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## PART V

THE COST AND CONSEQUENCES OF  
MIDDLE EASTERN CHOICES DOMESTICALLY,  
REGIONALLY, AND INTERNATIONALLY

## MIDDLE EASTERN CHOICES

*NO Middle Eastern and North African nation will be able to cope successfully with rapid social change unless it can build stable political authority. Stability, however, can no longer be attained merely through the use of power alone. Only power which addresses itself to the problems of social change can hope to build enduring foundations for authority. The first of the political consequences of social change we examine in this final part of the book, therefore, is the high cost of political stability.*

*The transformation of Middle Eastern society, however, has not only domestic consequences. Social change has also become a major influence, and often the decisive factor, in the regional and international relations of the Middle East. The main threats to stability and peace in the area today stem from domestic and regional conflicts produced or exacerbated by the uprooting of the entire structure of society. The greatest danger, internationally, is not open aggression initiated from abroad but covert foreign intervention in internal political warfare initiated by Middle Easterners. This entire section of the book may therefore be viewed as an analysis of those domestic but frequently crucial factors which mold the intentions, capabilities, vulnerabilities, and probable future role of Middle Eastern countries in their external relations.*

*The two concluding chapters are, however, in no way intended to constitute a systematic presentation of the area's regional and international relations. Only a separate volume could hope to describe adequately such complex issues as the decline of Western imperialism in the Middle East and North Africa, the changing relations among the great powers in the area, the volatile history of friendship and enmity among Middle Eastern nations, or such major unresolved issues as the Arab-Israeli conflict. Instead, we concentrate on the regional and international consequences of Middle Eastern social change—a perspective which policy makers have often neglected at great cost.*

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## CHAPTER 17

### THE PRICE OF POLITICAL STABILITY



#### *Problems of Decision-Making*

AT STAKE in Middle Eastern politics is the transformation of man and his society. Whether people shall obey the hallowed interpretations of God's final revelation or use their individual judgment, whether they shall wear hat or fez, marry four wives or one, join trade unions or not, lose their land or gain more, have a parliament or a dictator, be Arabs rather than Syrians—all these are now political issues. All such questions have become issues of power and freedom, and the chief business of governments and parties.

Khrushchev is right: "In his mind, the social and economic revolution now in progress in Russia, China, and elsewhere in Asia and Africa is the status quo."<sup>1</sup> Obviously Khrushchev will not, and the West need not, accept every specific form that status quo will take. But it is vital that Khrushchev not be alone in recognizing that all that now exists in the Middle East is changing and that the task for all concerned with the status quo, including conservatives, is to decide what is essential and worth saving—defining "essence" here as Aristotle does, as "that which can persist through change."

This is a heavy burden for the nascent political institutions of the Middle East. None of the countries under discussion possesses procedures for orderly government succession sufficiently strong and stable so that one could confidently expect any turnover to

<sup>1</sup> Reported after his interview with Khrushchev by Walter Lippmann, *The Communist World and Ours*, p. 13.

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take place in a predictably lawful fashion. As a result, much political capital is devoted to investments and reinvestments in power rather than to the broad distribution of dividends. Yet frequent changes at the top continue, and in the absence of autonomous institutions for creating and altering political consensus, the Middle East's development continues to be abrupt and unsteady.

There will be no early or easy achievement of political stability, though the will clearly exists. Middle Eastern leaders are committed by nationalist ideology and pragmatic necessity to affirm in every way their moral connection with their entire people. But this means living in two worlds at once. In order to mobilize the new middle class, Nasser, like other leaders, can use the modern, secular language of his *Philosophy of the Revolution*. In order to mobilize a larger audience, he must be able to reach men most of whom, if they have read or memorized any book at all, know the seventh century Koran. In such a communication, there can be no complete rationality, no complete honesty. Opposition leaders can easily profit from the difficulty the masses have under these circumstances of distinguishing between the plausible and the possible. Political leaders cannot know how much support there is for any given policy, or how much it would take to get support. "Hence calculation is impossible, and the flow of political interaction involves under-reaction and over-reaction, violence and apathy, alternations of periods of political latency with sudden and violent shifts in power."<sup>2</sup>

Only a few years ago it was possible, in describing decision-making in foreign affairs in Washington, to say that "the effort that must go into 'selling' a policy that requires wide support, the difficulty of getting some kinds of problems 'recognized'

<sup>2</sup> Gabriel A. Almond, "A Comparative Study of Interest Groups and the Political Process" in *American Political Science Review*, March 1958, p. 275. Especially for this chapter, but also for other parts of this book, I have profited much from Lucian W. Pye's *The Policy Implications of Social Change in Non-Western Societies*, Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, April 1957, and an essay by Dankwart A. Rustow, *Politics and Westernization in the Near East*, Center of International Studies, Princeton University, March 1956.

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except at the top, and the competition for the attention of these decision-making levels all combine to put obstacles in the way of any attempt at systematic policy making. Some issues . . . are the subject of massive concentration, while others are neglected almost entirely. There is a tendency to bounce from the crest of one crisis to the crest of another, and a bias toward postponing final choice among possible decisions that are mainly reactions, the children of events rather than their master. At the same time there is also a tendency to decide as little as possible. If wide consent is necessary, decisions will almost inevitably tend to deal with only one aspect of a problem . . . rather than with the whole complex of threats [or] solely on technical grounds, without a full look at the political context or consequences. It is here, in what might be called the discontinuity of policy development . . . that we are most likely to find the reason why America is so often surprised by the turn of international events. Most of our troubles . . . seem to derive . . . from the problems we have never really faced as a nation. . . .”<sup>3</sup>

This is also an excellent description of the decision-making problems of Middle Eastern governments in both foreign and domestic affairs. Although most people in the world manage to live with only partial answers and to survive by having only partial escapes, the leaders of the Middle East cannot hope to survive with such small pains. Their countries have entered a new historical era and need Founding Fathers who know how to build a stable authority and a consensus capable of achieving purposeful change.

The obstacles to a clear apprehension and execution of choices, however, are likely to remain high in the Middle East. A society built largely on face-to-face relationships has not yet established a firm consensus on the requirements of impersonal or public authority—on public purpose, public interest, and public duty.<sup>4</sup> Having traditionally perceived historical movement

<sup>3</sup> Roger Hilsman, “Congressional-Executive Relations and the Foreign Policy Consensus,” *American Political Science Review*, September 1958, p. 739.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Burton C. Marshall’s sensitive testimony on Pakistan, in Hearings before the Subcommittee for Review of the Mutual Security Programs of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 86th Congress, First Session, January 21 and 22, 1959, esp. pp. 8-10.

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in terms of the changing power and influence of persons, and more recently in terms of the conspiracy of small groups or Great Powers, many Middle Easterners still have difficulty analyzing politics in relation to changing socio-economic and intellectual forces. They see themselves instead caught in a world they did not make, and therefore they say "no" more often than "yes" in the hope of freeing themselves.

"No" is an important word in the formation of personality and its creative force should not be overlooked. No therapeutic results, however, arise merely from acting out frustrations unless learning in fact takes place or the environment changes. If the threats to personality amid scarcity and uncertainty remain too great, "no" can persevere and become an ideology of spite.

Saying "no" for the sake of constructive freedom will demand tremendous will and imagination. Although the traditional system of social action of which it was a part has crumbled, Middle Eastern family life continues to produce individualists readier, on the whole, for rivalry than cooperation—a tendency reinforced by the sharpened competition in many countries for food, housing, education, and jobs.<sup>5</sup> A long historical past in which men living under tyranny and exploitation learned to hold their tongue in order to save their head, or even to acquiesce in what they detested, is also not readily overcome. The Middle East's present rebellion against "the evil secretion . . . of prolonged impotence" has not yet, in all instances, led to a new self-confidence but rather to its first liberating but unstable cry of bold outward assertiveness.

It is the extremist rather than the radical who is likely to find

<sup>5</sup> "In the field of child psychology, it has been observed that each of the children who comes to school, to a degree, believes that no person, not even his father or mother, can be implicitly trusted; that every statement he hears has to be weighed. Never the simple reaction, 'that's true,' or 'It isn't true.' Never the simple remark, 'That's interesting.' Always, 'Why did he say it? Why did he want me to hear it?' " (Alford Carleton, "The Interaction of Education and Public Responsibility," in *The Evolution of Public Responsibility in the Middle East*, edited by Harvey P. Hall, Washington, Middle East Institute, 1955, p. 88.) On the deliberate incitement of sibling rivalry, see Hamed Ammar, *Growing Up in an Egyptian Village*, London, 1954, pp. 107-114. See also Fereidoun Esfandiary, "Is It the Mysterious—or Neurotic—East?" *New York Times Magazine*, March 24, 1957, pp. 13 and 70-72; and Raymond D. Gastil, "Middle Class Impediments to Iranian Modernization," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Fall 1958, pp. 325-329.

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it easier to make recruits under these conditions. Radical leadership in the Middle East cannot draw help from any local secular tradition except one dedicated to the pursuit of power. It has only recently become acquainted with the secular moral, political, and social tradition of others, and has barely begun to gain fresh insight from its own rich history of religio-political heresy, heterodoxy, and rebellion. Extremist leaders, by contrast, need only mobilize passions, fears, frustrations, and confusion, and in return for submission, promise land, bread, or glory.

There is yet another inheritance that lies heavy upon a present which demands planned and continuous effort. Observers have noted that the Arab mind, for example, "whether in relation to the outer world or in relation to the processes of thought, cannot throw off its intense feeling for the separateness and individuality of the concrete events. . . . It is this, too, which explains—what is so difficult for the Western student to grasp—the aversion of the Muslims from the thought processes of rationalism. . . . The rejection of rationalist modes of thought and of the utilitarian ethic which is inseparable from them has its roots, therefore, not in the so-called 'obscurantism' of the Muslim theologies but in the atomism and discreteness of the Arab imagination."<sup>6</sup> Although others have thought that this quality of mind typifies all Oriental civilizations,<sup>7</sup> it may be doubted whether it is, at least in certain essential respects, exclusively Arab or Oriental.

Indeed, studies of various aspects of working-class life and culture have suggested that, in its essence, "it is the 'dense and concrete' life, a life whose main stress is on the intimate, the sensory, the detailed, and the personal. This would no doubt be true of working-class groups anywhere in the world."<sup>8</sup> Living for centuries in an environment of great uncertainties and scarcities, Moslems may well share with the poor anywhere a great skepticism that the concrete experiences of each separate

<sup>6</sup> H. A. R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, F. S. C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West*, New York, 1946.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, London, 1957, p. 88, cited by Seymour Martin Lipset, "Democracy and Working-Class Authoritarianism," *American Sociological Review*, August, 1959, p. 493.

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day can be abstracted by thought or manipulated except by a fortuitous or merciful act of power.

Although the new middle class of the Middle East is intent upon making life more predictable and rewarding, the population groups growing most rapidly are the unskilled poor and the educated unemployed. The insecurity of their new existence gives them reasons to perpetuate on new grounds their accustomed vision of life as a series of sudden and discontinuous moments. Their new knowledge of the potentialities of the modern age, however, gives them reasons for the first time for resenting their style of life. As a result, they demand change, but their political intervention still tends to flame suddenly and violently into mob action, rather than to glow steadily in permanent, patient commitment. Their God sustained their patience (and gave them the will to rebel) in the past. With the decay of traditional faith, that burden (and opportunity) now falls increasingly on men. The temptation to avoid recurrent crises of power by impressing the impatient masses with spectacular rather than solid action will therefore remain great especially for Middle Eastern decision-makers who cannot rely on a well-organized, well-disciplined, politically educated mass organization of their own.

### *The Economic Cost of Political Stability*

The political leaders of the Middle East will find it difficult to offer many rewards for patience for followers and opposition alike even as they strive to create a society capable of stable and sustained motion. It has been suggested that "the economic difference between a traditional and a modern society is merely a question of whether its rate of investment is low relative to its rate of population increase—say, under 5 percent of national income—or whether it has risen to 10 percent or over. With a capital-output ratio of about 3 to 1, a society that invests more than 10 percent of its national income will outstrip any likely population growth; and a regular increase in output per head can then be assumed."<sup>9</sup> It is doubtful that most Middle Eastern coun-

<sup>9</sup> "[W. W.] Rostow on Growth," *The Economist*, August 19, 1959, p. 410.

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tries will be able to muster such savings from domestic sources during the next decade. Perhaps only four can make a serious beginning in that direction—Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Sudan. In 1963, however, it appeared that they first lacked primarily the political will to dare face all the far-reaching structural changes in politics and society which economic development entails; the second still lacked primarily stable political strength; the third, sufficient skills; and the fourth lacked at least a large enough initial infusion of capital to achieve that rate of growth.<sup>10</sup>

The majority of Middle Eastern countries belong to the domain of Alice's Red Queen, where everyone will have to run very fast if he is merely to stand still. The largest and most overpopulated Arab state, Egypt, must build the world's biggest dam, the High Aswan Dam, if it is to increase its cultivated land by one-third in ten years—while its population grows by one-fourth during the same period. In Egyptian industry, even a doubling of present industrial employment would hardly absorb the probable annual increase in the total labor force. Yet the trend in Egyptian industry, in common with the rest of the world, and for the sake of competing in international markets, is toward introducing labor saving machinery. Present industrial production in Egypt's large factories can probably be doubled with hardly any increase in employment.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, it may soon prove feasible to displace most of the clerks by machines.

Discontent breeds more quickly than economic opportunities —faster even than people. Hard disciplined work combined with austere consumption may raise the ceiling of poverty from \$100 yearly per capita income to \$200 within a decade in several countries of the Middle East. Such a goal, which is not likely to be achieved by all and surpassed only by a few, contrasts patently and painfully with the probable increase in American leisure and American per capita income from \$2,300 to \$3,300 during the same period. Hard, disciplined work and austerity, moreover,

<sup>10</sup> In the Sudan, about 120 million acres are thought to be suitable for agriculture and another 80 million for stockraising. Only about 7 million acres are now being cultivated in any one year. (Aglan, *The Economic Limitations to Future Development*, Khartum, 1953.)

<sup>11</sup> Harbison and Ibrahim, *Human Resources for Egyptian Enterprise*, pp. 22 and 136-138.

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directly conflict with the cardinal traditional values of Middle Easterners, namely leisure and immediate gratification. In modern times also, hard work alone has ceased to be a match for technological inventiveness combined with non-human energy. As a result, even the most dramatic economic achievements within the present capabilities of Middle Eastern countries may leave great dissatisfaction.

Yet if job opportunities do not significantly increase, a new closed society may well come into being in which those who hold jobs, especially among the new middle class, try to freeze their hold by converting themselves into a dominant caste of functionaries keeping the rest of their society at bay. A battle against such rule and the resultant instability would have none of the saving grace of the instability that characterized the traditional closed system of Islam, where rebellion helped to reconstitute authority. Rebellions against such an elite would convert the new states into battlegrounds in which the sheer necessity of survival engendered the warfare of all against all. Nationalism would then indeed have proved to be a temporary phase, yielding not to a larger sense of community but to none at all. In such a struggle, the great majority might well continue to be merely passive victims, that is, men who in this environment commonly weaken to die of disease before they die of starvation. We need suppose only that at least as many as were inspired to acts of terroristic violence by the battle for national independence, or later by a vision of the millennium, would then enlist in the fight for the sheer necessities of life. The army, as the guardian of domestic peace, might well then also split into factions, just as it has done many times before. Such possibilities are not far-fetched.

There are, to be sure, imaginative ways of treading water without drowning. One can build projects that appear to be symbolic demonstrations of things to come; cut inefficiency and end corruption; and set high standards of simplicity, austerity, and equality. It is also possible, at higher cost, to build proud armies and discover or perpetuate menacing enemies, without actually going beyond the brink and sacrificing bodies.

In fact, treading water effectively and for a long time may

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well be one of the higher tests of statesmanship in the Middle East. There are no simple ways out. Birth control cannot be made retroactive. The provision of inexpensive, effective birth control devices is obviously essential; but birth control will not prove acceptable until there has been a revolution in the structure of values and society. Islam has no theological objection to birth control, but births will not diminish as long as the survival of a family cannot be purchased except by plentiful free labor, as long as status can be attained in few other ways than by the production of male children, as long as the position of women remains fundamentally unchanged, as long as the individual is less important than the family or tribe. In short, birth control—or any other single development—is unlikely to be widely acceptable until economic and social and intellectual change allow it to be part of a cumulative process of change.

No change can proceed effectively in isolation. In Nuri's Iraq, for example, there were wide economic opportunities (6,000,000 empty acres, a surplus of water, adequate oil revenues, and a small population), but political courage set limits to economic planning. Had Nuri parcelled out the 6,000,000 new acres to the 300 or so families who then dominated Iraq, he would have asked for revolution; had he parcelled it out among the thousands of sharecropping families to convert them into economically independent owners, he would have led his country through a revolution, peacefully and constructively. Instead, he delayed until he lost his life at the hand of revolutionary forces whose strength he had underestimated.

Problems arise even when there is both courage and imagination—as in the Gezirah scheme of the Sudan. Here, a combination of free enterprise, cooperative organization, and government guidance produced a prolonged rise of incomes. Cotton, however, brings uncertain prices in the world's markets, and there is a limit to what an economy based principally on cotton may earn. Among Gezirah farmers accustomed to a steady rise in incomes and thus all the more baffled and discontented when they reached a ceiling, communist organizers were able to make headway more quickly than among any other group of farmers in the Middle East.

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Even a major advance is not enough; only continuing progress assures political stability. Economic development itself is a revolutionary influence, and can have constructive results only as it overturns established patterns of thought and action, maintains its momentum, and establishes new and solid foundations for growth. For this reason, political leaders who have so far succeeded in buying time for a small price may be resting upon illusions. If left unremedied, the increasing imbalance between population and resources, and between aspirations and satisfaction, daily increases the price of buying time.

All these qualifications merely enhance the importance of economic development. Without such development, it is not simply that nothing can happen. On the contrary, it becomes much more likely that the forces of extremism will find increased opportunities. With sufficient economic development, opportunities arise for a whole range of alternatives—witness prewar and postwar Japan, prewar and postwar Germany, the U.S.S.R. and the United States. But only with economic development sufficient to alleviate political, social, and economic imbalances will there also be a chance for stable, progressive, and ultimately democratic government.

Although economic development is, by itself, insufficient, its paucity cripples activities in all other fields in the Middle East. Yet where shall the money come from? Some productively multiplying activities may require much labor, of which there is a great surplus in most of the Middle East, but relatively little money: more intensive agricultural production, irrigation systems, roads, and buildings may fall into this category. Such efforts may produce good results, especially if consumption is not allowed to rise greatly and new investments are made wisely. However, unless the country is richly blessed in resources, this cannot be the road to an American, Japanese, or Soviet level of life.

Countries that lack adequate capital or resources, or both—most countries of the Middle East—have four alternatives. The first is to be content with the life of the poor, preaching asceticism and voluntary sharing. The growing pressure of population upon existing resources, the incitement of the vivid example of prog-

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ress in other parts of the world, and the ideological commitments of the dominant new middle class all make this an impractical alternative, for it is in fact an option for losing ground economically and politically. The second possibility is to try for modest gains through the intensive use of surplus labor, prudent discipline, equal justice, and soul-satisfying words, until new levels of technology—in cheap energy, cheap conversion of sea water into water for irrigation, inexpensive birth control, efficient food production—permit the building of a qualitatively different way of life at a smaller moral, economic, and political price than today. By such efforts, it may be possible for example, for Egypt to double a \$150 annual per capita income into a \$300 annual income. But it is a recipe that constantly skirts the edge of totalitarianism, both in the possibility of failure and in the effort to avoid failure.

The politics of despair that leads to communism, neo-Islamic totalitarianism, or ultra-nationalism is a powerful third alternative. Its potentiality is enhanced by the fact that the most rapidly growing segments of Middle Eastern society, including the new middle class, are those which have lost or not yet attained status, prestige, and jobs. If the undogmatic elements of the salaried new middle class are to build the new society and new body politic required for their survival, they will, in most countries of this region, need to have available a fourth alternative—capital and skills from abroad. These must be available, moreover, in quantities sufficient to compensate for the sums the country itself cannot muster for the necessary take-off into self-sustaining growth.

#### *To Set a Course*

Middle Eastern leaders face one vital task, however, for which no foreign supplies can compensate: to establish clear directions for bringing about enough change to control the changes which have already taken place—that is, to create new institutions with enough resiliency to deal with continuing social change.

How demanding a task this is may be measured by the model of Turkey. No Middle Eastern state is likely ever to have as easy

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a transition. When Ataturk began his revolution in the early twenties, he faced a population that was culturally more homogeneous than that of the majority of Arab states,<sup>12</sup> conscious of age-old (and very recent) military threats from its northern and western neighbors, and hence readily responsive to appeals for national unity. It was the most self-confident part of the Ottoman Empire, for its army and bureaucracy had ruled the rest. The majority of peasants already owned their land at the time of the revolution, and more land was available. Because of lack of communications they were physically and even psychologically out of touch with the battles for reform and secularization in the cities. The regime could therefore postpone coming fully to grips with the problems of the majority of the population for about two decades.

The principal revolutionary force, the army, had been favored as a career by the most intelligent, ambitious, and patriotic sons of both the old and new elite. More disciplined than any political party, more modern than any other institution of the state, its morale and its standing in the country were assured by its victories after World War I over various Western armies that had sought permanently to cut off parts of Turkey. Except for a minor revision of the frontier with Syria, the majority of the political leadership could think of no unsatisfied territorial ambitions. Domestically, however, in common with other politically active elements in the country, the army's leadership had participated in a century of discussions and rebellions for reforms, so that Ataturk's revolution was not a radical departure for many of those chiefly affected by it.

Ataturk himself was a brilliant organizer, an educated propagandist, and a charismatic personality without personal ties to any group which might obstruct healthy change. He never allowed his ideology to become rigid, but rather let it evolve as a broad guide to pragmatic action. In the realm of foreign policy, he skillfully enlarged his independence in the early twenties by doing what Nasser is doing now—drawing arms from the U.S.S.R. in order to free the country from past dependence on the West, and then striking a new balance. Since that took place

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the discussion of neighboring Syria in Chapter 11.

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in a more innocent international age and one about which the United States has few memories, Turkey was not precluded from quietly maintaining its flexibility during World War II and from gaining full recognition after 1947 of its international status as a member of NATO and the Western community.

No other country in the Middle East can today duplicate any but a small portion of Turkey's advantages. Yet even Turkey did not accomplish all that was necessary. After 1954, the government lost contact with most of its educated class and began to resort to repression.<sup>13</sup> In 1959, the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization reported that "a truly heroic program of land use adjustment is required" to change the "spiralling destruction" of Turkish agriculture, and to begin to meet Turkey's needs for future investment.<sup>14</sup> It required a second major revolution, beginning in the wake of a military coup in 1960, to project more solid social, economic, and political foundations for Turkey's modernization.

Most of the rest of the Middle East and North Africa will have to make progress on harsher and more difficult terms. Most leaders in this region today are unlikely to survive for long unless they succeed in making progress of wider scope with greater speed and with fewer resources. Even their most constructive roads to modernization may give the appearance, therefore, of seeming much closer to communism than to democracy. Such a view, however, whether by Middle Easterner or by Western or Soviet observers, would be a great and misleading over-simplification. Modern political science, pioneered by the West, has so far developed no adequate analytical discrimination, not even sufficient terms, for differentiating among alternatives in those parts of the political spectrum where most Middle Eastern choices will be made. There are vital distinctions to be made among political colorations that seem to share the same intensity and yet are far apart—among moderates trying to cope with immoderate problems, extremists resorting to totalitarianism to avoid dealing with roots, and radicals using authoritarian means to mobilize enough strength to establish new roots for a society.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 14.

<sup>14</sup> *New York Times*, September 11, 1959.

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In the Middle East, we shall need to acquire the unaccustomed habit of examining the adequacy of moderation with scepticism, and develop a sensitivity to the vital differences between extremist and radical movements. The latter, though moving insecurely across terrain unfamiliar to the West, are altogether alien to extremists in their avoidance of violence in the service of dogma while creating more solid foundations for human dignity. Such vision is important especially since, if time passes without sufficient help, the non-totalitarian leaders in the Middle East are almost certain to find their tasks beyond their strength.

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## CHAPTER 18

### REGIONAL RIVALRY AND THE PROSPECTS FOR UNITY



#### *Is There a Middle East?*

FOR thousands of years, men have sought to impose unity upon the Middle East from within and from without, but all past empires crumbled in the absence of secure frontiers and internal cohesion. The Middle East has no natural boundaries to mark it off from the rest of the world. Most of its mountains and deserts act not as outer frontiers but as internal obstacles to regional communication; its great rivers and inland seas are not barriers but traditional routes of interchange and invasion.

In the twentieth century, neither native nor foreigner has been able to bring the Middle East under a single rule. Islam—once the principal cement—no longer binds the region politically. Indeed, the spread of Islam has contributed to its diversity. More than half of the world's 430,000,000 Moslems live east of Karachi, and there are as many Moslems living under Indian rule or in sub-Saharan Africa as in all the independent states of the Arab East. Where Islam's new center of creativity may lie and whether it still has power to affect the political realm remains to be seen. Today, political leaders between Morocco and Pakistan speak of their own national interests, or of Egyptian, Arab, or Afro-Asian aspirations. Not one of them speaks or acts as if the "Middle East" as a unit were the object or inspiration of his policy.

Even the term "Middle East" is of recent invention and foreign

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importation. It was fashioned by the British before the first World War to cover the area between the "Near" East (namely Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey, the Levant—roughly Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine—and also Egypt) and the "Far" East. The "Middle East" lay between these two areas, and consisted of Arabia, Mesopotamia (now Iraq), Iran, and Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup> But this term melted and expanded as distances changed and cultures met. The nearest East (Greece, Bulgaria, and lately Turkey) became linked increasingly with Europe while a large new country, Pakistan, linked itself for political and religious reasons predominantly with the Middle East. In the age of the airplane, the Near and the Middle East, never culturally distinct, began to seem equally close to London no less than Washington, and increasingly the more ample and ambiguous "Middle East" has come to be the favored designation.

"North Africa," a term which traditionally excluded such northern African states as Egypt, Sudan, and Mauritania, has also been altered in scope, overlapping or fusing with the "Middle East." For centuries the broad stretches of Libyan desert along the shores of the Mediterranean separated Libya from both Egypt and the Arab West (*Maghrib*). Now, however, the Libyan and Saharan deserts are becoming economically valuable and offer no barriers to communication by radio or plane. Through these great deserts now run new paths of interaction among the Middle East, Arab Africa, and Black Africa.<sup>2</sup>

There is no way to define the Middle East simply, permanently, and with precision. The very fact that it spills over and also interlocks with other regions is an essential part of its true definition and of its significance. Its lack of natural frontiers and its location as a bridge between three continents have made the area from Morocco to Pakistan for thousands of years a crossroads for the world.

<sup>1</sup> For lucid discussions of the problems of defining the "Middle East," see C. M. Woodhouse, *Britain and the Middle East*, Paris, 1959, pp. 10-20; G. Etzel Peary, "The Middle East, An Indefinable Region," *Department of State Bulletin*, Washington, March 23, 1959; and Roderic H. Davison, "Where is the Middle East?" *Foreign Affairs*, July 1960, pp. 665-675.

<sup>2</sup> See Friedrich-Wilhelm Fernau's *Arabischer Westen: Der Maghrib in Bewegung*, Stuttgart, 1959, for an excellent discussion of these recent changes in relationships.

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Now that the people of the Middle East are reasserting their right to help shape their place and role in the world, and yet common ancestry, religion, and proximity count for less than in the past, the concept "Middle East" is likely to change its meaning again. Middle Eastern nations may discover new grounds or rediscover old foundations for regional unity. Or they may find greater kinship instead with countries on other continents that may be ideologically or politically closer to them than their immediate neighbors.

### *Conflicts within and around National Frontiers*

Unity will not come easily. Just as the Middle East as a whole lacks clear-cut grounds for regional political unity, almost every country in it suffers from similar difficulties. The thousand miles that separate the two wings of Pakistan from each other are merely a more obvious mark of the gaps and fractures that characterize other countries in this region. The 1,500,000 inhabitants of Lebanon, a country half the size of New Jersey, practice 18 distinct faiths and most of them believe themselves to be entitled to "a due proportionality" in the assignment of official posts.<sup>3</sup> Two-thirds of all the Jordanians are ex-Palestinians, annexed to their surprise in 1948 by a dynasty which most of them despised for being pro-British, Bedouin-linked, and a supporter of the status quo. In the Sudan, that quarter of the population which lives in the south is neither Arabic-speaking nor Moslem, but divided among several scores of different tribal groups and languages. About one-sixth of Iraq's people are not Arabs but Kurds; slightly more than half of all Iraqi Arabs are not orthodox but heretical Shi'a Moslems.

Even the countries that need not cope with such religious, ethnic, and linguistic diversity suffer, with the rest, from profound divisions between the modern-minded and the traditional, the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, between radicals, extremists, and moderates, between those whose horizon is bound by ties of kinship and those who have dedicated themselves to the nation.

<sup>3</sup> Woodhouse, *Britain and the Middle East*, p. 8.

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The very frontiers of each nation in the Middle East remain uncertain. Most frontier lines in this region were drawn by Europeans in an effort to compromise among rival European interests as these asserted themselves about forty years ago. Almost all the rest reflect the fortunes (or misfortunes) of wars fought since then. It is not surprising, therefore, that no area of the world faintly approaches the Middle East in the multiplicity and intensity of its current unresolved border disputes: Morocco demands the annexation of Mauritania and Rio de Oro, sometimes under its control in earlier centuries; these two areas would quadruple Morocco's size. Morocco and Tunisia both claim certain portions of Algeria lost as that territory expanded under French hegemony. Portions of the Libyan-Egyptian frontier remain unmarked, while rival claims exist along the border between Egypt and Sudan. A war between Saudi Arabia and Yemen in 1934 fixed only a portion of the frontier between these two countries. Yemen has employed troops recently to dramatize its claims to British-held Aden and the Aden Protectorate. Saudi Arabia remains in dispute over frontiers with a number of British-protected sheikhdoms and principalities along the rim of the Arabian Peninsula. Recent conflicts between Iran and Saudi Arabia over the sovereignty of islands in the Persian Gulf has caused Saudi Arabia to propose that this body of water henceforth be known as the "Arabian Gulf."

The problem of the borders between Israel and the Arabs has occupied more sessions of the UN's Security Council than any other single issue. Both Egypt and Iraq during the past six years have employed subversion, intensive propaganda, and troop movements to persuade neighboring countries to unite with them. The anti-government forces in the Lebanese civil war of 1958 were able to draw on outside help in part because "a tribal structure of society is prevalent which creates bonds of identity within ethnic groups, the realities of which are in some cases not diminished by the existence of a political frontier, the demarcation of which is, in some places, the subject of disagreement or uncertainty."<sup>4</sup> Unresolved border issues between Iran and Afghanistan involve an area near the Helmand River. Between Pakistan and

<sup>4</sup> *First Report of the United Nations Observation Group in Lebanon*, UN Document S/4040, July 3, 1958, p. 4.

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Afghanistan, the latter's claim to "Pushtunistan"—an undefined border region reaching in the most extreme view as far as Karachi—has frequently embittered relations. Pakistan's dispute with India over Kashmir continues unresolved.<sup>5</sup> Clearly it is wrong to argue, as Middle Easterners frequently do, that it is only the imperialists who are keeping them apart.

Outsiders are by no means innocent bystanders, however. Each of the great European powers has tried, at one time or another, to dominate the region but, barring that possibility, has preferred to see the Middle East weak and divided and so open to all traffic. It was on this principle that the powers agreed to prolong the flickering life of the Ottoman Empire until the early part of this century, and to divide most of its territories after World War I into non-self-governing states.

Between the two world wars, there was not sufficient local will or strength to alter the state boundaries and political arrangements imposed from outside. Three of the seven independent nations of the Middle East of that period (Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and Turkey) were too remote in space and time to think in regional terms; most of the rest were unable to play an independent role despite their formal sovereignty. Only Turkey was fully sovereign, and it had no regional interests. The new Turkey wanted none of the old Ottoman international entanglements; it had officially rejected Islam as a bond within Turkey and without; its aim was to become a part of Europe with whom it no longer had any major unresolved quarrels. There were no large Turkish communities outside its frontiers striving for aid or rivalry; it had little need of the resources of the Middle East for the survival of its own population. The contrast between Turkish nationalism and the unsatisfied hopes and unresolved issues of Arab nationalism could scarcely be greater.

<sup>5</sup> If Turkey is the only Middle Eastern country that escapes mention here, it is only because it appears to have settled its frontier disputes prior to 1959. In the early 1920's, it exchanged Greek and Turkish populations and in 1923 it willingly yielded all its claims to Ottoman territories; in 1939, it gained Alexandretta from Syria; in the early 1950's, the U.S.S.R. renounced its claim to the Turkish provinces of Kars and Ardahan, while Turkey had already ceased to express political interest in the Turkic-speaking populations of the U.S.S.R. In 1959, the Cyprus dispute was apparently settled.

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### *Nationalism vs. National Interests: The Struggle for Arab Unity*

The Arabs, founders of the Islamic Empire in the middle of the seventh century, ceased to control it as a single empire by the middle of the eighth century. Since that time the Arabs have remained disunited, although Arabs by language and culture constitute the majority in all countries from Iraq to Morocco. When the calls to unity began to be heard again in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Arab spokesmen were in fact divided among champions of Arab supremacy among Moslems, champions of Islamic supremacy in Arab states, champions of secular nationalism, and champions of rival dynastic claims over various parts of the Arab world.<sup>6</sup> These differences persisted until after World War II. The Arab League, founded in 1945 as the first collaborative association among Arab nations, remained ineffective as quarrels persisted between the Hashimite dynasties of Iraq and Jordan and the non-Hashimite dynasties and rulers of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.

During the 1950's, however, several developments fundamentally altered the significance of the passion for unity and rivalry in the area. Movements led by the new middle class won control of several states from the traditional elites. Soon after the emergence of this new type of leadership—Nasser was the first of these among the Arabs—the U.S.S.R. entered the Arab world in 1955 for the first time in history as an alternate source of political, economic, and military aid.<sup>7</sup> For the first time, the intra-regional conflicts of the Middle East came to have an ideological content and far-reaching international implications.

Regional and international issues began awkwardly and dangerously to coincide. The movement for socialist, authoritarian

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of this early period, see C. Ernest Dawn, "Ideological Influences in the Arab Revolt," and Harold W. Glidden, "Arab Unity: Ideal and Reality," in *The World of Islam: Studies in Honour of Philip K. Hitti*, edited by James Kritzeck and R. Bayly Winder, London, 1959, pp. 233-248 and 249-254.

<sup>7</sup> Only along the northern tier of the Middle East—directly along its own frontier—had the U.S.S.R. ever played a similar role. During the early 1920's, it supported Kemal Ataturk with arms, King Amanullah of Afghanistan with money and diplomatic support, and Reza Shah of Iran with diplomatic aid. After 1928, even these efforts to woo governments came to an end as the Comintern returned to an emphasis on overthrowing governments by revolution.

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nationalism found increasingly strong popular support even in countries governed by status quo oligarchies. The majority of the latter, seeking for countervailing external support against a local movement that meant to undermine their social and political system, their accustomed role in the region, and their ties with the U.K. and France, turned to the West. The West, anxious to maintain and, if possible, improve its position in this region in the midst of the cold war, thought it prudent to extend such help. When the Western powers thus committed themselves anew to the status quo governments of the Middle East, the leading reform-minded nationalist governments turned for external support to the U.S.S.R. With such augmented strength, these nationalists wished first to break the Western monopoly of influence and prerogative in the area, and then free themselves from dependence on any single great power.

The first results of these moves were, however, an intensification of the arms race among Middle Eastern nations and an increase in threats and actual outbursts of violence among Arab factions. The new conjunction of issues helped to set off the French-British-Israeli invasion of Suez in 1956, the American intervention in Lebanon, and the return of British troops to Jordan in 1958.

Yet by the end of 1958, these alarms and excursions had demonstrated that, while the old pattern of forces in the Middle East had been irremediably altered, the new pattern established certain new barriers against political adventurism. The United States had shown itself ready to curb even its closest allies when they sought by force to regain traditional prerogatives in the Middle East. The United States had also proved that it would intervene to protect the independence of Middle Eastern states, while at the same time becoming more skeptical about the wisdom of intervening merely to rescue unpopular but pro-Western regimes. And the power of both the Western states and the U.S.S.R. to intervene in the Middle East had shown itself to be limited by the undeniable weight each bloc could exert against the other, yet not necessarily on the sensitively nationalist Middle East itself.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The international implications of these developments are treated in detail in the final chapter.

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The Iraqi coup of 1958 served to dramatize that the major remaining obstacle to Arab unity is no longer foreign influence but disagreement among the Arabs themselves. Under General Kassim a reformist nationalist regime came to power that was stimulated by many of Nasser's ideas, yet refused to join with him in a common Arab state. Men who agreed at last on the social content and purpose of nationalism found themselves interpreting in different fashions the national interests of each separate Arab state. An earlier generation of Arab "nationalists" had adjusted itself to an unresolved tension between Arab nationalism and dynastic and clique interests. To the new reformist nationalist, the clash between nationalism and national interests seemed to come as an unexpected shock.

In Iraq itself after 1958, the clash among reformist nationalists provoked repeated bloody disorders and attempts on the life of General Kassim. The factions were many. The more moderate supporters of Iraqi "solidarity" with the Arabs (as opposed to Arab unity, federation, or confederation) argued that Iraq had not yet had an opportunity freely to develop its own political institutions or freely plan the full development of its own national economy. Why not build up a multi-party democracy that would reflect the genuine differences of opinion and cultures that exist in Iraq, and discover first the true measure of Iraq's wealth and power instead of forcing Iraq prematurely into the centralized structure of another Arab state? More extreme Iraqi nationalists sought to unite Arabs under Iraqi hegemony by laying claim to the oil-rich Sheikdom of Kuwait and pressing Syria and Jordan to unite with Iraq.

The so-called pro-Nasser groups in Baghdad were not all of one mind either. The Iraqi branch of the Syrian Socialist Resurrectionist (*Ba'th*) Party fought hard to bring Iraq into the Egyptian-Syrian union. At first glance, that policy seemed merely a continuation of its established line. The *Ba'th* Party had been chiefly responsible for tying Syria to Egypt. After the Egyptian-Syrian union had been consummated, however, Nasser had not trusted this Syrian-based party either to become the core of the "National Union," the sole political movement of the United Arab Republic, or to survive as the National Union's

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competitor. If the *Ba'th* now strove for Iraq's inclusion in the UAR, its hope seemed to be that its victory in Baghdad would allow it to strike a new and different bargain with Nasser regarding the distribution of power in a united Arab state. The Arab nationalists in Baghdad who fought unhesitatingly for complete unity with the UAR in 1958 had by 1961 also drawn certain lessons from Syria's experience. Most of them expected Iraq to arrange in advance that proportion of its revenues which would be allocated to the central Arab government.

The majority of politically active men in the Arab East doubtless recognized by the early 1960's that the quest for Arab unity was no longer a matter merely of settling relations among Arab governments. Popular movements have arisen that respond willingly to leaders of neighboring Arab states, or at least to similar programs. Many Arabs now quite readily treat the struggle for unity, hegemony, or separatism among the Arab states, even when it involves political violence, as an acceptable phase of an internal Arab revolution rather than an inadmissible form of combat among sovereign states. But the simple enthusiasm of 1956, when Nasser was still the only successful champion of Arab unity, is gone. Today, even supporters of Nasser in the most artificial Arab state, Jordan, tend to draw distinctions between Egyptian hegemony and Arab unity. They would yield their separate statehood only in return for a clear statement of their autonomous rights.

Western leaders, content that no aggressive nation would soon dominate these crossroads, began in the face of these developments to adopt a policy of sympathetic impartiality—one might almost say neutralism—toward Middle Eastern rivals. Soviet leaders viewed these divisions with satisfaction. "It is said that Arab nationalism supposedly stands above the interests of the separate Arab states and above the interest of the different classes of the population of Arab countries," observed Chairman Khrushchev. "Undoubtedly the interests of the majority of Arabs are indivisible in the struggle against the colonial yoke. But after a country has freed itself from foreign domination, the interests of the people cannot be ignored. The interests of all the Arabs cannot coincide. Therefore attempts under the flag of

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nationalism to ignore the interests of separate classes of the population and the interests of the working people are futile." He thought that leaders who would try to "foist" Arab unity on people may "fade" or be "thrown completely overboard."<sup>9</sup> Clearly the U.S.S.R. is not in favor of any movement for enduring unity that might stabilize a portion of the non-Soviet world; the reservations of the Western powers, especially since 1958, seem to apply only to movements aggressively hostile to the West and intent upon imposing unity on others by force.

It would be quite wrong, however, to expect the story of Arab unity to end at this point. By now, there are ancient obstacles that the drive for Arab unity need no longer face. The map of the Arab world of the Middle East and North Africa has changed its meaning. In the past, the great deserts and the mountains of this region, and the parochial pride of kinship groups kept men separate from each other, and the authority of empires radiating from oases and rivers soon diminished with distance from the capital and decayed in the rivalry of family and tribes. It was Islam's remarkable achievement that it had the power to give a similar cultural and religious cast to this region. It could not, however, keep the many separate clusters of population from preserving a high degree of cultural political autonomy.<sup>10</sup>

Today, the clusters of population and the nearly empty spaces between them have an entirely new significance. The clusters everywhere consist increasingly of men uprooted from parochial ties and eager for new leadership. The spaces between them are easily filled by the rapid communication of news and ideas, and the rapid movement of men. Within hours, a coup or even a speech will reverberate throughout the region.

This quest for new institutional bonds within a region possessing few locally sanctified frontiers can be expected to continue during the next decade probably without achieving final solutions. The 1960's are likely to see important changes in the relative strength of Arab countries as some prove themselves success-

<sup>9</sup> Khrushchev's speech to an Iraqi economic delegation on March 16, 1959, translated from *Izvestia* by the *Mizan Newsletter*, April 1959.

<sup>10</sup> Most instructive in this connection is the contrast between the frontiers of the countries of the area and the distribution of the population shown on the map in the front of the book.

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ful in dealing with internal social change, and others fall behind, and hence become either more adventurist or more vulnerable to subversion and pressure from outside. The change in the relative position of Iraq and Egypt may be especially dramatic.

Egypt contains over half of all the Arabs of the Arab East, or over one-third of all Arabs if we add all of North Africa. So many Arabs located in so strategic a position cannot readily be isolated: they are bound to take a leading role in Arab affairs. Egyptian actions, however, will almost certainly reflect the disturbing imbalance between modern aspirations, inadequate resources, and a soaring population. For Egypt, Arab unity is an issue involving not only political status but economic survival. As long as Egypt must endure its discontent, its style of leadership —regardless of the individual in charge—is likely to be volatile and, at times, inflammatory.

Since the emergence of socialist and nationalist regimes in Iraq, and of voices for regional unity in North Africa, Nasser no longer has a regional monopoly of leadership for Arab unity under the banners of reformist nationalism. Even by 1962, however, he retained several advantages over all other contenders. He held the prestige of having been the first reformist nationalist to come into power in the Arab world, the first to engage in large-scale land reforms, the first to secure a large supply of arms, the first to extend political and economic support to movements elsewhere akin to his own. He survived both a European and Israeli attack, and avoided entangling his political fortunes with those of local communist parties. No one rules nearly as many Arabs as he. No one among his Arab contemporaries has been in actual charge of any government for as long as he.

Iraq, although it contains less than one-tenth of all the Arabs, has far greater potentialities than Egypt. It contains probably more varied untapped resources than any other country in the Middle East. Within a relatively short time, it could become one of the wealthiest, most stable, and most influential countries in the region.

Similarly, in North Africa, the partners who might bring about North African or Arab unity may well change character and place. Tunisia, one of the most modern of all the Arab countries

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politically, has been losing some of its former prominence as other, larger African states, both north and south, achieved independence. States scarcely vocal in the past, Libya and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, are likely by virtue of oil or mineral wealth to play an increasingly more influential role provided they succeed in building adequate political institutions. Will the radical rebel army of Algeria and the conservative royal army of Morocco allow their two countries in the future to move in similar directions? Even if these states do not find it possible to cement North African unity during the next decade, it is certain that none of them will wish to purchase unity at the cost of bowing to the control of another Arab state.

With the majority of peoples and nearly half of the states in the Arab League now located in Africa, and Africa itself coming alive with a multitude of newly independent states, the problems of Arab unity must be resolved in an entirely new context. The three circles of Egyptian interest of which Nasser has written—the Arab, African, and Islamic—will from now on pose for Egypt and other Arab countries problems of balance as delicate as those which face Great Britain, for example, in living simultaneously with NATO, the Commonwealth, and movements for European unity.

Just as Middle Eastern leaders confront multiple revolutions in domestic politics, so they are challenged in regional politics at least during the next decade by circumstances which derive simultaneously from five different historical eras. The first of these is obviously coming to an end. The few Arab communities remaining under foreign control or protection—the sheikhdoms and principalities of the Arabian Peninsula, including Bahrain and Qatar, which are wealthier than most independent Arab states—are likely soon to be free to collaborate as they choose with other Arab states. While the second of these historical eras, characterized by regimes such as those of Kings Husayn and Saud, overlaps with the age of Nasser and Ben Bella, the rivalry among Middle Eastern states will continue to have strong ideological overtones—status quo against reform. As long as such states coexist, the Arab League is unlikely to find much common meeting ground except on anti-imperialism (provided no power

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is mentioned by name), on Palestine (provided the issue remains the future of Israel and not that of "Arab Palestine," now largely incorporated into Jordan), and on cultural collaboration (provided the proposals do not raise conflicts over how to deal with social change).

During the 1950's, the Middle East entered a third modern historical period in its regional relationships: a majority in the Middle East came to be ruled by reform nationalist governments. The latter, sharing a common political language and orientation, collaborate and compete with each other primarily on grounds of national interest. Such an era may well have greater potential than those which preceded it for cementing basic common interests through negotiations. In this era, it may prove feasible to lay the ground for a common development bank combining local resources and skills, or even for confederative ties in which Middle Eastern countries that join with others still retain a guaranteed voice in the shaping of common enterprises.

This era, however, is likely to overlap even within the decade with a fourth period filled with more menacing possibilities. If the rate and character of development in Iraq, Sudan, Iran, Syria, Libya, and certain of the sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf live up to their potentialities, and were to contrast with the obvious and high barriers to progress in countries like Egypt and Algeria, the Middle East could become divided regionally among rich countries and poor countries, and hence most likely between moderate and extremist regimes.

Only the character of the fifth stage in Arab relationships emerging within this coming decade remains uncertain. The growing potentials for conflicts among national and ideological interests, and among the rich states and the poor, could make the Middle East more than ever a breeding area of subversion, assassinations, and local wars. Foreign powers may be able to keep each other from intervening directly, but scarcely from intervening subversively under such conditions, and the power with the least interest in regional stability would have the greatest advantage.

There is another alternative. The richer and more stable Arab countries could decide, by an act of imaginative statesmanship,

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to take the lead in fashioning bonds that would, by a common sharing of resources and enlarged freedom of regional migration, overcome the perils to rich and poor alike of living in an economic and political slum. (The poorer states may be just as imaginative, but others may be less likely to follow their leadership.) If such an initiative is too much to hope for, then outsiders interested in the progress and stability of this area will have much more to compensate for than they ever imagined, not only economically, but in preventive and constructive political action.

### *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*

Although one can readily write almost an entire volume on the travails of the Middle East before it becomes necessary to turn to the Arab-Israeli conflict, this Middle Eastern issue will remain for some time to come the most volatile source of potential regional conflict, burning up resources and energies that could otherwise enormously ease the social and political transformation of the area.

There is little hope in the present decade of writing an analysis of the Arab-Israeli dispute that will strike all readers as objective or any partisan as rendering justice.<sup>11</sup> What follows is not intended to be a full-fledged analysis of this conflict nor an attempt finally to resolve it. Our purpose is limited: to show why passions run so deeply, why renewed fighting is so likely, and how the tensions it generates affect, or are affected by, social change. But if the Arab-Israeli conflict interests us in the present study only as it touches the politics of social change, this does not mean that we shall be able impartially to stand above the battle. On this dispute as on all other issues, we judge the political wisdom of Middle Eastern leaders by their ability to meet the demands of social change. The analysis that follows, though it is not built on familiar pro-Zionist or pro-Arab lines, may therefore validly be called partisan.

<sup>11</sup> For the period from 1936-1948, *The Struggle for Palestine*, New York, 1950, by J. C. Hurewitz remains the best account. For the earlier period, the reader should compare George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, New York, 1946, and Elie Kedourie, *England and the Middle East: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1921*, London, 1956.

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Certainly claims and counter-claims are irreconcilable on this issue. If Jewish religion and culture came to its first flowering in Palestine, it is also apparent that the Arabs have inhabited the land for more than a thousand years. If, in the Arab view, Great Britain's MacMahon Note of 1915 first promised political control of Palestine—then still an unconquered part of the Ottoman Empire—to the Arabs before Great Britain's Balfour Declaration of 1917 promised it as a "national home" to the Jews, the history of promises nonetheless does not end there. The MacMahon Note and the Balfour Declaration were merely the first steps in a series of contradictory British declarations and policies toward Zionists and Arabs in Palestine.

Zionists, who had originally been promised by others only a "national home" in Palestine, finally used arms to create an independent state. The majority of Arab states who made war on Israel in 1948 to prevent the carrying out of the UN resolutions on the partition of Palestine, recognizing their present weakness, now say they favor a return to the terms of these resolutions.<sup>12</sup>

But this conflict does not have its origins in an encounter between Jewish and Arab nationalism. Zionists sowed the seeds, tended the plant, and reaped the harvest of Israel. Their energies alone, however, were not sufficient to make Israel grow. During the late 1920's, more Jews left Palestine than entered it. After 1933, however, Central and East European Jews were compelled—whatever their views on Zionism—to seek refuge in Israel in order to save their very lives; after World War II, many liberated survivors from extermination camps went to Israel because the doors were either closed or barely ajar in the rest of the world. The failure of Western society to prevent aggression and secure individual freedom in Europe helped to make the survival of Jews a major Middle Eastern problem.

As a result, the Arabs—whose record of peaceful coexistence with their Jewish neighbors has over the centuries generally been superior to that of Europe—found themselves in a battle which eventually produced about one million Arab refugees. The Arab

<sup>12</sup> By defeating the Arab armies, Israel was able to establish armistice lines such that a third of its present territory exceeds the area it would have gained under the UN resolutions.

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defeat also left a deep emotional scar. This defeat came at a moment when the Arabs had anticipated one of the most important victories in their increasingly successful struggle against all foreign rule in the Middle East. Thus it had all the traumatic impact that the newly nationalist and sensitively proud United States might have experienced if Great Britain had succeeded in recapturing New Jersey (Israel is no larger) in the War of 1812. After their defeat, the Arabs found themselves with a neighbor that continued to have the strength to defeat all of them together. Israel's collaboration in the British and French attack on Suez in 1956 seemed to confirm their worst fears that this state was the spearhead of renewed Western imperialism.

By 1963, the evolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict had produced the following factors which both the partisans of a final solution and the seekers for a *modus vivendi* would have to take into account:

Israel was created chiefly by men in fear of their lives, in rebellion against persecution, and in realization of socialist and nationalist principles. Israelis have demonstrated extraordinary skill in economic and political development, and in diplomacy, and in winning two wars. Hence they are most unlikely to yield willingly any major portion of their territory or readmit any politically dangerous number of Arab refugees. Politically and psychologically they seem to be better prepared so far than any of their neighbors to withstand prolonged periods of sacrifice. The United States is no more likely to let Israel fall a victim to aggression than it was to let neutralist Egypt be defeated by America's NATO allies, Great Britain and France, and by Israel in 1956. In short, Israel is here to stay.

The scars of defeat have not yet healed in the Arab world. The Arab Moslem states west of Libya, and south of Egypt feel the pain with less intensity, and the non-Arab Moslem states of Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan do not feel it at all. But in the states that actually participated in the war of 1948 there is no question but that any leader who signed a peace treaty with Israel would be assassinated upon the morrow. The example of King Abdullah's assassination in Jordan in 1951, following his "secret" peace negotiations with Israel, is fresh in people's minds. In short, there will be no peace treaty in the foreseeable future.

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As a result, the Arab refugee problem is likely to continue to fester. Egypt is likely to continue to hamper Israeli traffic through the Suez Canal on the grounds that, under the Convention of 1888, it is entitled to bar transit with any nation with whom it remains technically at war.<sup>13</sup> This issue, and the presently dormant issue of Israeli transit from its port of Elath through the Gulf of Aqaba (whose narrow Straits of Tiran are claimed by Egypt and Saudi Arabia as domestic territorial waters), can readily flare into conflict with world-wide repercussions.

There remains, above all, the continuing threat of renewed warfare. War between the Arabs and the Israelis can all too readily break out again. The eventuality most feared by the Arabs is probably the least likely to occur within the next decade, given the probable continuation of adequate foreign aid to Israel and the stability of Israeli domestic alignments: namely, a deliberate Israeli policy of expansionism to compensate for discontent at home. Unlimited freedom of Jewish immigration into Israel, which will undoubtedly remain an essential principle of this state, has caused particularly grave fears among Arabs who do not believe that Israel, which now contains 15 percent of the world's Jews, can maintain many more within its borders.

Yet, in practice, the rate of migration is unlikely to assume the same proportions or pose the same economic burden as it did during the first decade of Israel's existence. Only Africa and the Soviet bloc are likely sources of immigrants. It is conceivable that more of Morocco's 200,000 Jews might wish to go to Israel; Algeria's Jews are French citizens and most emigrants, when Algeria became independent, preferred moving to France. Tunisia pursues a policy of political and social integration, and grants religious autonomy to its 50,000 Jewish citizens. Most of Libya's Jews have already left for Israel. The arrival of Jews from the Union of South Africa would be no burden, rather it would constitute an important infusion of capital and skills into Israel. For reasons of domestic and foreign policy, the U.S.S.R. seems unlikely to permit unlimited emigration of any of its

<sup>13</sup> On August 4, 1951, the UN Security Council voted 8 to 0, with three abstentions, for a resolution calling upon Egypt to end restrictions to Israeli traffic based on this argument. The Council did not attempt to pass on the legal issues involved, but argued that "neither party can reasonably assert that it is actively a belligerent."

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citizens during the next decade. Only a few of the Eastern European Communist states have permitted Jews to leave.

Without reducing its standard of living to the Middle Eastern average, Israel has the economic and political capabilities for making the sacrifices that would make it largely self-supporting during the next decade. Already, Jewish financial contributions from abroad amount to only eight percent of Israeli expenditures. Technological advances, especially in the field of water utilization, and a not unlikely continuation in the present rate of growth of industrial production and exports could allow Israel to feed quite adequately 4,000,000 people—or twice its present population. This is the number expected by Israeli officials to live in the country twenty years hence.

There are more threatening causes of war between Israel and the Arab states. Any of the many border incidents of each year could snowball into general hostility. If the rule of King Husayn should end in chaos, with no strong Jordanian group able to succeed him, a grave danger looms. A Jordanian faction could invite Egyptian or Iraqi troops to enter, and so incite Israel to enter also in order to prevent the establishment of an enlarged and strengthened Arab state at its most exposed frontier. In invading the West Bank of Jordan, Israel would be unlikely to assume the dangerous and ultimately impossible task of assimilating half a million Jordanians, including many Arab Palestinian refugees living there, or the bloody task of ousting them. Israel would be much more likely to declare itself ready to quit the West Bank as soon as the United Nations agreed to make that area a Demilitarized Zone. For some years to come, there will not be sufficient Arab forces to prevent such an Israeli move.

Despite much public talk to the contrary, no important Arab leader today believes that his country could hope to defeat Israel during the next several years. Nonetheless, no reduction of tensions is possible while domestic frustrations and a sense of inferiority persist among Arabs and incite rival leaders to establish leadership and unity upon a ready anti-Israeli platform. Moreover, failure by Arab governments to cope with the growing number of the educated unemployed and the unskilled unemployables could stimulate Arabs to embark on belligerent adventures

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abroad, however slim the odds may be for victory. Arab disunity, therefore, cannot spell safety for Israel. If it delays the day of a coordinated Arab attack on Israel, it does so only at the price of perpetuating social and economic frustrations that may well encourage separate, but hardly less destructive, adventurist attacks. But can two or four million Israelis in any event hope always to remain militarily superior to sixty or one hundred million Arabs? Arab unity may not bring any greater security for Israel: a united Arab world may be a more belligerent and more powerful enemy. But only Arab unity would make it possible for the majority of Arabs independently to mobilize sufficient resources to allow them to concentrate on constructive domestic action.

Although the Israelis know that war holds more disastrous possibilities for them than for the Arabs since a military defeat for Israel would mean national extinction, they have so far spent little effort on communicating to the Arabs their sense of common problems in the face of social change or, until recently, on persuading the great powers to institute effective guarantees against aggression in the Middle East. Instead, Israelis continue to strive for military superiority over the Arabs. They believe, and under existing circumstances they may well be right, that a mere balance of power is not sufficient to deter Arabs from curbing Israel's access to the Tiran Straits or to Jordan water (i.e., to expanded exports and food production), or from accepting the risks of war itself. This striving after military superiority, however, is itself one of the chief causes of tension in the Middle East. It is also a source of temptation for Israel again to resort to preventive war while its military superiority remains, at least in order to postpone having to confront more powerful neighbors in the future.

By contrast to all these incitements to war, there are no sure local barriers to war. Rapid changes in weapons, technology, and unpredictable changes in the ability of any Middle Eastern country to purchase weapons abroad make reliance on self-defense alone not only damagingly expensive but also highly uncertain. The essential margin of safety will have to come from forces outside.

So far, the United Nations has been unable to develop a police force that could guard the peace as effectively all along

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the Arab-Israeli frontiers as it does along the Gaza Strip. The Israelis oppose such a scheme because they are uncertain whether a defense dependent on the will of a growing Afro-Asian bloc in the UN and all the great powers is as reliable as an undiminished capacity to defend themselves. The Arabs do not wish to see their hope for revenge so obviously nullified by a wall of UN soldiers. Other small states with unsatisfied regional aims look with disfavor upon a UN instrument capable of preventing them from employing convincing threats of force.

There have been moments during the 1950's when it seemed that the U.S.S.R. and the West might find it possible to lessen the risks of war in the Middle East by agreeing on a program of limiting arms shipments to those nations which participated in the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. American voices have been raised in favor of such a proposal since 1954,<sup>14</sup> and President Eisenhower endorsed such measures in his address to the UN General Assembly on August 13, 1958.<sup>15</sup> The U.S.S.R. endorsed them in several official notes and conversations beginning in April 1956;<sup>16</sup> Israeli government leaders endorsed them beginning in 1959.<sup>17</sup> Arab governments, however, remain opposed to an agreement among the suppliers of arms.

The scope and sincerity of the endorsements and objections have never been tested. Yet it is not inconceivable that such an agreement could establish useful precedents in spirit and procedures for arms limitations and inspection programs in other parts of the world. For at least the next decade, however, the Arabs and Israelis already possess sufficient jets and tanks in stock to make war again, nor can locally developed capabilities for more advanced technological warfare be overlooked. A program of limiting new arms shipments from abroad would

<sup>14</sup> For one of the most cogent statements on this issue, see Charlton Ogburn, Jr., "Divide and Rue It," *Harper's Magazine*, December 1957.

<sup>15</sup> For an earlier official statement in a similar vein, see Vice President Richard M. Nixon's New York address, December 6, 1956, *United States Policy in the Middle East, September 1956-June 1957*, Department of State Publication 6505, August 1957, pp. 12-13.

<sup>16</sup> See *The New York Times*, April 18, 28, and May 5, 1956.

<sup>17</sup> See Premier David Ben-Gurion's interview with the *London Times*, November 13, 1959.

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probably serve in the short-run only to lessen tensions rather than capabilities. That would still be an achievement.

It would require much more to eliminate the chances of war. One possibility would be to translate into permanent treaty terms the position which the United States first enunciated and which the great majority of states supported during the Suez crisis of 1956. They voted to employ the machinery of the United Nations—both the good offices of its Secretary General and the strength of a United Nations Emergency Force—to arrange an immediate cease-fire in order to end a military intervention which had been designed to alter another nation's government and frontiers. But just as the United States succeeded in preventing timely UN action on the movement of insurgents from Honduras to overthrow the communist-dominated Arbenz regime in Guatemala in 1954, so the U.S.S.R. may frustrate on other occasions common action by the United Nations if the aggressors are not Western or pro-Western nations. The U.S.S.R., moreover, exploited this particular crisis to issue threats of its own. In messages to the British and French governments, it declared itself "fully determined to apply force in order to crush the aggressors and restore peace in the East"; in these and simultaneous messages to the United States, it added references to its possession of "rocket weapons," and "atomic and hydrogen weapons." It also offered to send "volunteers" to Egypt.<sup>18</sup>

By itself, the action of 1956 stands as a fragile UN precedent. Yet the Middle East is the only area of the world in which the frontiers of the U.S.S.R., NATO, and neutralists directly touch each other, and hostilities among countries, encouraged by arms shipments from the West and the U.S.S.R., can easily involve the great powers in regional wars. Here would seem to be common danger enough for the U.S.S.R., NATO, and neutralists alike to encourage agreement among them on procedures for averting, stopping, or at least localizing all aggression. Since about the

<sup>18</sup> Texts in *The New York Times*, November 6, 1956. In 1958, Chairman Khrushchev acknowledged to a group of Indian editors and reporters that "if one speaks of the participation of volunteers of other countries in the development of events in the Near and Middle East, then that would denote a real war." (*The New York Times*, August 5, 1959.)

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early 1960's there seemed to be relatively too much calm in the Middle East, and there was too much tension between the U.S.S.R. and the West, to make such an agreement seem feasible.

One other external barrier to the outbreak of Middle Eastern wars, especially between Israel and the Arab states, seems conceivable—one erected by the United States. In early 1957, there was a moment when it seemed that the United States might take such a stand. In one of the first statements issued by the White House on the Suez intervention, the President "recalled that the United States, under this and prior Administrations, has pledged itself to assist the victim of any aggression in the Middle East. We shall honor our pledge."<sup>19</sup> Some observers therefore thought it possible that the United States might issue a declaration stating that it would be prepared to employ its armed forces, if necessary, to secure and protect the integrity and independence of any nation in the Middle East requesting such aid against overt armed aggression by *any* nation. It would require the capacity to intervene in time—especially before Arab or Israeli planes had inflicted havoc on their enemy. It was argued in this connection that American military power, intended to be a sufficient deterrent to Soviet aggression, should certainly be adequate to act as a deterrent to aggression by Middle Eastern states or their larger neighbors. However, the doctrine that emerged specified only one aggressor, international communism. It did not suggest, as many hoped it would, that the United States, as a leader of the free world, cannot allow any country this side of the Sino-Soviet bloc, whether neutralist Egypt, pro-Western Israel, or Communist Yugoslavia, to fall victim to aggression, whatever its source. The limitations of the American pledge were noticed especially below the northern tier region of the Middle East, which had just experienced aggression on the part of Great Britain, France, and Israel, but never on the part of the U.S.S.R.

As a result, there are neither external nor internal barriers to renewed warfare in the Middle East. Good fortune and daily acts of prudence may yet preserve the peace. If present forces

<sup>19</sup> White House News Statement, October 29, 1956, quoted in *United States Policy in the Middle East*, p. 137.

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and trends persist, however, then the United States will probably not be able to avoid being drawn again and again into regional conflicts with little advance warning and against all its hopes.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile the fear of enemies infects all regional relationships and energies and inhibits constructive action by Middle Easterners and outsiders alike.

<sup>20</sup> On May 8, 1963, however, President Kennedy at his press conference publicly affirmed a position which his diplomats had earlier and in greater detail impressed privately on Arab and Israeli leaders: "The United States supports social and economic and political progress in the Middle East. We support the security of both Israel and her neighbors. We seek to limit the Near East arms race, which obviously takes resources from an area already poor and puts them into an increasing race which does not really bring any great security. We strongly oppose the use of force or the threat of force in the Near East. And we also seek to limit the spread of Communism in the Middle East, which would, of course, destroy the independence of the people.

The Government has been, and remains, strongly opposed to the use of force, or the threat of force in the Near East. In the event of aggression, or preparation for aggression, whether direct or indirect, we would support appropriate measures in the United Nations and adopt other courses of action on our own to prevent or to put a stop to such aggression, which, of course, has been the policy which the United States has followed for some time."

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## CHAPTER 19

### THE INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION OF THE MIDDLE EAST

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#### *The Vulnerability of the Area*

THERE is no power vacuum in the Middle East and North Africa. No outside power can any longer move in uninvited without meeting determined resistance on the part of local forces, the opposite camp in the cold war, and the majority of states in the international community. In the past, the great powers could dispose of Middle Eastern problems; now they must deal with Middle Easterners. The governments of this region possess a strength and freedom which they never had before.

Part of the reason is external: years before the U.S.S.R. thought it useful to champion Middle Eastern nationalism, the former Western imperialist powers had conceded independence to the great majority of countries in this area. The entrance of the United States as the principal Western power in the Middle East hastened the shift from domination to freer bargaining in economic and political affairs. The subsequent emergence of the U.S.S.R. as an alternate supplier of military, political, and economic aid, and the growing weight of the Afro-Asian bloc in the United Nations enhanced Middle Eastern confidence and maneuverability.

Internally, too, there is less cause for a power vacuum. The rule of dynasties and cliques dependent on the fortunes of individuals has, for the most part, already given way to governments dependent on armies or parties representing the interests

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of at least the salaried middle class if not broader masses. Individual leaders matter as before, but they can hope to endure only if they convincingly represent the interests of emerging new social classes. It is the interplay of Middle Easterners attempting to transform their society that now holds the stage in the politics of this region. Outside powers can still influence its future, but only as they collaborate with local groups able to meet the demands of this fundamental revolution.

British-French military intervention in Egypt in 1956, and even the invited entrance of U.S. troops into Lebanon in 1958, illuminated the new limitations on the exercise of power by outsiders in the Middle East. These Western actions demonstrated (1) that there are points beyond which it becomes imprudent to challenge the national interests of Western states or the national independence of any nation, and (2) that military or covert intervention is an unreliable and ineffective device when employed in disregard of the historical forces transforming Middle Eastern society.<sup>1</sup>

In Egypt, Nasser became a far more popular hero as a result of the armed intervention by Britain, France, and Israel which was designed to end his rule. Some observers, conscious only of the overwhelming military superiority of the attacking forces, ascribe this result to pressure from other powers which prematurely halted the invading forces. However, the result of successful intervention would have been disastrous. Reoccupation of the Suez Canal was bound to be met with continued sabotage by Egyptians who had succeeded once before, in 1953, while negotiating for an earlier British withdrawal from this area, in making the Canal Zone unsafe for sustained operations. Had the French and British thereupon been tempted to seize Cairo and Alexandria, they could have succeeded. But this step would have turned the largest Arab country into a larger Algeria, with thousands willing to convert their miserable life into heroic death. Few candidates would have been prepared to risk assassination and the disdain of the majority of the world living in

<sup>1</sup> I have enlarged upon this point in *The Morality and Politics of Intervention*, published by The Council on Religion and International Affairs, New York, 1963.

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Asia, Africa, and Latin America to govern Egypt in behalf of absentee Western powers.

In Lebanon, civil war was the fruit of a Western-supported attempt to secure a Christian-dominated, pro-Western government in a politically and culturally divided country where Moslems rather than Christians were becoming the majority. Even the landing of 10,000 American troops could not sustain a Lebanese regime that lacked adequate popular backing. Instead, the United States finally decided to use its influence to persuade the pro-Western government that had invited American troops to yield power to an alignment of Lebanese leaders more closely reflecting the balances of power in a still divided community.

Though the Middle East has ceased to be a military, political, or social vacuum, the actions of Middle Eastern states in international affairs remain largely shaped by four weaknesses of which they themselves are acutely aware. Although they are now sovereign, independent states, they know that they remain dependent on the great powers for capital, arms, and technical skills. Although the great majority of them are united by common history, culture, language, and religion, they are rent by so many regional conflicts that they have not yet been able to strengthen themselves by sharing their resources or by dealing, as a unit, with the great powers. There are also divisions within each country, far deeper than in any Western nation, between the very rich and the very poor, the powerful and the powerless, religious traditionalists and secular modernists, radicals, moderates, and extremists, so that most Middle Eastern countries have not yet achieved a popular consensus on the methods and objectives of government. Finally, the nations of the Middle East are uncertain and inexperienced in dealing with a world in motion, having until quite recently lived in a world that was sure of its truths, rituals, and institutions because it knew itself possessed of God's final revelation.

The sensitivity and volatility of Middle Easterners in the face of such difficulties are compounded by the fact that most of the people of this area are young (half of them are under 20), almost all of them are poor, and the few who have power or jobs are unsure, in an environment of rapid movement and great

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scarcity, both of themselves and the security of their position.

Weakness tends to corrupt no less than power. It greatly increases vulnerability to suspicions, resentments, subversion, error, and accident.<sup>2</sup> Given all these Middle Eastern problems and grievances as a natural focus for resentment, and the ancient unconscious defense mechanism of all communities for channeling domestic hostilities against outsiders, it is surprising that relations between Middle Eastern and foreign nations proceed with such frequent periods of calm.

Between the two World Wars, the weakness of Middle Eastern countries did not loom as a major world issue. The U.S.S.R. displayed remarkably little interest in the area, neglecting to open embassies in the Arab world except temporarily in remote Saudi Arabia and Yemen during the late 1920's; no ambassadors were exchanged with Egypt, the largest Arab state, until 1944. International rivalry for influence in the Middle East was confined to Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, with the two democratic nations clearly predominant until shortly before World War II. Between the wars, the urban masses sometimes intervened dramatically in politics, but only sporadically and as mobs. The customary elite of kings, landowners, and bourgeoisie seemed firmly in control, and most of its members welcomed alliances with the West.

The elite's willing acceptance of support from abroad partially masked its weakness. It lacked sufficient strength on its own to end the conflicts of rival dynasties and individuals or, later, to meet the mounting domestic pressure from below. In relying on foreign friends, this elite was not disloyal to its inherited code which derived from an age in which not the nation but personal and tribal feuds stood at the center of politics, and any enemy of one's enemy was acceptable as friend. As this elite drew closer to Western powers, however, its social and economic distance from its own masses became wider. Its fortunes grew and its style of life became pseudo-European. The West rein-

<sup>2</sup> To this thought, Eric Hoffer adds: "Power corrupts the few, while weakness corrupts the many. . . . When it is in their power to do so, the weak destroy weakness wherever they see it. The self-hatred of the weak is likewise an instance of their hatred of weakness." ("The Awakening of Asia," in *The Reporter Magazine*, June 22, 1954, p. 17.)

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forced this system of rule based on a calculus of personal loyalties by intervening in behalf of sympathetic political factions, granting special favors in trade, credits, and investments.

The pseudo-European posture of this elite raised certain illusions in the West. Since this group held a monopoly of social, political, and economic power, and yet was responsive to the West, it was easy to conclude that the West had succeeded in communicating with all who counted in the Middle East. In no country were there more than five hundred of such men; and thus it seemed that the Western position was secure. Evolution, it was imagined, would come slowly as others gradually entered this limited circle, and improved its skills but not its perspectives.

Yet this symbiotic relationship between the Middle East's traditional elite and the West has by now been destroyed almost everywhere by the grave limitations it placed on the freedom of action of both partners. In countries in which Western nations sought to advise such elites to make reforms which would relieve discontent, it was often discovered that these status quo regimes were in fact truly dedicated to the status quo. Where the more liberal professional groups among the local bourgeoisie themselves pressed for free parliamentary government and speedier evolution toward complete national sovereignty, the Western European nation with dominant influence in the country usually sought to delay such grants. As a consequence, the more reactionary groups in the traditional elite came to be discredited by the repressive measures which they employed to compensate for the unpopularity of their international alignment and domestic exploitation; the bourgeois liberal groups became discredited by the repeated failures of their initiatives. When, after many delays, reforms were finally adopted, they were popularly regarded as efforts to save regimes that had become too weak to resist making concessions. The reputation and influence of the West suffered along with those of the rulers with whom it was so intimately connected.

Above all, in concentrating its attention on the tangle of personalities in the perennial and seldom consequential game of musical chairs among the elite, both the latter and the West failed to take seriously the forces shaping a new social class

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with an interest in substituting an entirely new game under entirely new rules. For a long time, the representatives of this new class were dismissed as a minority of vocal agitators. When they finally came to power in Iran with Mosadeq in 1951 and in Egypt with Nasser in 1952, the status quo elites of the area sought increased protection from the West. By this time, however, the United States was beginning to take the leading Western role in the Middle East,<sup>3</sup> and thus the West responded in a new fashion.

### *Defending the Middle East Militarily While Losing it Politically*

The 1950's mark the end of the age of political romance in the Middle East—that is, when Great Britain could rely on the men of the desert who were able to pledge the word of their families and henchmen, and the United States had only friends because it had no national political interests, but instead had only private philanthropic concerns in the area. At a moment when the political revolutions of the Middle East began, American policymakers were to retain for some time yet their inclination to perceive in Middle Eastern politics only the clash of personalities and cliques, and the flow of power into power vacuums, or to trace all the West's difficulties in the area either to the creation of Israel, or to sympathize above all with Israel's burden in nation-building. Instead, the United States found cause in events elsewhere to give particularly urgent attention to the requirements of defense in the cold war. The United States believed that the Korean war which broke out in 1950 conclusively demonstrated that the U.S.S.R. would attack wherever and whenever Western strength was not clearly and sufficiently in evidence. Because of the decline of British power in the Middle East, this area threatened to become a gap in that strategic position by which

<sup>3</sup> The assumption of a major American role in the eastern Mediterranean began in early 1947, when Great Britain asked the United States to assume responsibility for protecting Greece against communist guerrilla forces and Turkey against Soviet threats, a burden which Great Britain found itself financially unable to carry any longer. For developments in American policies leading to the Truman Doctrine of 1947, see William Reitzel, *The Mediterranean: Its Role in America's Foreign Policy*, New York, 1948.

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the West sought to inhibit Soviet aggression—that global ring of strategic bases which would have to be knocked out (during the 1950's, by manned planes) before the U.S.S.R. could attack without fear of retaliation. The United States concluded therefore that a Middle East Defense Organization, even if organized on more modest terms than NATO, would be the most effective way of enhancing the internal security of the area and the will (and over time the capacity) to resist external aggression.

The effort in 1951 to unite all the countries of the area in a Middle East Defense Organization failed. The West attributed this failure primarily to a fact with which it had long been familiar, but which it had hoped Middle Eastern countries would be able to transcend in the face of a larger threat: the intensity of regional conflicts and rivalries.<sup>4</sup> But the West underestimated the weight of the other major cause for this rejection—the growth of nationalism opposed to any new links between unequally strong partners, especially with a West still so influential in the internal affairs of the Middle East. This sentiment was already so strong in the area that even the government of King Farouk's Egypt felt compelled to reject the idea of a Defense Organization two days after it had been proposed.

As the nationalism of the salaried middle class gathered strength, especially after Nasser's Egyptian coup of 1952, the West discovered that this movement intended to subvert the traditional elite (with whom the West, by virtue of earlier commitment, was still allied). It also clearly intended to put an end to all special Western prerogatives in the area, doing this at a time when continued fighting in Korea symptomized the seriousness of the "cold" war.

The ensuing drama of cross-purposes and misunderstandings illustrated how policies fail that do not successfully accommodate themselves to the needs of two different, yet simultaneous, his-

<sup>4</sup> The Arabs themselves tried to meet the problems of regional defense by ratifying the Arab Collective Security Pact. (For its text, see J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, a Documentary Record, Princeton, Van Nostrand, 1956, Vol. I, pp. 242-245, 311-314.) It pledged its members to consult in times of danger, to coordinate their armed forces and resources, and to aid without delay any member subjected to aggression. It came into force in April 1952, yet no Joint Defense Council or Permanent Military Commission was ever established in pursuit of this Pact.

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torical demands—in this case, the social revolution of the Middle East and the cold war. The United States had no intention of opposing nationalism and reform in the Middle East. Indeed, it looked with considerable favor on the emergence of reform politics under the leadership of the new middle class and during 1954, for example, successfully influenced a more reluctant Great Britain to yield its former military rights in the Suez Canal Zone and its former property rights in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Yet in pursuit of Western defense in a nuclear age, it soon found itself more closely allied than before with the regimes of the Middle East supporting the status quo. The new nationalists had no intention of joining in the campaigns of the cold war, yet, in satisfying their own aspirations, they soon found themselves inviting the U.S.S.R. for the first time in history to participate in the politics of the entire Middle East.

This is how the events unfolded: Foiled in its efforts to collaborate in defensive arrangements with the Middle East as a whole, the West looked for individual nations that might prove receptive. Nasser was willing to accept Western arms in order to assume the leadership in strengthening the Arab Collective Security Pact.<sup>5</sup> He made it clear that he would not enter any formal alliance with the West, but vouched that Arabs in their nationalist pride could be counted upon to defend themselves against any aggressor. The West remained unconvinced, however, that the U.S.S.R. would be deterred by any scheme that lacked military bases to demonstrate the Western presence. The West feared that its acceptance of Nasser's leadership would alienate its more traditional friends, and was unsure that Israel's defense could be integrated with such an arrangement. There were, moreover, more willing partners.

Turkey, already NATO's eastern anchor, became the West's principal agent in persuading Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan to join in a series of agreements beginning in April 1954 that culminated in November 1955 in the Bagdad Pact.<sup>6</sup> This Pact

<sup>5</sup> See preceding footnote.

<sup>6</sup> The "Northern Tier" defense concept was first suggested by Secretary Dulles after his return from the area in a "Report on the Near East," Department of State Bulletin, June 15, 1953, pp. 831-835. On April 2, 1954, Turkey signed a security treaty with Pakistan. On February 24, 1955, Turkey signed the

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linked all the nations of the Middle East's "Northern Tier," except Afghanistan, with Great Britain and, for almost all practical purposes, with the United States.

This lining up of pro-Western nations, no less than the reactions of the Middle Eastern neutralists, had unintended consequences. Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan were concerned in varying measure to deter possible Soviet aggression, but they had no illusions that military planning and arms shipments under the Baghdad Pact would make them strong enough, even a decade hence, to stem a Soviet attack. They interpreted this alliance primarily in local terms. The Pakistanis welcomed the United States as the first great power, accompanied by its Middle Eastern friends, to promise them strength against the neighbors they feared most, namely India and Afghanistan. Iran looked forward now to receiving assistance for building a vastly greater armed force and a much more prosperous economy in order to become, as in earlier centuries, the leading power along the Northern Tier. Iraq joined with three immediate gains in mind. By virtue of a bilateral agreement with Great Britain signed at the same time as the Baghdad Pact, Iraq regained control over the two major British airbases in Iraq, an achievement similar to rival Egypt's earlier recovery of its rights in the Suez Canal Zone. By virtue of the Baghdad Pact, Iraq also ceased to be solely dependent on Great Britain, enlarging its maneuverability by adding to its supporters the United States, a country not always in agreement with its European ally on Middle Eastern issues. Above all, Iraq believed it had now earned implicit Western backing for fulfilling a long-standing dream—incorporating Syria and Jordan into a Fertile Crescent Union under Iraqi leadership. All of the Northern Tier countries expected henceforth also to be sustained by Western aid in maintaining their domestic power structure.

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Baghdad Pact pledging cooperation "for their security and their defense," and on April 4, Great Britain adhered to this pact, followed by Pakistan on September 23, and Iran on October 20, 1955. The United States subsequently joined the Military, Economic, and Counter-Subversive Committees of the Baghdad Pact, and in 1958 entered into new bilateral defense agreements with Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan. But the United States never signed the Baghdad Pact itself.

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Among all of them, Turkey most closely adhered to the original purpose of the Pact, and was least affected by its transmutations. Turkey had already moved far in reforming its traditional social structure, had no vital regional ambitions, and already possessed considerable social, political, and military strength.

Thus a defensive scheme that took too little account of regional rivalries and social revolutions was transmuted by them even before it took final shape. Middle Eastern rivalries and revolutions for the first time became connected with the cold war and helped to shape its course. This linkage took place in early 1955, and within days the pressure began to build up which was to impel Nasser to turn to the U.S.S.R. by mid-summer.

On February 24, 1955, Iraq signed a security treaty with Turkey and laid the foundations for the Baghdad Pact in the hope of becoming the first among other Arab adherents to a Western-oriented organization. On February 28, an Israeli force estimated at half a battalion attacked and destroyed the Gaza garrison headquarters of the Egyptian army, killing 38 and wounding 31 Egyptians. During March, Iraqi and Turkish troops marshalled along Syria's frontier, eager at least, so it appeared, to create pressure in favor of a new regime willing to unite with Iraq. On April 22, Adnan Malki, the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Syrian Army, who was the principal military supporter of the neutralist and socialist *Ba'th* Party, was assassinated by an adherent of the fascist, and self-styled pro-American Syrian National Social Party. (At a subsequent trial, the prosecution blamed the American Central Intelligence Agency for having organized the assassination.)

To Nasser, then the principal spokesman of reform nationalism, the adherence of Iraq to a Western-sponsored defense organization meant that Egypt's traditional rival in the Arab world would henceforth become the area's chief recipient of arms while he could buy them neither for cash nor credit from the West. The developments within Syria and along its frontiers apparently suggested to Nasser that Iraq would use its enhanced power and influence to win hegemony in the Arab world for

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itself and the forces of the status quo. The Gaza raid and its demonstration of Egypt's utter military weakness raised not only issues of power and prestige, but also of Nasser's survival as Egyptian leader. If Nasser could not improve on King Farouk's military performance against Israel, the army officers who constituted his sole organized political support would no longer permit him to rule.<sup>7</sup>

Sometime between March and June 1955, as a result of these domestic and regional considerations, Nasser initiated and concluded negotiations with the U.S.S.R. to become the Arab world's largest recipient of outside arms.<sup>8</sup> In December 1955, within two months after the conclusion of the Baghdad Pact, Afghanistan—the only Northern Tier country outside the Pact—reacted to Western military support for Pakistan by accepting Soviet support in its quarrel with Pakistan over the border territory of "Pushtunistan." More concretely, it received a \$100,000,000 commercial loan from the U.S.S.R. and credits for about \$30,000,000 for the purchase of Soviet arms. Syria and Yemen entered into an arms agreement with the U.S.S.R. in February 1956. Extensive Soviet economic agreements with these and other Middle Eastern nations were to follow.

Western attempts to stem these reactions by enlarging the area of the Baghdad Pact made matters worse. The visit of the Chief of the British Imperial General Staff to Jordan in January 1956 to win that country's adherence to the Pact succeeded only in toppling three Jordanian governments within a week. The visit further helped to bring about by March the dismissal of Glubb Pasha, British Commander of Jordan's Arab Legion, and, within a year thereafter, the end of the Anglo-Jordanian treaty and British base rights in Jordan. A new American initiative in early 1957—offering military and economic aid to countries declaring themselves against international communism under the Eisenhower Doctrine—won only Lebanon to the

<sup>7</sup> The defeat of the Egyptian army by Israel in 1956 did not raise the same issue. It was possible to salvage pride then by asserting that no one could expect Egypt simultaneously to defeat Great Britain, France, and Israel.

<sup>8</sup> In exchange, Nasser paid in cotton—Egypt's principal revenue crop—for which demand in the West had been steadily declining since the end of World War II, and especially so in the year 1955.

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ranks of committed pro-Western states. Moreover, this step split the various Lebanese religious and ethnic groups and helped to bring about a civil war, with American and Syrian military intervention in it, and Lebanese renunciation of the Doctrine before the year's end.

### *The U.S.S.R. Enters Middle Eastern Politics*

During 1955, the U.S.S.R. had broken through and jumped over the Middle East's Northern Tier. It had established its presence in the Middle East as a force to be reckoned with, without employing either its armed forces or the apparatus of international communism, but at the invitation of independent, nationalist governments.

The Soviet assumption of a major role in general Middle Eastern politics—after it had been thwarted during the late 1940's in Greece, Turkey, and Iran—caught most of the West by surprise. Yet the more obvious question might well have been—why did the U.S.S.R., the only great power immediately bordering on the Middle East, committed to the expansion of communism, and confronting a society in the throes of social revolution, delay its entrance for so long? The most plausible answer would seem to be that, until early 1955, the U.S.S.R. lacked the revelent perception, the necessary capabilities, or an issue directly touching the strategic balance of strength of the great powers in the Middle East.

Almost until the end of the Stalin period, the U.S.S.R. pursued the policy that all who were not for the U.S.S.R. were against it. There was the "camp of socialism and peace" and the "camp of imperialism and war." Neutrals like Nasser and Nehru were denounced as "hidden lackeys of imperialism." The change came gradually.<sup>9</sup> During the last years of the Stalinist era, between 1951 and 1953, it had already become firm strategy to strive for close relations with all who would oppose "U.S. imperialism." Yet the Communist Tudeh Party of Iran during this period shifted repeatedly between political support

<sup>9</sup> The changing strategy of the international communist parties after World War II is discussed in Chapter 10.

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and opposition, while the U.S.S.R. gave only occasional verbal support, to the Mosadeq regime which had nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and was facing serious political and economic pressures from the West. For more than two years after Nasser's coup of 1952, Soviet comment about it "varied between an attitude of cautious reserve and bitter hostility"<sup>10</sup> On February 8, 1955, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov still spoke pessimistically about the terms of competition facing the U.S.S.R. in the Middle East: "We cannot say that the National Liberation Movement in the countries of the Arab East has attained the strength and momentum which this movement achieved in a number of other Asian countries. The countries of the Arab East, particularly those that command oil reserves, still depend to a considerable extent on the Western powers who have laid their hands on the oil and other natural resources."<sup>11</sup> By October 1, this old Stalinist had been forced to confess his errors, and especially his rigidity and pessimism.<sup>12</sup> The world had changed, and communism required a more flexible strategy.

The question of war and peace has been given a new meaning. The U.S.S.R. has apparently recognized that wars are no longer likely harbingers of revolution, for nuclear weapons can destroy all civilization and leave no one to organize a communist or any other kind of society. Soviet society has changed. It has more self-confidence in its own long-term progress. It has produced a middle class in government, party, science, and industry that seems more eager to enhance present gains than risk them in adventurous gambits.

The U.S.S.R. has also seen Asia and Africa burst into independence with a will of their own. The Bandung Conference of 29 Afro-Asian nations in April 1955 was a powerful demonstration that agreement is possible among the pro-Western,

<sup>10</sup> See Laqueur, in the most thorough analysis available on *The Soviet Union and the Middle East*, pp. 151-152 and 194-197, and the Egyptian examples cited there.

<sup>11</sup> *The New York Times*, February 9, 1955.

<sup>12</sup> See *The New York Times*, October 2, 1955. A year earlier the U.S.S.R. had begun to reorganize and encourage research on contemporary problems of the Middle East—a field it had neglected even more than the West.

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Communist, and neutralist nations of this region of the world, but only if it acknowledges the right of all to pursue independent foreign and domestic policies.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, in demanding an end to "colonialism in all its manifestations . . . social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom . . . abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country," the Afro-Asian countries at Bandung were defining their independence in terms drawn from democratic rather than communist totalitarian ideology. In championing the "Spirit of Bandung," the U.S.S.R. is being cynical. Soviet communism, when it is free to impose its will as in Hungary or Poland, leaves no room for the pursuit of independent foreign or domestic policies. But in its new approach, the U.S.S.R. at least acknowledges the importance of this spirit to the uncommitted areas of the world and, indeed, their deep commitment to independence. This is accepted as the inescapable starting point from which Soviet persuasion and pressure must begin.

Soviet policy, especially since 1955, therefore focuses all energies on isolating the United States. The immediate objective is to separate the U.S. from allies and neutralists alike until it loses the capabilities for effectively counteracting the moves of the U.S.S.R. and international communism—so that communism may advance without risking the gains it has already made.

These changing Soviet perceptions and intentions were translated into action in the Middle East in response to a new kind of challenge in this region. What moved the U.S.S.R. to accept Nasser's invitation only partially overlapped with Nasser's fears and hopes, and was only partially intended to cope with the enhanced military capabilities of four Middle Eastern states. These four states gathering under the Baghdad Pact might now improve their defenses, but would never be able to threaten the U.S.S.R. militarily.

What the Baghdad Pact symbolized, however, was much more important: American power was entering an area in which declining British power had been giving steadily less concern to

<sup>13</sup> For the text of the Bandung resolutions, see *The New York Times*, April 25, 1955.

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and domestic policies of more than a dozen sheikhdoms and principalities along the rim of the Arabian Peninsula, and retained great political influence in at least nine independent Middle Eastern states. It controlled the most important enterprises in the domestic economy in seven Middle Eastern states. It was the major purchaser and supplier of goods in all states of this region, the sole purchaser of their oil, and the sole source for capital, technicians, and arms. Since this special position of Western Europe in the Middle East was often the heritage of military intervention, a tradition resurrected in the Suez intervention of 1956, it is not surprising that the West, including its leading member, the United States, is often more suspected and feared than the U.S.S.R. and, having demonstrated so much power, is also blamed for many things it has not done or could not have prevented.<sup>15</sup> Under these circumstances, increased relations with the U.S.S.R. appeared to most Middle Easterners to provide merely a counterweight to the remaining position of the West in the area, and a leverage for escaping dependence on any single power in the future.

There are also other reasons for a neutralist orientation which Middle Easterners share with a majority of Asians and Africans. None of the nations in the Middle East and North Africa has yet achieved in sum the internal cohesion, political stability, prosperity, military power, or international standing of the great industrial powers. In fact, the gap between the economic prosperity and military strength of the industrial states and most of the underdeveloped nations continues to widen. In an age so keenly sensitive to nationalism and rapid progress, the acquisition of sovereignty has not succeeded in stilling a sense of dependency that feels and smells like colonial-

<sup>15</sup> This tendency to see history as conspiracy and hence to miss its basic issues, forces, and trends, is not unknown to the West, and remains a pervasive attitude among Middle Eastern leaders. It is a legacy of Islamic tradition in which almost all political loyalties were in fact personal, and almost all personal relationships deeply colored by a struggle for power. It is reinforced by political repression which has made almost all contemporary political leaders victors through conspiracy, and the acute sense of being unable to control one's own destiny or that of one's country in the face of much more powerful forces. It becomes tempting, therefore, to assume that a hidden conspiracy is at work.

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ism.<sup>16</sup> The poor and indebted therefore strive to preserve and enlarge their freedom of action by dividing their obligations among divided creditors. Above all, in an age of transition when loyalties have become confused and the basis of authority uncertain, few Asian and African governments feel confident, or even able, to make firm political and military commitments to nations far more powerful than themselves.

They are genuinely fearful about another World War. They see little escape from being destroyed by armies or radiation—or at least being politically and physically devastated by a prolonged cut-off of food, fuel, and capital from abroad—if they are neutrals in such a war; they see no escape from destruction if they have granted military bases to their allies. They see no reason, therefore, to add the divisive issue of foreign entanglements to their already difficult task of achieving national unity. In their view, rival systems of alliances in Asia and Africa tend to sharpen regional and hence global conflicts rather than resolve them. They would rather be free to act to avoid war as actual or potential mediators than to stand fast as allies dependent on one of the big powers.

Neutralism clearly gained in strength in the Middle East, and in Asia and Africa generally, since Soviet arms and credits became available. The presence of the Soviet bloc as an alternate source of supplies made neutralism more viable and the greater willingness of the Soviet bloc than the West to supply more arms with fewer strings made neutralism more attractive. Neutralism by now marks the policy of the majority of governments in the Middle East and, except for Turkey, the sentiment of the majority of the politically active population even in states governed by pro-Western regimes. What does this shift mean for the security of the Middle East?

<sup>16</sup> Even a Turk, whose nation had achieved more progress and status than most others in the Middle East, could still write with concern in 1959: ". . . simply to get technical products (radios, automobiles, ice-boxes, even factories) which have been made in other countries cannot be counted as achieving technology, as possessing it. . . . This difference between buying technical products and being able to make them resembles the difference between a nation and its colony." (Professor Mümtaz Turhan, *Garblilasmanın Neresindeyiz [Where Are We in Westernization]*, Istanbul, 1959, p. 35. The translation is by Dean David Garwood, Robert College, Istanbul.)

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### *Opportunities and Limitations for Soviet Policy*

As a result of the Middle Eastern shift to neutralism and greater Soviet power and flexibility, the U.S.S.R. has been able to deal itself into the game of Middle Eastern politics. By its material support of predominant Middle Eastern opinion, the U.S.S.R. has gained respectability and influence very much greater than it ever possessed before. As long as it is willing to pay the political and economic price—and its capacity is growing—it will be able to continue in the game. The West's monopoly as the only foreign partner of the Middle East has ended. This has been the Soviets' gain.

The price which the U.S.S.R. has so far had to pay for this gain has been small. What is a fair price for surplus arms? The U.S.S.R. has shown itself quite willing in renegotiations with Egypt and Syria to lower the price of arms already delivered. Political support frequently costs nothing, especially when extended to an area in which the U.S.S.R. has no prior commitments and little interest in stable institutions. Soviet economic aid to the Middle East, although more extensive than its military aid, has been dramatic rather than large. Its credits have usually been announced as seven to twelve year loans, and have been extended at politically crucial moments. By 1962, Soviet postwar economic loans to this area had amounted to about one billion dollars, but probably only about one third of it had actually been drawn.<sup>17</sup> American postwar economic assistance to the Middle East and North Africa totalled nearly three and a half billion dollars by June 1962, most of it already utilized.<sup>18</sup> But the U.S.S.R. appeared as an *alternative supplier* to the West—and that was its great attraction.

The U.S.S.R. has three main avenues for scoring gains in the

<sup>17</sup> *The Sino-Soviet Economic Offensive in the Less Developed Countries*, Department of State Publication 6632, released May 1958, pp. 21-23. Since 1958, the U.S.S.R. has extended new credits to Egypt for building the High Aswan Dam, and to Iraq for general economic development.

<sup>18</sup> This figure does not include any assistance extended through Smith-Mundt assistance in educational exchange, or indirectly through UN refugee and relief organizations. In estimating the total Western contribution, consideration should also be given to loans extended by Great Britain, West Germany, and the World Bank, of which the U.S.S.R. is not a member.

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new political game now in progress. It can win political opportunists to its banners. The political careerist who once thought of making his fortune by collaborating with the West now finds Soviet buyers on the market. A wealthy landowner ambitious for the presidency became one of the chief Soviet instruments in Syria in 1957. Political opportunists may move far before they are checked by the zealous concern of the great majority of the area's new middle class for their national independence.

Secondly, the U.S.S.R. may rely on the greater respectability of the communist party, which now asserts itself as a non-violent, reformist opposition party associated with a seemingly benevolent foreign state and striving for power by parliamentary means. While this strategy may have some promise in India, Indonesia, or Japan, it suffers in the Middle East from the near absence of freely elected parliaments. In fact, in none of the countries under discussion are Soviet-oriented communist parties legally recognized. Despite their illegality, the Syrian and Iraqi communist parties and, to a lesser extent, the Jordanian party, have benefited to some degree from the new Soviet posture, but not sufficiently to overcome distrust in the genuineness of their nationalism or to match the vigor of political rivals also striving for a monopoly of power.

This new Soviet strategy is attuned above all to scoring gains over the longer run. Fostering neutralism is a backward step undertaken with the hope of achieving a position from which to make two steps forward.<sup>19</sup> This strategy carries inherent limitations and risks, however. Even the most optimistic Kremlin planner cannot be sure of returns on a policy that relies so heavily on negotiation, persuasion, economic and military aid, and on the assumption of growing Western weakness.

There is, for example, no one-to-one relationship between economic penetration and political penetration in a world in which both the West and the U.S.S.R. remain available as alternate suppliers. Attempts to exploit economic dependency for political leverage are bound to cause the threatened nation to apply for help to the rival supplier with scarce chance of being

<sup>19</sup> In 1949, the French Communist newspaper *L'Humanité* had called the strategy of fostering neutralism "the minimum program of the imperialists."

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turned down.<sup>20</sup> Economic aid that is effectively employed, moreover, enhances the forces of political stability in the Middle East, regardless of its original source.

The present Soviet policy involves a course of action which can only be successful if the U.S.S.R. honors the rules of the game. Just as pressure from pro-Western and Western states between 1954 and 1956 helped to move Syrian and Egyptian neutralism in a pro-Soviet direction, so communist-inspired violence in Iraq during 1958 and 1959 helped to persuade the neutralist Iraqi government to reduce its dependence on the U.S.S.R. If local governments discover that the U.S.S.R. is working through its diplomats, technicians, agents, or communist parties to overthrow them, or gained the kind of special power in the area that was so resented when the West exercised it, their reactions will be such as to cost the U.S.S.R. all the advantages it had gained by its diplomatic and economic efforts.<sup>21</sup> Should one country in the area awaken too late to this threat, the rest, while the present balance of power among the great nations persists, are all the more likely to move for safety toward the Western camp.

Entering Middle Eastern politics not for the purpose of effecting immediate ideological conversions but to bring about a change in the world's balance of power has mired the U.S.S.R. as deeply as the West in the sharp rivalries and conflicts of the region. It has, for example, supported Iraq against Egypt at the height of the conflict between Kassim and Nasser over the

<sup>20</sup> The need for replacement parts for machinery and weapons gives some political leverage to the original supplier. Once bargaining comes to involve the very independence of the state, however, opportunities for extending basic political and economic support are again opened to all competitors.

<sup>21</sup> "It appears that bloc technicians are under orders to avoid political discussion and to refrain from any activity that might be misinterpreted, and there is little surface evidence that bloc personnel engage in espionage, propaganda, or subversive activities. . . . Social contacts with the local population are usually limited. Soviet aid missions are conscious of maintaining good public relations. . . . However, on the basis of known facts about bloc espionage tactics, some of the aid personnel in most countries can be assumed to be professional agents, [but Soviet] technicians are under some degree of surveillance in most areas." (From an unclassified Intelligence Report No. 8256, *A Comparison of U.S. and Soviet Bloc Personnel in Less-Developed Countries*, published by the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, June 6, 1960, pp. 6-7 and ii.)

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future of Arab nationalism. It has supported Morocco against Tunisia in their rivalry over North African leadership. As a result, the U.S.S.R. has already lost much of the glamour it possessed when it first entered the area, and indeed has created local suspicions and resentments.

Nor has the U.S.S.R. aligned itself unequivocally on the side of social change. It has not hesitated to give economic and military assistance to the traditional Imamate of Yemen or to offer aid to the kingdoms of Saudi Arabia, Libya, Iran, and Ethiopia in order to woo them away from the West. The distinction the U.S.S.R. drew for a time between Iraq and Egypt was based on Soviet hopes in the realm of foreign policy, not on vital differences in ideology between Nasser and Kassim. The U.S.S.R. has been willing to risk little for the sake of procuring the triumph of local communist parties lest the repercussions destroy over-all Soviet gains.

Beyond these limitations, there are major risks inherent in present Soviet policy that have already been discussed in earlier chapters. The U.S.S.R. is now more liable to become involved in regional wars between recipients of Western arms and recipients of Soviet arms. By asking communist parties to give priority to the task of organizing the broadest possible movement for opposing the foreign policies of the West, the U.S.S.R. risks transforming the character and élan of a revolutionary movement that is deliberately kept from making revolutions. It is this latter danger which has split communist parties in many countries of the Middle East, has caused a public debate between communist leadership of the U.S.S.R. and China, and perhaps dissension within the Kremlin itself.

#### *The Relative Contributions of Neutralist and Pro-Western States to the Security of the Middle East*

On the surface, there would appear to be grounds for Soviet optimism that it can score major gains over the longer run in the Middle East. The pro-Western orientation of part of the Middle East, no less than the neutralism of the rest, derives from a sense of weakness rather than strength. The neutralists

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have been concentrating on eliminating the remnants of special Western positions in the area. Some of the nations now pro-Western may well follow suit. No Middle Eastern neutralist state has as yet the independent strength or detachment to try, like India, to lessen the burden of the coincidence of unsatisfied Afro-Asian aspirations and the Soviet-Western encounter by acting as mediator in the cold war. On the contrary, many Middle Eastern neutralists fear, second only to a worsening of the cold war, a lessening of it on terms that would leave them without external leverage for ending all remaining Western prerogatives, curb their freedom to acquire arms, or reduce their chances of acquiring economic assistance. However great their sense of moral superiority over the larger nations on problems of international power, most of the Middle Eastern neutralists are as eager for armaments as their alliance-bound neighbors. Neither neutralist nor pro-Western nations in the Middle East shrink from using the threat of violence, or violence itself, to achieve objectives within their own region.

This sense of weakness and distrust also stems from a lack of adequate domestic progress—a vulnerability which encourages Soviet hopes, often enough expressed, that others will find both ideological and pragmatic reasons to join the Soviet camp once the historical reasons for the growing strength of the Soviet bloc have become apparent to all. To weld the anti-colonial and communist reactions against “capitalist imperialism” into a single movement led by the U.S.S.R. may well look like a feasible project.

The neutralists of the Middle East, however, believe themselves to be protected by certain safeguards. First, they consider themselves to be covered by their own policy of making sure that both the West and the U.S.S.R. remain on hand competing for advantage among them, each ensuring that the other shall not gain predominance in the area. Second, they assume that Soviet technicians and diplomats are not engaged in plotting the violent overthrow of Middle Eastern governments, but will act instead in line with present Soviet policy of appearing as the champion of peaceful coexistence and Afro-Asian nationalism. Third, they are confident that, if their independence

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is threatened by one side in the cold war, the other side, joined by the force of world opinion, will assuredly foil such threats. Most neutralists also rely on three internal forces—an acutely sensitive nationalism, a major effort to develop a socialism of their own, and a prudent monopolization of domestic political power. These safeguards are clearly of unequal weight but together they constitute the most comforting form of insurance now being bought by nations that cannot hope to defend themselves by their own military strength.

This neutralist assessment neglects one essential guarantee of the safety of their independent role: the military strength and political moderation of the Western coalition. The presence of the U.S.S.R. may enhance the maneuverability of Middle Eastern states in local disputes with their rivals or the West. But if it were unhampered by Western power, the U.S.S.R. would scarcely stand in defense of the national independence of these states.

Would Middle Eastern states be more secure if they joined in military alliance with the West? Here the answer appears to be contingent: such an alliance can be as irrelevant, inadequate or prudent as neutralism, or it can provide better safety than neutralism. The security of the Middle East, far more than the security of Western Europe, depends not only on its ability to defend itself against outright foreign aggression but also against domestic subversion by extremist movements. As long as the Middle East remains vulnerable to both menaces, insurance against aggression is not enough, whether written in neutralist or pro-Western terms.

The discrimination between neutralist and pro-Western countries can be a distinction without a difference. In common American usage, a neutralist nation is one that will not stand up and be counted with us against communist expansionism.

This looks like a simple and obvious test. Actually, even the nations gathered in NATO are not agreed among themselves on all the circumstances that would cause them to go to war with the Sino-Soviet bloc. Fundamental changes in weapons technology about every five years, and hence in the capacity

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and will to go to war, may alone be sufficient to prevent any treaty commitment from remaining final or even relevant. It was not a neutralist but a leader of the Western coalition who said that "since the advent of nuclear weapons, there is no longer any alternative to peace." "A soldier," continued President Eisenhower, "can no longer regain a peace that is useable to the world."<sup>22</sup>

A policy of high military preparedness against possible Sino-Soviet encroachments does not mark the policies of pro-Western nations alone. Neutrals, too, have a keen interest in defending their own territorial integrity. As in the case of pro-Western nations, neither the motives nor the enemies need be single. India, which spends about 40 percent of its regular budget and 18 percent of its total expenditures on defense, also has long been engaged in creating situations of strength along its own northern tier. Perpetuating relationships dating to the days of British India, although encouraging internal reforms in these areas, New Delhi seeks to maintain its influence over the internal affairs, foreign policies, and trade of neighboring Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan. Although unable, despite these efforts, to match the strength of China, India intends to maintain a military superiority over Pakistan, at least two and a half times as great as the strength of the latter. It is true that Pakistan, a member of both the South East Asian Treaty Organization and the Central Treaty Organization (formerly known as the Baghdad Pact) spends more than India on defense, 39 percent of its total expenditures. There is general agreement, however, both within Pakistan and without, that this high level of preparedness is also stimulated by Pakistan's unresolved conflicts with India rather than by any hope of countering communist China.

Willingness to permit Western bases on one's soil does not clearly distinguish neutralists from pro-Western nations. Denmark has allowed no troops from other NATO nations to be stationed on its soil. Several NATO nations are reluctant to permit missile bases on their territories. By contrast, Saudi Arabia has until recently granted the United States military air facilities and Libya has furnished a major air base in exchange

<sup>22</sup> *Department of State Bulletin*, October 4, 1954, p. 354.

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for money and American support in their sometimes difficult relationships with other non-communist countries. These two countries, however, have insisted on maintaining their political neutralism in the United Nations and elsewhere.

Certainly neutralist and pro-Western orientations are unrelated to ideological differences. Anti-communists, democrats, dictators, reformers and traditionalists are by now to be found in both camps—which is one reason why there is no neutralist bloc and the West finds it sometimes difficult to characterize the “free world.”

A pro-Western orientation can make a difference. As long as prevailing military technology gives the West the ability to deter general war by virtue of its possession of military and naval bases at a short distance from the Sino-Soviet bloc, participation in the base structure of the Western coalition remains an important contribution to the defense of all countries. Even if no bases are granted, a pro-Western country is more likely than a neutralist one to contribute to the security of the region by easing rights of access, transportation, and communication for the West in a crisis or limited war. Such an orientation can also make it easier for Western governments to gain access to local leaders and to enter into more intimate consultation on critical foreign and domestic problems. It is likely to give a country greater backbone if it comes under Soviet diplomatic pressure.

A pro-Western orientation alone, however, is not a sufficient indication of how willing any country may be, even when it has the right to call for military assistance, to chance a war in reply to a Soviet military threat. It is also no indication of how willing or able a country may be to deal with underlying problems of internal political stability.

Given the overlap in motives, behavior, and problems on the part of both neutralist and the pro-Western states in the present stage of Middle Eastern political development, it may well mislead the West to convert any contingent differences into a distinction in principle. Since neutralism is so pervasive and nationalism so sensitive in the Middle East, yet the area's vulnerability still so great, here even more than in the rest of the world, concrete acts of mutually rewarding collaboration de-

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serve to be held in higher regard than declarations of loyalty. Because the West cannot allow an erosion of the non-communist world, it has a stake in protecting neutralist states no less than pro-Western states. It cannot prudently help to safeguard the internal strength and external security of the one group while neglecting the other.

Sometimes it may be prudent to neglect making choices. The government that accepts an alliance with the West in order to perpetuate an unpopular regime or win backing for its regional rivalries may not be preferable to a government that is successfully immunizing itself against subversion by extremists, but relies for its external safety on the present balance of international power. At other times, especially in periods of danger, it may be necessary to accept the best bargain without championing it as the best principle.

### *Limitations and Opportunities for Western Policy*

If the U.S.S.R. clearly ended the Western monopoly of influence in the Middle East after 1955, it was also apparent that, by 1960, the U.S.S.R. had already made the maximum gains it can hope for on the basis of its present policies. Other countries may yet turn to neutralism, but no Middle Eastern neutralist state sees any reason to put an end to Western prerogatives in the region in order to yield such prerogatives to the U.S.S.R. Therein lies the locally-imposed ceiling to Soviet ambitions.<sup>23</sup>

To make decisive new gains, the U.S.S.R. must push beyond neutralism by stimulating the growth of pro-communist regimes to follow upon the anticipated failure of present Middle Eastern governments in meeting the issues of the social revolution now in process. This policy, so heartily advocated by the Chi-

<sup>23</sup> "By deliberately ignoring the need for a concrete historical approach to nationalism, Western reactionary propaganda is now trying to describe as 'nationalism' the policy followed by the countries of Asia and Africa that have recently won national independence, or are advancing towards that goal. But the fact is that their policy is a manifestation of the national-liberation movement of the oppressed peoples of Asia and Africa. . . . What is the purpose of describing this great progressive movement as 'nationalism'? Is it not meant as a foundation for the wholly false conception that communist internationalism and 'Asian nationalism' are irreconcilable?" (*Observer*, "Internationalism and the Movement for National Liberation," *New Times*, July 1956, p. 4.)

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nese Communists, is fraught with perils. The U.S.S.R. cannot cease supporting the present neutralist regimes, much less undermine them, without driving them closer to the West. The U.S.S.R. can succeed in such a strategy only if, at the same time, it has isolated the United States, split the Western coalition, and overcome Western political and military capacity to move to the aid of other states.

The challenge to the West is therefore plain.<sup>24</sup> It must not allow itself to be isolated in Middle Eastern policies. It must maintain the strength of the Western coalition so that the U.S.S.R. will not be tempted to alter its policy to that of a strategy of revolution and war. It must, above all, help Middle Eastern nations succeed in establishing their changing society on a new and stable base.

Unlike the U.S.S.R., the United States can be content with a Middle East that has the will and strength to pursue genuinely independent foreign and domestic policies. Middle Eastern nationalism cannot help being "anti-Western" in the context of changing a heritage derived from the West's past relationship with the area. But Middle Eastern nationalism is likely to become "anti-Western" in terms of the cold war, or the fundamental values of the West, only if the West refuses to transform the style and character of its earlier relationship with the Middle East. Here the West has options.<sup>25</sup>

Can the Middle East and the West discover overlapping national interests and hence areas of collaboration? There would seem to be two important common concerns—oil and the creation of secure, resilient foundations for responsible independence. Of these, oil represents by far the easier problem.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Readers may wish to compare the analysis of the Middle East's international orientation offered in this chapter with two recent studies that drew on extensive expert discussion: John C. Campbell's *Defense of the Middle East: Problems of American Policy*, published for the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 1958; and Peter Calvocoressi, *British Interests in the Mediterranean and Middle East*, (Report by a Chatham House Study Group), London, 1959.

<sup>25</sup> The two different meanings of "anti-Western" in Middle Eastern politics—often confused in discourse on the area—help to illustrate why the competition between the U.S.S.R. and the West is a non-zero-sum game. The participants register gains and losses on different scales. The different implications of neutralism for the U.S.S.R. and the West are obviously another illustration.

<sup>26</sup> George Lenczowski's *Oil and State in the Middle East*, Ithaca, 1960, is the most recent, most thorough, and most detached analysis of this issue. Brigadier

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By now, it has become much clearer than before to all concerned that the oil-producing states of the Arab world and Iran are as dependent on oil revenues for economic progress essential to their political stability as Western Europe is dependent upon them for fuel.<sup>27</sup> The more the subsistence economy of the Middle East is transformed by national development programs, the larger the constituency touched by a loss of oil revenues.<sup>28</sup>

To deny this fuel to its consumers for political reasons is demonstrably becoming self-defeating as well as ineffective. It is still possible to conceive of extremists preferring to drown in oil, but no projection of regional trends or analysis of still unresolved differences with the West makes it in the least plausible to suppose that there is likely cause that would allow such extremists to build a united front of oil producing countries in the Middle East and North Africa to deny oil to the West. Arab oil quickly substituted for Iranian oil when production ceased for nearly two years after the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951.<sup>29</sup> Western hemisphere oil helped to supply Western Europe without major hardships after the Suez Canal—though not Middle East oil production—was blocked in 1956. Since then it has become evident that North African oil, located more closely to Europe, promises almost as rich and certainly more accessible supplies.<sup>30</sup>

In the field of oil, moreover, the U.S.S.R. can be played off against the West in only limited fashion by Middle Eastern and

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S. L. Longrigg's *Oil in the Middle East: Its Discovery and Development*, London, 1954, is a detailed historical and economic study by a former adviser of the Iraq Petroleum Company. Benjamin Shwadran's *The Middle East, Oil, and the Great Powers*, revised second edition, New York, 1959, is more critical of oil companies and governments.

<sup>27</sup> Western European oil consumption amounted to 27,000,000 tons in 1938, 115,000,000 tons in 1956, and is expected, despite the availability of other sources of energy, to reach 340,000,000 tons in 1975. At present, 80 percent of Western Europe's oil imports come from the Middle East. (Lenczowski, *Oil and State in the Middle East*, pp. 28-29.)

<sup>28</sup> During 1958, the six principal oil producing territories of the Middle East earned an estimated \$1,274,000,000 in oil revenues, with Kuwait leading with \$415,000,000, followed by Saudi Arabia with \$300,000,000; Iran with \$246,000,000; Iraq with \$235,000,000; Qatar with \$57,000,000; and Bahrain with \$11,000,000. (*Ibid.*, p. 362.)

<sup>29</sup> Now Iranian oil, over Arab objections, is being delivered to Israel.

<sup>30</sup> A. J. Meyer estimates that within the next five to ten years Algeria and

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North African states. By assisting countries of this region (Syria, for example) in making geological surveys, drilling for oil, and building refineries, the U.S.S.R. can improve their bargaining position with the oil companies. At the same time, however, the U.S.S.R. must impose a ceiling on Middle Eastern and North African claims because it is striving ever harder to sell its own surplus oil in markets now buying oil from the Middle East and North Africa. It has no need for Middle Eastern or North African oil; no capacity for transporting it. Its competition can directly touch the income of Middle Eastern and North African states.

The oil situation is complicated in the Middle East and North Africa by the unavoidably sensitive relationship between private corporation and sovereign government, foreign ownership and local participation. These relationships will continue to present difficult, and sometimes tense, problems. The history of the past few years, however, has demonstrated that there are clear limits to the exploitation of oil as a political instrument by either the West or the Middle East and North Africa. This lesson, and the steadily increasing importance of the area's most valuable economic resource for both Western buyer and Middle Eastern and North African seller, should make it easier to arrange reasonably satisfactory bargains regarding prices, royalties, and the control of production.<sup>31</sup> The growing recognition of greater interdependence, yet also greater freedom from duress by either side, holds improved potentials for expanding collaboration in this and related economic fields.

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Libya together may develop an output equivalent to two-thirds of current Middle Eastern production, and at costs as low as the latter. ("Some Implications of North African Oil," *Current Problems in North Africa*, The Princeton University Conference, December 1959, p. 60.)

<sup>31</sup> However, the richest oil producing country in the Middle East—Kuwait—is so unique in its political and economic structure that it eludes all estimates of its probable policies on the basis of comparative analysis. Writes Woodhouse in *Britain and the Middle East*, p. 29: "Kuwait is smaller than Northern Ireland; it produces about half of the oil consumed every day in Great Britain; it has larger proved oil reserves than the entire North American continent; and the Kuwait Investment Board is the largest single investor of the London Stock Exchange." How does one chart the future course of the world's most extensive welfare state with the world's most diversified capitalist investments governed by a tribal sheikh?

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#### MIDDLE EASTERN CHOICES

The most serious mutual concern which the Middle East and the West share is how to make this region internally and externally secure. This constitutes a vital overlap of interests. The Middle Eastern states still lack the strength and skill to solve the problems of peace, stability, and welfare unassisted. The West cannot afford to let anarchy or expansionist totalitarianism triumph in a region where Europe, Asia, and Africa meet.

No nations in history, however, have ever tried to achieve as large and pressing a goal under similar handicaps. The majority of the people of the Middle East are poorer in resources and skills than the Chinese, yet they are no less eager to make progress. In the midst of unfinished revolutions and in the midst of competition with a totalitarian power, the West must help the Middle East fit itself into a stable system of world political and economic development as yet unattained.

The majority of politically active Middle Easterners have decided to draw upon both the West and the Soviet bloc for support to achieve the goals of their national revolution. What inspiration and support they will draw upon to set their independence on solid domestic foundation and thus accomplish their social revolution remains an open question. For the time being, the West has retained a vital link even with the neutralists of this area. For the majority of politically active Middle Easterners, the West remains the main source of values, knowledge, material assistance and inspiration, and a closer approximation of the style of life they want to live than the U.S.S.R. Middle Easterners may borrow techniques from the U.S.S.R., but exceedingly few bother to learn Russian, and fewer still know anything about Soviet culture. They have studied even Marxism primarily in the West and from Western sources. Their criticism of Western actions is usually based on Western values.

They have usually asked the West first for arms, or for money for projects like the Aswan Dam before they have turned to the U.S.S.R.

Some opportunities for fruitful cooperation between the West and the Middle East have already been missed because the Middle East reacted in the present with a distrust born of the past and the West acted as if it were poorer and less secure

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#### INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION

than the Soviet bloc. Moreover, there are things the West cannot offer to the Middle East. It has no single book that explains all historical change and what to do about it.

In reality, of course, no one does. There have been times when even Soviet leaders admitted this: "It should not be forgotten," said Khrushchev in 1960, "that Lenin's propositions on imperialism were advanced and developed tens of years ago when the world did not know many things that are now decisive for historical development. . . . We live in a time when we have neither Marx nor Engels nor Lenin with us. If we act like children who, studying the alphabet, compile words from letters, we shall not go very far. Based on Marxist-Leninist teaching, we must thoroughly study life, analyze the present situation, and draw conclusions that are useful to the common cause of communism."<sup>32</sup> However impressive the Soviet example of rapid economic growth may be, there are no ready-made models for starting out with fewer resources and different values.

Even the competitive struggle with the U.S.S.R. therefore requires no distortion of the Western heritage; it is not necessary to meet communist dogma, or the traditional dogma of the Middle East, with a Western dogma of our own. It should be the special strength of the West that it holds to no revealed truth in the secular realm. It can therefore offer an honest comradeship in a common search for relevant truths for a rapidly changing world. This could be one of the West's most valuable offerings to a Middle Eastern leadership predominantly pragmatic (and hence eager to experiment) and authoritarian (and hence tempted to stop experimenting too soon).

The Middle Eastern challenge to the West now is compounded of familiar and unfamiliar demands. Taking valid measure of the present international balance of power, the U.S.S.R. confronts the West in the Middle East not with the violence of revolution and war but with competition in diplomacy, economics, and ideas. As a result, the West is being asked to respond in

<sup>32</sup> In 1939, Stalin said, "We have no right to expect of the classical Marxist writers, separated as they were from our day by a period of 45 or 55 years, that they should have foreseen each and every zigzag of history in the distant future of every country." (Both quotations cited in *The New York Times*, June 25 and 26, 1960.)

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#### MIDDLE EASTERN CHOICES

terms that are in fact closer to its own interests and traditions than to those of the U.S.S.R.—terms which permit the West to concentrate on its longer run interests in building a resilient world order rather than its immediate position in the cold war. If the West loses such a competition it may even be said that it will have deserved to fail. The question remains open whether the West will meet the necessary but difficult prerequisites to the continuation of this kind of competition: maintaining sufficient strength to deter aggression and sufficient skill to alleviate conflict.

The West is also confronted in the Middle East by the bitter face of poverty and ignorance and deep eagerness to overcome both. This affects the quality of human life no less than the political fortunes of nations. Here the question is whether the West will be able sympathetically to tune in on the unfamiliar and revolutionary forces transforming an alien civilization—whether it can learn to collaborate effectively with alien revolutionaries who will often reflect in their own personality the contradictions, intensity, and frustrations of a society in upheaval. It will cost much to attain modest results.

The most relevant choice for the sake of the security and welfare of the Middle East and ourselves is not whether the West should ally itself with one Middle Eastern country rather than another, or commit itself exclusively to a particular reformer as once it used to commit itself to a particular defender of the status quo. The challenge is to recognize the full scope of the revolutions now transforming the Middle East and to help all its nationalists cope successfully with rapid social change.

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