-provocation. Since the settlement of the oil dispute (October 1954), the Shah had definitely turned toward the West. His intention was to join the northern tier grouping at such time as he felt the support from the West would be sufficient to counterbalance the risk of antagonizing the Soviet Union. Specifically, he wanted the assurance of American protection and some modern weapons for his army. Actually when he took his country into the Baghdad Pact (October 1955), he did not yet have full satisfaction on either count, but he had become convinced that the risk would be worth taking. The decision was not made under American pressure, although there was no doubt of Washington's gratification and the Shah had reason to believe

he had opened the door to increased support from the West.²⁰

The five pact members met at Baghdad in November 1955 to set up the formal organization, including a council of Ministers and special committees for military planning, economic cooperation, communications and counter-subversion.²¹ A permanent headquarters was set up in Baghdad, with a Secretary-General and Staff. The United States was represented at the meeting by Ambassador Waldemar Gallman and Admiral John H. Cassady in the capacity of observers. During the session, Ambassador Gallman reiterated United States approval of the treaty, indicating that the presence of observers and the intention to establish permanent political and military liaison constituted "still further evidence of the continuing interest of the United States in the pact and objectives."²² The United States itself was not prepared to join the alliance, despite the urgings of all members, for a variety of reasons: the State Department wished to keep whatever chance still remained of working with Saudi Arabia and Egypt; it did not want to provoke any new Russian move

²⁰Press release No. 605 dated October 12, 1955, "United States Welcomes Iran's Adherence to "Northern Tier" Pact," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXIII, No. 852, October 24, 1955, p. 653.

²¹For structure and organization, see The Central Treaty Organization, Op. Cit., p.8-10.

²²Statement by Waldemar Gallman, Ambassador to Iran, "United States Support for Baghdad Pact," Department of State Bulletin Vol. XXXIII, No 838, December 3, 1955, p. 926.

in the Middle East; it did not wish to further antagonize Israel, which had declared its hostility to the pact; and it did not relish the prospect of a debate in the Senate on ratification which might throw its whole Middle Eastern policy into the arena of domestic politics. When the next meeting of the Council was held in Tehran in April, 1956, the United States announced its decision for full participation in the committees on economics and counter-subversion and for permanent liaison with the Military Committee.²³ It was in the pact but not of it, a participant for practical purposes but without legal commitments.

To the extent that the formation and growth of the Baghdad Pact could be considered the results of American diplomacy, the State Department looked upon its handiwork and thought that it was good. In 1953 the Northern tier had been only a concept in the mind of Mr. Dulles and his associates. By the middle of 1956 it was a five-nation regional security organization covering the previously open gap between NATO and SEATO. It included the strongest and most populous countries in the Middle East. They had stood firm in rejecting the Russian threats and protests which had accompanied each step of the way. Iran, the key country from

²³Halford L. Hoskins, United States Interests and Policy Relative to the Middle East, Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, Legislative Reference Service, 1958, p. 9.

a geographical standpoint, had made a clear decision for alignment with the West. The anti-Western solidarity of the Arab League had been breached by the inclusion of Iraq. There now existed a barrier to Russian imperialism, not a formidable one but still a barrier.

The story of how the pact was formed and how it grew is not the chronicle of failure and futility that marked the efforts of 1951 and 1952 for a Middle East defense organization. Nevertheless the West was still far from a position of strength in the Middle East. Militarily, the pact offered no prospect of effective defense. Turkey, forces already committed to NATO, could not be expected to do more in the east than try to hold its own territory. Iraq and Iran were woefully weak; Pakistan was absorbed in disputes with India. All three had joined primarily in order to get arms from the United States rather than out of faith in the concept of regional security against the communist bloc. Britain had joined in order to save its position in Iraq and to bolster a sagging position throughout the Middle East. The refusal of the United States to join had left all members with a feeling that they had been let down. Iraq was now isolated in the Arab world and its government's position was gravely weakened. The gap between the northern tier and the southern tier of Arab states had been fatefully widened, creating opportunities for Russian penetration of

the Arab world which Moscow was not slow to exploit. Western gains in the north were matched by losses in the south. Fathered by American initiative, the pact was left weak and unformed by virtue of the disparate interests of its members and the half-heartedness of American support; uncertain of its future in the growing crisis which its very existence had helped to create.

2. The Crisis of 1956.

In the period of three months between Abdel Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal Company (July 26, 1956) and the end of October, the two questions of Suez and Palestine interacting with each other, moved toward a violent climax. The salient feature of this story was the failure of the Western powers, bound together by their common interests in free and secure transit through the canal and keeping the peace in Palestine, to find effective policies to protect those interests. They approached the moment of crisis without any common estimate of the situation or plan for united action or even having maintained adequate communication with each other. The consequence was serious damage both to the interests of the West in the Middle East and to the fabric of the Western alliance itself.

It is unnecessary here to trace the detailed story of the dispute over the Suez Canal. Egypt's expropriation

of a foreign owned company was not so different from similar acts by other governments in the past, such as the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951, except that this particular company had been managing an international waterway and by its mere presence there had represented a kind of institutional guarantee of the freedom of navigation enshrined in the Constantinople Convention of 1888. It had also been making substantial profits. Over twenty years before Sir Arnold Wilson had raised the question whether control of a great international highway by a commercial company, bent on paying as large dividends as possible, was consistent with modern ideas and modern needs.²⁴ By 1956 it was clearly no longer consistent with Abdel Nasser's idea of modern Egypt's needs.

The Western powers, stung by Nasser's dramatic and unexpected move, protested against it as seizure of "an international agency" for national purposes and a threat to the freedom and security of the Canal. They did not, however, attempt to test its legality before the International Court of Justice or to insist that the company be restored to its former position. Great Britain and France, while not fore-swearing the possibility of a resort to force, adopted at least temporarily the position that they could accept the

²⁴ Sir Arnold T. Wilson, The Suez Canal, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1933, p. vii.

expropriation (assuming full compensation to the owners, as Egypt had promised), conditional on the establishment of a new system of international control and management of the canal, in which Egypt and the principal canal-using countries would be represented. The United Kingdom, France and the United States agreed upon this approach in London on August 2, and elaborated it in the eighteen-nation plan that emerged from the conference of twenty-two nations held in London during August 16-23, 1956.²⁵

The approach was logical but abstract. The maritime nations of the world had a vital interest in freedom of transit and had at least a moral right to adequate assurance that they would continue to enjoy it in the future as in the past. While it was true that the canal was in its territory, Egypt could profit from it only if it served its purpose as an international waterway. The conflict arose because in the atmosphere and political conditions of 1956 no such rational approach was possible. Egypt had taken over the canal as a grand political gesture, an assertion of "sovereignty," an act of defiance against the West. Abdel Nasser himself

²⁵Text of the tripartite communique and of the eighteen-nation plan appear in Department of State, The Suez Canal Problem, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1956, p. 34-35, 291-292. This documentary collection also contains the texts of the Constantinople Convention and other relevant agreements.

had announced it as a "declaration of independence" from imperialism.²⁶ He had won great acclaim in the Arab world. He had refused to attend the London conference. How could he be expected to jeopardize all he had won by accepting a system of international control, which would have been more restrictive of Egypt's sovereignty than the concession to a foreign-owned but still legally Egyptian company which he had just annulled?

On the side of the Western powers also, particularly Britain and France, the matters in dispute were not considered on their merits alone. Their concern with the maintenance of freedom of transit through the canal, especially for vital oil shipments was real enough, but it explains only in part their reaction to the seizure and their attitude toward Egypt. If Suez was a word charged with emotion for Egypt, so it was also for Britain. Despite the loss of India and the crumbling of imperial positions in the east over the span of a decade, despite the recently completed withdrawal of British forces from Suez itself, the canal had remained a symbol. Britain's whole position as a world power seemed to be at the mercy of a nation for which many Britons had no respect at all and of a posturing demagogue who had bedeviled British interests all over the Middle East and even

²⁶ Ibid., p. 30.

beyond it. Could Britain's fate be allowed to depend on his whim? In many ways the seizure of the Canal Company was the last straw, both for the Government and for a great part of the public.

Similarly, the French reaction reflected the frustration generated by years of trouble and conflict in North Africa, where Egypt's moral and material support of nationalist forces was blamed for the persistence of the rebellion in Algeria. French opinion seemed virtually unanimous in favoring strong action in reply to Abdel Nasser's coup. Concern for French shareholders in the expropriated company explains this in part, but even more it was the growing feeling that France could not endure further humiliation, a conviction that il faut en finir.

As the scene shifted from the Conference of Twenty-Two, to the Menzies mission, to the Conference of Eighteen, to the Suez Canal User's Association²⁷ and finally to the United Nations Security Council, the question of the use of force remained unresolved. More than that, it began to poison relations between the United States and its major European allies. The British and the French were not content with a "solution by negotiation" which consisted of devising

²⁷Ibid., 353-356, 364.

progressively weaker schemes for Egypt to reject. They felt that at some point a solution would have to be imposed on Egypt. The United States, however, while agreeing with the principle of international regulation of the canal took a strong stand against any use of force. The effect was to deprive Britain and France of whatever means of pressure they might have derived from the threat of force. To them the Users' Association,²⁸ largely an American invention, made sense only as a means of bringing Abdel Nasser to terms, even by convoying ships through the canal in defiance of his new company's regulations and taking over control of operations. Mr. Dulles, however, renounced "shooting our way through the canal;"²⁹ to him, so it must have seemed in London and Paris, the Association was just another delaying device and Nasser was thriving on delay. The Egyptian Government, while it remained suspicious of the British and French intentions, could at least take comfort in the knowledge that the West was in fact not united and that the attitude of the United States and some commonwealth countries seemed to rule out coercion.

²⁸Declaration Providing For the Establishment of a Suez Canal Users Association", ibid., p. 365-366.

²⁹News Conference Statements by Secretary Dulles, September 13, 1956, ibid., p. 341.

It serves no useful purpose to try to apportion blame for this unfortunate situation. The United States may be said to bear responsibility for its unwillingness to see the seriousness of what its allies regarded as an issue vital to them and to give them at least some promise of a common course of action that would meet their needs. If force was ruled out, at least other means of pressure and persuasion might have been explored. Instead, it became apparent that the United States did not even favor severe economic measures beyond freezing Egyptian assets in the United States, which it had done at the outset.

That Britain and France felt deceived and disillusioned with Secretary Dulles' "preaching" and with American policy was not wholly the result of their own sinister designs or lack of political wisdom. On the other hand, the record on their side is hardly distinguished by statesmanship. The obsession of the need for a "showdown" with Abdel Nasser no doubt colored British and French thinking, but there was no corresponding strategy except somehow to force an international system or a Users' Association down his throat. British and French leaders seemed mesmerized by the supposed parallel with the appeasement of Hitler in the 1930's and the imminent disaster of a new "Munich." They tended to underestimate both the sincerity of the American "moral" objection to force and the seriousness of the American

conviction that the contest with communism for the Middle East and the whole uncommitted world could not be successfully waged, and might even be irreparably lost, by a reversion to the 19th century strong-arms methods.

In any event, communications between Washington and Paris and London, so far as the Suez question was concerned, virtually broke down during the latter half of October. No clear and authoritative warning of what was in the wind was conveyed by the British Government to the United States. The United Nations Security Council on October 13, 1956, adopted a six-point resolution which Britain, France and Egypt publicly accepted as the agreed basis for a negotiated solution,³⁰ although the Soviet representative at the same time vetoed the other part of the resolution, which approved the eighteen-nation plan already rejected by Egypt. The one point of the six on which the Western nations counted to protect their position was that the operation of the Canal should be "insulated from the politics of any country," whatever that might mean in law or practice. While the United States, gratified at this apparent progress, awaited the start of direct negotiations between the parties more immediately

³⁰Text in Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956 - June 1957, Documents, Washington, Government Printing Office, August, 1957, p. 120.

concerned, decisions were being made in Tel Aviv, Paris and London to apply more drastic corrective measures to the intractable problems dealing with Abdel Nasser.

Since the beginning of the Suez crisis the connection between Palestine and Suez must have become apparent to the Western European powers and to Israel, just as it had always existed for the Arabs in theory and in propaganda if not always in fact. Israel had already been worried by the withdrawal of British military forces from Suez, which gave Egypt a much freer hand for action in Palestine. The crisis over the canal, from which Israeli ships had always been barred, brought out more clearly the obvious parallel between the interests of Israel and those of the West in their common antagonism to Egypt. We cannot be sure to what extent Israel's leaders thought they could gain their own ends by acting as the cutting edge of Western policy, or to what extent British and French statesmen saw the advantages in having Israel do, or begin, the job they wanted done. We can be sure, however, that some thinking along these lines took place and that it led to ever closer relations between France and Israel and finally to the dovetailed if not concerted action which marked the outbreak of the crisis at the end of October 1956.

It had been a cardinal objective on the American side to prevent the problems arising from the seizure of the Canal Company from becoming enmeshed in the Arab-Israel

dispute. The flouting of that policy by France and Britain indicated how deluded, or how indifferent to the importance of solidarity with the United States, they had become.

The question of "collusion" is still not wholly clarified and for the present purpose of examining American policy perhaps that does not greatly matter, interesting as it may be as a political issue and as a point for historical investigation.

Israel's attack on Egypt took place on Monday, October 29, 1956. For a time it was not clear whether it was a real invasion or another retaliatory raid in greater "depth," but it plainly was no border incident; within a matter of hours Israeli columns were operating fifty miles and more within Egyptian territory. The reaction of the United States was to put the case immediately before the Security Council and to seek to end the fighting; this was what seemed to be called for both under the Tripartite declaration of 1950 and under the United Nations Charter. Before the Security Council could act it was informed by British and French representatives of the ultimatums delivered by their own governments to Israel and Egypt, on that day, October 30, directing them to keep their forces ten miles from the Suez Canal, the Israel army on the east and the Egyptian army on the west; British and French forces would occupy the canal

zone, using force if they were resisted.³¹ This intervention transformed the situation, turning it from a local Middle Eastern conflict into a Western attack on Egypt. The ultimatum could be interpreted in no other way despite the official reasons given: to stop the war and to protect British subjects, British shipping and the canal. Those who made this crucial decision did not inform the United States in advance because, as M. Mollet later admitted, they feared Washington would not approve their action and might upset their schedule.³² But they apparently counted on a measure of understanding and "benevolent neutrality" even without advance consultation and looked to American influence as a counterweight to any Russian inclination to intervene.

The French and British probably expected a quick military success, whereby they would seize the canal and oust Abdel Nasser before anybody else could do very much about it. If, so, they planned and conducted their military operations badly; they underestimated the capacity of the United Nations for speedy action; they underestimated the reaction

³¹Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956 - June 1957, Documents, op. cit., p. 137-142.

³²Interview, New York Times, December 10, 1956, p. 1, Col., 4 and p. 3, Col., 1.

of the Soviet Union, which took the form of threats of rocket warfare against Western Europe; and they overestimated the unwillingness of the United States, on the eve of an election, to take any strong action at all. The result was that the General Assembly, with the United States in a leading role and the anti-colonial bloc gladly following passed quickly and overwhelmingly a series of resolutions calling for a cessation of fighting and the withdrawal of foreign forces from Egypt.³³ The combined pressure of the United States, the Soviet Union, United Nations Resolutions, world opinion, lack of the united support of the Commonwealth and strong opposition of the Labour Party sufficed to bring Britain by November 6, 1956, to the point of calling it off with only Port Said captured. France had no choice but to follow suit.³⁴ The position of the United States should hardly have been a matter of doubt. Regardless of what had gone before, including the provocations on the Egyptian side, regardless even of its own failure to prevent this deterioration to the point of open hostilities, the United States was now faced not just with a troublesome situation but with the

³³Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, Sept., 1956 - June 1957, Documents, op. cit., p. 151-189.

³⁴Letters from the United Kingdom and French Governments to the Secretary General of the United Nations agreeing to cease military operations, (November 6, 1956) ibid., p. 190.

fact of open aggression on the part of Israel, Britain and France against Egypt. As in the case of Korea in 1950, even though this was not a Communist aggression, the conviction was strong that the United States had to act as it did unless it was willing to see the end of the United Nations and of all the hopes for an effective world security system which it represented. In addition to these reasons of principle were some eminently practical ones. A failure of the United States to take the stand that it did would have risked the permanent alienation of those nations of Asia and Africa, most of them newly independent, which were being so ardently wooed by the Communist powers.

As a practical matter the United States Government did not believe that the Western powers, even if temporarily successful in using force against Egypt and the Arab world, could make such a victory "stick" in the long run. This had been the lesson of the earlier occupation of Egypt and the lesson of Syria, of the Palestine mandate and of North Africa. As for the idea of getting rid of Abdel Nasser, the United States had no reason to be fond of him, but it was not convinced that there was any alternative or that the use of force was the way to find one. The Administration was also unwilling to let the Soviet Union reap all the benefits of acting on behalf of the Arab peoples in a case like this in which aggression was clear. In this way it had the chance to save

some credit for the West with the Arabs, now more bitter than ever against Britain and France.

It was embarrassing to the United States to find itself in the company of the Soviet Union in condemning its traditional allies and threatening them with chastisement. The American position was based on definite and independent reasons and not subject to change just because the Soviet Union representatives in the United Nations happened to vote the same way. Paradoxically, both the United States and the Russians came to this point of apparent coincidence of policy through their separate attempts, directed against each other, to fit the narrower issues of Palestine and Suez into the broader question of the fate of the Middle East in the cold war.

Moscow had made its basic strategic decision in 1955, or earlier, to play the card of Arab nationalism in every possible way against Israel and against the West. From this decision flowed its votes for the Arab cause in the United Nations, its arm deliveries, its trade deals, and its unceasing stream of pro-Arab propaganda.³⁵ The crisis of 1956, for Moscow was a confirmation of the correctness of

³⁵Walter Z. Laqueur, The Soviet Union and the Middle East, New York, Praeger, Inc., 1959, p. 211-227.

its strategy and an opportunity for redoubled efforts, which helped also to distract from the suppression of freedom in Hungary (1956). The Western powers, two of them anyway, seemed to be intent on digging a grave for themselves in the Middle East. To help them do so and to bury American interests along with them, Moscow made every possible appeal to Arab and Asian nationalism, to anti-colonialism, to the principles of sovereignty and the rights of small nations, victims of aggression. America was pictured as scheming to replace European with American imperialism in the Middle East. Behind the propaganda front the Russians were pushing ahead to consolidate and enlarge the positions they had already won in the Arab world.

These moves were methodical, not reckless. The Russian leaders wanted to convince the Arabs that Russia would fight if necessary while the United States would not; but they took no step which would spread the war in the Middle East. True, they intervened diplomatically in the dramatic way of proposing joint Russian-American action against the "aggressors" and by threatening Britain and France with missile warfare if they did not withdraw from Egypt.³⁶ They talked a great deal about sending "volunteers"

³⁶Letter to President Eisenhower from Russian Premier Bulganin, November 5, 1956; Note to the United Kingdom Government from the Russian Government, November 4, 1956; Message to French Premier Mollet from Russian Premier Bulganin, November 5, 1956, Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956 - June 1957, Documents, op. cit., p. 180-181, 169-171, 185-186.

to fight for Egypt.³⁷ While the notes to Britain and France may have had a bearing on the British and French decision to stop the invasion and withdraw, it would be a good guess that they were in fact a bluff and it is doubtful that there was a real intention to send "volunteers;" the proposal was a good experiment for testing reactions both in the Middle East and in the United States.³⁸ Russian willingness to use force cannot be excluded. If the fighting had continued, with Asian and other opinion inflamed against Britain and France, the Russian leaders might have taken the chance on a military intervention. In any case, the moves they took illustrated their intention to reap the greatest possible harvest from Western mistakes, fears and divisions.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union, under the surface of their apparent common front in the United Nations as defenders of the victim of aggression and upholders of the Charter, were doing their best to capitalize on that role in the Middle East and to forestall each other's moves there. In this competition the Russians had certain real advantages: their earlier record for support for Arab nationalism; their insistence on the immediate and unconditional

³⁷Statement of Moscow by the Tass News Agency, November 10, 1956, Ibid., p. 214-216.

³⁸Laqueur, Op. Cit., p. 237-240.

withdrawal of all foreign troops from Egypt and the Gaza strip; and their hard talk to Israel, even calling into question its future existence as a state.³⁹ On these points the United States could not match the abandon and irresponsibility of Russian threats, promises and propaganda. In fact, it found itself enmeshed in a series of complex and difficult questions involving the when and the how of Western and Israeli withdrawal, stabilization of relations in the area after hostilities and progress toward more permanent settlements. On all these matters its decisions had to take account of its future relations with the countries in the area, including Israel, of the badly strained Western alliance and of the need for meeting the over-all challenge of the advance of Russian influence, the answer to which had not yet been found.

Two lines of thought appeared in America's early reaction to the crisis. One was that the Suez and Sinai aggressions, like any aggression in open violation of the Charter, must be "liquidated" as soon as possible by a cessation of hostilities and a withdrawal of invading forces. This, the dominant theme of American policy, represented

³⁹Message to Israeli Prim Minister Ben-Gurion from Soviet Premier Bulganin, November 5, 1956, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956 - June 1957, Op. Cit., p. 187-188.

a somewhat rigid legal approach in requiring a return to the status quo ante with no change that could be interpreted as a reward for aggression.⁴⁰ The other line of thinking, more political than legal in its emphasis, tended to regard the armed action against Egypt not as an isolated crime against the peace but rather as a culmination of a series of actions and reactions in which Abdel Nasser's role was not simply that of an innocent victim.⁴¹ Even without passing judgement on that point, some looked to the fact of hostilities, the changed situation and the new prestige of the United Nations as providing the opportunity and the means for a fresh approach to the basic problems out of which the hostilities had grown. What that would mean in practice, however, would be using bargaining power created by military action to force Egypt to accept solutions that had previously been unacceptable. In concrete terms the question was whether the invading forces would be kept in Egypt until some settlements were reached with respect to the Suez Canal and the points at issue between Egypt and Israel and whether, if the withdrawal

⁴⁰Radio and Television Address by President Eisenhower, October 31, 1956; Statement in the United Nations General Assembly by Secretary of State Dulles, November 1, 1956, Ibid., p. 148-151, 151-157.

⁴¹Herman Finer, "Reflections on the Nature of Arab Nationalism," Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. IX, No. 10, October 1958, p. 310-312.

of those forces was required, the presence of the newly formed United Nations Emergency Force (November 1956)⁴² might serve the same purpose.

While attracted by this second line of thought, American officials were never able to find a way to do anything about it, restricted as they were by the legal and political considerations that underlay the original stand. On several occasions Secretary Dulles stressed the importance of immediate progress toward permanent settlements, and the United States Government had put before the United Nations the idea of special committees to go to work on the basic problems of Suez and Palestine.⁴³ That was as far as the initiative went.

The United States might have taken a more understanding view of the interests of its European allies and of Israel, once they had agreed to the cease-fire and might have tried to establish a stronger role for the United Nations Emergency Force. It was restrained from doing so by the practical difficulties of getting a two-thirds

⁴² Resolution Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, November 26, 1956, Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956 - June 1957, Documents, Op. Cit., p. 239.

⁴³ United Nations General Assembly, Question Considered by the Security Council at its 749th and 750th Meetings. . . . October 30, 1956, 1st Emergency Special Session, United Nations Documents A/3272 and A/3273, November 3, 1956, United Nations Security Council Official Records, Eleventh Year, Supplement for October-December 1956, p. 16.

majority in the General Assembly for such a course, the danger of losing recently gained Arab and Asian good will and an unwillingness to make the Secretary-General's job any more difficult. Critics of this relative inaction on the part of the Administration felt that it was unnecessarily hard on the friends of the United States and showed too much scruple or fear in its reluctance to offend the President of Egypt.

As far as the United Kingdom and France were concerned, their willingness to withdraw in a matter of weeks simplified the problem, although United States relations with them remained at a low point for some time. Possibly a major proportion of public opinion in both countries continued to resent the United States joining the Arab-Asian and Russian blocs in what seemed to them like vindictive resolutions and the apparent willingness by the United States to delay in putting prepared organizational arrangements into effect, to use their oil shortage as a means of political pressure.^{44,45}

⁴⁴During November the United States Government refrained, because "the international situation was extremely delicate," from authorizing operation of the Middle East Emergency Committee of thirteen U.S. Oil companies organized to expedite supplies to Europe. However, private companies on their own shipped some 15 million barrels of oil products to Europe in that month. Petroleum Survey, U.S. House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Preliminary Report, 85th Cong., 1st Session, Washington, G.P.O., 1950, p. 14-22.

⁴⁵For Imports of Crude Oil and Products to Europe and North and West Africa, Pre-Suez and November 1956 - March 1957, see Table III, p. 106a.

TABLE III

IMPORTS OF CRUDE OIL AND REFINED PRODUCTS TO EUROPE AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA
PRE-SUEZ AND NOVEMBER 1956 – MARCH 1957
(thousands of bbls/day)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Source of Supply	Pre-Suez			Nov. 1956 – Mar. 1957			Change from Pre-Suez		
	Crude	Products	Total	Crude	Products	Total	Crude	Products	Total
Western Hemisphere	286	442	728	655	725	1,380	369	283	652
U.S. Gulf	7	45	52	301	237	538	294	192	486
Caribbean	279	397	676	354	488	842	75	91	166
Middle East	1,900 ^d	215 ^d	2,115	1,200	75	1,275	-700	-140	-840
Suez/Cape	1,213	215	1,428	861	75	936	-352	-140	-492
Pipelines	687	—	687	339	—	339	-348	—	-348
Far East	14 ^c	43 ^b	57	—	2	2	-14	-41	-55
TOTAL	<u>2,200^a</u>	<u>700^b</u>	<u>2,900</u>	<u>1,855</u>	<u>802</u>	<u>2,657</u>	<u>-345</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>-243</u>

^a Average of May-Oct. 1956 according to U. S. Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Mines, *World Petroleum Statistics*, Mar. 15, 1957–June 18, 1957.

^b Residual (column 3 less column 1).

^c Figure for 1955 according to U. S. Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Mines, *International Petroleum Trade*, 76, Aug., 1957.

^d Residual in column.

Middle East Emergency Committee, *Report*, etc. of May 21, 1957, Tables A, B, C, D (except as otherwise noted)

But their only recourse was to swallow their pride and resentment and to extract themselves as soon as possible from untenable positions. In any event, by Christmas 1956, British and French troops were out, United Nations forces had moved eastward from the canal zone and the dispute over the canal was as far from solution as ever, or farther still since Abdel Nasser now considered Egypt released from the six principles of the Security Council Resolution of October 13, 1956.⁴⁶ The possibility of internationalization seemed dead beyond recall.

Events have shown that Egypt cannot be induced by persuasion or compelled by force to accept internationalization of the operation of the canal. The Western powers have therefore been constrained to get the best bargain they could by American negotiations with Egypt. What they have obtained, Egypt's "Declaration" of April 24, 1957, registered with the United Nations,⁴⁷ falls far short of the guarantees they were

⁴⁶Reference to the six principles was made on p. 94.

⁴⁷U.S. General Assembly, Letter dated April 24, 1957 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, addressed to the Secretary General, Documents S/3818 April 24, 1957; Letter dated 24 April 1957 from the Secretary General, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Egypt, Document S-3819, April 25, 1957. In connection with the declaration, Egypt formally accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, Letter dated 18 July 1957 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt, addressed to the Secretary General, relating to para. 9(b) of the Declaration, Document S/3818/Add. 1, July 23, 1957. U.N. Security Council Official Records, Twelfth Year, Supplements for April-June 1957, p. 8,12; July-Sept., 1957, p. 1.

seeking against arbitrary control of the canal by Egypt. The Western nations should look at the Suez Canal strictly in terms of what their economic interests require and what political conditions will permit. Economic interests require only that the canal be freely open to the traffic of all nations. It remained open after the nationalization (July 1956) until the crisis broke at the end of October; it has been open since the clearance by the United Nations (March 1957). The interests of the Western nations as a whole are not served if some of them act in anger over blows to their prestige or insist on guarantees they cannot obtain. As long as the Suez Canal runs through Egypt's territory and no foreign troops are in occupation of it, its operation cannot be "insulated from politics" of Egypt and paper guarantees are useful only to the extent they can be enforced.

As long as Egypt recognizes the validity of the principle of free navigation and of the Constantinople Convention of 1888 which established it, and does not in fact violate it, the situation is one which the Western nations can tolerate. Unless they are willing to accept a comparable degree of internationalization for the Panama Canal, the Bosphorus and Dardanelles and other such waterways as they demand for the Suez Canal, they are not likely to make good their demand.

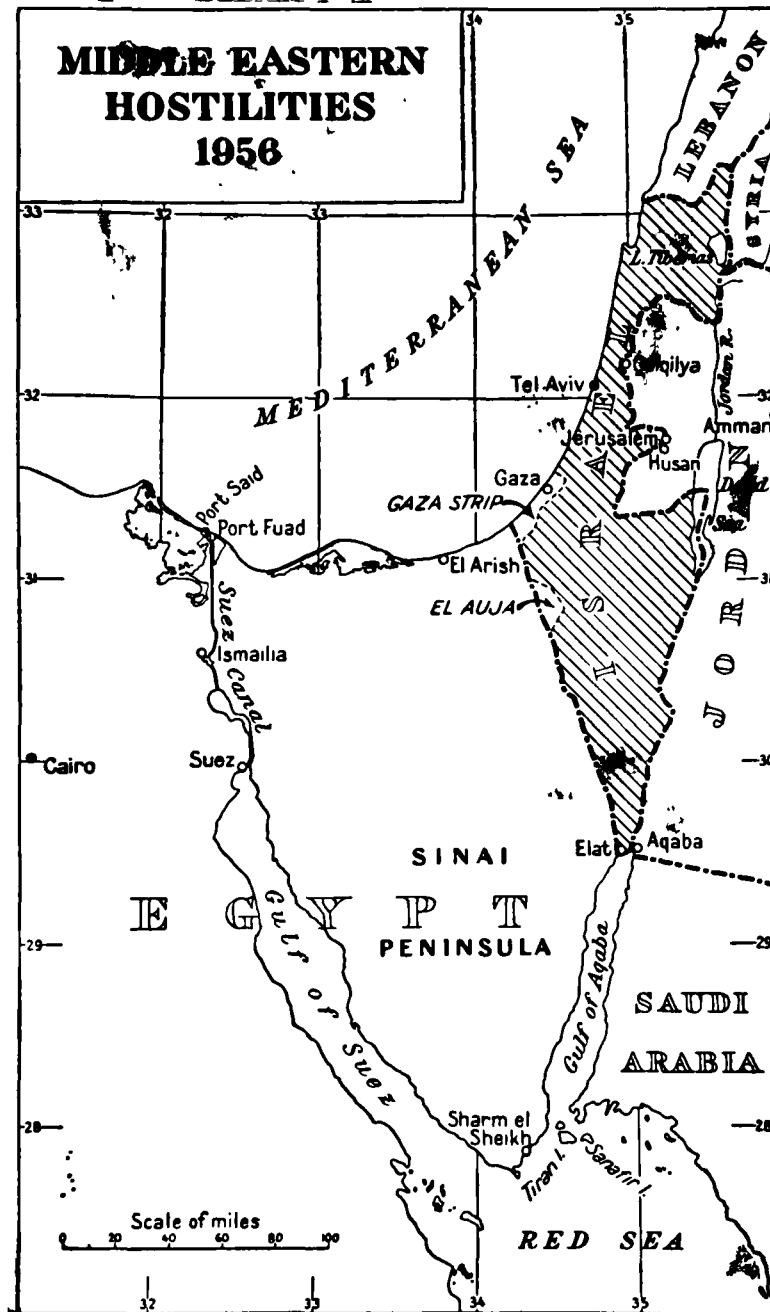
With Israel the difficulties were greater because Israel had won a military campaign and did not want to lose the fruits of victory. The attack in Sinai had grown out of a desperate feeling of insecurity. Israel could hardly be expected meekly to return to the same conditions, even when standing alone against overwhelming majorities in the United Nations. Ben-Gurion had in effect torn up the armistice at the time of the attack, saying that it no longer existed and must be replaced by a negotiated peace. Because Egypt and other Arab states would not talk peace with Israel and the United Nations would not compel them to do so, it came down to a question of what kind of de facto situations would emerge in regard to the withdrawal of Israel forces, the control of the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba and the status of the Gaza strip.⁴⁸

Israel retreated step by step. World opinion may have had some influence. The threats and pressure from the Soviet Union could not be ignored. But the big factor was the "friendly persuasion" of the United States.⁴⁹ Ben-Gurion

⁴⁸See Figure 3, Middle Eastern Hostilities 1956, p. 110.

⁴⁹Message to Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion from President Eisenhower, November 7, 1956, Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956 - June 1957, Documents, Op. Cit., p. 211-212

FIGURE 3



could not afford to alienate the country on which Israel depended so much for economic assistance, nor could he lightly take the responsibility for the world conflict which might result from failure to heed warnings from Washington. On the question of Sinai, Israel was not disposed to hold out and made the decision to withdraw from all but the Sharm el-Sheikh area opposite the Strait of Tiran at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba. It would have preferred some scheme for internationalization or demilitarization of Sinai, but no support developed for limiting Egyptian sovereignty in this territory which had always been a part of Egypt.⁵⁰

On the Aqaba and Gaza, however, Israel was less accommodating. Freedom of navigation to and from the port of Elath through the Gulf of Aqaba had become in Israel's eyes a matter of life and death. As for the Gaza strip, Israel's position was firm in its insistence on administering this territory, never a part of Egypt, which had been used as a base for raids against Israel. On these two questions the authority and negotiating abilities of the Secretary-General were not enough to bring a solution.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Statement in the United Nations General Assembly by the United States Representative (Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge), Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXVI, No. 925, March 18, 1957, p. 431-434.

⁵¹ Statement in the United Nations General Assembly by Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir, March 1, 1957, Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, Sept., 1956-June 1957, Documents, Op. Cit., p. 328-332.

The indicated next step was the voting of sanctions by the United Nations, which the Arab-Asian bloc was urging. It was at this point that the United States felt compelled to step in and take an active role. The question of sanctions was a dangerous one, both internationally and domestically. The Administration did not wish to be caught between the General Assembly and the United States Congress, where sentiment was against sanctions. It did not wish to lose the political gains it had made in the Middle East and Asia by its stand against aggression. On the other hand it did not wish to see a renewal of the fighting and recognized that Israel, on these two questions, had some legal and political justification for its position.

Following a diplomatic note from Secretary Dulles which offered Israel something beside moral precepts, direct negotiations produced a set of understandings on the basis of which Israel agreed to withdraw its troops from Sharm el-Sheikh and its troops and administration from Gaza.⁵² It is not quite certain just what the force of these commitments, or understandings, or "not unreasonable expectations" may be. Yet because they did represent a price for Israel's

⁵²Aide Memoire handed to Israeli Ambassador Eban by Secretary of State Dulles, February 11, 1957, Ibid., p. 290-292; Statement by Ambassador Lodge to the UN General Assembly, March 1, 1957, Idem, p. 322-327.

withdrawal and were assumed publicly in the full view of American and world opinion, they were not words to be forgotten or interpreted away. Israel soon experienced some disillusionment in that the expectation of a United Nations administration for the Gaza strip proved illusory when the softness of United States policy and of Mr. Hammarskjold's handling of Egypt opened the door for Abdel Nasser to step in and take over.⁵³ Yet the United Nations Emergency Force remained and still remains in the Gaza strip and at Sharm el-Sheikh. Even should these forces be withdrawn the United States still had assumed a strong moral commitment to see to it that the right of "innocent passage" through the Strait of Tiran was maintained (unless the International Court of Justice should rule differently) and that Egypt did not use the Gaza strip as a base for renewed attacks of the fedayeen on Israel.⁵⁴

With the final withdrawal of Israel troops behind the armistice line the crisis may be said to have reached its end. Peace in the Middle East, in the sense of the absence of large-scale military operations, had been restored

⁵³Hamilton Fish Armstrong, "The United Nations Experience in Gaza," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 35, No. 4, July 1957, p. 600-619.

⁵⁴Aide Memoire handed to Israeli Ambassador Eban by Secretary of State Dulles, February 11, 1957, U.S. Policy in the Middle East, Sept., 1956-June 1957, Documents, Op. Cit., p. 291.

and a world conflict had been avoided. There was some possibility that the presence of the United Nations Emergency Force on the border might cut down the volume of raids and sudden death, but the world was no nearer to solutions on Suez and on Palestine than it had been before the crisis broke out. The hostility between Israel and the Arab states was deeper than ever. Aside from the psychological effects of Israel's spectacular Blitzkrieg and Abdel Nasser's success in in snatching political/victory from military defeat, things were more or less back where they were before the fighting started.

Looked at from the standpoint of the world balance, however, the results of the crisis were no mere restoration of the status quo. For the debacle of Britain and France and the advance of Russian influence into the Middle East forced a new and urgent decision on the United States. Even as it was upholding the law of the Charter against its Western European allies it had to find some way to save vital Western interests in the Middle East and to redefine its own role there. The first step along this way was the proposal which came to be called the Eisenhower Doctrine.

3. The Eisenhower Doctrine.⁵⁵

The crisis of 1956 patently called for a review of American policy in the Middle East. After the excitement of the immediate reaction to the outbreak of hostilities, the appeal to the United Nations and the acceptance of a cease-fire, official Washington had to take stock of certain very ominous facts. One was that Great Britain had virtually abdicated its role as a great power in the Middle East. Another was that the Soviet Union had intervened in the crisis, not by armed force but still strongly enough to raise justified fears that the Kremlin would take full advantage of the division among the Western allies and push forward just as fast and as far as it could. The Russian "ultimatums" to Britain, France and Israel and the threat to send "volunteers"⁵⁶ had enhanced Russian prestige throughout the Arab world. Egypt and Syria seemed more and more receptive to Russian influence and suggestions.

The strong stand of the United States against the aggression of its major European allies presented Moscow with opportunities to move in ostensibly as a defender of the

⁵⁵Also known as the American Doctrine, see "The Middle Eastern Policy of the United States," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXVI, No. 933, May 13, 1957, p. 758.

⁵⁶See p. 101-103.

United Nations Charter and of the rights of small nations. Hence the United States, simultaneously with its own efforts and those of Mr. Hammarskjold to restore peace and some measure of stability, had to look to the graver danger of the expansion of Russian power. Certain steps of an emergency nature were taken as the occasion demanded; the public and private warnings to Moscow that the sending of Russian "volunteers" to Egypt would be met by force and the warning that any threat to the territorial integrity of political independence of the states of the northern tier (Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan) would be viewed by the United States with "the utmost gravity."⁵⁷ These states, however, and the situation itself, demanded a more comprehensive statement of American policy for the Middle East, one which would definitely commit the American people to its defense. Joining the Baghdad Pact, strongly urged by the northern tier states, might have been one way to do it, but for various reasons this course had been rejected, principally because it would further alienate Egypt and other Arab states.⁵⁸ Other possible ways would have been a statement of policy in a public speech by the President, a formal

⁵⁷Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956-June 1957, Documents, Op. Cit., P. 419-420

⁵⁸John R. Beale, John Foster Dulles, New York, Harper, 1957, p. 263, 287.

communication to the United Nations, a series of diplomatic notes, or an increased aid program. The Administration wisely chose a method which would associate the Congress and the President in a solemn declaration of national intent.

The problem was one of a new public posture rather than of new policies, although policies could not be exactly the same because of the change in the context and the assumption of new responsibilities. It had been, after all, an American objective for some years to prevent the advance of Russian power in the Middle East. That objective was implicit in the Truman Doctrine of 1947.⁵⁹ It had been the basis for the program of military and economic aid carried on since that time. The State Department and other agencies concerned wished to keep on with the policies and programs they felt were achieving the basic objective. But to do so they needed more authority and more money and they needed the assurance of backing by the Congress. The Administration chose the method of a public law which would combine a declaration of policy extending the "security frontiers" of the United States across the Middle Eastern gap between NATO and SEATO with a dramatization of the aid programs already in existence and increased flexibility in their future use.

President Eisenhower made the specific proposals in his special message to Congress on January 5, 1957. The

⁵⁹See p. 35 ff.

United States, he said, must make more evident its willingness to support the sovereignty and independence of each and every nation of the Middle East against the predatory desires of "international communism," i.e., the Soviet Union. The proposed joint resolution would do three things: (1) authorize the President to employ as he deems necessary the armed forces of the United States to secure and protect the integrity and independence of any nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East requesting such aid against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism; (2) authorize the Executive to undertake programs of military assistance to any nation or group of nations in that area desiring such aid; (3) authorize cooperation with any nation or group of nations in the development of economic strength for the maintenance of national independence. The President also requested specific authority to spend \$200 million of already appropriated funds for military and economic aid in the Middle East, free from the restriction of existing legislation.⁶⁰

Although there was never much doubt that the resolution would be adopted by the Congress in substantially the form proposed - not to have passed it after the President

⁶⁰Message of the President to the Congress, January 5, 1957, Department of State, Middle East Proposals, Department of State Publication No. 6440, Washington, G.P.O., 1957, p. 1-17.

had publicly placed it before the world as a necessity would have been a supreme gesture of irresponsibility - it ran into some rough weather in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and was severely criticized by a number of prominent Democrats including a former Secretary of State, Dean Acheson. The hearings in both Houses brought out a variety of points on which the new "doctrine," as it came to be called, was seriously challenged. Some of the criticism had its origin in domestic politics or in general dissatisfaction with the way in which the Secretary of State had handled Middle Eastern affairs in the previous year or two. But most of the arguments went to the substance of the proposals and should be considered in any effort to evaluate the doctrine as national policy.

It was said that the Russian threat was not military and that it was therefore unwise to build a policy on the contingency of an "overt armed aggression" that probably would not take place. Another point was that the real danger was subversion, against which the doctrine offered no sure defense. Some critics objected to its unilateral character, in that it avoided a regional treaty arrangement or "bypassed" the United Nations. Others pointed out that in its limitation to "Communist aggression" it overlooked the more real danger arising from conflicts that arose in other ways, as recent events had shown. Perhaps the most justified criticism was

that the new doctrine ignored the specific problems like Palestine and Suez that had made it possible for the Soviet Union to build up its influence in the area, not by the force of arms but by well timed political moves.⁶¹

Secretary Dulles vigorously defended the proposed doctrine against these criticisms. While an overt Russian attack in the Middle East might not seem imminent, the Soviet Union had the means to attack and he preferred not to wait until an attack occurred in order to be sure it was going to occur; the important thing was to deter it by removing the danger of miscalculation. This end could not be achieved with the desired speed by the conclusion of security treaties "without involving ourselves in controversies which are of a local character and do not involve international communism;" the Administration had seriously considered joining the Baghdad Pact but decided against it largely on those grounds. As for the United Nations, the Administration's proposal had provided that the use of United States forces should be consonant with the Charter and with the actions and

⁶¹Economic and Military Cooperation with Nations in the General Area of the Middle East, Hearings on H.J. Res. 117, U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, 85th Cong., 1st Sess., January 7-22, 1957, Washington, G.P.O., 1957, p. 13-17, 141, 152, and passim. (Hereafter referred to as House Hearings on the Eisenhower Doctrine.)

recommendations¹ of the United Nations and should not affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council to take such action as it deemed necessary. While hoping that it would be possible to act through the United Nations, Mr. Dulles was not willing to be tied down by a requirement to do so:

"We must have this alternative." As to the threat of subversion, the Secretary said that the United States could not intervene with force if there were no overt aggression. The way to deal with that threat was by the three-pronged policy of reducing the fear of armed attack, helping non-Communist governments to build adequate internal security forces and fostering economic progress to remove the causes of popular discontent. Finally, Mr. Dulles rejected the proposal that the commitment should be expanded to cover aggression within the region, by the Arab states against Israel or vice versa, on the ground that in such a local controversy "international communism" would not be directly involved and the problem would be suitably handled by the United Nations.⁶²

The official reasoning on all these points tended to dismiss too lightly the many complicating factors inherent in the Middle Eastern situation and to place too much value

⁶²The Presidents Proposal on the Middle East, Hearings on S. J. Res. 19 and H.J. Res. 117, U.S. Senate Committees on Foreign Relations and Armed Services, 85th Cong., 1st Sess. January 14 - February 4, 1957, Washington, G.O.P., 1957, p. 48-50, 256, 264-265, 334, and passim; (Hereafter referred to as Senate Hearings on the Eisenhower Doctrine.)

on declarations as effective policy. It overstressed the contingency of overt aggression and thus by implication slighted others. Still the Administration made its case for a strong declaration of intent.

The Senate, concerned over the constitutional aspects of a specific legislative grant of authority to the President to employ the armed forces, changed the resolution to read that the United States "is prepared to use its armed forces" to assist on request any Middle Eastern nation subjected to overt attack by a state controlled by international communism. With this change and another slight modification giving more recognition to the possibility of action through the United Nations, both Houses passed the resolution and the Eisenhower Doctrine became law.⁶³

The sharp criticisms of the doctrine in the course of two months' discussion that preceded its adoption should not obscure the general agreement with its purposes. Even those Democrat Senators who were so caustic in pointing to its inadequacies were as one with the President and the Secretary in seeing the need for a public statement of policy that would place the authority of the Congress behind the

⁶³ Public Law 85-7, 85th Congress, 1st Session, H.J. Res., March 9, 1957. Text in Department of State, United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956 - June 1957, Documents, Op. Cit., p. 44-46.

President and thus express a national decision to keep the Middle East out of the Russian orbit.

In terms of power, the United States had to fill the "vacuum" resulting from the British retreats and withdrawals. Arab leaders, obsessed by fears of a new colonialism replacing the old, took exception to that phrase, asserting that if there was any vacuum to fill, the Middle Eastern nations themselves could fill it. Secretary Dulles, extremely sensitive to such views and to Arab Russian propaganda based on them, took pains to avoid the phrase and to disclaim all intention to dominate other nations or to prolong or restore methods and policies associated with colonialism. Yet there was no disguising the fact that in the world balance of power between the Russian-Communist world and the West a vacuum had been created and that if American power did not fill it Russian power would. No talk about the strength of the Middle Eastern nations themselves could have real meaning in terms of their ability to hold off Russian power unsaid. The United States, to provide the necessary counterweight, did not have to move into the Middle East in the sense of controlling the destiny of its peoples. But the presence of American power had to be felt there, through commitments and through the ability and the will to protect the area against Russian encroachment.

These were not easy distinctions to make, British opinion expressed in editorials took a certain wry satisfaction in the fact that the United States, so soon after taking Britain to task for unilateral intervention found it necessary to proclaim what looked like a doctrine of unilateral intervention of its own.^{64,65,66} American officials took care to point out that the United States would act only on the request of a Middle Eastern government and that going in to protect a state was very different from going in with bombs to impose one's will. Be that as it may, there was no evading the fact that the United States was now assuming virtually the entire responsibility, on behalf of the West, for the task of holding for the free world a huge area bristling with unsolved problems and too weak to provide for its own defense.

In the long view it may not be of great importance just what the Eisenhower Doctrine says on paper. The provision for the use of American armed forces was important in extending the "warning system" which in other regions takes the form of a series of regional and bilateral mutual assistance

⁶⁴ _____ "No One Else Can," The Economist, Vol. CLXXXII, No. 5915, January 5, 1957, p. 7-8,30.

⁶⁵ _____ "Is There an Eisenhower Doctrine?", The New Statesman and Nation, The Week-end Review, Vol. LIII, No. 1347, January 5, 1957, p. 4-5.

⁶⁶ _____ "Doctrine on the Books," The Economist, Vol. CLXXXII, No. 5925, March 16, 1957, p. 909-910.

treaties. It may have helped somewhat in eliminating the danger of miscalculation by Russian leadership of the American reaction to an aggression, although the United States was already substantially committed through its special relationships with the Baghdad Pact countries,⁶⁷ and the United States had no strong reason to expect the Soviet Union leaders would be any more inclined to embark on direct aggression in the absence of the doctrine than with it in existence. The provision covering aggression on the part of a Russian satellite might prevent the spread of communism by force once it got a foothold in Syria or some other Middle Eastern state, but it would not prevent its being implanted there or elsewhere by means other than overt aggression. In the first place, the doctrine contained no formula applicable to any but overt aggression. In the second place the thin edge of the Russian wedge already had entered the area. Since this had been in the form of agreements with the constituted authorities of Egypt, Syria and more recently Yemen (1958), no overt aggression had taken place and no ground for remedial action appeared to exist. In the third place, the formality of the Eisenhower pronouncement, the implication in its wording of the possible use of force, its timing so soon after the injudicious employment of force in

⁶⁷See p. 84-85.

Egypt by allies of the United States all gave color to the Tass charge that this was "an example of how the imperialists of the United States are trying to establish themselves in the Middle East and squeeze out Britain and France, so that, having taken their place, they can subject the peoples of that area to an even more colonialist oppression."⁶⁸ The provisions for military and economic aid involved no new departure.. Such programs had not prevented the steady deterioration of the Western position or solid gains of the Soviet Union in the area. In his message to Congress on 5 January 1957, President Eisenhower said, "This program will not solve all the problems of the Middle East."⁶⁹ It might not solve any of them. It had deliberately avoided such questions as Suez, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the future of the Baghdad Pact.

It is only fair to point out, however, that the Administration itself, judging by its conduct, did not regard the doctrine as an isolated step. It was part of a larger complex of moves which included strengthening (but not joining) the Baghdad Pact, continuing to supply arms to Arab states but not to Israel and wooing Arab leaders such as

⁶⁸Halford L. Hoskins, United States Interests and Policy in the Middle East, (Document D 465 D), The Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service, Washington, April 3, 1958, p. 19-20.

⁶⁹See p. 35. 113.

King Saud as a means of counterbalancing the leadership of Egypt and Abdel Nasser.

If the Eisenhower Doctrine was not a policy, it supplied the framework for a policy. It made clear to potential enemies, to friends and to all the peoples of the Middle East that the United States hence forth would take the lead in the defense of the whole Middle East. It established certain rules under which the game would be played. In highlighting the dangerous consequences to a resort to force by the Soviet Union or its satellites, it set the stage for a cold-war competition in which the United States would presumably use all of the forces at its disposal. Furthermore, it offered to the Middle Eastern nations themselves more than the role of spectators, or victims, of such competition between great powers. To both allies and uncommitted states in the area it offered assistance in the task of consolidating and defending their own independence. It was a necessary step, though a belated one, in the development of an American policy for the Middle East.

4. The Crisis of 1958.

Events were soon to put the Eisenhower Doctrine to the test. In 1956 and 1957 Jordan, under pressure to join the Baghdad Pact, renounced its treaty arrangements with Great Britain and swung toward Egypt and Syria. When in

April 1957, King Hussein attempted to halt a trend which might have cost him his throne, there developed a threat of Syrian-Egyptian intervention.⁷⁰ On April 24, 1957, an announcement from the White House, with the concurrence of Secretary Dulles, stated that "the independence and integrity of Jordan" were considered as "vital." On the following day the United States Sixth Fleet was ordered from French waters to the eastern Mediterranean prepared to take action in the event of armed invasion of Jordan from any quarter, Arab or Israeli, and America began to assume the burden of financial and economic aid which alone permitted Jordan to exist.⁷¹

In 1958 the challenges to the Western position were more severe and demanded more drastic action. On February 1, the federation of Egypt and Syria into the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) took place (recognized by the United States on February 25, 1958). While this was regarded by some of its major Syrian advocates as a means of resisting the growing power of the local Communists, it meant that Nasser's currently anti-Western and pro-Russian pan-Arab nationalism had gained in prestige and that Nasser was in a better position to bring his influence to bear on Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. The Hashemite kingdoms responded by the

⁷⁰See p.130.

⁷¹Hoskins, Op. Cit., p. 22.

proclamation of the (short lived) Arab Union of Iraq and Jordan (February 14, 1958). In Lebanon certain Moslem groups favored federation with the United Arab Republic and Christian groups were aroused to the defense of Lebanese independence through closer ties with the West. In May civil strife broke out in Lebanon which grew into an armed rebellion against the pro-Western Chamoun regime and was encouraged from Cairo and Damascus.⁷² The Lebanese President addressed a protest to the United Arab Republic over its "massive interference." On May 21 the Lebanese Foreign Minister called for a meeting of the Arab League to consider this protest against the U.A.R. On the following day Lebanon presented a complaint to the United Nations Security Council charging existence of a "situation arising from the intervention of the U.A.R. in the internal affairs of Lebanon, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security."⁷³ After a delay of several days to permit the Arab League to consider Lebanon's complaint, the Security council discussed the situation and, pursuant to a resolution introduced by Sweden and supported by the United States,

⁷²Paul L. Hanna, "America in the Middle East," Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. X, No. 5, May 1959, p. 178-190.

⁷³The Lebanese Complaint to the Security Council," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXIX, No. 997, August 4, 1958.

dispatched a United Nations observer group to Lebanon.⁷⁴

Despite the presence of the observer group, the fighting in Lebanon intensified. In a news conference on June 10, Secretary Dulles declared that there was irrefutable evidence of intervention through press and government-controlled radio in the internal affairs of Lebanon, inciting the people to violence. He added: "There is increasingly coming in evidence that violence is abetted by the actual supply of military equipment and ammunition."⁷⁵

On July 14, 1958, revolutionaries overthrew the pro-Western monarchy of Iraq, killing King Faisal, destroying the Iraq-Jordan Arab Union and installing a regime which it thought would be pro-Nasserite, thus bringing new pressures on Lebanon and Jordan. On the same day a comparable plot against the King of Jordan was barely thwarted. The government of Lebanon (President Chamoun) thereupon made an urgent appeal to President Eisenhower for United States assistance in preserving the country's independence.⁷⁶

⁷⁴"U.N. Security Council Sends Observation Group to Lebanon," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXIX, No. 994, July 14, 1958, p. 88-90.

⁷⁵Department of State, Highlights of Foreign Policy Developments, 1958, Washington, G.P.O., 1959, p. 13.

⁷⁶Ibid.

On July 15, 1958, responding to the Lebanese Government's appeal, President Eisenhower dispatched a force of 5,000 United States Marines to Lebanon to protect American lives and property and "to encourage the Lebanese Government in defense of Lebanese sovereignty and integrity." The Marines subsequently were supplemented by approximately 9,000 soldiers. In explaining the reason for his decision, the President declared that President Chamoun had made clear that he considered an immediate United States response imperative if Lebanon's independence was to be preserved. Simultaneously with the dispatch of United States troops the United States requested an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council.⁷⁷

In a report to the American people (July 15, 1958), President Eisenhower referred to the revolution in Iraq and the request of King Hussein of Jordan for assistance in resisting outside interference in his country's affairs. The President said that "these events demonstrate a scope of aggressive purposes which tiny Lebanon could not combat without further evidence of support. That is why Lebanon's request for troops. . . was made. That is why we have responded to this request."⁷⁸ On July 17, in answer to the appeal of

⁷⁷"United States Dispatches Troops to Lebanon," Statement of and Message by President Eisenhower to Congress, July 15, 1958, Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXIX, No. 997, August 4, 1958, p. 181-183.

⁷⁸Radio-TV Statement of President Eisenhower, July 15, 1958, Ibid., p. 183-186.

King Hussein, 2,000 British paratroops landed in Jordan to prevent the spreading of the revolt by conspiracy and aggression from Iraq.⁷⁹

While no military activities were engaged in by the American or British troops and while assurances were given that the troops would be withdrawn whenever United Nations action had provided security for Lebanon and Jordan or upon request of the host governments, the Soviet Union charged America and Britain with aggression. Many of the Asian and African peoples regarded the American action as an example of old style imperialism, differing only in degree from that of Anglo-French intervention at Suez in 1956 which the United States had so soundly denounced.⁸⁰

August 21 saw the adoption of an Arab-sponsored resolution by the United Nations General Assembly emergency session. This resolution called upon the member states to act "strictly in accordance with the principles of mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, of non-aggression, of strict non-interference in each other's international affairs. . ." It requested the Secretary General to make, in consultation with other governments concerned,

⁷⁹Department of State, Highlights of Foreign Policy, Op. Cit., p. 14.

⁸⁰M. Perlman, "Midsummer Madness", Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. I, No. 8-9, August-September 1958, p. 260.

"such practical arrangements" as would adequately help in upholding the purposes of the Charter in relation to Lebanon and Jordan and thereby facilitate the early withdrawal of foreign troops from the two countries.⁸¹

On October 8, the Department of State announced that by agreement with the Republic of Lebanon and in view of the progress made toward "more stable international conditions in the area, it has been concluded that United States forces can now be totally withdrawn from Lebanon."⁸² The last United States troops left Lebanon on October 25, 1958.

The Eisenhower Doctrine, important and valuable as far as its guarantee of protection went, did not meet the realities of the Middle East. There was hardly any real danger of outright military attack by the Soviet Union. The real danger was aggressive action on the part of Egypt, and later the United Arab Republic. But neither Egypt nor the U.A.R. qualified, under the Eisenhower Doctrine, as a "country controlled by international communism." Moreover, there was not much danger of armed aggression against an Arab country from the outside. The real danger was aggression by internal subversion, inspired and directed from the outside and supplied

⁸¹For text of Resolution, see Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXIX, No. 1003, September 15, 1958, p. 411-412.

⁸²Department of State, Highlights of Foreign Policy Developments, 1958, Op. Cit., p. 15.

with money, arms, "volunteers," refuge and leadership from the outside. This danger was not clearly spelled out in the Eisenhower Doctrine; nor did the Doctrine explicitly promise United States help against it. It should be noted that the Lebanese crisis (and especially the Iraqi coup) in July 1958, galvanized American policy-makers into giving the Doctrine an interpretation broad enough to cover just such an emergency.

The landing of United States troops in Lebanon in July 1958, upon the request of the government of that country, which was engaged in fighting a rebellion of its own subjects, has established the precedent that United States military support under the Eisenhower Doctrine may be forthcoming in the event of threatened "indirect" as well as actual aggression. Action of this sort, though ostensibly justified as assistance for legitimate governments against foreign subversion, comes perilously close to intervention in the domestic affairs of foreign states to support governments whose claim to represent the will of their own people is at least questionable. It suggests, in addition, that the relation of the suspected aggressor to "international communism" may be no more explicit than the willingness of the President of the United Arab Republic, to purchase arms and accept technical aid from the Soviet Union.

CHAPTER IV

UNITED STATES AID TO THE MIDDLE EAST

1. The Scope of United States Foreign Aid.

At the present time (1959) the United States is giving foreign aid for three purposes: Military assistance, defense support and economic aid.¹

Expenditures under military assistance provide for United States military advisory groups and the furnishing of military equipment of all kinds. Military assistance is intended to permit the recipient country to erect better military defenses than it would otherwise do. At the same time it is intended to create political defenses against subversion by releasing materials and manpower for civilian purposes, alleviating poverty and improving standards of living.

In addition to direct military assistance, substantial sums are spent on "defense support." Such support takes different forms in different countries, but in all cases its purpose is to build up the economies of the countries that receive substantial military assistance. Defense support takes the form of direct construction - sometimes exclusively by the United States, as far as finances are concerned and

¹86th Congress, 1st Session, House Document No. 116, U.S. Foreign Aid, Its Purposes, Scope, Administration and Related Information, Legislative Reference Service, Library of Congress, Washington, G.P.O., 1959, p. 4.

and sometimes in cooperation with the recipient country - of power plants, fertilizer factories, chemical establishments, railroads, dock facilities and various other industries, as well as expenditures for schools, public health facilities and improvements in sanitation.

Most economic aid takes the form of development assistance for countries that are economically underdeveloped, through loans or grants and through the furnishing of technical cooperation in the person of engineers and other experts.

Aid is given either through loans of the banking type or on a non-banking basis. The former are those regarding which there is reasonable expectation that repayment will be made, whereas other loans include those that are made for a longer period of time, or under other terms that would not ordinarily be made under usual banking terms (sometimes called soft loans). Some loans are made to private enterprise, whereas others are made on a government-to-government basis. The bulk of foreign aid to date has been rendered on a grant or gift basis.²

"Technical cooperation" refers to programs designed to transfer technical skills or knowledge to underdeveloped countries, including relatively small amounts of supplies

²Ibid, p. 5.

and equipment required for demonstration purposes.

How is the military aid and defense support program in the Middle East related to the threats facing the area and United States strategy in the Middle East? Most United States authorities seem to feel that the defense of the area against overt military aggression by Russia itself is primarily a function of United States global strategy rather than of actions by local governments. The Eisenhower Doctrine (1957) has most recently put the world on notice that the United States will use its military might to meet Russian aggression in the Middle East. United States Military aid in the Middle East has been related in part to the 1955 Baghdad Pact which linked the "northern countries" of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan with the United Kingdom and the United States.³ Grant military aid had been provided to Turkey and Iran since 1947,⁴ but Pakistan and Iraq were added to this list of recipients about the time that negotiations got underway for the formation of the Baghdad Pact.⁵ The military strength of the Middle East members of the Baghdad Pact has increased

³See Chapter II p. 35,37 ff; Chapter III p. 71,73; Chapter IV Table IV - VIII, p. 149 -153a.

⁴Idem

⁵Idem

considerably since 1955, but it is difficult to see how they could do more than harass and delay a major Russian drive for conquest by armed might. Moreover, as previously noted following the July 1958 Iraqi revolution that country maintained a merely passive membership in the Baghdad Pact and finally left the pact in early 1959, thus decreasing whatever effectiveness it may previously have had.

The Soviet Union presents a serious political threat to the Middle East area and, therefore, United States military aid has been directed at helping local governments maintain internal security. United States military aid provides not only actual military "hardware," but is also intended to provide a symbol of United States interest in the area and support for the continued independence of nations there.⁶

Defense support is economic aid to help primarily the poorer less developed countries receiving United States military aid to meet some of the economic and political burdens incurred by expanding the local defense establishment. The primary purpose therefore is military security, but some economic benefits may result as a byproduct. Such projects as the construction of roads, harbors and communication networks clearly have dual purposes. They strengthen

⁶U.S. Foreign Aid, Op. Cit., p. 59-60

military defenses but may also speed up the marketing of produce, help expand trading facilities, or help attract foreign investment capital. The many results of defense support make it impossible to say accurately what percentage also contributes to economic development.

The program of technical assistance was proposed by President Truman in his inaugural address, January 20, 1949. As point four in his statement of United States foreign policy, he said: "We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of under-developed areas."⁷ Technical cooperation involves such activities as sending United States technical experts to the recipient country to provide advice and instruction; providing materials for demonstration projects; bringing nationals of the receiving government to the United States or another country for instruction and contracting with United States colleges to plan and organize institutions of higher education in the receiving country.

2. A Glimpse of the Record.

American economic and technical aid to the Middle East has been spread rather widely, with some variations to

⁷ "Inaugural Address by the President," Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXIII, No. 50, January 30, 1949, p. 125.

the pattern because of differing needs and political attitudes. Turkey, besides getting considerable economic benefit from military aid, has been granted substantial economic aid since the close of World War II. Iraq, needing no outside capital because of its own substantial oil royalties, has received technical aid only. Iran has had substantial economic aid since 1953, chiefly to keep the government solvent, in addition to a large program of technical assistance. Modest amounts have been granted to Lebanon and Jordan for specific public works and industries. Syria has refused all aid on the ground that the conditions attached to it (the same as for all other recipients) were unacceptable. Saudi Arabia accepted technical assistance for a period, then arbitrarily terminated it in 1954. Egypt has had none since grants in 1954 were made at the time of early faith and hope in the Nasser regime. Israel has received, since 1948, more in grants and loans than all of the other Arab states combined, in addition to considerable sums from private American sources.⁸

The policy behind the American military aid program in the Middle East has not always been clear. Starting with the Greek-Turkish program in 1947, in many respects it just

⁸See Tables IV-VIII, p. 149-153.

grew as the global aid program expanded and the interest of the United States in Middle East defense increased. When the first Mutual Defense Assistance Act was passed in 1949, as a result of the need for the United States to arm its allies in Europe, it was natural that requests should also come in from the Middle East. Iran, which had received American help in building up its gendarmerie, was then added to the list of regular recipients. Later when American official hopes were placed on the "northern tier concept," the promise of military aid served as an inducement to Pakistan, Iraq, and Iran to move ahead with the Baghdad Pact.⁹ While the Palestine conflict remained acute, Washington was reluctant to grant military aid to Israel or its Arab neighbors but was prepared to make an exception in the case of Egypt in 1955 when it was thought - erroneously, it turned out - that Abdel Nasser would cooperate in plans to defend the Middle East.¹⁰

With the adoption of the Eisenhower Doctrine (1957), one of the main points of which was the offer of military aid, any state which endorsed the doctrine apparently was eligible

⁹See Chapter III, p. 71, 73, 83-84.

¹⁰Paul L. Hanna, "America in the Middle East," Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. X, No. 5, May 1959, p. 183.

for it. The Baghdad Pact nations seem to be slated for increased aid and Lebanon (and Libya) which also endorsed the doctrine received modest amounts. Jordan which avoided a stand on it but whose king roundly denounced "international communism" (along with Israel and Syria and many of his own compatriots who were trying to push the country into the Egyptian-Syrian camp), has been granted some \$20 million in arms in order to keep its army in existence. Israel's approval of the doctrine, however, was not followed by a grant of arms because, in the State Department's view, Israel was "quite substantially armed" and not in danger;¹¹ the real reason no doubt was that to provide Israel with arms would risk losing what gains the United States had made toward winning greater cooperation from several of the Arab states.

It may be that if the United States had found some way to provide Egypt with arms, Abdel Nasser would not have turned to the Soviet Union. The Department of State had adequate warning that he might do so. Its failure to see the magnitude of the danger and to act in time may have been a costly mistake. As grant aid in arms equipment was not possible as long as Egypt would not agree to conditions required of all recipients under the mutual security legislation

¹¹Statement by Secretary Dulles at press conference, September 10, 1957, in Department of State Bulletin, Vol. XXXVII, No. 953, September 30, 1957, p. 527.

the question was whether arms could be purchased by Egypt. The United States after long delay agreed to make available some of the items on the Egyptian shopping list, but while desultory negotiations were in progress on whether some other means of payment than dollars, which Egypt could not spare, might be acceptable, Abdel Nasser suddenly concluded his deal in September 1955 for large quantities of arms from the Soviet Union bloc.¹²

The interplay over the proposed High Aswan Dam has to be considered in the context of Egyptian self-confidence and Western distrust. The United States Government, in December 1955, decided to go ahead with an offer of \$56 million as an initial grant on which (together with a British offer of \$14 million) the World Bank loan of \$200 million depended.¹³ It saw this decision as a last chance to preserve some Western influence in Egypt; if the Soviet Union, already the main source of arms, should finance the dam as well (which it did in 1958),¹⁴ it would be in a position of nearly complete control over the Egyptian economy.

¹²Campbell, Defense of the Middle East, Op. Cit., p. 72-73.

¹³United States Policy in the Near East, South Asia and Africa - 1955, Department of State Publication No. 6330, Washington, G.P.O., 1956, p. 38.

¹⁴Soviet-Egyptian Pact on Aswan Dam, (Document), December 27, 1958, Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. X, No. 2, February 1959, p. 78-79.

The whole story of what happened in the following months is not publicly known, but a few points seem clear enough. Abdel Nasser, either because he wanted better terms from the West or sought to provoke a better offer from the Soviet Union, delayed his acceptance and raised a number of conditions, requiring further negotiation. The United States negotiated patiently with him, but as months went by, was increasingly disturbed over the burgeoning contacts between Egypt and the Russian bloc; trade deals, technical missions and arms shipments of a magnitude that gave new dimensions to the picture as it had been seen on the previous autumn. These facts raised legitimate doubts as to Egypt's ability to carry its part of the High Dam scheme and to repay the World Bank loan, for its main export, cotton, appeared to be mortgaged almost totally by the Russian bloc for some time through the accumulation of obligations.¹⁵

To these doubts were added others on the political side. Egypt was reveling in its new role of Arab leadership. Its propaganda against the Baghdad Pact and the government of Iraq was incessant and violent. Its hand in the anti-Western riots in Jordan was obvious.¹⁶ Its radio broadcasts were encouraging unrest and revolt in Africa, beyond the confines of the Arab world. The Egyptian press was filled with

¹⁵Campbell, Op. Cit., p. 74.

¹⁶See Chapter III, p. 75-78, 82.

denunciations of the West, but no word of blame for the Soviet Union. Finally in May 1956, Egypt established relations with Communist China. As matters were developing, the Aswan Dam offer seemed more and more incongruous to the United States. The appropriations Committee of the Senate directed that none of the mutual security funds could be used for the dam without its prior approval.¹⁷ It would have been difficult enough for the Administration to defend such a grant to an Arab state before Congress in an election year. When that Arab state, after stalling on the offer when it was first made, became increasingly hostile in all its public acts and utterances, it was only to be expected that there would be a new look at policy toward Egypt and, as it turned out, withdrawal of the offer (July 19, 1956).

The United States should be prepared, barring the miracle of an agreement on arms limitation, to carry on indefinitely its military aid program to the Middle East. The haphazardness should be taken out of it; it should be geared as far as possible to a sound military strategy and thus to minimize its effects on combustible local conflicts and rivalries. At the same time the United States should frankly recognize its political influence and use it where possible

¹⁷Mutual Security Appropriation Bill, 1957, U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, S. Rept. 2579 to accompany H.R. 12130, 84th Cong., 2nd Sess., Washington, G.P.O., 1956, p. 4.

in the service of United States political strategy. Whether the United States can accomplish these purposes while keeping military aid at current levels or reducing it is an open question.

The United States should not expect miracles from economic and technical aid to the Middle East. It can help avert nasty situations. It can contribute to stability, or rather to controlled change, by helping to raise living standards or to prevent their decline. It can offer new hope to the people through projects that increase the arable land or wipe out disease. If provided in ways that satisfy the recipients, it can win a certain amount of good will. Still economic policies and aid for development do not of themselves provide the master key to success in the Middle East. They do not guarantee a contented populace plus resistance to communism. They are not a substitute for the solution to political problems. They are, however, a necessary concomitant and lubricant of efforts to solve those problems.

3. Facts and Figures, 1945-1957.

A complete summary of United States Government foreign aid, covering the period July 1, 1945 through June 30, 1957,¹⁸ was published by the Office of Business

¹⁸ U.S. Government Fiscal Years run from July 1, through June 30.

Economics, United States Department of Commerce in October 1957. The tables reproduced on the following pages summarize that portion of foreign aid made available to the Middle East during the period.

- Total gross aid to the Middle East during the period amounted to \$1,542,000,000. Total net aid (gross less returns on grants and principal repayments on credits) as of June 30, 1957 was \$1,398,000,000, of which \$1,008,000,000 represented grants and \$391,000,000 outstanding credits.¹⁹

The share of the Middle Eastern countries in total gross and net United States aid for the entire postwar period was 2.3 per cent. However, since most United States aid to Middle Eastern countries (except in the case of Turkey) was furnished during Fiscal Years 1951-1957, the regions share during that period was larger than for the entire postwar period. In Fiscal Year 1957 the Middle East's share amounted to 5.0 per cent of total net United States aid.²⁰

The data given in the tables do not include United States contributions to the United Nations Relief Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, which on 30 June 1957 stood

¹⁹See Table IV, p. 149.

²⁰United States Aid to the Middle East, 1945-1947, Middle Eastern Affairs, Vol. VIII, No. 11, November 1957, p. 385.

at \$169.7 million. Also excluded are United States Government contributions to the United Nations Technical Assistance Program and its capital investments in the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Finance Corporation and International Monetary Fund.²¹

In addition to Department of Commerce statistics, tables published by the International Cooperation Administration, Department of State, have been reproduced to illustrate obligations and expenditures by program in the Middle East.²²

²¹Idem.

²²See Tables VII and VIII, p. 153-153a.

TABLE IV
U.S. FOREIGN AID - GRANTS AND CREDITS
JULY 1, 1945-JUNE 30, 1957
(in million dollars)

Country	Gross Aid	Returns ^a	Net Aid	Net Grants	Net Credits
Egypt	88	16	72	64	8
Iran	319	18	301	222	80
Iraq	13	1	11	11	(*)
Israel	454	22	432	265	167
Jordan	38	(*)	38	38	—
Lebanon	24	2	22	22	—
Saudi Arabia	23	12	11	4	7
Syria	1	(*)	1	1	(*)
Turkey ^b	582	73	510	381	129
Total	1,542	144	1,398	1,008	391

^a All returns to U. S. Government stemming from grants and credits. Returns on grants consist mainly of economic and technical assistance counterpart funds; returns on credits refer to principal repayments but exclude interest and commissions.

^b Excludes military aid.

U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Office of Business Economics, *Foreign Grants and Credits by the United States Government, June 1957*
Quarter, Fiscal Year 1957 Review (Washington, Oct., 1957)

Note: All years in the tables refer to Fiscal Year (July 1 to June 30). Because of rounding, totals do not necessarily add up.

Explanation of symbols: Dash (—) indicates that amount is zero; asterisk (*) is used when amount is less than \$500,000.

TABLE V

U. S. GRANTS — BY COUNTRY AND PROGRAM
JULY 1, 1945--JUNE 30, 1957
(in million dollars)

<i>Country and Program</i>	<i>Total Postwar Period</i>	<i>Fiscal Years 1946-1950</i>	<i>Fiscal Years 1951-1957</i>
Egypt			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical			
assistance	33.9	—	33.9
Famine and emergency relief	1.0	—	1.0
UN Relief and Rehabilitation	0.3	0.3	—
Agricultural commodities ^a	28.5	—	28.5
Gross Grants	63.8	0.3	63.4
Less Returns	0.1	—	0.1
Net Grants	63.7	0.3	63.3
Iran			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical			
assistance	232.3	—	232.3
Famine and emergency relief	2.7	—	2.7
Lend-Lease	0.8	0.8	—
Agricultural commodities ^a	2.1	0.01	2.1
Gross Grants	238.0	0.8	237.2
Less Prior Grants Con- verted into Credits..	8.5	8.5	—
Less Returns	7.9	—	7.9
Net Grants	221.6	-7.7	229.3
Iraq			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical			
assistance	11.0	—	11.0
Agricultural commodities ^a	0.5	—	0.5
Gross Grants	11.5	—	11.5
Less Returns	0.4	—	0.4
Net Grants	11.1	—	11.1
Israel			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical			
assistance	226.8	—	226.8
Agricultural commodities ^a	39.0	0.6	38.4
Gross Grants	265.8	0.6	265.2
Less Returns	0.5	—	0.5
Net Grants	265.3	0.6	264.7

^a Agricultural commodities through private agencies; includes donations of agricultural commodities transferred through the UN Children's Fund.

TABLE V (CONTINUED)
 U.S. GRANTS - BY COUNTRY AND PROGRAM
 JULY, 1945 - JUNE 30, 1957
 (in million dollars)

U. S. GRANTS -- BY COUNTRY AND PROGRAM (Continued)

Country and Program	Total Postwar Period	Fiscal Years 1946-1950	Fiscal Years 1951-1957
Jordan			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical assistance	33.9	—	33.9
Famine and emergency relief	1.1	—	1.1
Agricultural commodities ^a	2.9	—	2.9
Gross Grants	37.9	—	37.9
Less Returns	0.1	—	0.1
Net Grants	37.8	—	37.8
Lebanon			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical assistance	19.8	—	19.8
Famine and emergency relief	0.3	—	0.3
Agricultural commodities ^a	1.9	0.04	1.8
Gross (Net) Grants	22.0	0.04	22.0
Saudi Arabia			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical assistance	2.6	—	2.6
Lend-Lease	1.6	1.6	—
Gross (Net) Grants	4.3	1.6	2.6
Syria			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical assistance	0.1	—	0.1
Famine and emergency relief	0.2	—	0.2
Agricultural commodities ^a	0.8	—	0.8
Gross (Net) Grants	1.1	—	1.1
Turkey			
Mutual Security Aid			
Economic and technical assistance	400.2	16.0	384.2
Famine and emergency relief	12.2	—	12.2
Agricultural commodities ^a	0.9	—	0.9
Greek-Turkish military aid	158.6	147.0	11.6
Military equipment loans	21.3	—	21.3
Gross Grants	593.2	163.0	430.2
Less Returns	33.4	7.0	26.4
Net Grants	559.8	156.0	403.8

^a Agricultural commodities through private agencies; includes donations of agricultural commodities transferred through the UN Children's Fund.

U.S. Dept. of Commerce, *Foreign Grants and Credits by the United States Government*, June 1957 Quarter, Fiscal Year 1957 Review

TABLE VI

U. S. CREDITS — BY COUNTRY, PROGRAM AND STATUS

JULY 1, 1940—JUNE 30, 1957

(in million dollars)

Country and Program	Authorized (Net)	Utilized	Principal Collected	Outstanding on June 30, 1957
Egypt	25.5	23.6	15.8	7.9
Export-Import Bank	7.3	7.3	5.1	2.2
Mutual Security program....	7.5	5.7	—	5.7
Sales of overseas surpluses	10.7	10.7	10.7	—
Iran	153.6	90.4	10.7	79.7
Prior grants converted into credits	8.5	8.5	7.8	0.7
Export-Import Bank	54.2	14.0	0.5	13.5
Mutual Security program....	65.0	42.0	—	42.0
Sales of overseas surpluses	25.8	25.8	2.3	23.5
Iraq	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.1
Export-Import Bank	0.5	0.2	0.02	0.1
Sales of overseas surpluses	0.9	0.9	0.9	—
Israel	206.3	188.0	21.9	166.1
Export-Import Bank	135.0	135.0	21.9	113.1
Mutual Security program....	40.0	28.3	—	28.3
Mutual Security under Agri- cultural Trade Develop- ment and Assistance Act	31.3	24.8	—	24.8
Lebanon				
Sales of overseas surpluses	1.6	1.6	1.6	—
Saudi Arabia	31.8	31.8	12.0	19.8
Export-Import Bank	14.8	14.8	10.1	4.6
Sales of overseas surpluses	1.9	1.9	1.9	—
Lend-Lease silver	15.2	15.2	—	15.2
Syria				
Export-Import Bank	0.1	0.1	0.05	0.05
Turkey	205.3	169.0	40.3	128.7
Export-Import Bank	37.9	35.6	30.6	5.0
Mutual Security program....	155.2	121.2	0.2	121.0
Sales of overseas surpluses	6.1	6.1	6.1	0.02
Merchant ship sales	6.1	6.1	3.4	2.7

U.S. Dept. of Commerce, *Foreign Grants and Credits by the United States Government*, June 1957 Quarter, Fiscal Year 1957 Review

TABLE VII
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ADMINISTRATION
OBLIGATIONS AND EXPENDITURES — BY COUNTRY
FISCAL YEARS JULY 1, 1951—JUNE 30, 1957
(in million dollars)

Country	Total	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
Egypt								
Obligations.....	61.7	—	0.4	12.9	3.3	42.8	2.3	0.02
Expenditures...	39.2	—	0.1	0.8	2.7	4.2	19.1	12.3
Iran								
Obligations.....	316.2	—	14.9	31.9	84.4	72.8	65.1	47.1
Expenditures...	260.4	—	4.9	19.7	61.5	92.0	39.9	42.5
Iraq								
Obligations.....	13.3	—	0.5	2.1	2.2	2.9	2.1	3.5
Expenditures...	10.2	—	0.1	0.6	2.6	2.0	2.4	2.3
Israel								
Obligations.....	283.4	—	63.7	73.6	54.0	41.4	23.9	26.8
Expenditures...	260.9	—	63.6	59.5	40.2	45.4	28.9	23.4
Jordan								
Obligations.....	53.9	—	4.7	2.9	10.5	7.3	7.4	21.1
Expenditures...	30.4	—	1.4	1.3	3.1	11.1	5.3	8.1
Lebanon								
Obligations.....	35.0	—	1.7	3.0	8.8	7.6	2.0	11.9
Expenditures...	17.5	—	0.5	2.1	2.3	5.3	3.5	3.9
Saudi Arabia								
Obligations.....	2.4	—	0.3	1.7	0.9	-0.4	-0.1	0.03
Expenditures...	2.4	—	0.1	0.7	1.1	0.4	0.1	0.02
Turkey^a								
Obligations.....	617.7	49.8	69.6	58.6	78.7	90.4	107.2 ^b	57.8
Expenditures...	526.4	35.2	86.3	54.2	41.9	59.8	86.9	108.3
Bagdad Pact Program								
Obligations.....	12.7	—	—	—	—	—	—	12.7
Expenditures...	0.08	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.08
TOTAL^c								
Obligations...	1,396.3	49.8	155.8	186.7	242.8	264.8	209.9	180.9
Expenditures...	1,147.5	35.2	157.0	138.9	155.4	220.2	186.1	200.9

^a Totals for period Apr. 3, 1948—June 30, 1957.
^b Includes \$25 million considered as an advance against Fiscal Year 1957 program.
^c Totals do not include figures for ICA regional and evacuees programs for the Near East and South Asia, since these are not separately listed for Middle Eastern countries.

TABLE VIII

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ADMINISTRATION OBLIGATIONS AND EXPENDITURES — BY PROGRAM
 CUMULATIVE JULY 1, 1951—MARCH 31, 1957
 (in million dollars)

Country	Total		Defense Support		Development Assistance		Technical Cooperation	
	Obligations	Expenditures	Obligations	Expenditures	Obligations	Expenditures	Obligations	Expenditures
Egypt.....	61.7	37.7	—	—	52.7	31.7	9.0	6.0
Iran.....	278.5	246.6	65.0	46.4	170.7	166.9	42.8	33.3
Iraq.....	10.8	9.7	—	—	0.04	0.02	10.8	9.6
Israel.....	257.0	252.4	—	—	251.9	248.2	5.1	4.2
Jordan.....	33.6	24.9	—	—	19.5	12.1	14.1	12.8
Lebanon.....	23.0	17.1	—	—	10.5	5.8	12.6	11.3
Saudi Arabia.....	2.4	2.4	—	—	—	—	2.4	2.4
Turkey ^a	579.2 ^b	488.5 ^c	511.1	436.6	—	—	13.3	10.7
Total ^d	1,246.2	1,079.3	576.1	483.0	505.3	464.7	110.1	90.3

^a Includes programs beginning Apr. 3, 1948.
^b Includes \$54.7 million for Direct Forces Support.
^c Includes \$41.1 million for Direct Forces Support and \$0.2 million undistributed by category.
^d Totals do not include obligations of \$78,000 and expenditures of \$38,000 under the Bagdad Pact program; or figures relating to the ICA regional and evacuees programs for the Near East and South Asia, since these are not separately listed for Middle Eastern countries.

International Cooperation Administration, Office of Statistics and Reports, FY 1957,
 Issue No. 3, *Operations Report. Data as of March 31, 1957* (Washington, Oct., 1957)

TABLE VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The United States has been laboring under handicaps in attempting to uphold the interests of the West in the Middle East. It has been handicapped by lack of long experience in working with the peoples of the area. It has had to overcome factors of distance, contrasts in language, religion and culture. It has been confronted with difficulties arising from varying degrees of underdevelopment in countries which, save for petroleum in a few of them, are largely destitute of natural resources. Perhaps most of all it has been hampered by close political relationships with the two European nations which, in the eyes of Middle Eastern peoples, are exponents of colonialism and which, especially since the Suez episode of late 1956, have enjoyed almost no favor in most of the Arab countries.

In a region with no united will for defense against the Russian menace, a region of many conflicting aims and interests, the United States Government has had great difficulties in finding firm footing for the role of partner or of leader in organizing free world strength. It has had to act against the background of an ever changing situation, including strong political pressures at home and manifold criticism abroad. Inevitably, because the United States was obviously the citadel of power and the dispenser of largesse for a large part of the world, the tendency of others was to look to America for support of particular interests

and to be critical of the absence or inadequacy of such support.

While having longer-term solutions in mind, the United States has generally found itself able to do little more than meet the crises as they arose, guided by the general purpose of obtaining the cooperation of all concerned - European powers and Middle Eastern nations, northern tier and southern tier, Arabs and Israel. Washington's diplomatic efforts have followed two roads simultaneously; the road of mediation and compromise, to settle the annoying conflicts which stood in the way of general cooperation (for example: the controversies over the nationalization of Anglo-Iranian Oil, the Arab-Israel disputes, inter-Arab rivalries and the dispute on the Suez Canal); and the road of moving ahead with the building of a barrier (hence the initiative for the northern tier alignments, the courting of Egypt and the Eisenhower Doctrine). Both roads were strewn with obstacles. The mediation was not always effective, many of the disputes being beyond America's capacity to solve, while the exercise in barrier building, though not fruitless, often exacerbated the conflicts and suffered from the obvious defects of measures which were necessarily unilateral or partial in character.

The Eisenhower Doctrine was a significant and a necessary declaration, both as a deterrent to Russian aggression and as a statement of a national concern. It is, however,

largely irrelevant to many of the real challenges to American policy. Its limitation to "overt aggression" by states "controlled by international communism," and to cases where aid is requested makes it inapplicable to most of the critical situations likely to arise in the Middle East, including aggression by Israel against Arab states or vice versa.

Beyond the immediate claims of the troubled situation in the Arab lands, the United States must work steadily and at greater perspective to link the Arab future to the West. The least effective way to do so is to press for participation in military pacts or political alignments. The approach should be a search for long-term common interests which will give the Arabs the sense that they have a stake in partnership with the West and that the partnership will actually strengthen their independence. In making the approach the United States should recognize the fact of change in Arab society and avoid permanent identification with lost causes and dying institutions. Of the various lines of action that suggest themselves, among the most promising are those which will strengthen and expand economic enterprises linking the West and the Middle East on a basis which makes all possible concession to local nationalism and desires for progress and to the idea of Arab unity, while setting irreducible limits of Western interest.

Further attempts to build a system of pacts and alliances in the Middle East would be self-defeating. The Baghdad Pact, the concrete expression of that policy, is of limited importance. The United States should not abandon it, but neither should the United States lose flexibility of policy by joining it or attempting to join it. Similarly, to make acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine or any other form of alignment a test of friendship or of eligibility for assistance would be unwise. Some Middle Eastern nations will voluntarily choose alignment with the West. Their choice need not be discouraged. American political strategy should be broad enough, however, to accept a variety of attitudes on the part of the Middle Eastern States. Neutralism is a force with which the West will have to live. Nothing is gained and much is lost by acts that push genuine neutrals into the Russian camp, or, unless the evidence is incontrovertible, by the assumption that they are already there. It is enough that they should have the will to defend their independence.

There is no simple rule of thumb for removing barriers of suspicion between nations and for replacing them with good understandings and friendly cooperation. With reference to the relations of the United States with the countries of the Middle East, and particularly with the more wary Arab states, there is as yet no reason to conclude that eventually a considerable degree of friendly relationship within the

limits set by self-conscious nationalism may not be attainable. For all that it has preferred to manifest a neutralist attitude with a pro-Russian inclination as a recipient of forms of Russian aid, the United Arab Republic can hardly be regarded as pro-Communist. Not only have Communist activities been outlawed in Egypt, but all political groups in Syria, the "northern region" of the new states have been dissolved.

In the interest of forestalling Russian influence in the Middle East, the efficacy of technical, economic and military aid clearly has limitations. The methods employed heretofore in this approach to the task of aiding underdeveloped countries of the area to be able to aid themselves so to resist Communist advances seem not to have been eminently successful in this area where techniques in the administration of aid may be nearly as relevant to results as the substance itself. In certain instances, notably in Turkey and Iran, the timely provision of some forms of aid undoubtedly has yielded good returns and the continuing needs in these and other countries of the area are such that the principle of contributing to the upbuilding of friendly countries undoubtedly will be retained as a feature of American foreign policy. But even as debate on foreign aid has continued in Washington, some of the benefit that might be expected to accrue from aid

programs has been diluted, at least, by proffers of Russian aid in greater amounts and reportedly on more liberal terms than any supplied heretofore by the United States. The upshot of international competition on this level cannot presently be assessed, but that it sharpens the Russian challenge to the West in the Middle East cannot be questioned.

Such considerations as the above, at all events, call for careful examination in the policy making agencies of the United States Government in the shaping and amplifying of foreign policy to apply to situations beyond the limits of the Eisenhower Doctrine. That doctrine is both finite and rigid in providing merely for the physical protection of Middle East states - on request - from overt aggression. It is mainly in the broad/realms beyond, where Arab custom and tradition, religious influences, moral standards, physical and intellectual needs and yearnings, natural aptitudes and designing propaganda play upon each other and react with events to form ideas and shape attitudes, that the great power contest for the Middle East ultimately will be lost or won. It is the adapting of policy to the forces at work in this amorphous realm that the utmost in wisdom and skill is required if the resultant of these forces is to be in keeping with the interests of the United States and the non-Communist world.

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