

American Presidents and the Middle East

George Lenczowski

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Preface

The idea of this book had grown out of a seminar on American policy in the Middle East that I conducted at Berkeley in the mid-1980s. My students seemed to be especially captivated by the continuities and discontinuities of American policy and the pivotal role played by the successive U.S. presidents in the policy-making process.

Signal help in the preparation of this book has been rendered by my able research assistant, Mr. (now Dr.) I. Antoine Warde, and, in the early phase of the project, by Miss Kim Peasley. I owe a debt of gratitude to Professor Arthur Turner of the University of California, Riverside, for reading the entire manuscript and for his constructive comments. I also wish to thank Professor Robert Springborg of Macquarie University in Australia for reading parts of the book and for his judicious remarks. Mr. Edward Jajko of the Hoover Institution has valiantly assisted me in locating a number of sources. Professor Carl Leiden of the University of Texas has paved my way to the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library in Austin, while Ms. Tina Lawson Houston, Chief Archivist, and Mr. David C. Humphrey, Archivist, in that Library have rendered valuable assistance in tracing certain documents in the collection under their jurisdiction. Mrs. Florence C. Myer has greatly eased my task with her cheerful endurance and professional perfectionism in typing the manuscript. Mr. Richard Rowson, Director of Duke University Press, deserves my gratitude for his cordial cooperation and warm encouragement.

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Last but not least, I am deeply indebted to my wife for her loving patience and support throughout the whole time of my research and

writing. Needless to say, I bear the entire responsibility for the form and contents of this book.

George Lenczowski
Berkeley, California
Summer 1989

Introduction

This is a study of the role the presidents of the United States have played in the formulation of American policies toward the Middle East, a region of key strategic importance abounding in complex international conflicts and revolutionary changes. Formally, of course, virtually every move the U.S. government makes in this crisis-ridden area bears the imprint of presidential decision. In reality various governmental agencies contribute to the policy-making process: the State Department, the Defense Department, the Treasury Department, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Council, the Congress, and others. The aim of this book is to focus on the successive presidents, from Truman to Reagan, and to explore their attitudes and actions toward this region, in particular their perceptions of the issues that confronted them, the relative weight they assigned to them, and the policy choices they made. The approach of this study is selective: in each presidency we have chosen a few issues, usually associated with an international crisis, that claimed the president's attention, called for action, and illustrated that president's thinking as it related to the problem at hand within a broader framework of regional and world politics.

Much political change has occurred in the Middle East since World War II: Western colonialism has retreated, new nations and states have been born, old loyalties have clashed with new concepts, a variety of ideologies has competed for public attention, new methods of warfare have been developed, revolutions have brought transformation in the politics and economies of many countries, and significant realignments have occurred in the relations of local states with major external powers. At the same time certain constants could be observed in the politics and international relations of the area: the Middle East's geographical proximity to one superpower, the Soviet Union; the strategic role of the region's oil for war and peace alike; the Islamic



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character of the majority of its countries; nationalism of both its older and its emerging states; and the general state of underdevelopment of their economies, often requiring injections of foreign aid and technology. While no responsible leaders in the United States could ignore these constants, they had to be viewed in juxtaposition with immediate developments and crises. The resulting policy would thus be a function not only of certain hard facts in a given situation but also of the way these facts were perceived by a president and the rank they were given in competing priorities in U.S. global policy. It is on these presidential perceptions, priorities, and policies that we propose to focus.

This study is addressed primarily to university students concentrating on the Middle East, to foreign service officers and government officials dealing with the area, and, more broadly, to educated laymen interested in U.S. foreign policy. Specialists who already know the facts may find some merit in the arrangement, the chronological sequence, and the comparative accents of the subject matter. Essentially, this is a work of synthesis with, as already noted, emphasis on the attitudes and policies of successive American presidents since World War II. We believe that the grouping of the text mostly around the crises the presidents faced may be justified because their behavior during such trying periods tended to disclose with greater force and clarity their ideas and strategies. Each presidency and each crisis deserves to be treated in a separate book-length monograph, and indeed a number of such studies have been produced over the years. Each of these, apart from the narrative of events, contains an analysis greater in scope and depth than the present work was intended to provide. To give a few examples of books dedicated to the more recent period, it is possible to mention such excellent studies as William Quandt's *Camp David*, Harold Saunders's *The Other Walls*, Gary Sick's *All Fall Down*, Michael Ledeen and William Lewis's *Debate: The American Failure in Iran*, James Bill's *The Eagle and the Lion*, or George Ball's *Error and Betrayal in Lebanon*. Similarly, an outstanding study spanning the eight presidencies but focusing on American-Israeli relations has been produced by Steven Spiegel: *The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*. References to such works are to be found in the footnotes and the bibliography.

It is obvious that presidential decisions and policies do not occur in a vacuum but in the context of world and regional politics and against the background of American domestic forces that condition

policy-making. To do full justice to the analysis of all such factors would require a book exceeding the space limitations of this study or a number of books. Thus the present text does not propose to develop a comprehensive analysis of Soviet aims and methods, of the bureaucratic infighting in the U.S. policy-making process, of the executive-congressional relations, or of the role of domestic pressure groups and lobbies. Such matters are undoubtedly important in understanding the formulation and execution of America's foreign policy, but again adequate attention cannot be devoted to them within the framework of this single volume, which covers eight presidencies over the span of more than four decades.

Perhaps a few words should be said about what this book is not. It is not an advocacy of any favored policy or objective. Nor is it a psychopolitical analysis of the presidents' personalities and motivations. If there is a note of criticism in presenting a president's decision or policy, it is usually addressed not to his objectives (which may be debated as wise or unwise) but rather to the contradiction between his stated or implied objective and the actual action taken by him or, to put it in simpler terms, to his inconsistency.

There are, unavoidably, a number of delicate and controversial matters treated in this book. They were bound to be included inasmuch as they were inherently connected with the crises that are being discussed. The author has tried his best to avoid explicit value judgments on such matters, leaving it largely to the readers to draw their own conclusions. The approach taken has been to let the eight presidents "speak for themselves" by frequently giving quotations from the presidential pronouncements while in office or from their writings at a later date.

This book does not aim at presenting any new or sensational revelations. Most of the factual material has been public knowledge for quite some time. There are perhaps a few concealed or unpublished facts that could be discovered through a painstaking study of the archival materials (interoffice memos, etc.) that are opening up gradually thanks to the Freedom of Information Act. No such research was carried out in preparing this book because the putative benefits to be derived from this kind of "investigative reporting" would not, in the author's estimation, square with the broad, synthesis-seeking objective of this study.

Presidential memoirs and the memoirs of their chief collaborators or prominent foreign statesmen have provided the most frequently

used sources for this book. Except for John Kennedy, whose life was abruptly ended before the completion of his term, and Ronald Reagan, the president still in office while these lines were written, all the presidents have produced memoirs, as have a number of presidential aides, middle-level executors of special tasks, and foreign leaders with whom the presidents were dealing. Even though it may be assumed that memoirs tend often to be self-serving, they do nevertheless reveal a good deal about their writers' thinking. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the memoirs written by a president with those written by his secretary of state and security adviser (as was clearly the case of the Carter presidency and to a lesser extent of the other presidencies) is likely to bring an additional dimension and a better insight to the policies conceived and executed during a given period. Whenever possible, such "cross-checking" has been resorted to.

When necessary, to give documentary authenticity to certain data (even though already known), the author has selectively relied on State Department bulletins, compilations of presidential communications, minutes of congressional hearings, and other official documents.

The Middle East as defined in this book encompasses the countries of southwest Asia and northeast Africa: from Turkey in the north to the Yemens in the south and from Afghanistan in the east to Egypt in the west. Although Islamic, Pakistan (part of the Indian subcontinent) and Libya (part of North Africa) do not belong strictly to the Middle East proper but constitute its peripheral appendages. If they are mentioned in the text, it is because of the relevance of some of their problems to the central core of the area.

1. The Truman Presidency

It is appropriate that the Truman presidency (1945–52) provides the opening chapter to this volume for a number of reasons. First, it coincided with the end of World War II and the beginning of a period of postwar international relations during which the long-range trends could assert themselves in contrast to the immediate, often ad hoc moves and solutions dictated by the demands of the war. Second, this new, postwar era witnessed an intensive involvement of the United States in the political and economic affairs of the Middle East, in contrast to the hands-off attitude characteristic of the prewar period. And third, under Truman the United States had to face and define its policy in all three sectors that provided the root causes of America's interest in the region: the Soviet threat, the birth of Israel, and petroleum.

THE IRAN-AZERBAIJAN CRISIS, 1945–1946

Until World War II America's relations with Iran were limited in scope and intensity. American Protestant missions were engaged in medical and educational activities in Teheran and a few provincial centers. And on two occasions, in 1911—following Iran's constitutional revolution of 1906–7—and in 1922, American financial experts Dr. Morgan Shuster and Dr. Arthur C. Millspaugh were invited by Iran to assist in the organization of the country's public finance. In the period between the two world wars certain American oil companies tried unsuccessfully to obtain concessions in the areas not preempted by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Politically, the United States was not interested in Iran and, in practice, considered it a country within the British sphere of influence.

World War II brought an abrupt change in this relationship. Beginning with 1942, thirty thousand noncombatant American troops ar-

rived in Iran to help transfer U.S. lend-lease war equipment and supplies to the Soviet Union. Dr. Millspaugh was asked for the second time to help in guiding Iran's treasury and revenue system, this time assisted by a sizable mission. In November 1943 President Franklin D. Roosevelt went to Teheran to attend the Big Three summit meeting with Britain's Winston Churchill and Russia's Joseph Stalin. Even though this conference primarily focused on European affairs, it also generated an interallied declaration (December 1, 1943) which gave assurances to Iran regarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as a promise to assist it in its postwar reconstruction and development. Thus one could observe a heightened American presence in Iran, quite visible because of the movements of U.S. uniformed troops (the Persian Gulf Command) and the daily activity of the Millspaugh mission. But this presence could not yet be construed as a meaningful, politically motivated involvement in Iranian affairs. Even the 1943 interallied declaration must be viewed as merely a marginal by-product of the summit conference, as a gesture of courtesy toward the country on whose soil the Big Three met without Iran's advance knowledge or participation. In U.S. eyes Iran was a transit country, a "bridge to victory," whose tranquility in wartime and well-being after the war were desirable but not much more. There was no stake worth real concern in Iran itself. In fact, the United States stood aloof from the subterranean political struggle that, under the guise of allied unity, pitted the British against the Soviets over the political future and sovereignty of Iran. To Washington the preservation of allied unity—that is, close cooperation with Russia, no matter how disturbing her behavior toward her neighbors and her postwar ambitions—was infinitely more important than the destiny of Iran. It was perhaps best symbolized by the fact that, at the Big Three meeting in Teheran, Roosevelt chose to accept Stalin's invitation to live in the Soviet Embassy for the duration of the conference, oblivious to the strong possibility—if not actual certainty—of the presence of bugging devices in the walls of his temporary abode.

With the advent of the Truman administration the situation in U.S.-Iranian relations underwent a radical change. By the end of World War II the wartime priority of allied unity was replaced with a new challenge, the nature of the relationship between the two emerging superpowers in the postwar period. The issue was not so much a change in Soviet objectives and behavior; in fact, there was a remarkable continuity in Russia's foreign policy. In Eastern Europe the Soviet

drive to expel the German armies, termed "liberation" by Russian propaganda, became in reality a campaign of military and political conquest of the countries previously under German occupation. In its westward march the Red Army brought with it not only the political commissars but also the native East European puppets, sheltered in wartime Moscow, to assume power and ensure Stalin-style communization of the satellite states up to the Elbe River. Similarly, Moscow was consistent in retaining territorial gains initially secured in the early stages of the war (parts of Finland, the whole of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, and half of Poland) while further expanding toward the end of the war by annexing parts of East Prussia, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia.

The only direct territorial advance made by the Soviets in the Middle East in the early part of the war was the occupation of northern Iran in 1941, a step carried out in conjunction with the British, who occupied southern and central Iran. London and Moscow, in their new alliance following Stalin's break with Hitler, justified their invasion by the need to open up Iran as a road of supplies to Russia. In the Tripartite Treaty of January 1942 they declared that their military presence was not an occupation, proclaimed Iran to be their ally, and pledged to withdraw their troops within six months after the end of the war.

Again with remarkable consistency and continuity of her policy, Russia violated these promises in letter and spirit in wartime and after the end of the war. She treated Iran not as an ally but as an occupied country by harassing the population, manipulating to her own advantage the food supplies, expelling inconvenient Iranian officials, influencing elections to Iran's Majlis (parliament), and applying oppressive measures toward the "bourgeois" classes in her northern zone. Moreover, she sponsored the revival, on a national scale, of the hitherto suppressed Iranian Communist movement in the form of Tudeh, the party of the "masses," led by veteran Communist leaders, some imported from the Soviet territory and some with a record of a militant role in the Moscow-sponsored Soviet Republic of Gilan (1920-21).

Following the surrender of Japan (September 1945), first the American and then the British forces left Iran within the treaty-stipulated six-month period, while the Soviets not only violated the March 2, 1946, deadline for withdrawal, but actually expanded their military presence in the southward direction. Furthermore, using their troops and secret police, they set up by mid-December 1945 in the northwestern part of Iran two separatist pro-Soviet regimes, the Autono-

mous Republic of Azerbaijan in Tabriz and the Kurdish Republic in Mahabad. At the same time the Red Army barred Iran's forces from proceeding northward to quell the separatist uprisings. Subsequently, in direct negotiations held in Moscow, the Soviets exacted from Iran's premier Qavam as-Saltaneh the recognition of Russia's right to intervene in the relations between Teheran and the puppet regime in Tabriz and to grant Moscow an oil concession in the northern zone.

President Truman first became aware of the possible complications in Iran when, at the interallied Potsdam Conference in July–August 1945, Stalin objected to Churchill's proposal for an early withdrawal of allied troops from the country, that is, ahead of the agreed-upon schedule.¹ By September, however, the president had become alerted to Moscow's behavior in Iran. It did not cause him to halt the withdrawal of American troops—a process accomplished by Christmastime even though the United States as a nonsignatory of the 1942 Tripartite Treaty was not bound by the evacuation deadline—but he expressed concern over Russia's actions in Azerbaijan, which he considered a planned move to subject northern Iran to her control. "Together with the threat of a Communist coup in Greece, this began to look like a giant pincers movement against the oil-rich areas of the Near East and the warm-water ports of the Mediterranean."²

Having developed this basic perception of Soviet intentions, Truman looked toward the forthcoming Moscow conference of foreign ministers in December 1945 as an opportunity to assert America's interest in the fate of Iran, a country whose independence and territorial integrity appeared to be threatened.

Unfortunately, the Moscow conference brought the president a double disappointment. The first was procedural but vital for the concept and functioning of the presidency; according to Truman, Secretary of State James Byrnes usurped the president's powers, assumed the responsibilities of the president, which he could not abdicate, and failed to communicate with him and secure his approval for the decisions taken. "I had been left in the dark about the Moscow conference," Truman told Byrnes bluntly.³ The second disappointment pertained to the substance of the Moscow agreements. The president was highly critical of Byrnes's failure to protect Iran, which, to Truman's annoyance, was not even mentioned in the final Moscow communiqué. He considered that the "successes" of the Moscow conference were "unreal." In a subsequent letter scathingly critical of Byrnes's performance, the president said:

I think we ought to protest with all the vigor of which we are capable against the Russian program in Iran. There is no justification for it. It is a parallel to the program of Russia in Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania. It is also in line with the high-handed and arbitrary manner in which Russia acted in Poland. When you went to Moscow, you were faced with another accomplished fact in Iran. Another outrage if I ever saw one.

Iran was our ally in the war. Iran was Russia's ally in the war. Iran agreed to the free passage of arms, ammunition and other supplies running into the millions of tons across her territory from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea. Without these supplies furnished by the United States, Russia would have been ignominiously defeated. Yet now Russia stirs up rebellion and keeps troops on the soil of her friend and ally—Iran. . . . Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand—"how many divisions have you?"

I do not think we should play compromise any longer. . . . I am tired of babying the Soviets.⁴

The president's determination to resist Soviet aggression in Iran and elsewhere encountered opposition from the liberal and left-of-center groups and individuals inclined toward appeasement. Perhaps most notable in this respect was the ideological rift between Truman and the secretary of commerce—and former vice president—Henry A. Wallace. Wallace claimed that Russia had reasonable grounds for suspicion and distrust of the United States and advocated a change in American policy to allay these Soviet fears. Truman wondered "how this might be accomplished without surrendering to them on every count" and expressed apprehension lest Wallace "lend himself to the more sinister ends of the Reds and those who served them."⁵ On September 12, 1945, Wallace delivered a speech which Truman described as an all-out attack on U.S. foreign policy. Eight days later the president asked for and obtained Wallace's resignation. In describing this crisis in a subsequent letter to his mother and sister, Truman referred to the Wallace backers as "crackpots,"⁶ an expression he would use also on other occasions when describing, as he saw it, ideologically confused or emotionally disturbed opponents to his policies.

Truman had a well-crystallized perception of the aggressive na-

ture of Soviet actions in Iran, which meant that the Roosevelt-initiated era of giving priority to cooperation with Moscow over other considerations—in practice an era of appeasement—had come to an end. The new president, despite the contrast between his relatively modest background and the international glamour of his aristocratic predecessor, had the courage and resolution to reverse the policy that appeared to him naive and dangerous. In the case of Iran priority was thus given to resisting Soviet designs rather than to cultivating Moscow's goodwill. Moreover, in Truman's mind the Iranian crisis was not an isolated local episode. On the contrary, he believed that "Russian activities in Iran threatened the peace of the world."⁷ He viewed the situation in Iran as composed of three elements: the security of Turkey, which in addition to direct Soviet threats was likely to be outflanked from the east by Soviet moves in Iran; the control of Iran's oil reserves; and, most disturbing for Truman, "Russia's callous disregard of the rights of a small nation and of her own solemn promises."⁸

The ensuing U.S. policy was developed in several stages. First, on March 6, 1946, George Kennan, U.S. chargé d'affaires in Moscow, delivered a note to the Soviet government protesting Soviet failure to withdraw troops by March 2—a stipulated deadline—and calling for their immediate evacuation from Iranian territory. (Moscow replied on March 24 pledging immediate withdrawal; in reality Soviet troops stayed a few weeks longer.) In the second stage diplomatic support was given to Iran through the spring of 1946 when it lodged a complaint in the United Nations Security Council against Soviet actions. In the third stage the U.S. government gave encouragement to the government of Mohammed Reza Shah in mid-December 1946 to send troops to the north to put an end to the two rebel structures left behind after the removal of Soviet troops: the self-styled Azerbaijan and Kurdish republics. The fourth stage centered on the issue of Soviet designs on Iran's northern oil. The year was 1947 and the newly elected Majlis was reluctant to ratify the Soviet-Iranian oil agreement concluded under duress in March of the previous year which, with 51 percent Soviet ownership, gave de facto control to Moscow. On September 11 the U.S. ambassador in Teheran, George V. Allen, publicly decried intimidation and coercion used by foreign governments in securing commercial concessions in Iran and promised full American support for Iranians in freely deciding about the disposition of their national resources. With this unequivocal encouragement the Majlis, on Octo-

ber 22, 1947, refused to ratify the oil agreement by an almost unanimous vote of 102 to 2 (the latter were both Communist deputies).

President Truman played a direct role in the shaping of this early American policy. He personally instructed Secretary Byrnes "to send a blunt message to Stalin" following Russia's failure to withdraw troops from Iran by March 2, 1946.⁹ In his memoirs Truman does not reveal what the message was. Because he speaks of it separately from the earlier-mentioned note delivered to Moscow by Chargé d'Affaires Kennan, it would appear that he refers to a different message. In a statement published in 1957, a year after the publication of his memoirs, Truman added further clarifying information: "The Soviet Union persisted in its occupation until I personally saw to it that Stalin was informed that I had given orders to our military chiefs to prepare for the movement of our ground, sea, and air forces. Stalin then did what I knew he would do. He moved the troops out."¹⁰

Thus the foundations of a long-range American policy toward Iran were laid by President Truman. It was a policy based on his understanding of the nature of the Soviet system and its expansionist proclivities as well as on his conviction that Soviet threats and aggression should be contained, with force if necessary. In this broad conceptual framework Iran played a strategically significant role, as Russia's direct neighbor and target of Soviet imperialism, as a vital link in a chain of non-Communist states bordering on the Soviet Union, as a rich source of oil, and as an access route to the Indian Ocean. Taking a cue from Truman's basic perceptions and priorities, the successive American presidents enlarged and refined U.S. policies toward Iran by extending economic and technical assistance, strengthening its military potential, establishing closer cultural ties, and integrating it into the regional security system encompassing the northern tier of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf.

THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE

The main phase of the Iranian crisis was barely over with the defeat of the Soviet-sponsored puppet regimes in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan in December 1946 when President Truman was confronted with a new crisis, this time in Turkey and Greece. Although the situation in these two countries differed from one another, there was one common denominator: the aggressive posture of Russia.

Turkey had been discussed by Truman, Stalin, and Churchill already at the Potsdam conference in 1945. At that time Stalin had asked for a joint defense of the Turkish Straits by the Black Sea powers and for the right to establish a Soviet fortress on the Bosphorus.¹¹ Although meeting with a rebuke from the two Western leaders, he persisted in his demands. The Soviet government launched a major propaganda drive by accusing Turkey of disloyal and treacherous behavior during World War II. Turkey, the Soviets said, allowed German and Italian armed ships to pass through the straits under the guise of merchant vessels in violation of the Montreux Straits Convention of 1936. Turkey thus could not be trusted to be the sole guardian of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and had to be replaced by a collective body composed of the Black Sea powers (USSR, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Turkey). Inasmuch as three of these powers were Communist—two of them Soviet satellites—it was clear that effective control of the straits would thus be assumed by Russia. Furthermore, Moscow also advanced claims to two eastern districts of Turkey, Kars and Ardahan, claiming historical and ethnic (Georgian and Armenian) titles to them.

As for the straits, America's initial response tended to be cautiously conciliatory. Without conceding to the Soviets the military control of the straits, the State Department was prepared to meet their demand for the revision of the Montreux Convention through proposals that would allow the Soviets to gain a more privileged position when transiting the straits.¹² Negotiations on this subject among the four concerned countries (the United States, Britain, USSR, and Turkey) continued intermittently through 1946. The winter of 1946–47, however, was marked by sizable concentrations of Soviet troops north of the Turkish border and general intensification of anti-Turkish propaganda.

Simultaneously with the ripening Turkish crisis, the political situation in Greece was deteriorating. Occupied during the war by combined Italian and German troops, Greece was freed toward the end of 1944 by the British, who helped install in Athens the royalist government returned from exile in London. But the government was challenged by Communist guerrillas who initially fought the occupying Axis forces and now made a bid for power in the liberated country. These guerrillas found active support from Soviet-controlled Bulgaria as well as from Communist Yugoslavia and Albania. If it had not been

for British military intervention at Christmastime 1944, the royalist government might have fallen.

The dangerous situation in Greece and the impending move by the Communists to overthrow the royalist government were presented by Loy Henderson in a State Department memorandum entitled "Crisis and Imminent Possibility of Collapse" and addressed to Secretary of State George C. Marshall. However, because Britain, with her 40,000 troops in Greece, was regarded by the United States as the Western power responsible for the eastern Mediterranean, no sense of alarm prevailed in Washington, even though President Truman was aware of the potential link between the security of Iran and that of Turkey.¹³

The situation changed abruptly when, on February 21, 1947, the British ambassador in Washington, Lord Inverchapel, delivered a note addressed to Secretary Marshall informing him that Britain was no longer in a position to continue its responsibility in safeguarding the security of Greece and Turkey. Britain, said the note, was compelled to withdraw its forces and its support from both countries by April 1. This particular communication added a new dimension of urgency to the situation.

Owing to Secretary Marshall's temporary absence from Washington, the British note was handled by Under Secretary Dean Acheson (and two senior division directors in the State Department, Loy Henderson and John Hickerson), who promptly informed President Truman of its contents. From the moment he learned of the note the president assumed personal control and leadership over the fast-developing emergency.

Truman's perception of this new crisis was clear and free of ambiguities. He considered any concession to the Soviets on the straits question as affecting not only Turkey but also Greece, and he saw it as leading to Soviet control of the *whole* of the Middle East. In his eyes the fate of Greece and Turkey was interrelated; in each case the culprit was Russia acting by different methods—direct in Turkey and indirect, through local Communists and their satellite Balkan sponsors, in Greece. It was not the first time the president expressed awareness of and concern for the security of Turkey. Already in 1945, at the time of the Azerbaijan crisis, he had seen a connection between Iran's security and that of Turkey. Now, with Britain announcing her impending withdrawal from the Greek-Turkish zone, the president not only saw

his earlier fears confirmed but also felt the need for a prompt and decisive reaction by the United States.¹⁴

But to engage publicly in a strong action designed to thwart Soviet designs, the president felt the need of congressional and, more broadly, public endorsement. To this end on February 17 he called a meeting of congressional leaders to the White House. It was attended by, among others, Senators Arthur Vandenberg and Tom Connolly, representing the Republican majority and the Democratic minority in the Congress. The president spoke convincingly first, but the next phase of the discussion proved disappointing. Secretary Marshall, not a great orator, asked by the president to report on the situation, presented the facts in a flat tone and uninspiring manner. When it became clear that the legislator's reaction was one of coolness and indifference, Under Secretary Acheson, with Truman's encouragement, took the floor to speak forcefully and persuasively. "These congressmen," wrote Acheson in his memoirs,

had no conception of what challenged them; it was my task to bring it home. . . . In the past eighteen months, I said, Soviet pressure on the Straits, on Iran, and on northern Greece had brought the Balkans to the point where a highly possible Soviet breakthrough might open three continents to Soviet penetration. Like apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one, the corruption of Greece would infect Iran and all to the east. It would also carry infection to Africa through Asia Minor and Egypt, and to Europe through Italy and France, already threatened by the strongest domestic Communist parties in Western Europe. The Soviet Union was playing one of the greatest gambles in history at minimal cost. It did not need to win all the possibilities. Even one or two offered immense gains. We and we alone were in a position to break up the play. These were the stakes that British withdrawal from the eastern Mediterranean offered to an eager and ruthless opponent.¹⁵

Acheson's earnest zeal and eloquence brought a change in the attitudes of the listeners. Senator Vandenberg responded by saying: "Mr. President, if you will say that to the Congress and the country, I will support you and I believe that most of its members will do the same."¹⁶

Thus the signal for action was given, and the next several weeks were spent in preparatory work by the State Department group headed

by Joseph M. Jones under Acheson's overall direction and in further meetings in the White House. As usual, the process of drafting the presidential message to the Congress encountered some "in-house" difficulties. For example, George Kennan, back in Washington from his diplomatic post in Moscow, feared that the president's draft message, which incorporated the points Acheson had made, was too strong and might provoke the Soviets to aggressive action. This might appear surprising in view of the fact that, somewhat later that year, Kennan was the first to articulate publicly the policy of containing Soviet imperialism in his article "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" in the July 1947 issue of *Foreign Affairs*. On the other hand, the president's adviser Clark Clifford wanted to make the statement stronger.

The result was the message, since known as the Truman Doctrine, delivered to the Congress on March 12, 1947, in which the president (a) described the deteriorating situation in Greece and the pressures on Turkey; (b) called for financial aid to both countries in the amount of \$400 million, as well as for military advisory aid; (c) couched his appeal in terms of struggle between freedom and democracy on the one hand and totalitarian coercion on the other; (d) did not mention Russia by name but made clear the existence of the global contest between the United States and Communist imperialism and subversion.

The earnest and urgent tone of the message was conveyed by the following passages:

The very existence of the Greek state is today threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists, who defy the Government's authority at a number of points, particularly along the northern boundaries. . . .

The future of Turkey as an independent and economically sound state is clearly no less important to the freedom-loving peoples of the world than the future of Greece. . . .

One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion. . . .

The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria. . . .

Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far-reaching to the West as well as to the East.

We must take immediate and resolute action.¹⁷

A congressional debate followed the delivery of the message. Several weeks later, on May 22, 1947, Congress responded positively by enacting a law that provided for financial aid and military advisory assistance to Greece and Turkey in the amounts and of the kind requested by the president. It should be noted that in its preamble the bill justified unilateral U.S. action by saying "Whereas the United Nations is not now in a position to furnish to Greece and Turkey the financial and economic assistance which is immediately required. . . . Be it enacted."¹⁸ Thus the UN was bypassed—an important precedent indicating that American policy would henceforth not be shackled by the formalism of UN procedures when vital United States interests were at stake.

It is also to be noted that the Truman Doctrine did not go so far as to pledge the use of military forces. Apparently the president did not believe that the situation in the two threatened countries warranted such a drastic move. He might have been motivated also by reluctance to open a Pandora's box at home, where opposition to armed intervention might explode, uniting the right-wing and left-wing critics of his administration.

In these early postwar years any strong policy of stopping Soviet aggression was likely to encounter opposition from two quarters: the isolationist and the liberal-leftist. Congressional leaders such as Senator Robert A. Taft represented the isolationist trend, but isolationism was not limited to diehard Republicans. Isolationists criticized Truman for trying to pull "British chestnuts" out of the fire.¹⁹ As Margaret Truman puts it, her father was not only faced with a hostile Republican majority in Congress but "had to fend off foolish advice from his own party. The Democratic Congressional Conference called a meeting . . . and voted to warn Dad against supporting 'British policies' in the Mediterranean."²⁰ Yet Truman was convinced that "inaction, withdrawal, 'Fortress America' notions could only result in handing to the Russians vast areas of the globe now denied to them."²¹

The liberal-leftist opposition was perhaps even more dangerous. Misplaced idealism focusing on near worship of the newly formed United Nations as a panacea for world ills, pacifism advocating unilateral disarmament of the United States in disregard of the growing Soviet military capacity, a tendency to dismantle American intel-

ligence agencies in spite of plentiful evidence of Soviet espionage and subversion in the Free World, acceptance at face value of Soviet claims that the "liberated" nations of Eastern Europe were adopting of their free will "democratic socialism," a campaign of denigration against the House Committee on Un-American Activities, a tendency to gloss over the brutal practices of the Soviet penal system, and justification of Soviet demands for a world power role—all of these constituted important ingredients of the attitude that was hostile to any forceful American policy designed to thwart Soviet expansionist schemes.

A good example of this kind of thinking was provided by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's son, Elliott Roosevelt, in 1946 at a reception given in Moscow by a member of the U.S. Embassy. According to the American ambassador to Russia, General Walter Bedell Smith, Elliott Roosevelt said, *inter alia*:

(a) foreign correspondents have as much liberty in the U.S.S.R. as they do in the U.S. . . . ; (b) it is proper for the U.S.S.R. to insist on a joint regime with Turkey for the Dardanelles in which the U.S.S.R. would "naturally play a leading role"; (c) the U.S.S.R. would not be interested in building up Communism in states along its borders if the U.S. and U.K. were not pursuing their "present expansionist policies"; (d) the U.S. and U.K. have often broken their word as given at Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam, but the "Soviets have never broken theirs"; (e) the UN is being used by the U.S. merely to further its own "selfish ambitions."²²

Truman had profound scorn for this type of opposition and was aware of its potential to inflict harm on U.S. national interests. In a letter to his daughter Margaret written on March 13, 1947, a day after presenting his Greek-Turkish message to Congress, the president wrote:

The terrible decision I had to make had been over my head for about six weeks. . . . I knew at Potsdam that there is no difference in totalitarian or police states, call them what you will, Nazi, Fascist, Communist or Argentine Republics. . . . The attempt of Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, et al., to fool the world and the American Crackpots Association, represented by Jos. Davies, Henry Wallace, Claude Pepper and the actors and artists in immoral Greenwich Village, is just like Hitler's and Mussolini's so-called socialist states.

Your Pop had to tell the world just that in polite language.²³

Truman used a similarly scathing language when referring to the delays he expected to encounter in Congress in approving his message: "When Congress gets all snarled up it is necessary for them to find someone to blame—so they always pick on me. But they are not fooling anyone. The people, I'm sure, are not to be fooled by a lot of hooley put out by ignorant demagogues."²⁴

Those, however, who were directly involved in the shaping of the president's new policy were not only aware that the Truman Doctrine was a watershed in America's foreign relations but were enthusiastic about it. Joseph Jones, a senior State Department official entrusted with the drafting of the presidential message, called it

the most revolutionary advance in United States foreign policy since 1823 [the year of the Monroe Doctrine]. . . . Harry S. Truman adopted and sustained, beginning with the Truman Doctrine, a courageous and responsible course for the United States in world affairs, which, in fact, not in slogans, checked and rolled back Soviet-Communist aggression and influence in large parts of the world, increased immeasurably the nation's security, and raised American prestige in the world to a high pinnacle.²⁵

He further stressed the global nature of the president's policy that "picked up the ideological challenge of communism." Two other State Department high officials, Loy Henderson, director of Near Eastern division, and John D. Hickerson, director of European division, the men who received the initial message from the British ambassador, immediately grasped that, by abdicating her responsibilities in Greece and Turkey, Great Britain had "handed the job of world leadership, with all its burdens and all its glory, to the United States."²⁶

Similarly conscious of the gravity of the situation in Greece and Turkey and eager to act ("the collapse of Greece, unless aid came, was only weeks away") were Under Secretary Acheson and Secretary Marshall. Marshall, about to attend a foreign ministers' conference in Moscow in March, gave instructions to proceed with utmost vigor. Acheson fully endorsed the view that "a major turning point in American history was taking place."²⁷

There is no doubt, however, that the guiding spirit, the impetus and the resolution came from President Truman himself. He developed a deep conviction that henceforth America was to "head the free world" and that "this was America's answer to the surge of Communist tyranny."²⁸ Moreover, he was fully conscious of the global im-

plications of his policy: "This was, I believe, the turning point in American foreign policy, which now declared that wherever aggression, direct or indirect, threatened the peace, the security of the United States was involved."²⁹

To conclude this section it may be appropriate to quote another participant in these momentous decisions, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, who made the following entry in his diary on September 18, 1947: "Lunched today with Jimmy Byrnes. We talked about Russia and American policy from 1943 on. He said one of the difficulties, he thought, after Roosevelt's death, was that Stalin did not like Truman and had told him (Byrnes) so. I made the observation that Mr. Truman was the first one who had ever said 'no' to anything Stalin asked—that he had good reason for liking FDR because he got out of him the Yalta Agreement, anything he asked for during the war, and finally an opportunity to push Communist propaganda in the United States and throughout the world."³⁰

RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL

In 1939 British-Zionist relations entered a phase of tension. This was the year when, in May, the British government issued a White Paper drastically reducing and eventually stopping altogether Jewish immigration to British-mandated Palestine and severely restricting land transfers from Arab to Jewish owners.³¹ To Zionists this act constituted a major defeat, in fact a stunning blow, because it was viewed as a virtual repudiation of the Balfour Declaration of 1917. That declaration, in which Britain pledged the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, was a charter on which Zionists based their hopes for a redemption of the Jewish people in their own homeland and on the basis of which they brought close to a half-million settlers into the mandated territory.

The British, whose first concern after 1939 was to survive and win the war, enforced their ban on Jewish immigration and land sales resolutely or, as their Zionist critics would say, ruthlessly. Leaky ships bringing Jewish wartime refugees to the Palestine coasts were intercepted by the Royal Navy and either turned away, occasionally to perish in the Mediterranean, or directed to Cyprus—a British crown colony—where their refugee passengers were interned in barbed-wire-enclosed camps for the duration of the war.

In response the Zionists, who had cherished an alliance with

Britain since 1917, now turned against her. Their action took three forms. First, on the political level a Zionist conference held in New York in 1942 produced the so-called Biltmore Program which set as a goal the transformation of the whole of Palestine into a Jewish State, rather than the modest establishment of a Jewish National Home *in* Palestine (as stipulated by the Balfour Declaration). Furthermore, at the Biltmore Conference American Jews wrested the leadership of the world Zionist movement from the European Jews, whom they criticized for weakness and indecision. Second, major efforts were exerted to promote illegal Jewish immigration into Palestine to save as many survivors of the Hitlerian holocaust as possible. And third, the extremist segment of the Jewish community in Palestine, grouped in such organizations as the Irgun Zvai Leumi under Menachem Begin and the Stern gang, launched, in the latter part of World War II, a campaign of terror against the British, with the ultimate objective of forcing them out of Palestine.

This was precisely the tense situation that President Truman found upon his advent to office. It was aggravated by the presence, in the displaced persons (DP) camps in Western Europe, of multitudes of Jewish survivors whose numbers were growing as a result of the Soviet takeover of Poland and her neighboring countries.

Truman was sworn in as president on April 12, 1945, but already on April 20 Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council, called on him to help in the resettlement of the refugees and to discuss the proposed Jewish homeland and state in Palestine. From that time on the president became intimately involved in the question of Palestine through its successive phases.

The first phase centered on the Jewish refugees in the DP camps and their admission to Palestine. Truman sympathized with the plight of the survivors of the holocaust and, in a genuinely humanitarian spirit, felt that their sufferings should be alleviated. He was critical of the British White Paper of 1939 and, in a communication to Prime Minister Churchill on July 24, 1945, he asked Britain to lift restrictions on Jewish immigration. Following the victory of the Labour Party the president raised the question of refugees with Premier Clement Attlee on August 31, 1945, urging Britain to admit immediately 100,000 Jewish immigrants to Palestine.

Despite its earlier endorsement of the Zionist program, once in power the British Labour Party adopted a policy that closely resembled the one followed by its Tory predecessors. This policy could be

summed up under two points: first, in view of her widespread imperial interests Britain should avoid provoking the Arab world into a posture of hostility; second, in view of her strained financial and military resources Britain should seek a peaceful solution in adjudicating Jewish and Arab claims in Palestine, a task deemed impossible to attain if a sudden influx of 100,000 Jews were to occur. For these reasons British response to Truman's appeals represented a mixture of resentment at the pressures from Washington, criticism of the American initiative as one that urged action in Palestine but eschewed responsibility for its enforcement, and even a degree of cynicism regarding real American motivations. (Later Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, speaking at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth on June 12, 1946, made a flippant remark that American policy-makers want to ensure Jewish immigration into Palestine "because they did not want too many of them in New York.")³²

Concretely, the British proposed, with an eye to sharing responsibility with the United States, to set up an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, a binational "blue ribbon" body, to review the situation in Palestine and recommend a solution. Upon Washington's acceptance the committee was appointed. It carried out its assigned mission in the period between the first and second appeals made by Truman to admit the refugees. In April 1946 it recommended continuation of the British mandate for Palestine pending the establishment of a United Nations trusteeship; immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees; and repudiation of the land transfer limitations. The next step was the creation of a new Anglo-American Commission whose task was to devise methods to implement the committee's recommendations. The result was the Grady-Morrison report that recommended the creation of a federalized Jewish-Arab state of Palestine and put forth a requirement of a common Jewish-Arab consent to permit further Jewish immigration. The Grady-Morrison Plan, disappointing as it was to the Zionists, was not accepted by President Truman. Instead, on October 4, 1946, he sent a second message to Attlee repeating his appeal for immediate admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine.

Without going into the complex details of U.S. interagency procedures and the American-British diplomacy, it is possible to state that in this initial phase of the Palestine problem (1945-46) President Truman was primarily concerned with the humanitarian aspects of the Jewish question.³³ Although aware of the Zionist goal to create a state, he was not yet ready to endorse it. In fact, he deplored Zionist

appeals for American support as an obstacle to the attainment of the immediate objective, which was to open the gates of Palestine to Jewish refugees.³⁴

As the question of Palestine entered its second phase, following the collapse of joint U.S.-British efforts to adopt a mutually acceptable solution, the issue of statehood emerged as the primary concern of international diplomacy. It coincided with the British decision, in April 1947, to submit the Palestinian dispute to a special session of the United Nations General Assembly. As the assembly and its Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) deliberated in the spring, summer, and fall of 1947, the president's ideas on Jewish statehood gradually crystallized.

It is interesting to observe that Truman's perceptions in this matter were rooted in his belief in the principle of self-determination. This was, in terms of history and logic, a paradoxical construction. Generally, when issues of imperialism and colonialism are discussed, it is understood that self-determination means the right of a people subjugated by another nation to regain freedom and determine its own destiny; it does not mean the right of the colonizers to set up their own rule over the unwilling conquered people. Yet Truman unmistakably declared: "The Balfour Declaration, promising the Jews the opportunity to re-establish a homeland in Palestine, had always seemed to me to go hand-in-hand with the noble policies of Woodrow Wilson, especially the principle of self-determination."³⁵ In evaluating without prejudice Truman's formulation, one should note that he speaks of the *reestablishment* of a homeland, in other words, of a return to a situation that had prevailed in Palestine some two millenia earlier. In his eyes this apparently justified the Zionist claim for a state of their own even though the majority of the population in Palestine had been Arab for thirteen centuries.

But even with this special definition of self-determination, there was an element of ambiguity in Truman's thinking. In his memoirs he quotes extensively from a letter addressed to him by Egypt's prime minister, Nokrashy Pasha, protesting the Zionist program and his reply to it reaffirming an earlier American pledge (made by Roosevelt to King Ibn Saud) that "no decision should be taken regarding the basic situation in Palestine without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews."³⁶ Commenting on this exchange, Truman stated: "It was my position that the principle of self-determination required that Arabs as well as Jews be consulted."³⁷ In line with this policy and in accordance

with the State Department's recommendation, he authorized public release of Roosevelt's letter to the king of Saudi Arabia (dated April 5, 1945).

Whether on the issue of immigration or on that of Jewish statehood, Truman was aware of considerable resistance to these initiatives in the State Department and the military. He spoke somewhat deprecatingly of the "striped pants boys" who, according to him, did not care enough about the fate of Jewish displaced persons and who were mainly concerned with Arab reactions to American proposals. Indeed, the State Department professionals, watching as they did over the entire range of U.S. interests in the Middle East, viewed the far-reaching commitments to the Zionists with apprehension. The same was true of Acheson, a man supremely loyal and devoted to Truman, who held his own opinion on the matter: "I did not share the President's views on the Palestine solution to the pressing and desperate plight of great numbers of displaced Jews. . . . [T]o transform the country into a Jewish state capable of receiving a million or more immigrants would vastly exacerbate the political problem and imperil not only American but all Western interests in the Near East."³⁸ Similarly, Acheson found Roosevelt's and Truman's assurances to consult the Arabs inconsistent with their sympathy toward Zionist aspirations.³⁹

Serious reservations about support for the Zionist program were also voiced by the military. In response to the president's request for an opinion, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended against any action that would cause disturbances in Palestine beyond Britain's military capability to control and definitely opposed the use of U.S. forces. Such a use of troops, they believed, would not only hurt British and American interests in the Middle East (including adverse effects on control of oil) but also pave the way for the Soviet Union "to replace the United States and Britain in influence and power in much of the Middle East."⁴⁰

Perhaps most vocal on this issue was the secretary of defense, James Forrestal. He spoke to the president repeatedly about the peril of arousing Arab hostility, which might result in denial of access to petroleum resources in their area,⁴¹ and about "the impact of this question on the security of the United States."⁴²

In spite of these critical voices within the administration, Truman gradually was won over to the idea that a Jewish state should be established. Thus when the UN Special Committee on Palestine recommended partition of the mandated territory into a Jewish and an

Arab state, with Jerusalem as an international enclave, the president instructed the State Department to support the partition plan. Accordingly, the U.S. delegate in the UN General Assembly voted for partition on November 29, 1947. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was proclaimed in Tel Aviv, and the next step for the U.S. government was to decide the time and kind of recognition to be extended to it. The president did not hesitate: within eleven minutes of Israel's proclamation of statehood the president gave *de facto* recognition to the newly created Jewish state. It was followed by the *de jure* recognition on January 31, 1949.

Although Truman adopted a policy designed to satisfy Zionist objectives, he did not do it without misgivings and caveats. These are summarized below.

(a) In advocating, first, the admission of Jewish refugees and, later, the establishment of a Jewish state, he wanted to accomplish these objectives in a peaceful way so as to avoid violent conflict in Palestine.

(b) By making public Roosevelt's letter to Ibn Saud, he tried to convey the idea that the United States was anxious to honor its pledges to the Arabs as well.

(c) No matter what the possible outcome of his political decisions, he was determined not to send U.S. troops to Palestine.⁴³

(d) He was concerned with the danger that "the Russians would be ready to welcome the Arabs into their camp."⁴⁴

Furthermore, following the outbreak of Jewish-Arab hostilities after the UN partition resolution the president, however reluctantly, accepted the State Department proposal (March 19, 1948) that, unless a peaceful transition to the partitioned status could be found, Palestine should be placed under the UN Trusteeship Council—a solution, as he was aware, that would be regarded as a betrayal by the Zionists. Before another special session of the General Assembly, called to consider this proposal, was able to reach any decision, swiftly moving events in Palestine outdistanced its deliberations and the State of Israel was proclaimed in mid-May.

The President was quite firm on opposing U.S. military intervention; therefore, when upon achievement of statehood Israel found itself at war with the surrounding Arab states, it was offered neither U.S. troops nor military advice. Moreover, the United States proclaimed an embargo on arms exports to both sides of the conflict—to the considerable chagrin of the Zionists, who did their best to circumvent it by smuggling out certain weapons and by securing them from

Soviet bloc sources. By contrast, however, the president was ready to extend financial assistance to the newly born state. When Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, paid a visit to the White House on May 25, 1948—within ten days of the proclamation of independence—the president pledged a \$100 million loan. Anxious as he was to see peace restored to the Holy Land, Truman showed a degree of flexibility regarding Israel's national territory. This was demonstrated when the newly appointed UN mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden, proposed that to avoid further aggravation in hostilities the extensive region of Negeb, mostly desert inhabited by Arabs, assigned to Israel by the Partition Resolution, should revert to Arab control. Concurring with the view of the State Department, the president, again somewhat reluctantly, agreed to support this proposal at the UN Security Council. (Paradoxically, it was the Soviet Union that opposed it in spite of her long-range pro-Arab policy.) Generally, on the territorial issue the president preferred to stay within the framework of the Partition Resolution. This applied specifically to Jerusalem, whose international status, with his concurrence, was reaffirmed both by the Democratic Party platform for the 1948 campaign and by the State Department.⁴⁵ This basic stance also explains why the United States government has, through subsequent vicissitudes, refused to move its Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Notwithstanding continuous inputs into the decision-making process by the State and Defense Departments and the Central Intelligence Agency, President Truman insisted on personally directing American policy toward Palestine. This was acknowledged by Acheson in his memoirs⁴⁶ and by such eyewitnesses and participants as Evan Wilson, one-time consul general in Jerusalem.⁴⁷ Truman himself was emphatic on exercising full control of foreign policy and repeatedly expressed annoyance at the attempts by entrenched career bureaucrats to thwart presidential directives: "I wanted to make it plain that the President of the United States, and not the second or third echelons in the State Department, is responsible for making foreign policy, and, furthermore, that no one in any department can sabotage the President's policy."⁴⁸

In shaping his policy toward Palestine Truman experienced continuous pressures, especially from the Jewish community, virtually from the very moment he took office as president. These pressures were not limited to solicitation of his political and diplomatic support. "Top Jewish leaders in the United States were putting all sorts of

pressure on me to commit American power and forces on behalf of the Jewish aspirations in Palestine."⁴⁹

When the Palestine question reached the forum of the United Nations, Zionist efforts to ensure partition gained in intensity. They also bifurcated: some were directed toward securing a favorable vote of lesser Latin American countries and some were aiming straight at the U.S. president. According to Truman,

The facts were that not only were there pressure movements around the United Nations unlike anything that had been seen there before but that the White House, too, was subjected to a constant barrage. I do not think I ever had as much pressure and propaganda aimed at the White House as I had in this instance. The persistence of a few of the extreme Zionist leaders—actuated by political motives and engaging in political threats—disturbed and annoyed me."⁵⁰

The president's daughter, Margaret, also testifies to the relentlessness and intensity of the Zionist campaign that "irritated" the president. Zionist leaders, she recalls, urged her father to "browbeat" South American and other countries into supporting partition.⁵¹ She acknowledges that "It was one of the worst messes of my father's career. . . . To tell the truth about what had happened would have made him and the entire American government look ridiculous. Not even in his memoirs did he feel free to tell the whole story, although he hinted at it. Now I think it is time for it to be told."⁵² Thus she reveals that on August 23, 1947, some three months before the UN partition vote, the president expressed his disapproval of Zionist pressures in a letter to Eleanor Roosevelt: "The action of some of our United States Zionists will prejudice everyone against what they are trying to get done. I fear very much that the Jews are like all underdogs. When they get on the top, they are just as intolerant and as cruel as the people were to them when they were underneath. I regret this situation very much because my sympathy has always been on their side."⁵³

But the president's resentment at the pressures intensified when they were accompanied by threats. Margaret Truman recalls an episode when, in October 1948, a New York Democratic Party delegation called on her father to urge him to offer Israel *de jure* recognition, lift the arms embargo, and endorse the widest possible boundaries for the Jewish state. Failure to do this, they warned, would result in certain loss of New York State. On this occasion Truman did not conceal his

irritation. "Dad looked them in the eye and said: 'You have come to me as a pressure group. If you believe for one second that I will bargain my convictions for the votes you imply would be mine, you are pathetically mistaken. Good morning.'"⁵⁴

It should be noted that pressures were not restricted to recognized Zionist leaders. They also emanated from highly placed White House officials, both Jewish and non-Jewish, such as David K. Niles, adviser on national minorities, Samuel I. Rosenman, a counselor, and Clark Clifford, an assistant to the president (and later a cabinet member). A rather special role was played by Truman's former partner in the haberdashery business, Eddie Jacobson, who in March 1948 urged and convinced the president to overcome his reluctance and receive Dr. Chaim Weizmann, at that time head of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.⁵⁵

Furthermore, one should not underestimate the influence exerted on behalf of the Zionist cause by non-Jewish leaders. These included a variety of individuals and groups ranging from religious fundamentalists to politicians. Mobilization of these elements in favor of the Zionist program constituted a major strategic objective of the Zionist leadership. On the other hand, while some of these Christian leaders gave wholehearted support to Zionist efforts, certain well-established and affluent Jewish notables opposed, or were indifferent to, the idea of establishing a Jewish homeland, inasmuch as they considered it harmful and likely to expose them to charges of dual loyalty and unpatriotic behavior. Prominent Jewish Americans such as Jacob H. Schiff, Felix M. Warburg, Adolph S. Ochs, Julius Rosenwald, and Monroe Deutsch could be listed as belonging to this category.⁵⁶

Whatever misgivings Truman might have had about the Zionist program, he eventually not only embraced it but added impetus to it by ordering the U.S. delegation at the United Nations to vote for partition. It is not easy to give an evaluation of his motives in choosing this option. Initially, as we have seen, he was merely interested in relieving human misery by urging admission of displaced Jews to British-ruled Palestine. In that early stage he appeared to be quite firm in rejecting "a political structure imposed on the Near East that would result in conflict."⁵⁷ He was also aware, as we have seen, of the gains likely to accrue to the Soviets if Arabs were to be antagonized. Yet he ultimately chose a policy that did lead to conflict and opened the gates to Soviet penetration of the Arab world, as the examples of Nasser's Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and other states showed. Was this policy based on

his genuine conversion to the idea that the thus generated conflict in the Middle East was of secondary importance and that the Soviet factor could be safely disregarded? This alternative does not quite square with his determination to stop Soviet advances in the northern tier of Iran, Turkey, and Greece. Furthermore, as his arms embargo indicated, he did not identify U.S. interests with Israel's victory and never went on record claiming that Israel was America's ally or strategic asset. This leaves us with the other possible alternative—that despite his resentment of the political pressures at home he chose to give them priority over other considerations. Certain observers who stood close to the decision-making process of that era were convinced that domestic politics constituted a major motivation in Truman's behavior.⁵⁸ In the often quoted statement addressed to four American envoys from the Middle East who, at a meeting in the White House on November 10, 1945, warned him of adverse effects of a pro-Zionist policy, he declared: "I am sorry, gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism: I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."⁵⁹

In throwing his support to the creation and *de jure* recognition of Israel, Truman committed the United States to the idea of the Jewish state's legitimacy. Although this constituted a major innovation in U.S. foreign policy, it did not yet determine the exact nature of American-Israeli relations. These could in the future follow the lines of friendship, antagonism, or neutrality, depending on the perceptions of Truman's successors and the actual political circumstances. In spite of the critical Arab response to Truman's Palestine policies and the Arab-Israeli war of 1948, his presidency was spared a major crisis in which American interests would suffer a drastic setback. Such crises occurred later during successive presidencies, in the course of which a substantial evolution took place in American-Israeli as well as in American-Arab relations.

2. The Eisenhower Presidency

The Middle East continued to claim the attention of the president and his chief advisers during the Eisenhower administration, 1953–61. Certain broader problems proved to be constant and required continuous vigilance, notably the threat of Soviet penetration in the area, the security of oil supplies, and the tense state of Arab-Israeli relations. As against the background of these concerns, the Eisenhower administration had to face four major disruptive events in the Middle East: the Iranian oil crisis, the Suez crisis resulting in the second Arab-Israeli war, the civil war in Lebanon, and the revolution in Iraq. There was a potential, in varying degrees, of a Soviet-American confrontation in at least three of these cases: in Iran, in Suez, and in Iraq. Concern, verging on alarm, over advances of international Communism prompted the president to sponsor the conclusion of the Baghdad Pact and, later, to issue a major policy statement known as the Eisenhower Doctrine. Furthermore, Eisenhower's advent to the presidency coincided with the ascent of Gamal Abdul Nasser, who not only pushed Egypt upon a revolutionary path of socialism but also launched a new powerful movement of Pan-Arabism which was to affect the entire Arab world and condition its relations with the superpowers.

Because of the firm ideological posture, erudition, experience in international affairs, and strong personality of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, a consensus seemed to develop that he rather than the president was the architect of major foreign policy moves in that era. While it would be hard to deny that Dulles played a dominant part in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy, one should not underestimate the president's role, which was far from passive. It was expressed in two ways: through well-considered approvals of ideas and initiatives submitted by Dulles and through closer personal involvement. In this chapter we will analyze Eisenhower's responses and policies in three

crises: the Iranian, the Egyptian-Israeli, and the Lebanese, within the framework of broader regional concerns.

THE MOSSADEGH OIL CRISIS IN IRAN

As a problem for U.S. policy, the oil crisis in Iran was inherited by Eisenhower from the Truman presidency. The two administrations gave a different emphasis to the crisis. Whereas Truman's concern centered primarily on the nationalization of the Iranian oil industry, Eisenhower had to face a constitutional crisis in Iran that originated in the oil issue but evolved into a struggle for political control of the country. It was in this second phase that the climax to the entire crisis occurred.

This crisis began in 1950–51 when Iran complained about the inadequate revenues it was receiving from the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), holder of a large concession in southwestern Iran initially granted in 1908 but substantially revised in 1933. Before long, the issue was brought to the attention of the Majlis where a group of eight deputies representing the National Front, led by Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh, launched an intensive campaign in favor of a drastic change of the concession agreement. Iran's premier, General Ali Razmara, tried to steer a moderate course to avoid disruption of oil supplies. On March 7, 1951, he was assassinated by a religious fanatic, and a week later, on March 15, during the premiership of Hossein Ala, the Majlis passed a new law nationalizing AIOC's assets and facilities. The Senate confirmed it on March 20. Unable to stem the tide of extremist anti-British agitation, Ala resigned, and on April 28 Mossadegh was appointed premier. Having barely escaped five years earlier from the danger of a Soviet takeover as exemplified by the Azerbaijan crisis, the shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, was reluctant to see his country plunge into a new struggle, this time against Britain. Despite her imperial legacy, Britain never coveted Iran's territory, and the shah viewed Britain, even with her diminished postwar power, as a counterweight to Soviet designs. In the heated political climate, however, he felt obliged to sign, on May 2, the nationalization law, thus giving it official promulgation.

From that time on the crisis began unfolding at a rapid pace. The AIOC asked for arbitration, but Premier Mossadegh rejected it. Further developments in British-Iranian relations were punctuated by a number of bilateral and unilateral steps. These included, first, the visit of

the AIOC mission from London to Teheran (May 1951) and, later, direct negotiation between the British government represented by Lord Privy Seal Sir Richard Stokes and Iran's government (August 1951). Even though Stokes accepted—after some American prodding—the principle of nationalization, the mission ended in failure because no agreement could be reached on compensation.

In September 1951 Britain lodged a complaint before the UN Security Council, citing Iran's "breach of international obligations," but, following an impassioned plea by Mossadegh, who personally attended the session, the council abstained from final decision. Instead it asked the International Court of Justice at The Hague (World Court) to decide whether the matter was within UN competence. Further steps in the dispute included the takeover, on September 27, of the Abadan refinery—the largest in the world—by the Iranian army and, by October 3, the expulsion from Iran of the remaining British personnel. Iran's oil production came to a virtual halt, and attempts to sell some oil to Japan and Italy scored only a partial success because a British court in the Crown Colony of Aden impounded an Italian tanker while all major supranational oil companies refused, in solidarity with AIOC and to avoid costly litigations, to buy Iran's "stolen" oil. All in all, Iran managed, during the entire period of the dispute, 1951–53, to sell three tanker loads of petroleum, less than one day's production when the AIOC was in operation. The principal sufferer from this disruption was Iran. Iranian oil was quickly replaced on the world markets by increased exports from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait. A further attempt, in the winter of 1951–52, by the World Bank to mediate in the dispute also ended in failure. No progress in its resolution was made through the rest of 1952 and the first half of 1953.

The crisis was not limited to an aggravation in the relations between the company and the Iranian government. In October 1952 Iran broke diplomatic relations with Britain. Emotions in Iran ran high. Every week would bring about some major street demonstration. Militant National Fronters, religious fanatics, and the Tudeh Party Communists vied with each other in outbursts of anti-British frenzy. Mossadegh, often clad in pajamas, would regularly harangue the crowds from the balcony of the Majlis, alternately crying and fainting from excess tension.

The United States watched these developments with increasing concern. It was represented in Teheran by a diplomat of vast experience in Asian and Soviet affairs, Ambassador Loy Henderson, who had

been active in the formulation of the Truman Doctrine and whose reports from Iran kept Washington well informed of the deteriorating economic and political situation. At home the crisis was initially "managed" by Secretary of State Dean Acheson. President Truman, in contrast to his personal role in other foreign policy crises, was not closely involved in this one. His attention was focused at that time primarily on the Communist aggression and the resulting war in Korea, in comparison with which the ownership of Iranian oil appeared as a secondary issue. In his memoirs Truman devotes merely a brief paragraph to the Iranian oil crisis and never mentions the name of Mossadegh, even though he had a number of communications with him.

From the very outset of the crisis the U.S. government proclaimed its neutrality in the dispute. It did not, however, propose to stay aloof. In the first place it could not remain indifferent to a disruption in world oil supplies. Although Secretary Acheson thought the British suffered from an old-fashioned imperial complex vis-à-vis Iran and were too intransigent, he did not want to expose the British-American alliance to undue strain. And while he was sensitive to the issue of the sanctity of contracts which Iran's repudiation of the oil concession had raised, he opposed resort to "gunboat diplomacy" as inconsistent with the UN Charter and the spirit of the twentieth century. Above all, however, he was concerned lest the cutoff of oil revenue in Iran produce an economic and political chaos that was bound to benefit the Tudeh Communists and their Soviet sponsors.

For all these reasons Acheson consistently sought a peaceful and fair resolution of the conflict by offering the U.S. government's good offices or mediations, by working closely with the British, and by keeping communications open with Iran. On his initiative, approved by Truman, Ambassador Averell Harriman was sent in mid-July 1951 to Iran as special presidential envoy to seek a formula acceptable to both parties in the dispute. Although his visit paved the way for the earlier mentioned Stokes mission, he did not succeed in providing a final resolution of the conflict. In the fall of 1951, during the UN session, Mossadegh called on the White House to enlist Truman's financial support for his cash-deficient country. Aware that Iran could have plenty of funds if it reached an agreement to resume production of oil, the president flatly refused. In January 1952 the United States cut off military aid to Iran. There were moments when the State, Defense, and Treasury departments—all involved in policy-making in

this case—were growing so exasperated with the British “rule-or-ruin” policy in Iran that they were ready to cast aside cooperation with London and develop “an independent policy or run the gravest risk of having Iran disappear behind the Iron Curtain and the whole military and political situation in the Middle East change adversely.”¹

But it was precisely this risk of Soviet absorption of Iran that prompted Acheson, despite his own criticism of Secretary Eden’s foot-dragging, to insist on synchronization of American and British policies. Furthermore, any break with London in the Iranian case would weaken the North Atlantic alliance and require joint action by major American oil companies—an alternative Acheson dreaded to envisage because of known opposition of “police dogs” in the antitrust division of the Department of Justice. Of course, failure to make any headway in the solution of the dispute could not be blamed only on the British.

Through all these negotiations and moves to find a decent compromise Premier Mossadegh “was whirling like a dervish.”² One day he seemed to accept certain ideas or proposals, the next, to reject them. He was perhaps right on one issue: in an earlier conversation with two U.S. officials, Paul Nitze and George McGhee, he said: “You have never understood that this is basically a political issue.”³ And later, during the Eisenhower presidency, he amplified it by declaring: “It is better to be independent and produce only one ton of oil a year than to produce 32 million tons and be a slave to Britain.”⁴ Mossadegh’s position was strengthened when, in June 1952, the World Court accepted Iran’s plea that the AIOC concession was a private contract and not a treaty or convention as the British government claimed and pronounced the matter outside its jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, political agitation, with the Communists riding high, reached a fever pitch in Teheran. Fearing the worst, Acheson secured President Truman’s consent to try to break the deadlock by offering Iran a \$100 million loan against future oil deliveries as an interim measure. But this too was rejected by Mossadegh. Acheson was apprehensive that Mossadegh, in the tempestuous climate of Iran, might break relations with the United States, “after which nothing could save the country from the Tudeh Party and disappearance behind the Iron Curtain.”⁵

In mid-July 1952 Mossadegh was briefly replaced by Qavam as-Saltaneh as premier. But after five days of mob violence in Teheran Qavam resigned and Mossadegh returned to office, this time demanding and obtaining near-dictatorial powers.

At about that time the idea began to gain ground, in both Washington and London, that no solution to the conflict could be found so long as Mossadegh stayed in power. Ambassador Henderson was given instructions to explore, together with the British chargé d'affaires, possible alternatives to the obstreperous Iranian premier. This trend of thought found strong support in London, where a belief prevailed that, in spite of his midsummer victory, Mossadegh was becoming politically weaker, a number of his early allies having deserted him in the course of 1952. In August Prime Minister Churchill proposed to President Truman a joint approach to Iran. By the fall the principle of combined British-American action was adopted in practice. Its implementation, however, was to be worked out by the new administration that came into office in January 1953.

Upon his assumption of the presidency, Eisenhower found the situation in Iran vastly changed. The initial focus on the dispute over oil was becoming quickly overshadowed by the struggle between Mossadegh and the shah. Thirsty for power, Mossadegh took a succession of steps to ensure his control of the country: (a) he wrested command of the military from the shah by arranging that his own supporter, General Taghi Riahi, become chief of staff; (b) he secured from the Majlis approval of his rule by decree for six months with an extension for another six months; (c) he induced the Majlis to vote the dissolution of the Senate; (d) in July 1953 he called, in turn, for the dissolution of the Majlis itself and by August 12, through a referendum marked by intimidation, he obtained popular approval of this measure.

While thus consolidating his power and reducing the shah to the position of a figurehead, Mossadegh tried to secure from the newly elected President Eisenhower financial aid to rescue Iran from the economic crisis which his intransigent oil policy had brought about. His strategy revolved around two major points: (1) prevent and/or destroy American-British cooperation on the Iranian problem and (2) gain American support by threatening that in its absence Iran would fall victim to a Communist takeover. The latter was a specious argument because it was precisely Mossadegh's reckless policy on oil, his challenge of the shah's power, and the ensuing chaos that were the main reasons for the Communist upsurge in Iran.

Mossadegh sent his first appeal to the new president in January 1953, even before the inauguration. Eisenhower responded immediately, assuring the premier of his impartiality in the dispute. In his second major message, on May 28, 1953, Mossadegh complained

about the lack of change in U.S. attitudes, depicted in glaring terms Iran's economic plight, called for the removal of obstacles to the sales of Iranian oil, and again appealed for U.S. financial aid.

Eisenhower, however, resisted ensnarement by Mossadegh's tortuous reasoning. "I refused," he said, "to pour more American money into a country in turmoil in order to bail Mossadegh out of troubles rooted in his refusal to work out an agreement with the British."⁶

While these high-level exchanges were taking place, the idea of seeking an alternative to Mossadegh had matured into a definite American-British plan to ensure his removal from office and the restoration of the shah's authority. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was ordered to prepare a plan. After considerable preliminary work the plan was presented by the CIA official in charge of the Middle East, Kermit Roosevelt, on June 25, 1953, at a meeting held in Secretary John Foster Dulles's office. Others attending the meeting were Under Secretary of State General Walter Bedell Smith, Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson, Ambassador to Iran Loy Henderson, CIA Director Allen Dulles, and three State Department officials of ambassadorial rank.

Of those present Ambassador Henderson was regarded as a "key person" who "feared that Iran under the leadership of Mossadegh was slipping under Russian control" and who "believed that this would be a grave blow to the West and would constitute an eventual danger to U.S. national security."⁷

The plan as presented by Roosevelt had initially been drafted by the British, but had been modified in some respects by the CIA. Having perused its written version at the meeting, Secretary Dulles said: "So this is how we get rid of that madman Mossadegh."⁸ Foster Dulles concentrated on the Soviet threat as the main rationale of the project. "If they [the Russians] could control Iran," he explained to those assembled, "they would control the Persian Gulf. This has been their dream, their chief ambition, ever since the days of Peter the Great."⁹

In the course of the ensuing discussion, Roosevelt called the Soviet threat to Iran "genuine, dangerous and imminent," stressing that "time seems to favor the Russians and their unwitting ally, Dr. Mossadegh." However, he was convinced that in a showdown between the premier and the shah, "the Iranian army and the Iranian people will back the Shah . . . against Mossadegh and, most especially, against the Russians."¹⁰

The plan called for consultation with the shah, envisaged that his

most loyal supporter in the army, General Fazlollah Zahedi, would be named premier in replacement of Mossadegh, and called for supportive action of the military units as well as for popular backing to overcome any possible resistance by Mossadegh and his chief of staff, General Riahi. Liaison with General Zahedi, at that time in hiding to avoid arrest by Mossadegh, was to be assured by the general's son, Ardeshtir Zahedi. The cost of the operation (code-named AJAX) was estimated at \$100,000 to \$200,000. Necessary contacts with and guidance of the civilian groups expected to rise against Mossadegh were to be entrusted to two friendly and enterprising Iranians (the "Boscoe brothers"). Those present at the meeting expressed their assent and Secretary Dulles—with full concurrence of the president—gave the signal to go ahead with the plan.

Taking charge of the execution of AJAX, Roosevelt proceeded to Iran "incognito" in mid-July. Arriving in Beirut he went by land via Baghdad to Teheran, where he set up his secret headquarters. His crossing into Iran's territory, on July 19, 1953, coincided with Mossadegh's call for dissolution of the Majlis and a plebiscite. According to Eisenhower's memoirs, within a week of that date "Mossadegh was moving closer and closer to the Communists" and "the Tudeh Party came out openly for Mossadegh."¹¹

The tempo of events in Iran was accelerating. On August 1 Roosevelt had his first secret meeting with the shah, during which he informed Iran's ruler that Eisenhower would confirm his mission as the president's personal representative by a phrase in a speech about to be delivered in San Francisco. In two subsequent secret meetings it was agreed that in case of premature revelation of the joint plan or any unforeseen difficulties, the shah—to dramatize the situation to his people—would sign the decree appointing General Zahedi as prime minister and fly immediately to Baghdad.¹²

On August 9, President Eisenhower sent—via Roosevelt—a cable to the shah wishing him "godspeed." The next day the shah left for the Caspian Sea resort of Ramsar and from there sent two *firmands* (decrees): one dismissing Mossadegh as premier and the other naming General Zahedi in his place. At this moment complications set in. In the first place Mossadegh defied the shah's order of dismissal and put Colonel Nematollah Nassiri, the shah's messenger, under arrest. Secondly, on August 15, pro-Mossadegh mobs led by the Tudeh "with strong Russian encouragement"¹³ took to the streets denouncing the shah and destroying his and his father's statues. Learning of these

events, the shah flew to Baghdad and then to Rome. Furthermore, the army commander in Isfahan, on whom the proroyalist plotters were counting, withdrew his support, while a friendly commander in Kermanshah was late in arriving with his troops in Teheran. Thus the original plan of action suffered substantial reverses, and Roosevelt found himself confined to his secret hideout while waiting for news from his Iranian contacts. The decisive day came on August 19 (28 Mordad of the Iranian solar calendar) when the people of the bazaar, led by athletes from gymnastic clubs called *zurkhaneh*, poured out en masse into the city and, supported by army units loyal to the shah, confronted and dispersed the military elements defending Mossadegh. Thus, in spite of the U.S. role in planning and financing the movement that supported the shah, the counter coup was carried out with a more substantial participation of the Iranians themselves than has generally been acknowledged in the West. Soon General Zahedi emerged from hiding and assumed authority as prime minister. Learning of the favorable turn of events, the shah left Rome and returned in triumph to Teheran on August 22. Mossadegh was captured and, in a subsequent trial, sentenced to three years in prison, following which he was allowed to live on his country estate.

Thus the coup and counter coup were concluded and the gate was opened for resumption of the suspended oil negotiations. These led to the signing, in 1954, of an agreement between Iran and the newly formed international consortium, Iranian Oil Participants, Ltd. The terms of the agreement were to conform to the pattern then prevailing in the Middle East of a fifty-fifty profit sharing. The parent companies of the consortium were to be the AIOC (40 percent), Royal Dutch-Shell (14 percent), Compagnie Française de Pétroles (6 percent), and five American companies (holding jointly 40 percent): Standard Oil of New Jersey (now Exxon), Socony Vacuum (now Mobil), Standard Oil of California (now Chevron), Texaco, and Gulf (each holding 8 percent). Somewhat later, the five American "majors" diminished their joint share by conceding to a group of independents (Iriscon Agency) 5 percent of the consortium's total and reducing their own holdings from 8 to 7 percent each. Oil production and exports were resumed and, after a period of struggle to regain the lost markets, Iran again became a major oil producer (second only to Saudi Arabia) in the Middle East.

President Eisenhower was intimately involved in the Iranian drama. "I conferred daily with the officials of the State and Defense departments and the Central Intelligence Agency and saw reports

from our representatives on the spot who were working actively with the Shah's supporters," he wrote in his memoirs. "Throughout this crisis," he added, "the United States government had done everything it possibly could to back up the Shah."¹⁴ Upon his return to power the shah promptly sent a message to the president in which he expressed the hope that, through joint action, Iran and the United States could change the whole strategic situation in the Middle East "by taking advantage of the Iranian renaissance."¹⁵ The president responded to these overtures by providing for continuation of technical aid (\$23.4 million) and for \$45 million of emergency economic assistance to Iran. These measures marked the opening of a new era of close U.S.-Iranian cooperation in economic, political, and strategic sectors, an era that was to last until the Iranian revolution of 1979.

THE SUEZ CRISIS

What has become known as the Suez Crisis of 1956 had its beginnings in the Aswan Dam scheme—a plan cherished by President Gamal Abdul Nasser following his emergence as undisputed ruler of Egypt in the early 1950s. The High Aswan Dam, to be constructed in upper Egypt, was to supply most of the electric power for the needs of the Nile Delta and to reclaim enough of the adjacent desert to add some 25 percent to the existing irrigated areas. With the costs initially estimated at about \$1 billion, it was to be financed jointly by the United States, Great Britain, the World Bank, and Egypt.

The American offer of assistance was made in December 1955, but for about six months Nasser equivocated about accepting it. In fact, drawing politically closer to the Soviet Union, he hinted that the Russians were about to offer him more advantageous terms than the Western partners. However, in spite of Soviet Foreign Minister Shepilov's visit to Cairo in mid-June 1956, Moscow at that time did not make any definite offer to help with the Aswan Dam project. This disappointment did not prevent Nasser from pursuing a strongly nationalistic Pan-Arab policy which on a number of issues was at odds with American objectives in the area. Thus, in more general terms, Nasser had opted for ostensible neutralism, in reality Moscow-tilted, a policy given considerable publicity by his attendance at the Bandung Conference in 1955. In the name of this policy and posing as champion of Arab solidarity, he vigorously attacked the U.S.-sponsored Baghdad

Pact which, that same year, brought together Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Britain, and one Arab member—Iraq—in a defensive alliance directed against Soviet threat to the area. Late in the summer of 1955 he had concluded an arms deal with the Soviets (initially through Czechoslovak proxy), thereby putting an end to the virtual monopoly of Western arms supplies to Egypt and other states of the Middle East. And, last but not least, he challenged the United States by granting recognition to Communist China.

Despite all these moves, viewed as ill considered if not outright inimical by the U.S. government, Nasser decided, belatedly, to accept the American offer of aid for the Aswan Dam. When this request was presented by the Egyptian ambassador on July 19, 1956, Secretary Dulles withdrew the offer. His official explanation to Egypt's envoy was that the United States had developed doubts about Egypt's ability to repay the debt (with the implicit hint that the Cairo-Moscow arms deal might have placed Egypt's finances in such straits as to drastically reduce its ability to meet the Aswan Dam obligations). America's refusal to extend the loan caused Britain and the World Bank to cancel their initial offers as well. Nasser's response to these decisions was typical of his own anti-imperialist philosophy and of the mood of the times: on July 26 he issued a decree nationalizing the Suez Canal, a waterway operated since 1869 on the basis of a concession by an international, Paris-based company, owned in its majority by French nationals but with a substantial equity holding by the British government. Transit through the canal was, in turn, subject to regulations embodied in the international Constantinople Convention of 1888 which acknowledged that the canal, as a waterway located in Egyptian territory, was within Egypt's defense and security jurisdiction, but which also stipulated freedom of navigation in times of peace and war.

As could be expected, British and French reactions to Nasser's move were strongly negative: Britain's Prime Minister Anthony Eden viewed Nasser as another Hitler-like dictator whose law-defying actions should be curbed, while French Premier Guy Mollet saw in him a hostile force already engaged in subversive intrigues in French-controlled Algeria. Both governments considered nationalization an act of "stealing" in defiance of the arbitration procedures stipulated by the concession agreement and branded it a threat to the freedom of navigation. Moreover, both claimed that once the Western pilots guiding the transiting ships left their jobs, Egypt would not be able to operate the canal safely and efficiently, and both hinted that force

might have to be used to restore respect for the terms of the concession.

Washington's response to these events was much more guarded. In contrast to the British and the French, President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles distinguished between the freedom of navigation, which they considered of prime importance, and the ownership of the Suez Canal Company, which in their eyes was not the decisive issue. On both counts they opposed use of force, but their efforts were focused on a negotiated solution whose overriding objective would be to ensure uninterrupted freedom of passage. Consequently, the president warned both London and Paris against a hasty resort to force and urged the convocation of a conference of principal maritime nations to devise a compromise formula that would satisfy Egypt's sovereign claims to the canal while ensuring freedom of navigation and adequate compensation for the company's shareholders.

This American initiative resulted in a conference in London in mid-August of twenty-two maritime nations (initially twenty-four were invited) which by a majority of eighteen adopted a plan presented by Secretary Dulles to form an international board, later to be called Suez Canal Users' Association.¹⁶ Its task would be to operate maritime traffic through the canal, receive transit tolls, and disburse them in a way that would guarantee a revenue to Egypt, maintenance of the canal, and compensation for the dispossessed shareholders. Inasmuch as Egypt refused to attend the conference, it was also decided to send to Cairo a mission, to be headed by Australia's prime minister, Robert Menzies, to persuade President Nasser to accept the conference's decisions. Such a mission did visit Egypt in early September but failed in its task: considering that the new organization would assume control of the canal, in contravention of the nationalization law, Nasser flatly rejected the proposals.

In mid-September Western pilots, initially in the service of the Suez Canal Company, resigned their jobs and were promptly replaced by new pilots, from Egypt and other countries. Within the next week 254 ships transited the canal under Egyptian administration. The traffic was managed efficiently, without accidents.

Disappointed in the outcome of the London conference (and seeing the Users' Association as a fee-collecting agency *for* Egypt), Britain and France brought the canal issue to the United Nations Security Council in early October. After deliberations the council adopted a plan prepared by UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, which

enunciated six principles to govern the canal's operation. Of these the most important was the third principle, which proclaimed that "operation of the canal should be insulated from the politics of any country."¹⁷ While adoption of these principles represented an advance in the search for the solution of the dispute, Britain and France felt disappointed because, as a result of the Soviet veto, the UN council failed to endorse the second part of the proposed resolution, one that confirmed the validity of the newly created Canal Users' Association, to which Egypt was adamantly opposed.

Frustrated, Britain and France began making secret preparations for a joint military action against Egypt. In their clandestine meetings held in Paris in mid-October, they were joined by Israel. Aggrieved by repeated fedayeen¹⁸ raids from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory and by her exclusion from the use of the canal, Israel perceived in the Suez dispute an opportunity to gain strategic advantages with British and French cooperation.

Although the United States was not informed of these military plans and secret meetings, President Eisenhower judged by the belligerent tone of various pronouncements emanating from London and Paris that use of force might be contemplated. Consequently, on October 11 he sent a letter to Prime Minister Eden warning him against resort to military action. Likewise, when on October 15 Israel, reinforced by sixty French *Mystère* planes, proclaimed mobilization, the president addressed similar warnings to Israel's Premier Ben-Gurion. These appeals proved futile. On October 29 Israel's forces invaded Egypt and in a swift move occupied key points of the Sinai Peninsula and the entire Gaza Strip.

At this juncture Britain and France entered the scene by issuing an ultimatum to Egypt and Israel to withdraw within twelve hours to a distance of ten miles from the Suez Canal. While Israel readily accepted this demand (her army was positioned for the most part at a distance farther than demanded), Egypt rejected it as unjust and inimical, whereupon on October 31 British and French air forces launched air attacks on Egyptian territory. In response Nasser blocked the canal by having a cement-laden ship sunk in it.

Eisenhower's reaction to these developments was one of dismay and anger over what he perceived as callous disregard of the UN-sponsored peaceful procedures, secretive British and French behavior, reckless Israeli adventurism, and—through incitement of hostility toward the West in the Arab world—encouragement of Soviet penetra-

tion into the area.¹⁹ In his attempt to cope with the crisis he resorted to both unilateral and multilateral action. On the unilateral front, on November 1 he ordered suspension of all U.S. military and some economic aid to Israel. Simultaneously, he made moves to use the United Nations as a peacemaking instrument: on November 2 the UN General Assembly (convened in an emergency session to bypass possible vetoes in the Security Council) approved the U.S.-sponsored resolution calling for immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of troops to the 1949 armistice lines. It also adopted a Canadian-initiated resolution setting up a 6,000-man UN Emergency Force (UNEF) to supervise the cease-fire and evacuation of troops.

In spite of these proceedings the conflict widened: on November 3, acting in solidarity with Egypt, Syria blew up the pipeline linking Iraq's oil fields with the Mediterranean coast. This action, when added to the blockage of the canal by Egypt, brought about serious shortages in supplies of Middle Eastern oil to Europe. Following the concentration of their troops in Cyprus, Britain and France launched, on November 5, a land attack on the Suez Canal zone. These actions in turn provoked the Soviet government to send messages to Eden, Mollet, and Ben-Gurion threatening the dispatch of "volunteers" and deployment of "terrible weapons" in defense of Egypt. In a separate letter to Eisenhower Soviet Premier Bulganin proposed to send a joint Soviet-American force to end fighting in Egypt. The president responded by warning Bulganin against the use of force and rejected his proposal for a separate Soviet-American action as inconsistent with the UN resolutions.

Finally, by November 6 Britain and France accepted the cease-fire and agreed to withdraw. They did it reluctantly and with a feeling that the United States had betrayed its Western allies. Officially, fighting came to an end on November 7. Israel's Ben-Gurion, however, opposed the withdrawal of his troops; it required a special cable from the president to make him agree, the next day, to the UN resolutions. By mid-November the UNEF landed in Egypt, and under its supervision the evacuation of invading troops began. By the end of the month a government-authorized group of American oil companies adopted a plan to supply Europe with 20,000 barrels a day of oil to supplement the usual quota of 300,000 barrels shipped from the U.S. Gulf of Mexico ports and Latin America.

By Christmastime 1956 the last British and French troops left Egypt. Israel, however, differentiated between withdrawal from Sinai,

that is, Egypt proper, and the Gaza Strip, an Egyptian-administered sector of Palestine, and refused to evacuate the latter. Deploring this attitude, Eisenhower "went to the country" in a televised speech on February 20, 1957, in which he called upon Israel to abide by the UN-ordered withdrawal. On his orders the American delegation to the United Nations was preparing a resolution to censure Israel. Furthermore, as a means of pressure, the president contemplated suspension of any private aid to Israel from the United States. As a result, on March 1, 1957, Israel agreed to withdraw her forces from the Gaza Strip, and this narrow slice of land reverted to Egyptian control.

Thus the military aggression aspect of the crisis came to a conclusion. In addition, however, two issues connected with, or generated by, the crisis still awaited a solution. The first of these was whether the freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal, stipulated by the Constantinople Convention of 1888 and reaffirmed in Dag Hammarskjöld's Six Points, would in practice apply to Israel. In defiance of these rules Egypt continued to deny passage to Israeli ships and Israel-bound or Israel-originating cargoes on neutral ships, and no amount of persuasion, within or without the United Nations, could change its attitude in this respect. Eventually it required two more wars (fought during successive U.S. presidencies) and strenuous international diplomacy to cause Egypt to allow Israel's use of the canal.

The second issue revolved around access to the Gulf of Aqaba. Until the Suez war such access was denied to Israel-bound ships by Egypt, whose forces controlled the narrow Strait of Tiran linking the gulf with the Red Sea. The capture by Israel's army of the Cape of Sharm el-Sheikh opened temporarily this narrow waterway to Israel-bound shipping. After the withdrawal of Israeli forces Sharm el-Sheikh came under the control of the UNEF. Because hostilities had come to an end, Israel claimed the right of free navigation through the strait. In this instance the United States took Israel's side and on March 7 President Eisenhower stated American readiness to declare the Gulf of Aqaba an open international waterway and to use it as such. To emphasize support for the right of "innocent passage" (and establish a precedent for the future), the U.S. government "directed an American tanker chartered by an Israeli company to proceed through the Gulf early in April and dock at the head of the Gulf in Israeli territory."²⁰ This action evoked strong and persistent protests from King Saud, who saw in it an act of Israeli provocation against the Moslem world and a threat to the security of Saudi Arabia and the safety of the Holy Places

of Islam located in its territory. The king, as well as the other Arab leaders, espoused the theory that the Gulf of Aqaba, as a body of water surrounded—with the exception of a narrow Israeli coastline—on all sides by Arab countries, was an Arab possession. By contrast, the U.S. government considered the gulf an open sea beyond the belt of territorial waters of the riparian states and insisted on freedom of access to it by ships of all nations in conformance with the relevant rules of international law. President Eisenhower had explained this to Saud during the king's visit in Washington in February 1957. Following the passage of the American tanker in March, he not only reiterated this view in subsequent communications but also gave assurances to the king of American readiness to prevent aggression against his country and to uphold the principle of "innocent passage" for the Arabs as for the Israelis.²¹

Of the various emergencies that Eisenhower faced in the Middle East, the Suez crisis revealed probably more than any other his thinking and attitudes on a number of vital issues affecting America's security and foreign policy. In the first place the president was fully aware of the importance of the area in question in world affairs; for several years, he said, "no region in the world received as much of my close attention and that of my colleagues as did the Middle East."²² Eisenhower realized that this was the arena of great confrontations of the mid-twentieth century: Communist imperialism vs. Western democracy, emerging nations of Afro-Asia vs. old colonialism, and Arab vs. Israeli nationalism. He viewed these confrontations as "a constant test to United States will, principle, patience, and resolve."²³

Paramount among these problems, in his mind, was the Soviet challenge and, as a matter of both principle and national interest, Eisenhower was determined to resist Soviet penetration into what he believed to be the most strategic area of the globe. By the same token, when approaching such issues as Anglo-French colonialism or Israeli-Arab hostility, he always looked at them in the light of their possible impact on the basic Soviet-Western rivalry. Convinced that the Soviets and, more broadly, Communists, consistently strove "to cause global confusion" and exploit the difficulties in the Middle East "to make inroads into the Free World and to disrupt the normally close cooperation among the nations of the West,"²⁴ he geared his actions to counter these designs.

Consistent with these convictions, Eisenhower was critical of the arms deal concluded between Nasser and Moscow in 1955, calling it

"the first evidence of serious Communist penetration" in the area. For the same reasons he favored the conclusion of the Baghdad Pact as a regional security instrument directed against Soviet imperialism, even though the United States did not become its signatory. As for the Suez crisis, Eisenhower opposed the Anglo-French intervention in Egypt not only as a matter of principle but also because of his concern about the impact it might have on Soviet chances "to gain a dominant position in the Near East area."²⁵ Similarly, Eisenhower viewed arms supplies to nations of the Middle East within the context of American-Soviet competition. Immediately after the cease-fire in the canal zone, he dictated a two-page memorandum outlining the actions that should be taken to ensure peace and stability in the region and to "exclude Communist influence from making any headway therein."²⁶ Among these actions he cited provision of arms to Egypt "sufficient to maintain order and a reasonable defense of its borders, in return for an agreement that it will never accept any Soviet offer."²⁷

Eisenhower's resolve to keep the Soviets from gaining advantages in the Middle East acquired special urgency because of the simultaneous upheavals in Poland and Hungary. In those two satellite countries local Communist regimes had challenged Moscow's dominance, thereby incurring hostile Soviet reaction, which in the case of Poland was limited to threats but in the case of Hungary resulted in the bombing of Budapest and brutal suppression of the uprising by Russian troops. Eisenhower fully concurred with Secretary Dulles in deploring the acute manifestation of Franco-British colonialism in Afro-Asia at the very time when Soviet colonialism in Eastern Europe was being discredited. "We could not permit the Soviet Union," wrote the president, "to seize the leadership in the struggle against the use of force in the Middle East and thus win the confidence of the new independent nations of the world."²⁸

Although the president encountered bitter reproaches in Britain and France for thwarting their plans and, in their eyes, siding with Russia and Nasser in condemning their actions, in reality he nurtured no hostility to these two Western allies and, in particular, had no desire to lessen British influence in the Middle East. As noted earlier, he differed from the British and French in distinguishing between the ownership of the Canal Company and the internationally guaranteed freedom of navigation. While he admitted Egypt's right to nationalize, he insisted on the freedom of navigation for all nations. Therefore, he was prepared to accept Nasser's seizure of the canal provided Egypt

demonstrated its ability to operate it and the canal was kept open to international maritime traffic. Like Britain and France, he was concerned about oil supplies to the West, but unlike them he felt that military action against Egypt would defeat the purpose of keeping the canal open, as indeed was proven by the unfolding events. His main disagreement with Paris and London was one of principle. These two Western allies were still operating within the old-fashioned categories of colonialism and gunboat diplomacy and, instead of viewing Nasser as an exponent of deep-seated Afro-Asian nationalism, regarded him as a Fascist-like dictator whose unhealthy ambitions should be curbed by force. By contrast, Eisenhower not only decried coercion in international relations but also wanted to make as much use as practicable of the peacemaking machinery of the United Nations.²⁹ That is why he termed the American and the Anglo-French positions as "diametrically opposed" to each other.³⁰

Lest it appear that by pronouncing these principles Eisenhower was an idealist visionary, it should be pointed out that, as the earlier case of Iran had proved, he relied on the United Nations only to the extent that UN intervention was carrying the promise of a workable solution. In fact, as a professional soldier, he understood and did not rule out the use of force. "My view was," he wrote in his memoirs, "that if Nasser was wholly arrogant, the United States would have to support any reasonable countermeasures. The fate of Western Europe must never be placed at the whim of a dictator and it was conceivable that the use of force under *extreme* circumstances might become necessary. In this unhappy event, quick military action must be so strong as to be completed successfully without delay."³¹ Furthermore, when at the end of July, shortly after nationalization, Khrushchev announced in Moscow Soviet support for Nasser in his determination to fight against a contemplated Western military intervention, the president warned Nasser "that if the Soviets moved into the troubled scene, they would find us at the side of our allies."³² In a more general sense Eisenhower wanted to cooperate with Britain and France within the framework of the Tripartite Agreement of 1950, which stipulated that arms supplies to the Middle East should be coordinated among the three powers and so regulated as to prevent any imbalance in the military capacity of Israel and the neighboring Arab states. Its ultimate purpose was to prevent any seizure of Middle East territory by force. It was precisely the defiance of this agreement by Nasser's arms deal with Moscow in 1955 and its violation by France in supplying

Israel with sixty Mystère jets that provoked the president's resentment.

Eisenhower viewed the 1950 Tripartite Agreement as a proper instrument to ensure neutrality of the West in general and of the United States in particular in the Arab-Israeli feud. At the time Moscow pledged arms to Nasser in 1955, neither Britain nor France had as yet openly violated the Tripartite Agreement (although France had been engaged in secret talks with Israel before the Soviet-Egyptian arms deal was announced). Under the circumstances when, following the announcement of the Soviet-Egyptian deal, Israel asked the United States to supply arms to restore military balance, the U.S. government refused the request to avoid—as the president put it—an arms race.³³ Sometime in early 1956 the president approved the “arms in escrow” idea. “The plan,” he wrote later, was to

store appreciable quantities of military equipment aboard a United States vessel located in the Mediterranean, ready for instant dispatch to any nation in the Middle East which might be a victim of aggression. The Department of Defense was doubtful about the value of the project, but I thought it would have important advantages in its demonstration of complete impartiality between the Arabs (primarily Egypt) and the Israelis. We pushed the plan through, and by the middle of July 1956, a vessel so supplied was on station in the Mediterranean.³⁴

This insistence on impartiality was the dominant feature of Eisenhower's approach to the Arabs and Israelis, both during the Suez crisis and, more broadly, throughout his presidency. His refusal of arms to Israel was matched by his earlier denial of arms to Egypt—an action which in response brought about Nasser's agreement with the Soviets in 1955. Although not insensitive to Israel's pleas for security, Eisenhower resisted the idea that Israel should have the right of veto over American arms supplies to Arab states. When in February 1956 Israel protested against the impending transfer of eighteen M-41 light tanks to Saudi Arabia, the president temporarily delayed the shipment pending an inquiry into whether the transaction conformed to the U.S.-British-French agreement of 1950. Upon finding that there was no violation and that the Saudis had paid in advance for the tanks, the president ordered that the shipment proceed as planned. By the same token he did not object to the proposed delivery of twelve Mystère jet fighters by France to Israel soon after the U.S.-Saudi transaction be-

cause he found it consonant with the 1950 agreement. (He later spoke sarcastically of the *Mystères'* "rabbitlike capacity for multiplication," no doubt referring to the delivery of sixty of these jets to Israel.)³⁵

Although the president was aware of the incursions into Israeli territory and acts of violence perpetrated by the Palestinian fedayeen, he was critical of the excessive use of force when Israel mounted massive reprisal raids that appeared to be disproportionate in their magnitude to the terrorist acts that provoked them. This attitude was reflected in the American policy within the United Nations. On January 22, 1956, the UN Security Council had passed a resolution censuring Israel for the size and intensity of her retaliatory attacks directed at Arab targets. This was accompanied by an admonition against endangering the truce in the region. Moreover, Israel was warned that if she launched a preventive war against her Arab neighbors she would be subjected to UN sanctions.³⁶ It was characteristic of the American stand at that time that the United States did not use its right of veto but allowed if not actually encouraged this council resolution to be adopted. Furthermore, it was on the U.S. motion that, on October 31, 1956, the UN Security Council called on Israel to withdraw from the recently invaded Egyptian territory and that it issued an appeal to other nations to stop aid to Israel.³⁷

When thus castigating Israel's warlike intentions and subsequent military actions, Eisenhower realized that he was running political risks at home, especially in view of the approaching elections in November 1956. In fact, he was warned more than once by his political friends of the dangers his actions toward Israel presented.³⁸ This however did not dissuade him from pursuing the line he deemed consistent with America's national interest. To make his position absolutely clear, he sent, two weeks before Israel's attack on Egypt, a personal letter to Ben-Gurion. "Both Foster and I," he wrote subsequently in his memoirs, "suspected that Ben-Gurion might be contemplating military action during these pre-election days in the United States because of his possible overestimate of my desire to avoid offending the many voters who might have either sentimental or blood relations with Israel. I emphatically corrected any misapprehension of this kind he might have."³⁹

In spite of his censure of Israel's behavior in the Suez crisis, Eisenhower did not conceal his criticism of Nasser's policies. He not only deplored the Egyptian-Soviet arms deal of 1955—to the extent of sending a special envoy, George V. Allen, to Cairo to dissuade Nasser

from this action—but also considered Nasser's Pan-Arabism a manifestation of aggressiveness. Nor did he mince his words in describing some of Nasser's moves as "blackmail" or "provocations."⁴⁰ Perhaps the best evidence of the president's balanced approach was his handling of the Gulf of Aqaba dispute in the aftermath of the Suez crisis. By defending the principle of open seas and of innocent passage, he knowingly incurred Egyptian and general Arab discontent. Nevertheless, he adhered consistently to his line on this issue to vindicate a principle of international law he believed in.

To conclude these remarks on the Suez crisis, one should perhaps comment on Eisenhower's personal involvement in the decision-making process, especially in view of the fact that certain observers have tended to focus their attention primarily if not exclusively on the role of Secretary Dulles in it.⁴¹ Actually, the president's involvement was serious, intense, and prolonged. Although he repeatedly acknowledged his close contact with, and reliance on, the secretary of state, he did not limit his activity to approval of proposals submitted by Dulles but frequently chose to give his personal stamp to the action by sending letters and telegrams and by talking face-to-face or by telephone to various actors in the drama. His memoirs abound in expressions such as "I sent a cable," "I wrote a letter," "I wrote a memorandum," "I called a meeting," etc. Moreover, in the very thick of the Suez crisis, on November 3, 1956, Dulles went to the hospital to undergo emergency surgery and thus was absent from the political stage during the crucial period of decision-making. This left the president in sole command of foreign policy. According to one observer, "the harder and bigger a decision was, the more the President relished making it."⁴²

His communications were perhaps most frequent with Britain's Prime Minister Eden, whom he addressed as "Anthony" and with whom he was linked by ties of friendship dating back to his service in London as Supreme Allied Commander in World War II. By the same token he was receiving either directly or through Dulles and Colonel Andrew Goodpaster, his military aide in the White House, reports from special envoys such as George McGhee, to whom specific tasks connected with the crisis were assigned. Eisenhower's personal role in the crisis was rendered even more remarkable by the fact that, in addition to the Suez question, itself encompassing relations with Britain, France, Israel, Egypt, and the rest of the Arab world, he had to deal simultaneously with the Polish and Hungarian uprisings and, of course, with his own presidential election. It is not surprising that, in

his memoirs, he gave the terse but eloquent title "Twenty Busy Days" to this dramatic and perhaps most demanding episode of his political career.

THE EISENHOWER DOCTRINE

Following the Suez crisis, the U.S. government continued to be concerned about multiplying signs of Soviet penetration in the Middle East. Under the president's aegis there was in official circles a discernible tendency to forewarn the Soviet Union against any rash or reckless move that would compel the United States to give a strong response and lead to a dangerous confrontation between the two superpowers.

These concerns found their expression in President Eisenhower's message to the Congress, delivered on January 5, 1957, and since known as the Eisenhower Doctrine. In the introductory part of his message the president referred to the emancipation to independence of Middle Eastern states and the recent (Suez) hostilities as well as to Israel's "relatively large attack" on Egypt. As a result, he said, instability was "heightened and, at times [was] manipulated by international Communism." He reminded his audience that "Russia's rulers have long sought to dominate the Middle East"—both the czars and the Bolsheviks. "The reason for Russia's interest in the Middle East," said the president, "is solely that of power politics. Considering her announced purpose of communizing the world, it is easy to understand her hope of dominating the Middle East." He also reminded Congress of the record of Soviet expansion: "Remember Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania," he said. He pointed to "Soviet control of the satellite nations" and to the more recent "subjugation of Hungary by naked armed force" and Soviet disregard of the United Nations.

To avert further dangers in the Middle East the president proposed three types of action: to develop economic strength of Middle East nations; to enact programs of military assistance and cooperation; to provide that "assistance and cooperation [would] include employment of the armed forces of the United States to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence of such nations, requesting such aid, against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism."

The president concluded by saying that "The proposed legislation is primarily designed to deal with the possibility of Communist ag-

gression, direct and indirect" and that it was needed because "ambitious despots may miscalculate."⁴³

Congressional response to the message was mixed. As usual, isolationist elements were critical of any initiative that would extend America's involvement abroad. Some opposed it for constitutional reasons, apparently in the belief that by authorizing in advance U.S. armed intervention, it would go counter to the congressional prerogative to declare war. "Others, friends of Israel, did not like helping any Arab nation."⁴⁴

In spite of these obstacles the Eisenhower Doctrine was adopted on March 9, 1957, by a joint resolution of the House and the Senate. "We had effectively obtained," noted the president with satisfaction, "the consent of the Congress in proclaiming the administration's resolve to block the Soviet Union's march to the Mediterranean, to the Suez Canal and the pipelines, and to the underground lakes of oil which fuel the homes and factories of Western Europe."⁴⁵

To be truly effective the Eisenhower Doctrine required also a positive response from the Middle Eastern countries to which it was addressed. With this in view the president entrusted James P. Richards, a Democratic congressman from South Carolina, with a mission to explain to the governments in question the purpose and tenor of the doctrine and to secure their acceptance of the proffered assistance. Richards embarked on his mission in January, even before the formal approval by Congress. He visited fifteen states and obtained approval from twelve. Initially, Israel was reluctant to accept but at a later date it also gave its approval.

Soon after the joint resolution the doctrine was to be tested in a number of succeeding crises. These occurred in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq. While each crisis had its own distinctive characteristics and origins, all of them had one major common feature: they reflected, to a greater or lesser degree, the powerful influence of the revolutionary ideology and action of President Nasser of Egypt. And inasmuch as Egypt was a recipient of massive Soviet arms supplies and host to a growing number of Soviet advisers, it was regarded by the U.S. government not only as Russia's virtual ally (despite its proclaimed nonalignment) but also as an instrument of Soviet policy in the region.

As early as April 1957 the Kingdom of Jordan experienced a crisis that posed a serious threat to the Hashemite dynasty ruling it and to the survival of the kingdom as a sovereign state. The challenge came from a vociferous socialist-nationalist opposition, aided by the Com-

munist Party and largely inspired by Nasser's Pan-Arab ideology. It reached its culmination with the attempted mutiny in the army led by a quick succession of two chiefs of staff who betrayed King Hussein and who, upon their dismissal from service, found refuge in Nasser-influenced Syria. Owing to King Hussein's personal courage and resolution, the attempted coup d'état was thwarted and the king, aided by the loyal tribal-based troops, reestablished full control of the country.

Viewing the developments in Jordan with grave concern, President Eisenhower decided to give the king his full support: "I authorized Jim Hagerty [the White House press secretary] to say that both the Secretary of State and I regard the 'independence and integrity of Jordan as vital,' purposely using the language which was akin to that in the Joint Resolution itself."⁴⁶ These words were backed up by action: the U.S. Sixth Fleet received orders to move to the eastern Mediterranean and, on April 29, Jordan became a recipient of a \$10 million economic aid grant, a subsidy that with the passage of time grew in size and evolved into regular annual payments, gradually replacing British financial aid to the Hashemite kingdom.

There were also other signs of partly Nasser-inspired turbulence in the region. In July 1957 a rebellion broke out in Inner Oman, directed against the Muscat-based government of Sultan Said ben Taimur of Oman, a country with close treaty ties with Britain. Rebel forces were trained by Egyptian officers and enjoyed Egypt's support. While aware of this disturbance, the United States did not intervene, leaving the matter to the Omanis themselves and to Britain as a general protective power in the Persian Gulf-South Arabian area.

The Syrian Crisis

The case of Syria was different and, from the American point of view, infinitely more dangerous than the relatively "innocent" intertribal feud in Oman. In the mid-1950s Syria was undergoing a rapid process of radicalization both in her internal politics and in her foreign policy. Internally, Syria's multiparty parliamentary system characterized by the traditional dominance of the two conventional parties, the People's Party and the National Party, was being eroded by the emergence and aggressive expansion of the ideological parties. These were the Baath Socialist Party and the Communist Party on the left, and the Syrian Nationalist Popular Party and the Moslem Brotherhood on the right. In this polarized competition the Left proved to be stronger.

Moreover, the Baath enjoyed support of Nasser's Egypt while the Communists benefited from close links with Moscow.

In the foreign sector Syria's orientation was definitely toward Egypt and Pan-Arabism in general and also toward closer ties with Russia and against "imperialism"—a code word for the American influence in the Arab political vocabulary in those days. There was a climate of considerable political effervescence in Syria in 1956 and 1957. In spite of Washington's support for Egypt's rights and territorial integrity during the Suez crisis and its criticism of the Israeli, British, and French invasion of Egypt, it was not the United States but the Soviet Union that emerged as a beneficiary of this crisis, perhaps because American policy appeared too evenhanded for the Arab popular tastes or too pro-Israeli on the issue of navigation in the Gulf of Aqaba. Moreover, because of his dynamic Pan-Arab and revolutionary policy, Nasser was rapidly moving toward a collision course with the United States, which opposed changes in the status quo that were accomplished by force or subversion. This estrangement between Nasser and Washington became aggravated in early 1957 when, following King Saud's visit to the United States, Saudi Arabia abandoned her cooperation with Cairo (based on shared antagonism toward the British and common opposition to the Baghdad Pact) and launched a new policy of resistance to Nasser's ideology and expansion.

Under the circumstances anyone opposed to or critical of Nasser's actions was bound to become a target for Arab radicals. This became very pronounced in 1957 in Syria where the Baath and Communist influences were rapidly growing. Syria's official broadcasting engaged in intensive attacks on the United States, and Syria's government expelled two American Embassy attachés. In July Prime Minister Khaled al-Azm concluded a major arms supply and economic aid agreement with Moscow, and in mid-August a strongly pro-Soviet general, reputedly a Communist, became chief of Army Staff. "Suspicion was strong," wrote Eisenhower, "that the Communists had taken control of the government. Moreover, we had fresh reports that arms were being sent into Syria from the Soviet bloc."⁴⁷

Faced with this situation, the president's policy concentrated, in the first place, on fact-finding and evaluation: "We tried . . . to find out how far toward Communism the Syrian government had swung. If the government comprised only radical Arab nationalists and pro-Nasserites, that was one thing; if they were to go completely Communist, that could call for action."⁴⁸

The president's thinking went parallel to that of Syria's neighbors. In fact, some of them reacted to the Syrian situation with attitudes bordering on panic. The Turks, the Iraqis, and the Jordanians, in frequent consultation with Washington, "had come to the conclusion that the present regime in Syria had to go: otherwise the takeover by the Communists would soon be complete. A strong Soviet outpost would be in existence amidst this formerly neutral region."⁴⁹ Syria's neighbors became thus inclined to mass troops in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey on Syrian borders to intimidate Damascus and prevent assumption of power by the Communists. In their communications with Washington they argued that Syria "had been invaded from without even though only by infiltration and subversion."⁵⁰ In using this language these neighboring governments came close to, but fell short of complete identity with, the formulation of the Eisenhower Doctrine which spoke of "overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism."

Even though the exact conditions of the doctrine were not yet fulfilled, the Eisenhower administration decided on a number of preventive ("interim") actions:

(a) to inform Turkey's Prime Minister Adnan Menderes that if Syria's neighbors were to take the necessary defensive action the United States would accelerate deliveries of arms already committed to the Middle Eastern countries;

(b) to warn any outside country—in this case Israel or Russia—against interference with defensive measures taken by Syria's neighbors to ward off a Syrian attack and "to assure restoration of Syria to the Syrians";

(c) to obtain assurances from Israel that, taking advantage of the crisis, it would not seize any territory for itself;

(d) to send a contingent of the U.S. Air Force from Western Europe to the U.S. base in Adana;

(e) to alert the forces under the U.S. Strategic Command;

(f) to send Ambassador Loy W. Henderson, deputy under secretary of state, to Ankara to consult there with Premier Menderes, King Hussein of Jordan, and King Faisal and the crown prince of Iraq and obtain their consensus on possible joint actions.

The British government was also informed of these decisions and tentative plans. Prime Minister Harold Macmillan gave a positive response. Similarly, Israel's Premier Ben-Gurion agreed to conform to

the president's wishes. In Ankara Henderson urged restraint on action-prone Turks.

Preventive steps taken by the president and Henderson's trip contributed to the subsiding of the crisis. Although initially firmly bent on the elimination of the leftist (but not yet Communist) Syrian regime, the Turks abstained from intervention in Syria and limited their moves to the concentration of first 32,000 and later 50,000 troops on Syria's borders. By mid-September 1957 the neighboring Arab governments (with the exception of Lebanon, a state especially sensitive to potential threats from Damascus) had abandoned their earlier plans of collective action against Syria. However, as late as October, Premier Khrushchev launched a verbal attack on the United States, accusing it of trying to provoke a war over Syria.

Although the feared Communist takeover in Damascus did not materialize, Eisenhower felt that by the end of 1957 "the threat of Soviet penetration of the Middle East remained, and a left-wing regime seemed strongly entrenched in Syria."⁵¹

Lebanon: Civil War and U.S. Intervention

In conformance with the tenets of Pan-Arab ideology, which called for Arab unity, Syria and Egypt signed, on February 1, 1958, a merger agreement that brought about the creation of the United Arab Republic under Nasser's presidency. In the U.A.R., as the new entity was called, Syria was to constitute its northern and Egypt its southern "region." Although officially the two regions were to enjoy equality with their respective "executive councils" under the authority of the union cabinet in Cairo, in reality Syria became subordinated to Egyptian control in the military, political, economic, and administrative sectors. This way Nasser considerably enhanced his status and influence in the entire Fertile Crescent area. Syria's rush into unity with Egypt proved to be very disturbing to her two closest neighbors: Jordan and Lebanon, where centrifugal Pan-Arab trends posed a challenge to the existing governments of King Hussein and President Camille Chamoun, respectively.

To counter the Egypto-Syrian monopoly of Pan-Arab appeal, the two Hashemite kingdoms of Jordan and Iraq concluded, on February 14, their own unity agreement establishing the Arab Federation, an entity preserving the identity and local autonomy of its two compo-

ment parts under their kings and governments but providing also for a federal cabinet and a rotation of the capital between Amman and Baghdad.

Another country that felt acutely threatened by the onward march of Pan-Arabism was Saudi Arabia, now for about a year definitely estranged from Egypt. In fact, King Saud saw himself so intensely endangered by the Syro-Egyptian union that in March he made an attempt to bribe Nasser's chief henchman in Syria, Colonel Abdul Hamid Sarraj, into betraying his master, arranging for Nasser's assassination, and reestablishing Syria as an independent state. The scheme failed: Sarraj publicly revealed the amount of the bribe offered and denounced Saud—an imbroglio that substantially contributed to Saud's loss of prestige and his later downfall. The episode is mentioned here to stress the dramatic impact the merger between Cairo and Damascus had on the political climate in the Arab world.

The country most immediately affected, however, was Lebanon. This was attributable to two factors, one long-range and the other short-range. The long-range factor was the nature and composition of the Lebanese state. If the sovereign countries of the West broadly correspond to the notion of a nation-state, the Arab world represents a widely differing scene: here the states are not coextensive with nations. One should rather speak of a broader Arab national area in which accidents of history or foreign imperialism have produced state boundaries not necessarily reflecting ethnic divisions or natural features of topography. This is well illustrated by the fact that in many cases boundaries between Arab states follow rather arbitrarily drawn straight lines in the deserts. It is clearly the case of state boundaries between Syria and Iraq, Syria and Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Iraq and Jordan, Egypt and Libya, etc. Lebanon, however, not only is not a nation-state but is a state that is a somewhat artificial association of religious and ethnic minorities. Hence the primary loyalty of a Druze inhabitant of Lebanon is to his Druze community, of a Shiite to his Shia community, rather than to the abstract concept of Lebanese sovereignty. The same can be said of virtually every confessional group in Lebanon, whether Sunni, Maronite, Greek Orthodox, or Armenian.

Thus in Lebanon's pluralistic multiconfessional system much attention had always to be paid to the delicate political balance among all its component parts to keep the system alive and functioning. Any regional or external event likely to enhance the power of one or more of the component parts was bound to disturb the system, even to bring

the danger of its collapse. Of all the confessional groups in Lebanon the Sunni were most susceptible to the Pan-Arab appeals emanating from Egypt and Syria. Actually, many Lebanese Sunnis would probably feel more at home as citizens of the predominantly Sunni Syria, and the Pan-Arab propaganda mixed with a radical socialist ideology of Nasserism certainly undermined their loyalty to the Christian-dominated (mostly Maronite-ruled) state of Lebanon. The feelings of the Sunni masses were often emulated by the Druzes not so much because of the religious affinity to Syria (where the Druzes were also a minority) but because of resentment of the underprivileged status they perceived to suffer in Lebanon.

The short-range factor centered on the person and behavior of Lebanon's Maronite president, Camille Chamoun. Chamoun was par excellence a Lebanon-firster. He feared Nasser and his Pan-Arab ideology. When in 1956 Egypt was invaded by British and French forces, Chamoun refused to sever diplomatic relations with the invaders. Moreover, he clearly favored close ties with the United States. All these actions brought upon him the wrath of Nasser and the assorted Pan-Arabists in Cairo, Beirut, Damascus, and Baghdad. Against the background of this tense relationship Chamoun further aggravated the situation by attempting to secure a second six-year term as president. To overcome the constitutional ban on a second term, in April 1958 he resorted to questionable tactics to ensure election of a parliamentary majority that would amend the constitution in his favor.

The assassination of a pro-Nasserite newspaper editor provided the spark that set off the conflagration in the supercharged atmosphere. Early in May a coalition of Sunni, Druze, and certain other enemies of Chamoun rose in rebellion asking for his resignation and radical reforms. Before long the rebels secured control of various districts in Beirut and of major rural areas, especially those with territorial access to Syria. Rebel leaders paid repeated visits to Damascus, and soon the Nasser-dominated Syrian authorities began supplying armed assistance to the rebellion.

On May 13 Chamoun asked Eisenhower for help, pointing to the Syrian intervention as a case of foreign aggression. In the course of consultation at the White House Secretary Dulles was reluctant to send troops to Lebanon, fearing adverse reactions in the Middle East. As a result, the official U.S. response was guarded. The United States would be willing to come to the aid of the Lebanese government under the following three conditions: (a) that the purpose of American inter-

vention would not be to secure a second term for President Chamoun, (b) that Lebanon's request for help should have the concurrence of some other Arab nation, and (c) that the mission of American troops would be twofold: (i) to protect the life and property of American citizens in Lebanon and (ii) to lend assistance to the legal Lebanese government. This last clause was clearly phrased in a way that was meant to save the U.S. government from involvement in the internal political struggle between Chamoun and those opposed to his ambitions.

As the rebellion widened and intensified, Eisenhower found that "the Lebanese-Syrian border was open to a steady influx of Syrians." The beleaguered Chamoun requested on May 22 an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council and on June 6 his delegate, Ambassador Charles Malik, presented to the council a strong indictment of Syria. Four days later the Security Council reached the decision to dispatch an international military observer team to Lebanon. According to Ambassador Murphy, who was soon to undertake a special mission to Lebanon, "by early June the situation had deteriorated badly, the country was in a state of civil war, and a vociferous radio and press campaign in Egypt was calling for the overthrow of the Republic of Lebanon."⁵² Despite Nasser's hostility toward Chamoun, the Egyptian leader did not object to the council's resolution; in fact, he offered his help in bringing peace back to Lebanon on three conditions: (a) that Chamoun abandon his plan for a second term; (b) that General Fuad Chehab (commander of Lebanon's army) succeed him; and (c) that the rebels be accorded amnesty.

Chamoun's term was to expire on September 23, but under combined pressure from Washington, Cairo, and his domestic opposition he formally renounced his second term in early July. Thus a major roadblock to a settlement seemed to be removed, and the prospects for an early end to the civil war brightened.

At this juncture an unexpected event gave a new turn to the situation. On July 14 a revolution put an abrupt end to the monarchy in Iraq, and a government led by General Abdul Karim Qassem, head of a reputedly pro-Nasserite officers' junta, assumed power in Baghdad. To the United States and Great Britain the sudden collapse of Iraq's royalist regime, allied to the West through the Baghdad Pact, appeared to be an unmitigated calamity. According to Eisenhower, "This somber turn of events could, without vigorous response on our part, result in a complete elimination of Western influence in the Middle East.

Overnight our objective changed from quieting a troubled situation [in Lebanon] to facing up to a crisis of formidable proportions."

"That morning," wrote the president, "I gathered in my office a group of advisers to make sure that no facet of the situation was overlooked. Because of my long study of the problem, this was one meeting to which my mind was practically made up regarding the general line of action we should take, even before we met."⁵³

That same day urgent appeals for U.S. action reached Washington from two quarters: Chamoun renewed his request for American intervention in Lebanon, urging that it be done within forty-eight hours, and King Saud asked that the Baghdad Pact Powers intervene in Iraq. This time Secretary Dulles abandoned his earlier reluctance to resort to military action. "Our intervention [in Lebanon]," he said at the White House meeting, "would be a response to a proper request from a legally constituted government and in accordance with the principles stated in the Middle East Doctrine."⁵⁴

Having reached the decision to intervene, the president promptly called twenty-two congressional leaders to his office to explain the imminent action. At the same time he issued a directive that the landing of American troops in Lebanon should take place the next day at 3 P.M. Lebanon time. He informed Prime Minister Macmillan of the decision. On July 15, the day of the landing, the president delivered a radio-television address to the nation in which he compared the situation in Lebanon to the events in Greece in 1947—events that had triggered the formulation of the Truman Doctrine. He also reminded his audience of the Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia in 1948, the conquest by the Communists of the Chinese mainland in 1949, and the Communist attempts to seize power in Korea and Indochina beginning in 1950. He disposed of a possible objection that the UN machinery was not being used in this case by pointing to the need for speedy action. He also stressed that the American landing in Lebanon did not constitute an invasion, that the troops were not to engage in fighting but would only be "stationed" along the beaches.

The president's next move was to appoint Robert Murphy, a career diplomat distinguished for his role in the De Gaulle-Darlan crisis during World War II, as his special emissary to the Middle East with the task of assisting in the resolution of the Lebanese crisis and carrying out a general fact-finding mission. Murphy promptly left Washington to travel to Beirut, Baghdad, and Cairo and engage in intensive peace-making activity.

Because of the possible spillover of the Iraqi revolution into the neighboring countries, the president also instructed General Nathan F. Twining, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "to prevent any unfriendly forces from moving into Kuwait,"⁵⁵ a decision demonstrating a good deal of foresight inasmuch as, after entrenching himself in power, Iraq's dictator, Qassem, did lay claim to the entire territory of Kuwait in 1961. Another threatened neighbor of Iraq was Jordan, which as earlier noted had experienced only a year earlier, in 1957, a serious crisis caused by the Nasserite and leftist elements. On the basis of his close relationship with Great Britain King Hussein requested British military assistance in mid-July 1958, in the wake of the Iraqi revolution. Responding to his request, the United Kingdom promptly (on July 17) sent 2,200 paratroops from Cyprus to Jordan as a preventive measure against the Nasser-fomented domestic insurgency.⁵⁶ In this case the U.S. role was limited to political intervention; because Israel was not inclined to agree to the overflight of British troops across its territory, Secretary Dulles called Premier Ben-Gurion to secure his consent, which was reluctantly given.⁵⁷

The landing of American troops in Lebanon was executed with exemplary precision under the overall supervision of Admiral James L. Holloway, Jr., commander-in-chief of naval forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. The 14,000-plus troops, mostly from the American forces in Europe, did not proceed to the interior of Lebanon; they received a welcome reception from the Lebanese population along the beaches. The status quo regimes in the region were pleased with America's military action. Satisfaction was voiced in Turkey, Pakistan, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. The radical forces were obviously critical of the troops' landing. Nasser, at that time on a visit to Yugoslavia's Tito, promptly flew to Russia from Brioni to consult with Premier Khrushchev. In Moscow a staged anti-American demonstration inflicted some damage to the U.S. Embassy, but the Soviet government refrained from interfering with the movement of American troops across the Mediterranean.

The presence of U.S. troops in Lebanon, signifying Washington's serious concern with the situation in the area, materially contributed to the resolution of the Lebanese crisis that was being worked out by Ambassador Murphy. On July 31 an election in Lebanon resulted in the advent of General Chehab to the presidency. He was a compromise candidate acceptable to Washington, Cairo, and most of the Lebanese. He owed his election to his prudent restraint in using the Lebanese

army in the course of the civil war. In accordance with the constitutional provisions President Chamoun relinquished his office on September 23 and thus cleared the path to normalization in his country. Lebanon survived the ordeal as an independent state, and there was no further need to keep American troops in it. They became fully withdrawn by October 25, 1958.

The presence of U.S. troops played an additional role as a deterrent to a possible revolutionary expansion of Iraq. In terms of preserving the international status quo in the region, it was helpful that Iraq's leadership, initially inclined toward early union with Nasser's United Arab Republic, became divided and that the group, headed by Qassem, committed to the preservation of Iraq as a separate state emerged victorious. Somewhat reassured on this issue, the U.S. government accorded recognition to Qassem's government on July 30.

America's armed intervention in Lebanon was justified by the administration as an action in fulfillment of the Eisenhower Doctrine. The circumstances that had led to the intervention were not exactly such as formulated in the Joint Resolution. The latter spoke of "overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by International Communism" and of "Communist aggression, direct and indirect." There was no overt armed aggression from the U.A.R., but there was covert military infiltration and active assistance from Syria to the Lebanese rebel guerrillas. This could perhaps qualify for the term "direct or indirect aggression." But what about a nation controlled by International Communism? Here it appears that some bending of the letter of the law had occurred. The administration implicitly advanced the thesis that inasmuch as Nasser was a client of Moscow and, with his revolutionary ideology and action, posed a threat to the survival of the existing sovereign states in the area, his country—the U.A.R.—could be considered a nation controlled by International Communism. Actually, it was not so: Nasser was neither a Communist nor a Soviet puppet. In fact, he curbed and suppressed native Communists both in Egypt and in Syria and, despite heavy dependence on Soviet arms and economic aid, jealously maintained his country's sovereignty. Nevertheless, despite all these features, his policies often ran parallel to Soviet policies in the Middle East and in practice were geared to the elimination of Western influence and the forcible removal from power of moderate or conservative governments in the region—goals the Soviets also aimed at. Thus, if viewed in those terms, Eisenhower's intervention in Lebanon appeared neither immoral nor incompatible

with the basic commitment to contain and counter Communism and Soviet imperialism.

CONCLUSION

The Eisenhower presidency corresponded to the period of aggravation in American-Soviet relations already strained during the Truman era. What was characteristic of the Eisenhower period was that in the Middle East the Soviet-American tensions were not confined to the Northern Tier region (as was largely the case under Truman) but extended to the wider Arab area. In the Northern Tier Eisenhower had to deal, at the beginning of his presidency, with the Mossadegh-generated oil crisis, which had grown largely out of the militant and, as it turned out, misguided Iranian nationalism and, though pregnant with possibilities of Soviet gains, did not involve Russia directly. As for the Northern Tier as a defined strategic region bordering on the USSR, Eisenhower's policy followed a preventive line expressed in the sponsorship of the Baghdad Pact, a regional security system filling the geopolitical gap between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the South-East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). It thus completed a defensive chain of alliances and bases along the southern periphery of the Soviet Union.

It was the Arab area, however, that challenged the Eisenhower administration with most of the "hot," crisis-ridden developments. This was due to the simultaneous ripening of three trends: the rise of militant Pan-Arabism under Nasser's leadership, the intensification of Israel's search for security through military means, and the convulsive resistance of West European imperialism to the widening decolonization process. All three of these phenomena carried with them not only the threat of destabilization in the Arab world but also a distinct possibility of Soviet infiltration. In spite of its enigmatic behavior during the UN debates on the fate of Palestine in 1947 and its vote for partition (clearly beneficial to the Zionists), the Soviet government rapidly changed its policy toward identification with Arab nationalism. Hence any deterioration in Arab-Western and Arab-Israeli relations was bound, at least in principle, to reflect favorably on the status and prestige of the Soviet Union in the Arab world. This basically explains why in the wake of the Suez crisis it was Russia rather than the United States that emerged as a power deemed friendly to the Arab causes in the eyes of the Arab masses and their radical-leftist elites.

These circumstances help explain both the similarities and the differences between the Truman and Eisenhower Doctrines. Truman had to deal with direct Soviet threat to the territorial integrity and political independence of Iran and Turkey and an indirect (via proxy) threat to Greece. In all three countries Russia was clearly perceived as an actual or potential aggressor. By contrast, Eisenhower faced a more complex situation in which Russia was not regarded as an aggressor but actually viewed as a friend of the Arabs. Soviet threat was not that of overt aggression; it was a threat of infiltration, of taking advantage of the alienation of major segments of the Arab world from the West.

The two doctrines were an expression of the policy of containment of "International Communism." But whereas the Truman Doctrine pledged only economic aid and military advisory assistance, the Eisenhower Doctrine committed American troops to be used under specified conditions.

No American president has managed to avoid or evade making decisions on the thorny Arab-Israeli issue. Eisenhower inevitably inherited this problem from the preceding administration. But whereas Truman, despite all his annoyance with the domestic Zionist pressures, ultimately took steps favoring Israel, Eisenhower endeavored to follow a more "evenhanded" course (long before this expression was given currency under Nixon). As noted in the earlier section, the big test came when the U.S. government asked Israel to evacuate its troops from the Gaza Strip following the end of the Suez hostilities. Describing a private meeting in George Humphrey's country house in Georgia, Eisenhower quoted Dulles with implicit concurrence:

We have gone as far as possible to try to make it easy for the Israelis to withdraw. To go further . . . would surely jeopardize the entire Western influence in the Middle East, and the nations of that region would conclude that the United States policy toward the area was, in the last analysis, controlled by Jewish influence in the United States. In such event the only hope of the Arab countries would be found in a firm association with the Soviet Union. Should this occur, it would spell the failure of the "Eisenhower Doctrine" even before it got under way.⁵⁸

The focus of the Eisenhower administration on the Arab East coincided with the opening phrases and the intensification of the Arab Cold War.⁵⁹ That "war" pitted revolutionary Pan-Arabism, preached by Nasser and by Syria's Baath Party, against virtually every Arab

regime that resisted their ideology, their schemes for Arab unity, and their proneness to cooperate with the Soviets. The year 1957 provided the opening shots of this long, drawn-out struggle. Both the Arabian Peninsula with its traditionalist Saudi monarchy and the Fertile Crescent became theaters of the Arab Cold War. That war entered its "hot" phase in Lebanon in 1958. There the domestic rebellion quickly evolved into a conflict that drew in external forces and thus opened the way for American military intervention, justified by Eisenhower as implementation of his doctrine.

It was characteristic of his Middle East policy that, regardless of the origins of the crisis—whether the aggravation in Syria, the civil war in Lebanon, or the revolution in Iraq—Eisenhower saw each one in the basic light of Soviet-American relations. As a former military leader, he was deeply convinced that the Middle East was of supreme strategic value to the West, and he perceived any Soviet move to extend influence in that region as another step in Soviet expansionism marked by conquests in Eastern Europe and Asia.

In his memoirs Eisenhower stressed that he had long studied the developments in the area and, especially with reference to the Lebanese crisis, that even before consensus was reached among his advisers his mind had been made up as to the need for forceful American action. Although he loyally acknowledged the role of John Foster Dulles in the decision-making, he nevertheless was personally involved and active in every crisis in the Middle East. In the account of their visit in Washington in the post-Suez period (March 1957) given by French Premier Mollet and Foreign Minister Pineau to Prime Minister Macmillan of Great Britain, "the President was very much the master when large decisions had to be taken. He was like a king, and the courtiers intrigued for his favour."⁶⁰ There is no doubt that, with his vision of broader strategic issues and his careful study of the facts in each of the succeeding crises, President Eisenhower left an imprint of his personal leadership upon the crucial eight years of American foreign policy.

3. The Kennedy Presidency

The advent of John F. Kennedy to the presidency in January 1961 marked a new turn in America's foreign policy. Whether the change was strategic, that is, involving more fundamental goals and orientations, or merely tactical may be justifiably debated. There is no doubt that the new president—whose age and youthful appearance stood in vivid contrast to the age and personality of the retiring President Eisenhower—laid emphasis on the national quest for change and progress at home and abroad and on a new style in the conduct of foreign policy. This style was to be characterized not only by intensive involvement in the decision-making process (which was far from absent in the Eisenhower presidency), but also by personal "activism," expressed by frequent contacts and correspondence with a number of foreign leaders.

Change, revolution, progress, modernization, and development were in many ways the code words and key concepts of Kennedy's approach to world affairs. "I go to see Mr. Khrushchev in Vienna," he declared in Boston in May 1961, "I go as the leader of the greatest revolutionary country on earth."¹ Kennedy's friendly biographers, often his former associates, liked to stress the difference between his "pragmatic" but also idealistic approach and that of John Foster Dulles, who was described as a "God-anointed" moralist, an "apostle" of free enterprise engaged in a crusade against atheistic Communism, and a self-righteous man bent on "unconditional surrender of the enemy." Obviously not free of partiality, these writers—by concentrating on Dulles—implicitly or explicitly played down the role of Eisenhower as if the former president was no more than rubber-stamping the policy shaped by his secretary of state. Kennedy's line, according to this view, was to stand in contrast to the Dulles policy of "exclusive reliance on nuclear power, its faith in military pacts, its

intolerance of neutrals and its conception of diplomacy as a sub-branch of theology."²

While still opposed to the aggressive aspects of Soviet despotism, Kennedy was reluctant to see world politics exclusively through the prism of Soviet-American, or more broadly, East-West relations. The struggle, he believed, had been moved to the southern part of the planet where the threat stemmed "not from the massive land armies but from subversion, insurrection and despair." This, in turn, called for a "concerted attack on poverty, injustice and oppression in the under-developed part of the world."³

From this basic attitude three further lines of policy would develop: (a) Kennedy's sympathetic understanding of nationalism as a driving force of ex-colonial peoples, (b) his acceptance of neutralism professed by the emerging nation-states, and (c) his advocacy of America's support for development, reform, and modernization as the best guarantee against extremist trends and assurance of stability in the less-developed societies.

It is interesting that Kennedy's rejection of the bipolar world concept as espoused by John Foster Dulles and his tolerance of neutralism coincided—at least outwardly—with a somewhat similar approach taken by Russia's Khrushchev. Soon after his advent to power Khrushchev rejected Zhdanov's rigid division of the world into Soviet and non-Soviet camps and launched a new policy of acceptance of, and friendship with, the third camp, the "zone of peace" and "national-democratic revolutions." He also spoke of "peaceful coexistence."⁴ (The first practical step in this new Soviet policy had been taken when Khrushchev and Bulganin made a trip to neutral Afghanistan in 1955 pledging friendship and economic support.) In spite of the similarity of the American and Soviet approaches to the uncommitted developing nations, a substantial difference existed between the two. Khrushchev's view, expressed rather frankly in a number of public pronouncements, was that both the coexistence and the acceptance of neutralism were just the methods to make the struggle against capitalism more effective. "In conditions of peaceful coexistence," he said, "favorable opportunities are provided for the development of the class struggle in the capitalist countries and the national liberation movement of the peoples in the colonial and dependent countries."⁵

Thus, in the early 1960s, the era of Khrushchev and Kennedy, the policies of the two superpowers seemed to converge in terms of recognition of legitimacy and support for the nationalist movements in the

Third World. But in reality each superpower would follow such a policy for vastly different reasons. While to the Soviet leadership the wooing and courting of the developing nations was no more than a convenient tactic in the basic struggle against the West, and national independence was not viewed as an absolute value to be supported for its own sake, in the eyes of Kennedy national independence was desirable per se, and the struggle for its achievement represented a primordial and most natural manifestation of collective human aspirations which, in accordance with American traditions, should enjoy the sincere support of the United States.

Similarly, as regards neutralism, Kennedy was prepared to accept as a fact of life that the developing states showed indifference to the moral challenges of the East-West conflict. He felt that it was justifiable that these emerging nations were more concerned with their own emancipation against colonialism and with their own development. "We have to live with that," he declared, "and if neutrality is the result of concentration on internal problems, raising the standard of living of the people and so on, particularly in the underdeveloped countries, I would accept that. It's part of our own history for over a hundred years."⁶ Moreover, even if these new countries failed to follow the free enterprise model and opt instead for a state-controlled economy, the very fact of emphasis on their independence should still be viewed as consonant with American interests. "The magic power on our side," he said to James McGregor Burns in 1959, "is the desire of every person to be free, of every nation to be independent."⁷ It is for this reason also that Kennedy was inclined to be tolerant of the rhetorical outbursts of nationalism that were often directed against Washington by ex-colonial leaders. He felt that, as a superpower, the United States should not be overly thin-skinned over the verbal pinpricks administered to it by countries in a more or less adolescent stage of development.

It was in this basic frame of mind that Kennedy as president had to deal with multiple problems and challenges in his foreign policy; actual experience demonstrated that his basic philosophy was exposed to severe strains. The first of these came from Russia. His search for peaceful coexistence with Moscow encountered some rude shocks, both when he had to face the aggressive and bullying behavior of Khrushchev at the summit meeting in Vienna in June 1961 and when he had to respond to the placement of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962.

In Vienna Khrushchev's line with regard to the Third World was to assert that Moscow genuinely respected national independence in emerging countries, even if they rejected Communism. The Soviet Union, he claimed, "could not be held responsible for every spontaneous uprising or Communist threat. Nasser, Nehru, Nkrumah and Sukarno . . . had all said they wanted to develop along Socialist lines. But what kind of Socialist was Nasser when he kept Communists in jail? Nevertheless, the Soviet Union helped them all and that was proof of its policy of noninterference. . . . And if the United States felt itself threatened by tiny Cuba, what was the U.S.S.R. to do about Turkey and Iran?"⁸

As for the Cuban missile crisis, it demonstrated to Kennedy three realities of Soviet behavior. The first was that, in spite of all the talk about coexistence, Khrushchev deliberately chose to threaten the United States by introducing the missiles into an area dangerously close to America's territory; the second was that, instead of scrupulously respecting Cuba's independence, he had no qualms in using her for his own strategic purposes; and the third pointed to the fact that America's diplomatic methods (i.e., negotiations with Moscow) had to be backed by the threat of force to produce the desired results.⁹ Furthermore, Kennedy discovered that, even after giving basic consent to withdraw its missiles, Moscow endeavored to exact an additional "pound of flesh" by demanding, on October 27, 1962, the removal of the Jupiter missiles from the American bases in Turkey. "We will remove our missiles from Cuba, you will remove yours from Turkey," said a new letter from Moscow. "The Soviet Union will pledge not to invade or interfere with the internal affairs of Turkey; the U.S. to make the same pledge regarding Cuba."¹⁰ Although President Kennedy had been in favor of withdrawing the Jupiter missiles from Turkey as obsolete long before the Cuban crisis, he refused to accede formally to the Soviet demand and incorporate it as a condition in the official agreement with Moscow. Instead, he instructed his brother Robert, then U.S. attorney general but an active participant in the missile negotiations, to inform Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin that "there could be no quid pro quo or any arrangement made under this kind of pressure. . . . However, it was our judgment that, within a short time after the crisis was over, those missiles would be gone."¹¹

The second "rude awakening" was administered by the initially glorified leaders of developing nations whose policies, instead of stressing internal development, in some cases proved aggressively

militant, posed danger to the security of their neighbors, disturbed the status quo, and threatened American interests. Thus, in spite of her much-vaunted reputation as a champion of peace and neutrality, Nehru's India adopted an aggressively acquisitive stance toward Kashmir, a province which by virtue of its religion should have become part of Moslem Pakistan, and toward Pakistan itself—a policy which, in due time, was to lead to war, the breakup of the Pakistani state, and separation of Bangladesh. However, the greatest challenge to Kennedy's friendly approach to the Third World came from Egypt's Nasser.

KENNEDY AND ARAB NATIONALISM

Kennedy's basic attitude toward Arab nationalism was one of understanding and sympathy. He had demonstrated it rather early when he was still a senator and went on record as favoring Algeria's independence from France. "No amount of mutual politeness, wishful thinking, nostalgia, or regret," he declared in the Senate in 1957, "should blind either France or the United States to the fact that, if France and the West at large are to have a continuing influence in North Africa, . . . the essential first step is the independence of Algeria."¹²

By the time Kennedy became president Algeria was well on its way to independence, and Egypt provided the central focus of Arab politics. Although he responded positively to Arab national aspirations, Kennedy took care to reaffirm his commitment to Israel's survival. In early 1961 he sent his assistant, Meyer Feldman, on a secret mission to Tel Aviv to promise Israel protection by the U.S. Sixth Fleet. On that occasion Feldman also offered Israel Skyhawk missiles.¹³ All in all, during his term of office, the president pledged nineteen times his support for Israel's security in case of an Arab attack.¹⁴ It was Kennedy's good fortune that his presidency coincided with a relative tranquility in Arab-Israeli relations. Thus he was not called upon to back up his words with deeds because no armed conflict had arisen that would call for American intervention.

By contrast, the early 1960s were replete with major events in the Arab world such as achievement of independence by Kuwait, June 19, 1961; Syria's defection from the United Arab Republic, September 28, 1961; Iraq's nationalization of a major oil concession, December 1961; revolution in Yemen, September 26, 1962; the first Baath Party revolution in Iraq, February 8, 1963; the Baath revolution in Syria, March 8,

1963; and the adoption of a unity charter by Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, April 1963, and its subsequent abandonment. Broadly speaking, these were the years of intensification of Arab nationalism and revolutionary Pan-Arabism. Virtually all of the above-mentioned events in the 1960s could in one way or another be traced to the accentuation of nationalist and ideological trends in the Arab world. The revolutionary militancy emanating from Cairo, Damascus, and Baghdad had caused a major rift in Arab ranks, dividing the Arab world into two mutually antagonistic camps, the radical (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Algeria) and the conservative (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, and Morocco). The rivalries and feuds between the two camps (given the name of the Arab Cold War) dominated inter-Arab politics between 1957 and 1967 and abounded in attempts at subversion, assassinations, successful and failed coups d'état, and—in the case of Yemen since 1962—an actual armed conflict and intervention of foreign states in its civil war.

The Arab Cold War had actually begun during the Eisenhower presidency. Three factors caused Washington at that time to draw closer to the conservative Arab camp. First, substantial American interests, including those of petroleum concessions, were associated with the monarchies and had to be safeguarded; second, of the two camps the radical one was activist and engaged in subversion, propaganda, and aggression; and third, the radical states, partly because of their Marxist-tinted socialist ideology (Egypt, Syria, Iraq), were drawing closer to Russia, who combined diplomacy, public relations, and military and technical aid to generate goodwill toward herself and gain a firm foothold in the radical camp. Characteristic of this situation was a speech Nasser delivered in 1958: "Russia has shown constant and sympathetic understanding of the fundamental needs of the United Arab Republic. The Five Year Plan of the Egyptian Province, the Ten Year Plan of the Syrian Province and that most vital and cherished of Egyptian projects, the Aswan High Dam, have all been granted support by the various Russian credit agreements."¹⁵

Under the circumstances the Eisenhower administration felt that it had no choice but to follow a policy of reassuring its conservative Arab friends that it would protect them against the aggressive militancy of the radical states. Eisenhower did not want to see friendly countries, notably Saudi Arabia and Jordan, repeating the sort of revolutionary upheaval that had occurred in Iraq in 1958.

Because of the central role that Cairo played in the growth of Arab

radicalism, relations between Egypt and the United States had reached a considerable level of tension in the closing period of the Eisenhower administration, with Nasser repeatedly indulging in fulminations against American policies.

Thus relations with Cairo by the time Kennedy came to power have been rather aptly described as being in a "deep freeze." Kennedy's intention was to put an end to this state of affairs and restore a friendly working relationship with all the states in the area regardless of their systems and ideological proclivities. He definitely did not want to identify the United States with the forces of reaction and tradition in the Arab community of nations. He looked toward a closer relationship with the ostensibly "progressive" Arab leaderships in the belief that they represented the force for the future. According to this view, those general principles that were to guide his policies toward the Third World could and should also apply to his policies toward the Arabs: respect for nationalism, acceptance of neutrality, help in the modernization processes.

In particular, Kennedy was greatly encouraged by the so-called Charles River school of economists (with Walt Rostow as its prominent member) who preached the need for intensive economic development of the emerging nations. This theory held that, with imaginative aid from the industrial world, these nations should reach a "take-off" point from which their development would follow a self-generating path.¹⁶ "The fundamental task of our foreign aid program in the 1960s," said Kennedy, "is not negatively to fight communism: its fundamental task is to help make a historical demonstration that in the twentieth century, as in the nineteenth—in the southern half of the globe as in the north—economic growth and political democracy can develop hand in hand."¹⁷

The theory had an implicit assumption that once the new nations' leaders embraced this approach to economics, they would concentrate on progress at home rather than on foreign adventures. Kennedy ardently hoped that he could persuade Nasser to adopt this point of view and make him see that such a policy was in Egypt's best interest. Early in his presidency Kennedy addressed a letter to Nasser (dated May 11, 1961) in which he said *inter alia*:

While tensions unfortunately have sharpened in certain other areas of the world, the Middle East during the past three years has been relatively tranquil. This has been due largely to statesman-

ship on the part of the area's leaders who have given priority to constructive programs of economic development. . . .

Underlying tensions do, however, remain, not the least of which is the unresolved Arab-Israel controversy. . . . We are willing to help resolve the tragic Palestine Refugee Problem on the basis of the principle of repatriation or compensation of properties . . . and to be helpful in making progress on other aspects of this complex problem. . . .

During his recent consultations in Washington, Ambassador Reinhardt told me of the significant progress which the United Arab Republic has already made in establishing an industrial base which will permit increasing prosperity and higher living standards for all your citizens. I am particularly pleased that we have been able in times past to arrange under favorable conditions the sale of substantial quantities of wheat and other commodities to the United Arab Republic since we recognize the importance of an adequately nourished population. It is my earnest hope that such mutually beneficial cooperation can continue.¹⁸

Moreover, in Kennedy's eyes stability (which he sought for the Middle East) was not to be equated with immobility or with containment of those forces that sought change. Rigid preservation of the status quo in a particular country or area might be counterproductive to stability: it might lead to an explosion generated by the impatient forces of change. It was thus advisable, in his view, to accommodate these forces to ensure true stability. Statesmen typical of the old order, the Nahas Pashas and Nuri Saids, had been replaced by the Nassers and Qassemis. Kennedy was convinced that "the tide of the future [was] flowing in their direction."¹⁹

It is in this climate of transformations in the area's politics that Kennedy conducted his policy toward the Arab world. Although the State Department was expected to perform its customary role as the executor of foreign policy, the president put two of his close advisers, Robert Komer and Meyer Feldman, in charge of the Middle East in the White House. He insisted on intimate personal involvement in the policy-making and conduct. Early during his term of office he prepared personal letters to thirteen Arab leaders.²⁰ He continued this correspondence, especially with Nasser, throughout his presidency.

Another way in which Kennedy wanted to give a personal imprint to the foreign policy was to appoint noncareer ambassadors to certain

key countries in Afro-Asia, notably India, Japan, and Egypt. The three men selected for these posts (Kenneth Galbraith, Edwin Reischauer, and John Badeau) enjoyed a reputation of having special skills or ties with the countries to which they became accredited. An Arabist and former missionary in Iraq, John Badeau had served as president of the American University at Cairo and, later, as chief executive of the Near East Foundation before becoming ambassador to Egypt. He had publicly protested Truman's early recognition of Israel,²¹ yet this did not prevent either his nomination by Kennedy or his confirmation by the Senate.²²

Unless there is a question of relationships between Washington and such major powers as Russia or the principal NATO allies, American ambassadors do not, as a rule, get to see their own president often. They usually report to the secretary of state. But Ambassador Badeau saw President Kennedy five times on consultation during the two years he served in Egypt. Obviously, Kennedy was attaching great importance to the relations with Egypt, and during those talks with Badeau "he was very specific. He knew exactly what he wanted to know and he asked specific questions about the Egyptian situation or about President Nasser and our relationship, and he wanted specific answers."²³

The first, and fundamental, question Kennedy had to deal with was to define his attitude toward Arab nationalism in its current phase. The nationalism professed by the new Arab leaders (especially those in Egypt and Syria) had two dimensions deserving America's attention: it reflected a revolt of the middle and lower classes against the privileged and tradition-bound ruling groups, and it was Pan-Arab in character. In the early stages of their struggle for freedom from Western imperial control, individual Arab countries had developed local nationalisms—Egyptian, Syrian, Iraqi, etc.—but once their independence was achieved, a new type of Pan-Arab nationalism began to emerge. This new movement even coined a special political vocabulary to account for the difference: the old local nationalism was to be known as *wataniyah* (patriotism) from the word *watan*, meaning a homeland or fatherland. The new Pan-Arab version acquired the name of *qaumiyah* (nationalism) from the word *qaum*, meaning a nation. Whereas in the early, pre-Nasser, era *wataniyah* was perceived as a virtue, during the Nasser period it began to be seen as a parochial obstacle to all-Arab unity. Consequently, it was replaced by a new expression, *iqlimiyah* (regionalism), with a negative connotation in

terms of the Pan-Arab ideal, because the "region" (that is, a country) was being contrasted to the entire "nation" (extending from the borders of Iran to the Atlantic) which was to hold primacy in Arab loyalties.

Although Kennedy understood the implications of Pan-Arabism as likely to lead to unions of two or more states and thus disturb the balance of power in the area, he was prepared to deal with its chief advocates, notably with Nasser, on the basis of friendship and mutual respect. In fact, following a procedure usually practiced only toward one's close allies, he made a point of informing Nasser in advance of certain major policy moves by the United States, whether or not they affected Egypt directly. Thus in the summer of 1962 the U.S. administration was about to make a number of Skyhawk missiles available to Israel. Aware that this decision would upset Nasser, he sent a special envoy to Egypt who, in Badeau's company, informed Nasser of the impending deal. The meeting took place in Alexandria. Although Nasser was less than happy to learn of the projected sale, he acknowledged the president's gesture by saying, "I do appreciate the fact that I know what's going to happen."²⁴ Moreover, because Nasser's public reaction to the Skyhawk decision remained free from excessive hostility, the general Arab response to it was relatively quiet and devoid of the vehemence usually associated with such occurrences. Kennedy attributed this restraint to his initiative of informing Nasser.²⁵

Similarly, when in 1962 the U.S. government decided to resume nuclear testing through a test explosion in the Pacific, Ambassador Badeau, on Kennedy's instructions, took the news to Nasser some twenty-four to forty-eight hours in advance even though this event was politically and geographically remote from Egypt. Nasser expressed his appreciation of the president's gesture. And again it produced political dividends: the reaction at a conference of the Non-Aligned Nations held soon thereafter in Yugoslavia remained free from the inflammatory rhetoric likely to ensue had Nasser chosen to make the United States his special target.

The most important act, however, designed to generate goodwill toward America was the extension to Egypt of the PL-480 Food Program. This program provided for deliveries of U.S. food, especially wheat, to certain countries in return for payments in local (as a rule nonconvertible) currencies. It was an arrangement very beneficial to recipient governments because of the chronic shortage of foreign ex-

change from which they suffered. In the case of Egypt the beginnings of the PL-480 Program could be traced to the final phases of the Eisenhower administration when the wheat deliveries were to serve as a means of thawing the "deep-freeze" in U.S.-Egyptian relations.

Upon his advent to power Kennedy promptly put the renewal of the PL-480 Program for Egypt on his agenda. At home it was not an easy project to carry through. There were elements in the Congress who opposed the program because they saw Nasser as a troublemaker in the area; they expected political concessions from him in return for U.S. food assistance. Other opposition came from certain groups and individuals in the Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency whose judgment was that Nasser was a Communist or a Soviet stooge.²⁶ In addition a number of legislators, strongly beholden to Israel, were in principle hostile to any move signaling an improvement in U.S.-Arab relations.

Despite these obstacles the administration succeeded in having the PL-480 renewed, and at one time as much as one-third of Egypt's wheat consumption came from this program. Although, as noted earlier, the program did generate a measure of goodwill toward America, it had its definite weak points. As Ambassador Badeau put it, "it is really bad for one country to be dependent on another country for its food, because if anything happens to disturb the relationship, if food is diminished, then the sending country is open to the accusation that it is using the lives of human beings and empty bellies as an instrument of diplomatic pressure."²⁷ Nevertheless, despite this vulnerability, the PL-480 Program marked an important step toward what Badeau described as "a honeymoon period under Kennedy" in the U.S.-Egyptian relations.

During this initial happy phase Nasser was not the only party to show restraint and civility in Cairo-Washington relations. The United States also refrained from taking advantage of Nasser's difficulties. Nasser had suffered a truly traumatic experience with the defection of Syria and the breakup of the United Arab Republic in September 1961. The U.S. government did not exploit this crisis for its own benefit. It could have launched a major propaganda campaign to discredit Nasser's methods of control in Syria and to join its voice to those who claimed with derision that the U.A.R. was a misnomer because it was neither "united" (but ruled by Cairo) nor "Arab" (but overwhelmingly Egyptian, that is, Nilotic-African) nor a "republic" (but a military

dictatorship). In fact, even after the rupture with Damascus Nasser retained for Egypt the name of United Arab Republic, and the United States continued to recognize the now obsolete appellation.

In listing these manifestations of mutual goodwill, we should also mention Iraq and the Iraq-Kuwait crisis. Although the Iraqi revolution of 1958 had owed its ideological inception to the combined Nasserite and Baath party's influence, its first leader, Abdul Karim Qassem, rather soon made a radical volte-face, abandoned the Pan-Arab program, and proclaimed his country to be "the Eternal Iraqi Republic." Moreover, during this initial phase he found common cause with the Communists to launch physical attacks on the Iraqi Nasserites and suppress them as a political force in his country. This undoubtedly constituted a blow to Nasser's prestige inasmuch as it demonstrated the hollowness of some of his Pan-Arab slogans. Again here, as in Syria, the United States could have exploited the Cairo-Baghdad rift. Instead, during both Eisenhower's second term and Kennedy's presidency the United States took a neutral stance, refusing to identify itself with the enemies of Pan-Arabism.

Similar restraint, but not absolute neutrality, was practiced by the United States in June 1961 when Kuwait attained independence from Britain. Immediately after the proclamation of Kuwait's sovereign status, General Qassem laid claim to its entire territory on behalf of Iraq and sent troops to its borders in an obviously intimidating move. The rescue operation was mounted partly by Britain, which sent some military and naval units to the scene, and partly by the Arab League. The League sponsored a collective expedition of troops from a number of Arab states, including the U.A.R., to protect Kuwait against the expected Iraqi invasion. Saudi Arabia also sent a contingent of some 500 troops which, owing to their lack of preparedness, were carried to Kuwait on trucks borrowed from the American-Arabian Oil Company (Aramco). These multinational troops remained in Kuwait for several months, during which the U.A.R. broke down into its component parts, necessitating a separation of Syrian from Egyptian troops under conditions of considerable tension. While the Kennedy administration abstained from involving the United States directly in the Kuwait-Iraq feud, in principle it favored Kuwait's independence and watched with a degree of concern Iraq's aggressive behavior. Thus also, without making any pronouncement on this issue, it gave its implicit approval to Egyptian participation in the collective Arab force.

As of the fall of 1962 the "honeymoon" relationship between the

United States and Egypt began to suffer from severe strains caused by the war and intervention in Yemen.

THE YEMEN CRISIS

On September 26, 1962, a coup d'état executed in Sana by army officers under the leadership of Colonel Abdullah al-Sallal brought down the Yemen monarchy. Yemen's king, Imam Mohammed al-Badr, who had only a week earlier succeeded his father, Imam Ahmed, fled the royal palace and found his way to the loyal tribesmen in the north. There he organized and launched a guerrilla warfare against the new rulers who proclaimed Yemen to be a republic. While there is no doubt that the republican officers had been inspired by the revolutionary slogans emanating from Cairo, it has not been proven that operationally Egypt had played an active role in carrying out the antiroyalist revolution. However, Nasser did not feel he could remain passive toward the events in Yemen. On the contrary, the Yemen situation called for action in the light of his revised Pan-Arab ideology.

Nasser's ideological adjustment or reformulation could be summed up as follows. Initially his Pan-Arab objectives had meant that Egypt under his leadership should strive to achieve unity of the "Arab nation" by promoting unions or federations among the Arab states. It was in this spirit that Egypt had effected a merger with Syria in 1958. But the union broke up in September of 1961. A postmortem analysis by Nasser of the causes of failure brought him to the conclusion that the union had collapsed because the ideology and social system of Syria remained different from that of Egypt despite the unification of the administrative and military structures of both countries. It was a mistake to rush prematurely into political unity before thoroughly preparing the ground through revolutionary equalization of conditions in the countries to be united. Thus a new slogan arose: before effecting a union, it is mandatory to achieve a *wahdat al-hadaf*, a unity of goals.²⁸ In practice it meant that a country about to be united with Egypt must first undergo a revolution Egyptian-style; in effect Egypt's revolution was to be exported. The reformulated ideology therefore conveyed the idea that in addition to its unionist goals Arab nationalism was also to have a revolutionary aspect.

The officers' revolution in Yemen thus seemed to fit perfectly into the new revised ideological scheme. And indeed, soon after assuming power Sallal and his associates proclaimed solidarity and admiration

for Egypt's revolution. They also requested help in their struggle against the counterrevolutionary tribal forces that gained in strength as the days went by and seriously threatened the republican regime. Nasser decided to respond positively, and soon a contingent of Egyptian troops landed in Yemen to join forces with Sallal's army. It is still a matter of some controversy whether Nasser's decision should be seen as a gesture of a Pan-Arab leader, honor-bound to assist his fellow revolutionaries, or whether it was a deliberate aggressive move planned in advance and aimed at the spread of the revolution and Egypt's imperial expansion in the Arabian Peninsula.

It was the latter version that was adopted by the royalist governments of Saudi Arabia and Jordan and by the British colonial authorities in neighboring Aden. The two Arab monarchies feared that the overthrow of the royalist regime in Yemen would set a dangerous precedent likely to affect their own security. Saudi Arabia in particular saw in Nasser's military intervention a signal of his limitless ambitions and a threat to both its own oil fields and its survival as an independent state. Before long, Saudi assistance in the form of money, arms, medicines, and other supplies began flowing to the royalist tribesmen in Yemen, and the Saudi kingdom gave shelter and hospitality to various high-ranking figures of the Yemeni monarchy, including in due time the deposed Imam himself. Jordan seconded the Saudi efforts by providing a limited military expertise to the royalist guerrillas. Within a few weeks what began as a revolution in Yemen transformed itself into a prolonged civil war and foreign intervention. The Arab Cold War degenerated into a hot one, and Yemen began to be perceived as a replay, within the Arab setting, of the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s, where the forces of conservatism clashed in mortal combat with the forces of leftist radicalism.

The conflict in Yemen became further aggravated when, in reacting to the flow of Saudi supplies to the royalists, Egypt's air force bombed certain Saudi Arabian border towns (including Najran) that served as bases from which Saudi aid was channeled to northern Yemen. These air raids not only constituted a disturbing extension of the war to the Saudi territory but also posed the danger of an American-Egyptian confrontation because the United States maintained in Saudi Arabia a number of military aircraft repeatedly flying over the country. To convince the Saudis of America's firm intention to protect them, American airplanes made two stunt-flying demonstrations over Riyadh and Jeddah in early December.²⁹

Several weeks earlier President Kennedy sought to give an additional reassurance to the Saudis by addressing a letter to Crown Prince and Prime Minister Faisal ben Abdul Aziz. The letter, dated October 25, 1962 (but not released to the public until January 1963), stated that "Saudi Arabia can depend on the friendship and the cooperation of the United States in dealing with the many tasks which lie before it in the days ahead." Characteristically for the "New Frontier" Kennedy orientation, the letter made America's cooperation implicitly contingent on Saudi Arabia's internal progressive transformation: "The United States has deep and abiding interest in Saudi Arabia and in the stability and progress of Saudi Arabia. Under your firm and enlightened leadership I am confident Saudi Arabia will move ahead successfully on the path of *modernization and reform* [emphasis added—G.L.] which it has already charted for itself. In pursuing this course you can be assured of full United States support for the maintenance of Saudi Arabia's integrity."³⁰

From the very onset of the war the United States had to face two main issues: recognition and disengagement. Logically, recognition should have preceded disengagement but in reality the two had become somewhat interwoven, at least during the first phase of the conflict, that is, the last quarter of 1961. It was necessary to decide whether and how soon to recognize the new regime in Yemen. According to international law, a government issued from revolution deserves recognition if it is in effective control of most of the country's territory. Under the conditions of civil war it was not easy to ascertain the territorial extent of the republican rule: the war was of a guerrilla type and abounded in sudden shifts of tribal loyalties. Moreover, after the initial success of seizing power in the main central cities, the republicans soon faced a determined highland tribal resistance which if unchecked might well end in royalist victory. This was indeed the reason Sallal had appealed to Nasser for help. Early recognition of the republican regime might thus have put the United States in the embarrassing position of giving an implicit accolade to a government whose hold on Yemen was problematical and lacking popular support.

Nasser and his radical-nationalist followers in the Arab world were anxious to see an early American recognition of Sallal's government because of the symbolic and political value of such an act. However, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the British in Aden were clearly opposed to recognition lest it act as a stimulus to the spread of revolution in their own territories. The Saudis, in fact, were inclined to view

any such move by Washington as an act of disloyalty and a betrayal of the virtual alliance that existed between them and the United States.

Kennedy's administration had to consider three main points in this connection: (a) it wanted to stay neutral in the conflict; (b) it was anxious to reassure Saudi Arabia and Jordan of its support for their security and territorial integrity; and (c) it was reluctant to jettison its initial favorable stance toward the "progressive" and modernizing trends and regimes in the Arab world. These three goals, not easy to reconcile with one another, eventually dictated Washington's policy of recognition.

The road chosen was to be neither the first nor the last in recognizing the republican regime. Too early a recognition was bound to provoke a crisis in Saudi-American relations and possibly undermine King Saud's position, already insecure owing to internal difficulties in his kingdom. Excessive delay in recognizing Sallal's government would in turn complicate U.S. relations with Nasser and Arab radicals everywhere. Actually, the first to recognize republican Yemen were the Soviet Union and the states of the Communist Bloc. They were followed by a number of West European countries. The United States delayed the recognition until Robert Stookey, the American chargé d'affaires in Taiz (Yemen's temporary capital), "certified" that Sallal's government was in effective control of the major parts of the country. Even then it was decided in Washington that certain conditions should be attached to the act of recognition. These were, first, that the new regime would officially disclaim any aggressive designs against the neighboring countries and, second, that it would honor the international obligations undertaken by its predecessor government. The first condition pertained primarily to Saudi Arabia as a potential target of republican hostility; the second was intended as a reassurance to the British that the Anglo-Yemeni Treaty of Sana of 1934, which upheld the status quo in the Yemen-Aden borderland, would be respected.

In addition to these two formal conditions that were to be accepted by the Sallal regime, the question of disengagement between the two sides in the Yemen civil war was also raised by the U.S. government. Washington sought a pledge from Nasser that, provided the Saudis would stop the flow of their supplies to the royalists, he would withdraw his troops from Yemen.

Negotiations regarding these objectives brought about statements from the Yemeni republican regime and the United Arab Republic, respectively. The Yemen republic (a) undertook to honor its "interna-

tional obligations, including all treaties concluded by previous governments, and abide by the charters of the United Nations and the Arab League"; (b) declared its intention to live in peace "with all our neighbours" while enjoining the Yemenis in adjacent areas "to be law-abiding citizens"; and (c) pledged to "concentrate our efforts on our internal affairs." The United States accepted these promises as satisfying its requirements for the granting of recognition and, specifically, as a virtual reaffirmation of the 1934 Anglo-Yemeni Treaty of Sana.³¹

In a proclamation dated December 18, 1962, the United Arab Republic confirmed and supported "the full contents of the communiqué released by the government of the Yemen Arab Republic." It also declared "its willingness to undertake a reciprocal expeditious disengagement and phased removal of its troops from Yemen as Saudi and Jordanian forces engaged in support of the dethroned King are removed from the frontier areas and as external support, including Saudi and Jordanian support of the Yemen royalists, is terminated, whenever the government of the Yemen Arab Republic should make such a request."³²

Upon receiving these pledges from Yemen and the U.A.R., the United States extended, on December 19, 1962, recognition to the Yemen republic. The formal document of recognition was accompanied by both above-mentioned statements. The State Department justified its decision by expressing its belief that "these declarations provide a basis for terminating the conflict over Yemen."³³

The act of recognition was not free of controversy in the Middle East and also within the inner councils of the U.S. government. Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Britain were less than happy about the decision, convinced that Washington had embarked upon a policy of appeasing Nasser and suspecting that, in return for this advantage and American economic aid, Nasser had promised to tone down and hush his anti-American and anti-Israeli propaganda. From Ambassador Badeau's memoirs we know that the original draft of the Egyptian declaration was much longer and full of revolutionary bombast. That it finally emerged as a document with a sober and restrained language was a result of Badeau's "deal" with Nasser's plenipotentiary, Vice President Ali Sabri. Seeing the initial Egyptian draft, Badeau said to him: "This won't do at all. It's all right if you want to make a propaganda statement, but don't put it in an official government proclamation. Why don't you make a proclamation of what has to be said and then give a press interview afterwards? In a press interview, you can say anything

about the Saudis or anybody else you want to, but it's not an official document."³⁴ Sabri accepted his suggestion.

It seems obvious that Nasser was determined to derive the maximum political benefit from the act of recognition. On the other hand, according to such a close observer of the Yemen imbroglio as correspondent Dana A. Schmidt, after considerable debate in Washington over recognition, "the day was carried by the 'New Frontier' element, who were anxious to prove that the U.S. is not necessarily committed to reactionary anachronistic regimes and is, on the contrary, anxious to help progressive young elements who are the wave of the future."³⁵

It appears, however, that those in the Kennedy administration who thought that recognition would bring about disengagement and peace were in for a considerable disappointment. This was so because neither of the two principal interventionist parties—the Egyptians and the Saudis—had a real intention to disengage themselves from the conflict. As long as U.A.R. troops remained in Yemen and the tribal-royalist resistance continued, Saudi Arabia would consider any cutoff of supplies to its Yemeni allies as virtually suicidal. As for Egypt, Nasser was not truly interested in disengagement, but in the complete victory and entrenchment of the republican regime in Yemen; this, he well knew, could not be accomplished without massive Egyptian military engagement.

Actually, in spite of his declaration of peaceful intentions (of December 18) Nasser intensified his military effort in Yemen. Between December 30, 1962, and January 1, 1963, Egyptian high-altitude bombers attacked the Saudi border cities of Najran and Jizan, while republican-controlled Radio Sana boasted that the Yemen Republic possessed and intended to use modern rockets against the royal palaces of Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Washington's reaction to these actions was expressed in both words and deeds. The State Department publicly "deplored these incidents which threaten to expand the Yemen conflict" and reconfirmed America's interest in the maintenance of Saudi Arabia's integrity by releasing Kennedy's letter of October 25, 1962, to Crown Prince Faisal.³⁶ Simultaneously, additional jet fighters, a destroyer, and paratroopers were sent to the Saudi Kingdom. In spite of these American actions a number of Saudi border localities were subjected to new Egyptian bombardments between February and May of 1963.

Thus, contrary to Washington's optimistic expectations, not only did recognition not produce the desired results, but following it the

number of Egyptian troops was drastically increased in Yemen. Nasser's failure to withdraw his forces "annoyed Kennedy and led him to regard Nasser as completely untrustworthy."³⁷

Although the administration's attempt to establish a linkage between recognition and disengagement did not work, efforts to bring about the separation of the warring parties and the restoration of peace in the area were further pursued. In fact, not only was the Yemen affair the major Middle East crisis that the Kennedy administration had to deal with, but it actually dominated U.S. relations with Egypt in 1963 and largely thwarted Kennedy's grand design to turn Egypt's energies inward.³⁸

Early in 1963 the United States began utilizing both the United Nations and its own diplomacy to resolve the Yemen conflict. Following an American suggestion, UN Secretary General U Thant sent Ralph Bunche as his special representative to the area in March. Bunche visited Sana and Cairo but, because of his refusal to see the deposed Imam and his royalist followers, was denied entry to Saudi Arabia. Bunche's "fact-finding" mission was not conspicuous for its neutrality. Having visited Sallal in the region of Yemen freshly "liberated" by the Egyptian troops, he gave a press interview in Cairo in which he praised Sallal's regime for its "earnestness [and] seriousness of purpose" and expressed his conviction that the Republic of Yemen should be given all possible assistance to stop further (Saudi) "infiltration."³⁹

Concurrently President Kennedy dispatched to the area a non-career envoy, Ambassador Ellsworth T. Bunker, as his personal emissary, with the task of securing a disengagement agreement. Bunker's mission was initiated by the policy directive of the National Security Council of February 27, 1963, written by two presidential assistants, McGeorge Bundy and Robert Komer. According to it, "Operation Hard Surface" was to pledge American protection to Saudi Arabia in exchange for Saudi cessation of aid to the royalists; this in turn was to induce Nasser to stop his military intervention in Yemen.

Like Bunche—hence also compromising his neutrality to some extent—Bunker did not consult the Yemeni royalist party. His two visits in Riyadh were not free from tension: by attempting to link American security guarantees to Saudi pledges of reform (as adumbrated in Kennedy's October letter to Faisal), he irritated the crown prince, who rather angrily asked about the exact extent of the U.S. commitment to defend his country. It appears that Bunker faced a dilemma in answering Faisal's question because the original directive

for the U.S. Air Force to "attack and destroy" foreign planes violating the Saudi air space had been weakened to provide merely for self-defense if American aircraft were attacked. In fact, Bunker chose to ignore the change in the directive and gave Faisal the original version.

Ultimately, having visited Riyadh, Sana, and Cairo, he succeeded in obtaining a disengagement agreement, which was delivered to Washington and the UN secretary general by April 13. By virtue of this agreement the Saudis undertook to stop their aid to the deposed Imam and to deny further use of their territory as a sanctuary for the royalists or as a base for attack against their enemies. In return Egypt pledged to start a phased withdrawal of its troops and to desist from punitive actions against the royalists and the territory of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the governments of Saudi Arabia, the U.A.R., and the Republic of Yemen agreed to allow a team of UN observers to gain access to all the regions necessary to ensure compliance.⁴⁰

Although it is far from assured, certain commentators and chroniclers of the Yemen conflict were of the opinion that had this team of observers been sent to Yemen immediately after the conclusion of the agreement, disengagement would have become a reality. According to Badeau, the idea of dispatching to the scene a quickly assembled force of U.S. military observers (from missions in Iran, Turkey, and Libya) was discussed in Washington but abandoned in favor of entrusting the task to the United Nations.⁴¹ But organizing and dispatching an international observer force (under the Swedish General Carlsson von Horn, chief of the Palestine Truce Supervisory Organization) suffered considerable delays. It was only in July 1963 that the UN Yemen Observation Mission began functioning in the area. It numbered merely 200 men and was hampered in its task by the difficult terrain, the lack of adequate support from the UN, and by the UN secretariat's ban on any contact with the royalists. Dismayed, General von Horn tendered his resignation in August 1963 and the UN mission formally ended its functions on September 4, 1964. Compliance of the parties with the agreement was spotty but initially rather satisfactory, especially by Saudi Arabia. As for Egypt, it appeared that while some of its military units were being withdrawn, others were being sent to replace them. Gradually, however, as the difficulties encountered by UN observers in performing their mission were mounting, violations of the agreement became more pronounced. Despite strong reinforcements sent to Yemen by the Egyptians, the warfare acquired a very mobile character,

with Egyptian and royalist offensives and counteroffensives and territories lost and regained. By the winter of 1963–64 the royalists succeeded in recapturing most of the areas lost to the Egyptians during the spring of 1963.

By the end of the Kennedy presidency, with his tragic death on November 22, 1963, it was clear that all the disengagement efforts, whether sponsored by the UN or Washington, had failed and the civil war and foreign intervention continued with even greater intensity than at the beginning.

Under the circumstances it is perhaps proper to ask whether the collapse of the disengagement efforts signified also the failure of American policy in the Yemen crisis. To answer this question one should take account of the primary American objectives when the war and foreign intervention began. These were to localize the war so it would not engulf a wider area, to prevent a major Egyptian-Saudi armed conflict that might call for substantial U.S. military involvement, to protect the stability and integrity of Saudi Arabia, and to safeguard the Persian Gulf oil resources from disruption and sabotage. Through a combination of diplomacy and limited—and rather symbolic—military demonstration (U.S. Air Force flights over Saudi cities), these fundamental objectives were attained. Two subsidiary objectives could also be mentioned: to prevent the “satellization” of Yemen by Egypt, which endangered the principle of self-determination for every country in the area, and to discourage Nasser from turning his energies toward foreign adventures at the expense of Egypt’s internal development. These two objectives were not achieved, but from the American point of view they were secondary and did not immediately involve U.S. vital interests.

Following Kennedy’s death and the departure of the UN observers, external efforts to produce disengagement subsided, and the Yemen imbroglio was left largely in the hands of the Arab governments and the Arab League. Their endeavors to restore peace were punctuated by a series of conferences and agreements that were no more successful than the combined American and UN initiatives. The decisive turn occurred in 1967 following the defeat of Egypt at the hands of the Israelis, a sobering fact that compelled Nasser to withdraw from Yemen and led to the Arab summit meeting in Khartoum in late August 1967. That meeting produced a peace settlement based on evacuation of U.A.R. forces and the recognition of the republican regime in Ye-

men. These events took place during the Lyndon Johnson presidency, during which America's involvement in Yemeni affairs was virtually nonexistent.

CONCLUSION

During his brief presidency Kennedy had to face three sets of issues in the Middle East: the unfinished business of the Arab-Israeli feud; the security of the non-Arab Northern Tier; and the American-Arab relations during the Arab Cold War. These issues were not of equal urgency. Paradoxically, the dominant issue in terms of long-range stability in the area—the Arab-Israeli feud—was during Kennedy's term the least urgent. His approach to it was to reaffirm, through special emissaries, arms sales and frequent communications, America's commitment to Israel's security. At the same time he tried to reassure Arab leaders of his concern for the Palestinian refugees, thereby demonstrating his lack of awareness that the Palestinian question was one of frustrated nationalism rather than of mere relief for the dwellers of refugee camps.

Kennedy's policy toward the Northern Tier was broadly one of continuation of the previous administrations' policies: involvement in the Central Treaty Organization (Cento) and support for independence of Turkey and Iran. Into this generally uneventful period the Cuban crisis introduced a jarring note, namely Russia's demand that U.S. Jupiter missiles should be removed from Turkey. To avoid a new complication with the Soviets the president chose a compromise solution: while refusing to include the Jupiter missiles in the formal agreement regarding Cuba, he privately—through his brother Robert—pledged that they would be removed, and he kept his promise.

The greatest challenges of Kennedy's presidency were centered on the Arab world. His initial approach was one of idealism and optimism: he wanted to put an end to America's excessive reliance (as he saw it) on traditionalist regimes and to encourage modernization and reform by his friendly overtures and assistance to progressive and revolutionary forces and regimes in the Arab world. To counterbalance the prudent conservatism of the professionals in the State Department, he freely resorted to the services of noncareer ambassadors and his political appointees in the White House. While thus searching for a new formula of U.S. relations with the Arabs, he succeeded to a certain extent in erasing America's close identification with Arab traditional-

ists. But his endeavors to form friendships with the "progressives"—largely represented by Nasser and his followers—produced only ambivalent results. In fact, Kennedy's initial optimism in this respect suffered a rude shock with the war in Yemen. That war rather eloquently demonstrated that it was unrealistic to expect radical leaders who attained power riding the crest of anticolonial revolution to show the restraint and maturity demanded by true statesmanship. These leaders proved to be much more adept at engaging in foreign adventures, including subversion and military expansion, than in concentrating on domestic development.

To be sure, a broadly similar observation could be made regarding certain authoritarian rulers at the other end of the spectrum (King Farouk, Nuri Said, King Saud, to some extent the shah). In their stubborn attachment to obsolete social notions and their pursuit of personal ambitions or dynastic goals, they had rejected their peoples' demands for political participation and had thus failed to achieve statesmanlike balance and sound judgment, eventually leading to their downfall. But these were not the leaders who either were in control or who claimed primacy in Kennedy's decision-making during his brief term.

In the beginning of his presidency Kennedy was critical of Eisenhower's legacy which had put American-Egyptian relations into "an ice-box." Despite some initial successes in producing a "thaw," by the end of the Kennedy presidency the Cairo-Washington relationship had reached a point of considerable distrust and irritation. The abrupt end of his presidential career did not permit the inevitable maturing of a number of issues in the Middle East during his lifetime. In retrospect his presidency could boast of no resounding successes, but it did avoid major disasters.

4. The Johnson Presidency

In foreign affairs Lyndon Johnson's was not a happy presidency. During his term of office the United States became embroiled in the Vietnam war, which produced many adverse reactions abroad, proved deeply divisive at home, burdened the country's economy, and, because of self-imposed constraints, was ultimately doomed to failure. Vietnam, moreover, tended to overshadow many other important sectors of foreign policy, as a result of which they did not receive the attention they deserved. The African continent was shaken by the troubles in the Congo, a strategic country that came close to being captured by the pro-Soviet faction. In the Caribbean there were upheavals in Panama and the Dominican Republic, the latter resulting in American intervention. More importantly, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) experienced serious strains following President de Gaulle's decision to withdraw from it and remove its headquarters from France. In addition, President Johnson's personal relations with Britain's Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson lost the closeness and cordiality that characterized the Anglo-American relationship during Macmillan's premiership. In the area of the Middle East Johnson's presidency was punctuated by two major crises: the Cyprus dispute and the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, both of which contributed to serious deterioration of America's position in that part of the world.

Lyndon Baines Johnson's life before his advent to the country's highest office had not been noted for experience in foreign affairs. He was an energetic and skillful Texas politician who made his mark as an outstanding congressional leader, but as vice president he was kept out of the decision-making process, especially in foreign policy. Conscious of the attributes of power and not reluctant to use it, Johnson never felt at ease with the sophisticated members of the eastern establishment, unable to forget his educational background—the Southwest State

Teachers College—contrasting with the Ivy League degrees held by some of his White House and cabinet associates.

As president, he relied a good deal on the erudition and advice of these members of the country's intellectual and political elite, partly inherited from Kennedy and partly selected by himself. His principal foreign policy adviser was Secretary of State Dean Rusk, a man with extensive experience in Far Eastern affairs, with Under Secretary George Ball acting as an alter ego whenever Rusk was away from Washington. MacGeorge Bundy served as national security adviser—an important position, but in Johnson's time not yet elevated to the level of influence characteristic of Henry Kissinger's and Zbigniew Brzezinski's subsequent tours of duty. The president as a rule gave considerable latitude to his advisers to develop ideas and formulate policies, but he firmly insisted on being fully informed and on reserving the final decisions to himself. Moreover, not unlike Franklin Roosevelt, Johnson had a penchant for using personal emissaries, sometimes selected from outside the regular bureaucracy, on more difficult missions, especially when faced with a complex crisis.

With regard to the Middle East it is far from clear how much Johnson knew of that area's history or understood its politics. It is also uncertain whether, considering his background, he had any emotional, social, or economic ties to either Jewish or Arab communities. As a political figure he was aware of the power of ethnic lobbies in the American political process and, on certain occasions, was inclined to link domestic politics to the foreign policy decision-making. Similarly, in his personnel appointments to higher offices, such as the White House staff or the American delegation to the United Nations, Johnson was not oblivious to their effects on the attitudes of certain ethnic constituencies.

Upon his assumption of the presidency Johnson did not launch any new program for the Middle East that would radically differ from Kennedy's policies. These policies were noted for the cultivation of alliance relationships with the Northern Tier, that is, Iran and Turkey, with its Greek and Pakistani extensions; for a protective attitude toward Israel; for fairly close links with oil-producing Saudi Arabia and pro-Western Jordan; and for a correct but somewhat reserved attitude toward the Arab radical camp exemplified by such revolutionary regimes as Egypt, Syria, and Iraq.

Preoccupied as he was with the promotion of his domestic pro-

gram—the Great Society—and with the Vietnam war, the president was caught basically unprepared by the fast-developing crises in Cyprus in 1964 and in Arab-Israeli relations in 1967. Both were of considerable magnitude in terms of America's security and her general political position in the region: the first because of its effect on the integrity of the North Atlantic alliance and the second because of its impact on the totality of Arab-American relations.

THE CYPRUS CRISIS

Subjected to British control since the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 and proclaimed a Crown Colony in 1925, Cyprus became an area of conflict in the period following World War II. Its Greek majority—some 80 percent of the population—was striving to achieve one of two objectives: either *enosis* (union with Greece) or independence. These objectives were resisted by the island's Turkish minority which, already in an underdog position, feared suppression at the hands of the Greeks. Officially, the problem was resolved in 1959 by the London-Zurich Accords, whereby Cyprus was proclaimed a separate state whose constitution was to be guaranteed by Britain, Turkey, and Greece. The constitution explicitly rejected *enosis*; provided for a Greek Cypriot president and a Turkish Cypriot vice president, a 30 percent Turkish Cypriot share in the civil service, a 40 percent participation in the army, and separate Greek and Turkish city councils; and stipulated the right of intervention by the guarantor powers should any of these provisions be substantially violated.

The ink was barely dry on the London-Zurich Accords before serious differences began to divide the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus. The fundamental cause of disagreements was the propaganda for *enosis* emanating from the veteran hero of the Cypriot struggle against British colonial control, Colonel George Grivas, then resident in Greece. The president of Cyprus, Archbishop Makarios, paid scant attention to the 1959 Accords, clearly favored the aggressive and chauvinist line pursued by the island's Greek majority, and disregarded those provisions that guaranteed the Turkish minority fair representation in the civil service. The Turkish Cypriots felt less favored or deprived of the many public services the Greeks enjoyed, such as adequate access to water and power, housing, and educational facilities. Similarly, the views of the Greeks and Turks clashed over the structure of the small Cypriot army: while the island's vice president,

Dr. Fazil Kuchuk, insisted that the 40 percent of the military force stipulated to be Turkish by the London-Zurich agreements should be set up separately from the Greek units, Makarios stood for an integrated force. Furthermore, Makarios was hostile to the idea of the constitutionally guaranteed separate (Greek and Turkish) city councils for the island's cities and townships. There were also deep differences over foreign policy: the Turkish minority favored friendly ties with NATO and the West in general, while Makarios was drawing closer to the nonaligned nations of Afro-Asia and to Moscow.

In this tense situation of mutual animosity any act or occurrence likely to inflame popular feelings was certain to trigger an explosion. This is precisely what happened when on December 5, 1963, President Makarios sent a message to the British, Greek, and Turkish governments that he had decided to abolish the 70:30 ethnic proportion in the civil service and unify the hitherto separate city councils. Makarios's action, definitely in violation of the London-Zurich Accords, signified a unilateral repudiation of the Cyprus constitution. An actual outbreak of violence soon followed: on December 21, Greek Cypriots attacked a Turkish quarter in the island's capital, Nicosia, killing some 300 men, women, and children. A civil war began, pitting the better armed and better organized Greek majority against the weaker Turkish minority.

Alarmed by the threat to the safety of her ethnic brethren and by the specter of union between Cyprus and Greece, Turkey reacted with firmness but within the bounds imposed by the London-Zurich agreements. These stipulated that the guarantor powers (Turkey, Greece, and Britain) could take unilateral action to redress violations if joint efforts proved ineffective. And indeed, Turkey first sent urgent messages to London and Athens to cooperate in restraining the Greek Cypriots from attacking the Turkish minority. Only when joint appeals from the guarantor powers were dismissed by the Greek Cypriots did Turkey order her jet fighters to fly low over Nicosia to warn that, unless the killing stopped, further military action was likely. Simultaneously, movements of the Turkish navy along the Mediterranean coast pointed to the possibility of the landing of Turkish troops in Cyprus. The military moves were accompanied by diplomatic action: Turkey sent appeals to President Johnson and certain other heads of Western states to intervene to stop violence in the island.

January 1964 marked the beginning of a period of intensive international diplomacy involving Washington, London, Ankara, Athens,

Nicosia, and the United Nations. United States' diplomacy was mostly conducted by Under Secretary of State George Ball, who consulted not only with his immediate superior, Secretary Dean Rusk, but also directly with President Johnson. It was apparent from the outset that both the British and the Turks wanted to involve the United States in the resolution of the Cyprus conflict: the British because, having relinquished their control over Cyprus, they were reluctant to assume new burdens in this troubled island and the Turks because they believed that only a strong American posture could be decisive in bringing about a solution.

Initial conversations between Under Secretary Ball and the British ambassador to Washington, Sir David Ormsby-Gore, made it clear that Britain wanted to share the Cyprus problem with NATO and within this framework expected to ensure special cooperation with Washington and American participation in a NATO force to be sent to Cyprus.¹ The ambassador also expressed Britain's opposition to the idea of dispatching a United Nations force to the scene. Such a force was certain to encounter delays in being formed and, moreover, it might give the Soviet Union, as a UN member, an opportunity to meddle in the conflict.

Following these consultations, Ball discussed the matter with the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson. Stevenson warned Ball to expect the worst from the Cyprus president, Archbishop Makarios, in whose residence he had spent a few days during the "troubles" and whom he regarded with utter contempt. "The Archbishop was," he said, "a wicked, unreliable conniver who concealed his venality under the sanctimonious vestments of a religious leader; the only way to deal with Makarios . . . was by 'giving the old bastard absolute hell.'"²

On January 25 Ball brought the Cyprus question to the attention of President Johnson. The president was at first reluctant to see the United States involved in the crisis, "but he quickly grasped the seriousness of the Cyprus problem and directed me to come up with an acceptable solution."³ Acting on this instruction, Ball came forth with the suggestion of an international force that would include American and British contingents, a pledge from Turkey and Greece not to intervene in Cyprus for three months, and the appointment of a NATO mediator. U.S. troops were not to exceed 1,200 men.

Time was of the essence: on January 28 the Turkish prime minister, Ismet İnönü, informed the U.S. ambassador in Ankara, Raymond

Hare, that unless the United States gave an answer to the Turkish request for help by the next morning, Turkey would invade Cyprus to protect the Turkish Cypriot minority. Moreover, Ball's proposal, leaked prematurely, was promptly rejected by Makarios. The archbishop made it known that he opposed any plan based on NATO mediation and intervention and that instead he favored the approach through the United Nations. At the same time violence in Cyprus intensified, and on February 4 a bomb (presumably planted by Greek extremists) exploded in the American Embassy in Nicosia.

The polarization of attitudes toward the peace initiative and the aggravation of conditions in Cyprus itself led President Johnson to instruct Ball to proceed to the concerned capitals in Europe and the Middle East to seek a solution of the conflict with the principal decision-makers.

On February 8 Ball started his intensive shuttle diplomacy—an odyssey that began in London and led to Ankara, Athens, Cyprus, and again to Ankara and London. In the course of these visits the positions of the feuding parties became crystallized. Turkey was above all interested in a formula that would bring an effective international peace-keeping force to Cyprus, prevent *enosis* with Greece, and protect the Turkish minority. She was thus prepared to accept the British-American plan for a NATO force. According to Ball, Turkish views had to be taken seriously because Turkey had “a strong and responsible government.” This contrasted with a virtual absence of government in Greece, under the weak leadership of Premier Ioannis Paraskevopoulos, from whom Ball was not able to secure any commitment.

But the contrast with a positive and responsible Turkish position was even greater in Cyprus, where Ball, accompanied by Assistant Secretary Joseph Sisco, discussed the crisis with Makarios. Ball fully shared Adlai Stevenson's impression of the Cypriot president. He described Makarios as “devious” and as “a tough, cynical man of fifty-four far more suited to temporal command than spiritual inspiration” who “gave nothing away.”⁴ Makarios reiterated his opposition to any NATO-based plan and pronounced himself definitely in favor of the United Nations. “That meant,” wrote Ball, “that Makarios' central interest was to block off Turkish intervention so that he and his Greek Cypriotes could go on happily massacring Turkish Cypriotes. Obviously we would never permit that.”⁵ Ball was further outraged by Makarios's “amused tolerance” when discussing with him the just-perpetrated massacre of fifty Turkish Cypriots by the Greeks in Lim-

assol and warned him that the world would not accept passively the transformation of Cyprus into the archbishop's "private abattoir." He confirmed his view of Makarios in a cable to President Johnson by stating that "the Greek Cypriotes do not want a peace-keeping force; they just want to be left alone to kill Turkish Cypriotes."⁶

The archbishop's adamant rejection of a NATO role convinced Ball that if any international force was to restore peace in Cyprus it would have to be done under UN auspices. On his second visit to Ankara he persuaded the reluctant Premier İnönü to accept this alternative, albeit İnönü warned him that if more violence occurred against the Turkish minority, Turkey would have to act on her own.

As a result of these consultations, on his way back home via London Ball proposed a new—interim—plan that would call for a joint intervention of three guarantor powers (Britain, Greece, and Turkey) not requiring the consent of Makarios, whom he considered as an impediment in the peace-seeking process. Such a force would operate through joint patrols pending the deliberations of the United Nations. The proposal, however, was rejected by the British, who insisted on divesting themselves of further responsibility for Cyprus.

Back in Washington in mid-February Ball reported directly to the president. Johnson accepted the conclusion that under the circumstances the only remaining course for the United States was to resort to the UN peacekeeping machinery. On February 17 Ball announced that he and the president had agreed that a settlement in Cyprus was "essential to the peace of the world."⁷ America's basic policy was to avoid taking sides but, because of the explosive potential of the dispute, to work actively for a peaceful solution. As seen in Washington, the dangers inherent in the Cyprus problem were identified as (a) a possible outbreak of war between Turkey and Greece, with a destructive impact on NATO's Mediterranean flank and (b) the prospect of an alignment of Cyprus with the Soviet Union. There were, indeed, growing signs of rapprochement between Makarios and Moscow. As early as February 7, in letters to President Johnson and other NATO leaders, Premier Khrushchev endorsed Makarios's rejection of a NATO-sponsored intervention by asking that NATO powers refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Cyprus. Moreover, toward the end of that month a direct airline connection was inaugurated between Moscow and Nicosia. A likely extension of Soviet influence in the island was repeatedly stressed by Turkey, whose foreign minister, Feridun

Erkin, warned that Cyprus could become the "Cuba of the Mediterranean."⁸

Thus the United Nations entered the scene. On March 5, 1964, the Security Council decided to create the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to be composed of troops from Canada, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, and Britain. An Indian, Lieutenant General Prem Singh Gyani, was named its commander, and later in March Finland's ambassador to Sweden, Sakari S. Tuomioja, was designated by UN Secretary General U Thant as mediator between the Greek and Turkish communities. The UN troops arrived in Cyprus on March 27. By the end of April their strength reached 7,500 men. Their peacekeeping task encountered considerable difficulties. On the political front Turkey objected to the joint patrols the UN force was operating with the Greek Cypriot security units. Furthermore, the UN force's presence did not completely eliminate the spreading violence in the island. Cases of bloodshed and hostage-taking, in which the Greek Cypriots were usually the aggressive party, were multiplying, leading to further polarization of the Greek and Turkish communities and to the growing estrangement between Ankara and Athens. The position of Greece was not only evasive and uncooperative but actually added to the difficulties by allowing or encouraging such militants as Colonel Grivas—then resident in Greece but keeping in touch with Makarios—to engage in pro-*enosis* activity. Moreover, while the diplomatic processes of the United States, Britain, and the UN were in high gear, elections in Greece resulted, on February 19, in the advent to power of the 76-year-old socialist-leaning premier, George Papandreou. According to Ball, he was "a hopelessly weak leader [who] found it expedient to play along with Makarios and the advocates of *enosis*. To a large extent, as I saw it," wrote Ball, "he was under the influence of his son, Andreas Papandreou, for many years a professor of economics in several American universities, who was trying to get a foothold in Greek politics by playing closely with the Communist bloc."⁹

Despite the presence of the UN force, Turkey continued to complain about the Greek-sponsored "genocide" of the Turkish minority in Cyprus and its feared total "annihilation." In mid-April the Turkish government proposed a new political structure in the form of a federated republic of Cyprus, to be divided into two regions, 62 percent Greek and 38 percent Turkish (the actual ethnic division being closer to an 80:20 ratio). The plan was indignantly rejected by Makarios,

while Papandreou insisted on full self-determination for Cyprus and the rejection of the London-Zurich agreements (presumably because, by providing for the supervision of the constitution by the guarantor powers, they restricted Cyprus' sovereignty).

Although attempts at mediation were made at one time or another by special UN emissaries such as Ralph Bunche and Galo Plaza Lasso (former president of Ecuador), the situation in Cyprus failed to improve and the strengthened contingents of Greek Cypriots intensified their attacks on a number of Turkish-inhabited areas.

The American policy of evenhandedness was not appreciated in either Athens or Ankara. In fact, on the morrow of Papandreou's election to premiership, Greece experienced an outburst of anti-American hostility in the form of a demonstration in Athens, during which students burned President Johnson's effigy—an act that caused the president to telephone Ball and ask plaintively: "Why are those Greeks burning my picture?"¹⁰ Not only were Johnson's feelings hurt by this personal manifestation of animosity, but he was also concerned about the adverse effects of such incidents on the Greek-American vote in the forthcoming November elections.¹¹ This theme was later belabored by the Turkish press when it was the Turks' turn to mount anti-American demonstrations. During one of them the demonstrators carried a sign proclaiming: "Henpecked Johnson, don't act under your Greek wife's influence. Use your own will power!"¹²

The president's growing concern about Cyprus led him to resort to the services of a special emissary. This time the choice fell on Senator J. W. Fulbright, who was sent to Greece and Turkey in early May in a new attempt at conciliation. The Turkish press voiced doubts about his impartiality. Upon his return to Washington in mid-May the senator stated that he was encouraged by the prospects of ultimate settlement of the dispute. Fulbright's optimism seemed premature: by the end of May the situation in Cyprus deteriorated to such an extent that a Turkish invasion appeared imminent. In fact, it was fixed by Turkey to take place on June 4.¹³

It became evident that the American policy of seeking conciliation between the parties to the dispute for the sake of peace, a policy of not focusing on the actual cause of aggravation, did not bring the hoped-for results. In essence, despite Under Secretary Ball's strongly negative view of Makarios and of Papandreou's Greek government, the United States did not differentiate between the aggressor—the Greek Cypriots abetted by Athens—and the Turkish Cypriot victims of ag-

gression. By early June the time had come to decide whether America would choose to focus her efforts on stopping further Greek aggression or on frustrating the Turkish resolve to respond to it. Without Ball's knowledge the president chose to prevent Turkey from taking military action. He did it in cooperation with Secretary Rusk who, assisted by Assistant Secretary of State Harlan Cleveland and his deputy, Joseph Sisco, prepared the president's note to Premier İnönü. The note (a) admonished Turkey to abide by the terms of the London-Zurich agreements, (b) criticized Turkey for not consulting with Washington, (c) urged Turkey to conform to the provisions of NATO, (d) questioned NATO's commitment to defend Turkey in the case of Soviet aggression if Turkey intervened in Cyprus, and (e) reminded Turkey that American-supplied arms could not be used for purposes other than defense against Russia. The following are excerpts from the note covering the most essential points:

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I am gravely concerned by the information I have through Ambassador Hare from you and your Foreign Minister that the Turkish Government is contemplating a decision to intervene by military force to occupy a portion of Cyprus. I wish to emphasize, in the fullest friendship and frankness, that I do not consider that such a course of action by Turkey, fraught with such far-reaching consequences, is consistent with the commitment of your Government to consult fully in advance with us. . . .

It is my impression that you believe that such an intervention by Turkey is permissible under the provisions of the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960. . . .¹⁴

I must call to your attention also, Mr. Prime Minister, the obligations of NATO. . . . I hope you will understand that *your NATO allies have not had a chance to consider whether they have an obligation to protect Turkey against the Soviet Union if Turkey takes a step which results in Soviet intervention without the full consent and understanding of its NATO allies.* [Emphasis mine—G.L.]

I wish also, Mr. Prime Minister, to call your attention to the bilateral agreement between the United States and Turkey in the field of military assistance. Under Article IV of the Agreement with Turkey of July 1947, your Government is required to obtain United States consent for the use of military assistance for

purposes other than those for which such assistance was furnished. . . . I must tell you in all candor that the United States cannot agree to the use of any United States supplied equipment for a Turkish intervention in Cyprus under the present circumstances.

Sincerely,
Lyndon B. Johnson¹⁵

The note undoubtedly reflected a serious anti-Turkish tilt in American policy. It concentrated on evils likely to ensue from the contemplated Turkish intervention, in particular the virtual certainty of the partition of Cyprus, which as the note stated was expressly forbidden by the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. But that treaty was also clear on excluding the *enosis* of Cyprus with Greece, and yet no warning of similar intensity was issued to Greece, even though on his advent to power Premier George Papandreu had openly promised military support to the Greek Cypriots.¹⁶ Moreover, the note passed completely under silence that it was the Greek and Greek-Cypriot side that initiated and provoked the crisis through its aggressive behavior.

When, on the eve of his departure for Europe on June 4, Ball saw the text of Johnson's message, he told Rusk: "That is the most brutal diplomatic note I have ever seen." Believing it to be "the diplomatic equivalent of an atomic bomb," he added: "I think that may stop İnönü from invading, but I don't know how we'll ever get him down off the ceiling after that."¹⁷

In addition to the note the president ordered General Lyman Lemnitzer, NATO's supreme commander, to fly to Ankara to help dissuade the Turks from invading Cyprus. The note and the general's visit worked: İnönü postponed the invasion indefinitely. In his own words "The invasion of Cyprus was fixed for June 4, 1964, but one day before, I was warned by Washington not to use American arms for purposes not approved by America. Mr. Johnson said that if the Russians took action, our NATO guarantees might not hold. We might also face the danger of impeachment at the United Nations. In half an hour we would be left without an ally."¹⁸

While the note, described elsewhere as "a presidential communication of great harshness, calling into question the very base of the alliance,"¹⁹ achieved its immediate objective of stopping Turkey's military action, in the long run it was bound to strain the ties and even

undermine the alliance between Washington and Ankara. Indeed, the note produced a psychological explosion in the Turkish capital. The Turks felt angry and did not conceal their sense of betrayal, a situation that was brought to Johnson's attention. Worried about the state of relations between the two countries, the president ordered Ball, then in Geneva, to proceed to Ankara to soothe and reassure İnönü of America's friendship.

On his way to Ankara, Ball stopped in Athens where he told Premier Papandreou rather bluntly that "Cyprus had become a major threat to the peace of the world, and Greece had considerable responsibility for what had happened." "This time," he added, "disaster had been avoided only by the President's forceful intervention. . . . But, if Greece did not show greater cooperation, we would not take such a hard line again."²⁰ Papandreou did not seem to absorb fully the gist of these remarks. In response he stubbornly spoke of the need for *enosis*, which Ball subsequently described as "total fantasy."²¹ In Ankara Ball was received by İnönü courteously but with reserve. He reassured the prime minister that not only was the United States not partial to the Greeks but that it actually acknowledged that the Greek Cypriots "had largely created the problem by terrorizing" the Turkish Cypriots. Moreover, he reconfirmed Washington's total mistrust of Makarios. At the end he invited İnönü to have a direct talk with the president in Washington.

İnönü accepted, but before embarking on this trip he sent Johnson a lengthy response to his note. In his message dated June 13, 1964, the Turkish prime minister expressed his disappointment with the president's note; pointed out that, contrary to the note's assertion, Turkey had several times consulted on the course of action with the United States, the United Nations, and the guarantor powers; and stressed that, in compliance with Washington's urgings and the expectation of effective measures by the United Nations, Turkey had repeatedly refrained from the planned intervention. He complained about the ineffectiveness of the UN force in Cyprus, the growing aggressiveness of the Makarios regime, the instigation of the troubles by the Greek government, and the intensification of terror against the Turkish Cypriot minority. He also invoked Article 4 of the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960, which, in case of a breach of the provisions of that treaty, gave the right to the guarantor powers to take concerted action and, if that proved impossible, a unilateral action to reestablish the status created by the treaty. He denied that the purpose of the Turkish intervention

would be to partition Cyprus and stated that a Greek-Turkish war would occur only if Greece attacked Turkey.

The central point of İnönü's letter dealt with the validity of NATO's defense commitment toward Turkey:

The part of your message expressing doubts as to the obligation of the NATO allies to protect Turkey in case she becomes directly involved with the USSR as a result of an action initiated in Cyprus, gives me the impression that there are . . . between us wide divergence of views as to the nature and basic principles of the North Atlantic Alliance. I must confess that this has been to us the source of great sorrow and grave concern. . . . Our understanding is that the North Atlantic Treaty imposes upon all member states the obligation to come forthwith to the assistance of any member victim of an aggression. The only point left to the discretion of the member states is the nature and the scale of this assistance. If NATO members should start discussing the right and wrong of the situation of their fellow-member victim of a Soviet aggression, whether this aggression was provoked or not, . . . the very foundations of the Alliance would be shaken and it would lose its meaning."²²

İnönü's subsequent visit to Washington on June 22–23 was helpful in restoring a measure of the badly shaken mutual trust between the two capitals. The joint communiqué by the president and the Turkish prime minister reaffirmed the validity of the London-Zurich Accords, the "cornerstone of the Turkish position." On June 24 Greek Premier Papandreou called on the president, but the meeting of minds this visit produced was more nominal than real: at a subsequent press conference Papandreou declared that the 1959 London-Zurich Accords were no longer valid.

Thus, although the contemplated Turkish invasion was prevented, the Cyprus problem remained unresolved. In a renewed attempt to find a solution, in July Johnson asked former Secretary of State Dean Acheson to proceed to Geneva to help mediate in the conflict. The veteran statesman—enjoying great prestige in Turkey and Greece since the Truman Doctrine days—advanced in August the "Acheson Plan," popularly dubbed a "double *enosis*." It called for (a) union of Cyprus with Greece; (b) cession of the Greek Dodecanese island of Castellorizon to Turkey; (c) resettlement and compensation

for Turkish Cypriots wishing to emigrate; (d) creation of two enclaves (cantons) on Cyprus for the Turkish Cypriots who wished to remain; and (e) establishment of a Turkish military base on Cyprus. Both Ankara and Athens as well as Makarios rejected the plan. Furthermore, Turkey experienced serious anti-American demonstrations.

In August the situation in Cyprus took a turn for the worse: President Makarios ordered intensified attacks on Turkish Cypriot villages and in retaliation the Turkish air force strafed a number of Greek villages on the island. In Washington a twenty-four-hour command post was established in the State Department in anticipation of a major confrontation between Ankara and Athens. At the same time Makarios called for military intervention by the Soviet Union.

Preoccupied with other priorities, Khrushchev refused to intervene. Instead, on August 12 he informed Makarios that "while he sympathized with the Cyprus government, a cease-fire would be an important contribution."²³ Rebuked by Moscow, Makarios accepted the cease-fire and so did Turkey. Torn for months by the escalating violence, the island returned to a measure of tranquility. Commenting on the avoidance of a major international explosion focused on Cyprus, two American journalists, Edward Weintal and Charles Bartlett, said in 1967: "Thus, on most counts, the 1964 U.S. venture into crisis diplomacy can be judged a success. It prevented the establishment of a Soviet satellite in the eastern Mediterranean. It staved off a Turkish invasion of Cyprus and, perhaps, a full-scale war between Greece and Turkey, two NATO allies. The U.S. managed to preserve its firm, if somewhat cooler, relations with both Greece and Turkey."²⁴

However, the tranquility proved imperfect and relatively short-lived. In April 1967 a military coup in Greece brought the downfall of the Papandreou government and the advent to power of General George Papadopoulos and his clique of colonels. The coup had almost immediate repercussions in Cyprus. The veteran guerrilla fighter, Colonel Grivas—who had returned to Cyprus in 1964—organized a force composed of 15,000 Greek Cypriots and 20,000 Greek regulars and in November 1967 launched an attack on Turkish posts in the Nicosia-Limassol region. Aroused by this revived Greek aggressiveness, Turkey demanded that Athens recall Grivas and withdraw its regular troops from Cyprus. These demands were backed by low overflights of Greek lines by Turkish military aircraft. Moreover, the Turkish navy began concentrating in the vicinity of Cyprus. This time the

situation differed from the preceding stages of the crisis in that it was Greece herself rather than Makarios that initiated the attack. In fact, considerable distrust developed between the Cyprus president and the junta in Athens. It stemmed from three causes: (a) the junta favored close links to the West while Makarios tilted toward neutralism and Moscow; (b) Makarios developed a vested interest in wielding power in independent Cyprus and did not cherish the prospect of relinquishing it in favor of *enosis*; (c) he was not anxious to subordinate himself to the military-type dictatorship in Greece. As a result, the Greek-Turkish tension was transposed from the Ankara-Cyprus plane to the level of direct relations between the Turkish and Greek governments.

Faced with Ankara's show of force, the Greek junta promptly complied with Turkish demands. Grivas was recalled to Greece by the end of November, and Greek troops withdrew from the villages they had initially occupied.

It was at this juncture that, concerned about NATO's cohesion, President Johnson sent another special emissary, Cyrus Vance, to the area on a mediating mission. In December his efforts produced an agreement between the interested parties, which called for evacuation from Cyprus of all non-Cypriot forces except for small token contingents authorized under the terms of the London-Zurich Accords and a cessation of hostilities between the Cypriot communal forces. This way a new chapter in the seemingly interminable crisis was concluded.

The success of mediation was more illusory than real. Although İnönü publicly expressed Turkey's gratitude to Vance, Turkish public opinion was less than satisfied. Its more radical segments felt that "NATO seemed to have snatched the prize from Turkey"²⁵ and gave vent to their frustration through anti-American student demonstrations.

Above all, the Turks could not forget Johnson's 1964 letter to İnönü. In their eyes the tone of the letter had humiliated their country while its substance seriously undermined their trust in America's determination to help them in case of Soviet aggression. Moreover, even though the Cyprus question receded into the background after 1967, the prevalent feeling in Ankara was that the conflict was patched up rather than definitely resolved. And indeed it was to be revived in a dramatic way in the mid-1970s during the Nixon and Ford presidencies. The encomiums heaped on America's successful crisis diplomacy

by Weintal and Bartlett appeared premature in the light of unfolding events.

THE ARAB-ISRAELI WAR OF 1967

In terms of America's standing and posture in the Middle East, Johnson's was an unhappy, virtually tragic, presidency. It marked a turning point in American-Israeli and American-Arab relations. Before 1948 the United States was the most popular of the Western countries in the Middle East; between 1948 and 1967 its glamour diminished but Eisenhower's stand during the Arab-Israeli Suez crisis convinced many Middle Eastern moderates that, if not actually lovable, the United States was at least a fair country to deal with; this view of U.S. fairness and impartiality still prevailed during Kennedy's presidency; but during Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency America's policy took a definite turn in the pro-Israeli direction. The June war of 1967 confirmed this impression, and from 1967 on the United States emerged as the most distrusted if not actually hated country in the Middle East.

As pointed out earlier, Lyndon Johnson had neither a good knowledge of the Middle East nor a deeply motivated set of personal convictions or sympathies toward the area. He was first and foremost a skillful politician whose foreign policy attitudes were primarily dictated by the needs of his and his party's advancement in domestic politics as he perceived them.

As early as 1952, as a Senate majority leader, he paid a visit to the residence of Abba Eban, then Israel's ambassador in Washington, and there he queried Eban in considerable detail about Israel's problems and requirements, in a matter-of-fact but friendly tone.²⁶ In his memoirs Johnson reaffirmed his friendly feelings by saying: "I have always had a deep feeling of sympathy for Israel and its people, gallantly building and defending a modern nation against great odds and against the tragic background of Jewish experience."²⁷

When Johnson succeeded to the presidency, one of his first foreign policy acts was to receive in Washington, in June 1964, the premier of Israel, Levi Eshkol. The visit was marked by considerable cordiality, and in due course Johnson and Eshkol established a degree of intimacy unprecedented in earlier relations between American presidents and Israel's premiers.²⁸

It was also during the first three years of Johnson's presidency that

the United States rather radically switched from a moderate supply of defensive weapons to highly sophisticated offensive arms for Israel's military forces.²⁹ Thus in 1966 American military aid to Israel rose sevenfold from \$12.9 million in 1965 to \$90 million, more than doubling the cumulative amount for all preceding years since 1948 (\$40.3 million).³⁰

The offensive arms included A-1 Skyhawk attack aircraft, the F-4 Phantom jet fighters and the Patton M-48 tanks, highly lethal weapons at that time, superior to anything the Soviets could deliver to their clients.³¹

In the early and mid-1960s a controversy developed between Israel and its Arab neighbors over the Israeli plan to divert a portion of the Jordan River waters to its own use. To prevent it Israel's northeastern neighbors arranged for diversion of the river's waters from its sources (at Hasbani and Wazzani) in Lebanon's territory to that of Syria and the Kingdom of Jordan. When work on this Arab diversion began, Israeli artillery directed its fire at the workers and compelled the project to be abandoned. Except for a statement from a subcabinet member of the U.S. government that the situation was "explosive" and the United States was opposed to "the use of force on the water issue," no serious effort was made by the Johnson administration to stop Israel from using arms in this case.

But the truly drastic turn in American policy came during the June six-day Arab-Israeli war of 1967. That war was a result of two causes: the long-standing Arab-Israeli hostility and the inter-Arab feud generally known as the Arab Cold War. The Arab Cold War had pitted the radical Arab regimes led by Egypt's Nasser against such Arab moderates as Saudi Arabia or Jordan. In this context Nasser had been the aggressive and threatening party, contrasting his "progressive nationalism" with the monarchies' "reactionary palaces." To defend themselves the moderate monarchies pointed in their counterpropaganda to Nasser's hypocrisy and cowardice in allowing the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to be stationed on Egyptian soil since 1957 while Israel adamantly refused to permit UNEF to be deployed on Israeli territory. Stung by these accusations and largely to save face, Nasser demanded on May 16, 1967, that the UN force withdraw from Egyptian-Israeli borders. On May 17, instead of leaving that particular stretch of UNEF-guarded territory, UN Secretary General U Thant ordered the entire UN force, even that deployed along the coast of the Gulf of Aqaba in the Sinai Peninsula, to be withdrawn. But once this

force was withdrawn from the southern stronghold of Sharm el-Sheikh (which controlled the Strait of Tiran at the junction of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea), Nasser took a risky plunge and proclaimed, on May 22, the blockade of the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping. Actually, Nasser did not physically blockade the Strait of Tiran and, moreover, had no intention of waging war against Israel, as the Israeli statesmen themselves subsequently acknowledged.³²

In making these moves Nasser miscalculated, because Israel took the denial by Egypt³³ of its right to navigate through the Strait of Tiran as a *casus belli*, that is, as an aggressive act that justified armed response. (Actually, Nasser was legally entitled to agree or disagree to the stationing of UN troops on Egypt's territory, exactly as Israel's Premier Ben-Gurion was entitled to refuse the UN troops' presence on the Israeli side of the border in 1957.) Thus Nasser's legal but politically risky move exposed Egypt to the danger of war.

Israel's first response was to insist on the right of international navigation through the Strait of Tiran. Israel's military leaders saw Nasser's move as an excellent opportunity to launch a preemptive strike against Egypt, and the Israeli government ordered a general mobilization. At this point some difference developed between Israel's military chiefs and its civilian government as to the right course of action. The military high command (especially General Yitzhak Rabin, chief of staff, and General Moshe Dayan, minister of defense) urged an early attack on Egypt, arguing that (a) Israel's economy, due to mobilization of its modest manpower, could not stand for long the absence of its men and women from the productive process and (b) the greater the delay in starting the war the more time was given to Egypt and such of its allies as Syria and Jordan (both voluntarily cooperating with Cairo) to prepare their troops and fortifications for war.³⁴

Opposing this view was Premier Eshkol, Foreign Minister Abba Eban, and the majority of Israel's cabinet. They argued that it was important for Israel not to be diplomatically isolated and that it was essential to gain the goodwill or actual cooperation of the United States and the main West European countries. Only when that was assured could Israel safely and profitably launch an attack. With this in view, Israel's cabinet dispatched Foreign Minister Eban to Paris, London, and Washington to sound out Western allies. In Paris he met a reluctant President Charles de Gaulle, whose country had until then been Israel's main supplier of arms. De Gaulle definitely tried to dissuade Israel from attacking the Arabs, arguing that under his leader-

ship France's policy had changed from an exclusive Paris-Tel Aviv relationship into a more balanced approach in which cooperation with the Arab world would be sought. Moreover, de Gaulle did not consider the blocking of the Strait of Tiran (or the threat of it) as sufficient cause for attack and counseled patience and moderation.³⁵ Having encountered a similarly cautious approach in London under Premier Harold Wilson, Eban arrived in Washington on May 24 and on May 26 was taken to the White House to see President Johnson.

By the time Eban reached Washington, he was given explicit instructions from Tel Aviv that, instead of insisting on the freedom of navigation in the Strait of Tiran, he should emphatically stress that Nasser and his fellow Arabs were bent on a war for Israel's annihilation and to probe U.S. intentions in this context.³⁶

It is at this point that we run into President Johnson's attitudes and policies. These policies could be characterized as following a dual line: On the one hand, the U.S. government—through its president and its secretaries of state and defense—advised caution and restraint. On the other, President Johnson took secret decisions clearly favoring Israel and implicitly encouraging it to resort to military action. While acknowledging his commitment to keep the Strait of Tiran open (a pledge given by President Eisenhower in March 1957),³⁷ he proposed to organize an international naval force to navigate through the Strait of Tiran and thus challenge Egypt's announced blockade. Moreover, the U.S. Department of Defense (and other responsible agencies) doubted Israel's assertion that Nasser was ready for war and that his attack was imminent.³⁸ Secretary of State Dean Rusk echoed this doubt by saying that no Arab attack on Israel was expected. Moreover, Rusk said, the president was not in a position to make a commitment to Israel's security without prior congressional approval, and if Israel were to initiate military action, the United States would find it very difficult to extend to it assistance, even limited to the political sphere.³⁹ As for the president, he stressed that Israel should not be the first to fire a shot. "Israel," said Johnson, "will not be alone unless it decides to go alone."⁴⁰ "Israel," he added, "must not be the first to act. I need two or three weeks to implement our political plans for resolving the problem."⁴¹ This was followed by Johnson's strongly worded message to Premier Eshkol, warning Israel against going to war.

These admonitions of caution and restraint brought no results. Israel's military-territorial school of thought prevailed, and on June 4 Israel's cabinet reached a decision to start the war. On June 5 Israeli

armed forces launched a sudden attack on Egypt and, later, on such allies of Egypt as Jordan and—in due time—Syria. The war was fought on land, the sea, and in the air. In addition to the main fronts the air hostilities brought a single and ill-fated Iraqi penetration of the Israeli air space and the subsequent destruction by Israel of an Iraqi squadron over the territory of Iraq. In six days the war resulted in almost total destruction of the Arab air forces and in Israel's overwhelming victory. Israel not only occupied the Egyptian-administered Gaza Strip but also overran the entire Sinai Peninsula, capturing Sharm el-Sheikh and bringing its forces to the banks of the Suez Canal. Moreover, Israel captured from Jordan the entire West Bank, including the Arab part of Jerusalem. On June 9, in spite of the UN-ordered (and accepted) cease-fire, Israel attacked Syria and, after heavy fighting, captured the Golan Heights.

It was just prior to and during these war operations that the dualism of American policy became particularly evident. First, although officially trying to dissuade Israel from waging a preventive war, in reality neither President Johnson nor his cabinet officers showed a determined resistance to Israeli war intentions,⁴² even though Israel's "first shot" was fully established.⁴³

Second, the position taken by the American delegate in the United Nations, Ambassador Arthur Goldberg, was at least ambivalent and could be seen as pro-Israeli. As usual, the UN Security Council tried to arrange for a rapid cease-fire and ordered the forces of the belligerents to return to their original positions. While favoring a cease-fire, the U.S. delegate definitely opposed a proposed UN order for the return of forces to their initial lines, thereby virtually siding with Israel which was anxious to retain its freshly conquered territories. Similarly, if forces were to be returned, the U.S. delegate favored the withdrawal of *all* forces from Sinai,⁴⁴ a solution that would have been patently unfair to Egypt inasmuch as Sinai was an Egyptian sovereign territory in which Egypt was fully entitled to keep its forces.

Third, the United States never uttered a word of condemnation or disapproval of Israeli war action.⁴⁵ On the contrary, President Johnson called Nasser's action in removing the UNEF from the Egyptian-Israeli borderland "illegal."⁴⁶ Actually, it was probably politically foolish but, as noted earlier, not illegal. Moreover, after the war was over President Johnson echoed Ambassador Goldberg's cease-fire posture by saying that the new peace settlement should not signify a return to the "fragile truce" and "hasty arrangements of 1957" because these ar-

rangements were not conducive to peace.⁴⁷ In his speech of June 19 Johnson said that peace could not be obtained by going back to the "fragile and often violated" armistice.⁴⁸

The most important feature, however, of Johnson's dualism was America's military behavior just before and during the actual war operations. On May 23 (about twelve days before the outbreak of the war) the president gave a secret authorization to ship by air to Israel a variety of weapons systems, military equipment, and spare parts for it. These items were sent just on the eve of the June 5 invasion by Israeli forces. It was done at the time when the president had made a public declaration of an embargo on all arms destined for the Middle East.⁴⁹

The second example of President Johnson's less than impartial behavior was provided by his reaction to Israel's attack in East Mediterranean waters on the American intelligence-gathering ship, the *USS Liberty*. The *Liberty* had been ordered from its earlier mission in West African waters to proceed, via Rota in Spain, to the vicinity of Gaza and El-Arish to collect information about the war operations. The ship was equipped with clearly visible signal-collecting instruments and antennae, carried U.S. Navy identification marks, and prominently displayed a large American flag. On June 8 it came closer to Egyptian (Gaza Strip and Sinai) shores but still stayed in international waters. Between 9 and 10 A.M. it was subject to the first reconnaissance of an Israeli warplane, to be followed from 10 A.M. on by other reconnaissance missions. These included a slow "flying boxcar," the *Noratl*s, which came so close to the *Liberty* that its Israeli pilots were clearly seen by the ship's crew. This gave the crew a reassurance that its U.S. Navy markings and the newly hoisted fresh and large American flag were well seen by Israeli pilots. Thus, despite official Israeli claims to the contrary, Israel's high command knew well that it was an American ship. At 4:05 P.M. the first Israeli attack, from the air, was launched by French-built *Mystère* jets against the *Liberty*, to be followed by a series of other attacks, the most damaging carried out by the Israeli torpedo boats. Moreover, when life rafts were lowered to save sailors from a badly damaged ship, these too were fired upon by the Israelis in an obvious attempt to leave no one alive (and thus have no surviving witnesses).⁵⁰ As a result, 34 members of *Liberty's* crew were killed and 171 wounded, some having lost their eyesight.

Although frantic calls for help reached the U.S. aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean, no help came to the rescue, and a group of U.S. Navy planes sent from the carrier *America* was ordered back before

ever reaching the *Liberty*, apparently on Washington's orders.⁵¹ Eventually, the gravely damaged *Liberty* limped back to a U.S. naval base in Valetta, Malta, while several of her wounded personnel were transferred to a U.S. hospital in Naples. A naval court of inquiry was formed. *Liberty's* personnel received firm orders not to say anything to anybody about the attack, and the naval inquiry was conducted in such a way as to earn it the name of "coverup."⁵²

Israel acknowledged the attack, but it claimed that it was an error. In a communication to Israel's ambassador in Washington, Secretary Rusk on June 10 stated, *inter alia*: "At the time of the attack, the U.S.S. *Liberty* was flying the American flag and its identification was clearly indicated in large white letters and numerals on its hull. . . . Experience demonstrates that both the flag and the identification number of the vessel were readily visible from the air. . . . Accordingly, there is every reason to believe that the U.S.S. *Liberty* was identified, or at least her nationality determined, by Israeli aircraft approximately one hour before the attack. . . . The subsequent attack by Israeli torpedo boats, substantially after the vessel was or should have been identified by Israeli military forces, manifests the same reckless disregard for human life."⁵³

It was significant that, in contrast to his own secretary of state, President Johnson fully accepted the Israeli version of the tragic incident. "We learned," he wrote, "that the ship had been attacked *in error* by Israeli gunboats and planes. Ten men of the *Liberty* crew were killed and a hundred were wounded. This heartbreaking episode grieved the Israelis deeply, as it did us."⁵⁴

Actually, not only did the president accept the Israeli explanation of "error," but he minimized the whole affair by dealing with it in the one short paragraph quoted above, and he distorted the actual number of dead, reducing it from 34 to 10 when even the Israelis admitted a number as high as 32⁵⁵ and 37.⁵⁶ The number of wounded was reduced by Johnson from the actual 171 to a round figure of 100.

It seems that President Johnson was more interested in avoiding a possible confrontation with the Soviet Union, whose long-standing support for Egypt and Syria was well known, than in restraining Israel. On June 5 the "hot line" linking directly the White House with the Kremlin was activated. The president talked several times to Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin. Moreover, on the occasion of Kosygin's visit to the United Nations in New York, following the Arab-Israeli war, Johnson invited him for a "summit" meeting. The resulting con-

ference between these two leaders in Glassboro, New Jersey, held from June 22 to 25, achieved at least partly its purpose by having the two heads of government pledge cooperation in trying to reach a peaceful settlement. It did not bring full unanimity: while the Soviet leader was anxious to see a cease-fire with Israeli return to the 1956 armistice lines, Johnson, as noted earlier, had already rejected this solution in favor of the Israeli view that cease-fire without removal of troops should prevail.

It may appear puzzling as to why Israel, in need of American assistance and cooperation, decided to attack and destroy the *Liberty*. The explanation seems to be found in *Liberty's* nature and task. It was an intelligence ship whose mission was to intercept radio messages exchanged by the Israelis and their adversaries in the war zone. Israel clearly did not want the U.S. government to know too much about its war operations and orders. Especially secret were Israeli plans and dispositions for attacking Syria, initially planned for June 8 but postponed for twenty-four hours. It should be pointed out that the attack on the *Liberty* occurred on June 8, whereas on June 9 at 3 A.M. Syria announced its acceptance of the cease-fire. Despite this, at 7 A.M., that is, four hours later, Israel's minister of defense, Moshe Dayan, "gave the order to go into action against Syria."⁵⁷ The U.S. government's timely knowledge of this decision, and of preparatory moves toward it, might have frustrated Israeli designs for the conquest of Syria's Golan Heights, hence a plausible thesis that Israel deliberately decided to incapacitate the signals-collecting American ship and leave no one alive to tell the story of the attack.⁵⁸

The results of the war became a subject of conflicting views and debates. In the first place, Nasser, Israel's implacable enemy and often hostile to the United States, was defeated—a situation hailed as positive by some in Washington. Furthermore, an opinion, shared by Johnson, was expressed in the National Security Council that the Soviet Union emerged as a loser. "There was a belief that the Russians too had suffered a loss in prestige."⁵⁹ To the extent to which Russia was responsible for arming Egypt and Syria, this may be true, inasmuch as such arms as Israel used during the war (mostly French and American) proved superior to those used by the Arabs. But to equalize the Arabs' military defeat with Soviet political defeat in the area might be unwise. Actually, what happened politically was that six Arab states—Egypt (U.A.R.), Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Algeria, and Sudan—broke

diplomatic relations with the United States. Although this rupture was based on a false charge by Cairo that U.S. carrier-based planes had participated in attacks on Egypt, basically it reflected Arab conviction that the United States was not neutral in the conflict and that it sided with Israel, which was largely true. In this connection it may be worth mentioning that Johnson disagreed with the State Department's description of the American position as "neutral in thought, word, and deed." "We were certainly not belligerents," said Johnson, "but our successive guarantees since 1950 to the independence and integrity of all the states in the area made 'neutral' a wrong word."⁶⁰ The Israelis themselves acknowledged that the United States was "giving us support such as we have never known before."⁶¹ From the Israeli point of view the Middle East was described as "one of the better chapters in Lyndon Johnson's presidency."⁶² Speaking of the United States during the conflict of 1967, Eban said: "We had involved them very deeply" and contrasted it with the Suez crisis of 1956 "when the United States refused to speak to us."⁶³

In the political sphere (as contrasted with the military) neither Nasser nor the Soviet Union suffered as a result of the war. Nasser, who offered to resign, was overwhelmingly supported by the people of Egypt for the continuation of his leadership, while the world witnessed a serious escalation of Soviet influence in the Arab world. Not only did Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Algeria become increasingly dependent on Soviet economic and military aid, but a newly created Arab sovereign state, South Yemen (formerly British Aden Colony and Protectorate) emerged as a Marxist entity and a virtual Soviet satellite in the strategic southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula. This in turn was bound to have its effects on the alignments in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Ethiopia.

More broadly, the June war hastened the process of anti-American radicalization in the Middle East. That process was expressed by the growth of both leftist and religious-fundamentalist movements and by their increased resort to terrorism as a weapon in their anti-American struggle. It transcended, in fact, the boundaries of the Arab area, because it spread to countries such as Iran and Pakistan and, more broadly, to the Third World, whose delegates in the United Nations began adopting increasingly critical posture toward America.

In the Arab East the June war produced a second massive exodus of the Palestinians, this time from the Israel-occupied West Bank, and

added impetus to the development of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), whose leader, Yasir Arafat, became widely recognized as spokesman for the Palestinian quest for self-determination and, as such, was invited to address the UN General Assembly in 1974.

The United States' pro-Israel stand was further accentuated during the debate in the UN when the General Assembly on July 4, 1967, voted overwhelmingly to condemn Israel for its administrative unification (in practice, annexation) of the freshly captured Arab Jerusalem with the Israeli part of the city. Claiming that the holy city should never be divided again, the U.S. delegation ignored the earlier American commitment to the internationalization of Jerusalem and instead abstained from the vote.

Above all, we should bear in mind that there was the important personal imprint of Lyndon Johnson on the policy adopted in the 1967 conflict. This was attested by the U.S. delegate to the United Nations, Ambassador Goldberg, in a conversation with Abba Eban: "He urged me," said Eban, "to draw sharp distinction between what the President had said personally and what I had heard from other sources. The American choices were now so grave that *only the presidential commitments mattered*."⁶⁴

Although President Johnson's policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict was clearly tilted in the direction of Israel, his actions after the war aimed at creation of an image of balance and impartiality. Significant in this respect was his speech to the B'nai B'rith organization delivered on June 19, 1967. In it the president stressed five principles that should govern peace in the Middle East:

1. Every nation in the area has the right to live
2. Justice for the refugees
3. Free maritime passage through international waterways
4. Curbs on the arms race
5. Respect for political independence and territorial integrity of all the states in the area.⁶⁵

It was characteristic of this ostensibly respectable program that, in point 2, the president spoke of the "refugees." He thus failed to acknowledge that the Palestinian problem was one of national identity and national aspiration for self-determination, thus misreading a powerful historical quest for reassertion in an important segment of the Arab world.

Similarly, on November 22, 1967, the United States acceded to the British motion, subsequently known as UN Security Council Resolu-

tion 242, which proclaimed the following principles of peace for the Arab-Israeli conflict:

1. Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict
2. Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries
3. Freedom of navigation through international waters
4. Just settlement of the refugee problem
5. Territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones.⁶⁶

In concluding this part of our study, one may be tempted to inquire about Johnson's motivation in pursuing a policy that was geared to satisfying immediate Israeli interests and ultimately hostile to the Arabs. Four explanations may be tentatively advanced. First, as a homegrown politician, Johnson was primarily motivated by domestic political calculations: pro-Israeli votes and money and his desire to neutralize the protests of many friends of Israel against his Vietnam policy. Second, he lent support to that school of thought among American policy-makers who attached more importance to Israel's effective military performance than to the Soviet advances in the area as a result of Arab alienation and radicalization; hence it was during his presidency that the concept of Israel as a strategic asset for America found its inception.

Third, in spite of President Kennedy's policy to cultivate Arab nationalism, Johnson was annoyed by Nasser's irritating antics and did not mind seeing Nasser punished. Fourth, as every president, Johnson was influenced by his close advisers. These included a number of people, in the White House and other agencies of the executive branch, who were known for their pro-Israeli stand, such as Walt and Eugene Rostow, Harry McPherson, Arthur Goldberg, and others.

5. The Nixon Presidency

Lyndon Johnson left a burdensome legacy to Richard Nixon: the war in Vietnam, the war of attrition between Israel and Egypt along the Suez front, ruptured diplomatic relations with six Arab states, increased Soviet presence in many areas of the world, strained relations with America's NATO allies, and a military vacuum in the Persian Gulf. In this list of unfinished business and challenging problems the Middle East constituted a substantial part. Nixon came to power determined to make a fresh start in foreign policy, with the broad objectives of putting an end to America's involvement in Vietnam, of achieving peace in the Middle East, and restraining the Soviets from further penetration of the strategic regions around the globe.

THE NIXON DOCTRINE

The first foreign policy item on Nixon's agenda was to disentangle the United States from its seemingly hopeless involvement in Vietnam. The method chosen was the secret negotiations conducted by Nixon's national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, and representatives of North Vietnam in Paris. Parallel to these was the reduction and, in due time, complete withdrawal of American forces in Vietnam. To justify this new military policy of restraint and withdrawal, the president pronounced on July 25, 1969, what has become known as the Nixon Doctrine. Delivered during his tour of Asia on the island of Guam, Nixon's speech contained this significant statement:

I believe that the time has come when the United States, in our relations with all of our Asian friends, [should] be quite emphatic on two points: One, that we will keep our treaty commitments, for example, with Thailand under SEATO; but two, that as far as the problems of internal security are concerned, as far as the

problems of military defense, except for the threat of a major power involving nuclear weapons, that the United States is going to encourage and has the right to expect that this problem will be increasingly handled by, and the responsibility for it taken by, the Asian nations themselves.¹

Nixon further elaborated his doctrine in his Foreign Policy Report of February 18, 1970: he stated that (a) "the United States will keep its treaty commitments"; (b) the United States will "provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us, or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security and the security of the region as a whole"; (c) "[i]n cases involving other types of aggression we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested and as appropriate. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense."²

Although the doctrine had Vietnam as its immediate objective, it could be applied to other regions as well. Foremost among them was, in the early 1970s, the Persian Gulf, in which Britain was about to relinquish, as of the end of 1971, its imperial status and withdraw its military forces. The Persian Gulf was and is one of the most strategic regions in the Middle East and the world at large. Countries around it as well as its waters contain the largest reserves of oil in the world, and they traditionally have provided Western Europe and Japan with the bulk of their oil supplies. Equally traditionally, defense of the Gulf had been assumed since the middle of the nineteenth century by Great Britain because the Gulf and its adjacent seas and shores were regarded as an alternate imperial lifeline (the other being the Suez Canal route) linking Britain to India.³ The Gulf region has had an unequal distribution of power. Bordered by three larger countries, Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, the Gulf has had among its riparian states also such smaller countries as Kuwait, Bahrein, Qatar, the Trucial Coast sheikhdoms (later to be known as the United Arab Emirates or UAE) and the Sultanate of Oman. Whether joined together in an alliance or not, these smaller states were too weak to be able to defend themselves against a determined aggressive power.

Since Britain officially announced in 1968 its intention to withdraw and grant independence to the Arab mini-states in the Gulf, a lively debate arose about the power vacuum thus likely to ensue and its consequences.⁴ The danger was that the expected vacuum might

tempt Russia to infiltrate the region and either conquer some smaller states or establish an alliance with them and thus secure bases from which it could threaten such pro-Western and oil-bearing countries as Iran and Saudi Arabia. The West clearly could not remain indifferent to such possibilities. But the question posed itself as to who was capable and willing to replace Britain as the guardian of the Gulf. Although not completely dependent on the Gulf's oil, the United States had a direct and—on account of its allies—an indirect interest in seeing that the Gulf would not succumb to hostile domination. However, in view of its embroilment in Vietnam, and the clamor at home to disentangle itself from it, it was highly unlikely, at least in the early 1970s, that Washington would undertake new military commitments in another region. And here it was that the Nixon Doctrine could be justifiably applied. There was a local country that had an understandable interest and was eager to assume the Gulf defense and possibly hegemony: it was Iran which—bordered by the Soviets in the north, radical, Soviet-tilting Iraq in the west, and neutralist Afghanistan in the east—felt the need of a frontier free of danger in the south and a friendly political stability in the Gulf.

Thus Iran could fulfill the role that the Nixon Doctrine envisaged for regional powers. It had ample manpower (in contrast to friendly but underpopulated Saudi Arabia), and its royal government had virtually identical views with the United States regarding the Soviet danger and the need to contain it. "Iran, under the Shah," wrote Kissinger, "was one of America's best, most important, and most loyal friends in the world."⁵ What was needed was the decision to provide Iran with adequate arms to enable it to perform its guardian tasks in the Gulf and, generally, to strengthen its military position. The shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, pressed the U.S. government to provide him with F-14 and F-15 aircraft and associated equipment. American response was slow in coming because of the objections voiced by the Defense and State Departments. The Defense Department was reluctant to provide technologically superior weapons that ran the danger of falling into hostile hands, and the State Department feared that such deliveries might become "too provocative" to Russia.

The "Gordian knot" was eventually cut by Nixon himself who, on the occasion of his visit to Teheran (on his way back from Moscow) in May 1972, not only agreed to supply the requested F-14s and F-15s but "added a proviso that in the future Iranian requests should not be second-guessed."⁶ Moreover, Nixon agreed to support the shah in aid-

ing the Kurds, at that time engaged in an uprising to obtain autonomy in Iraq. This was a doubly Machiavellian move: support for the Kurds would weaken the Soviet-tilting Iraq and prevent it not only from extending its influence in the Gulf but also, by binding its forces in the Kurdish areas, reduce its military capacity for a possible confrontation with Israel. As Kissinger acknowledged in his memoirs, "The benefit of Nixon's Kurdish decision was apparent in just over a year: only one Iraqi division was available to participate in the October 1973 Middle East war."⁷ From that time on Iran became a major recipient of American arms and, in practical terms, became America's surrogate as guardian of peace and stability in the Gulf. Iran's hegemonic role was not accepted with unreserved happiness by the Arab states bordering on the Gulf. However, realistically, they had silently to acknowledge its benefits: their sovereignty was preserved, the attempted radicalization of their regimes was halted, and Iran's expeditionary force sent to Oman in the mid-1970s saved that strategically located country from invasion and takeover by the Marxist South Yemen-supported rebels.

THE SCRANTON MISSION AND THE ROGERS PLAN

Nixon's policy toward the Arab world and Israel escapes an easy definition or description largely because it was replete with contradictions. The contradictions in turn were dictated by Nixon's oscillation between the national interest and domestic political considerations. Moreover, his perception of the national interest defied a simple, straightforward formulation.

Nixon's original intention was to change America's position toward the Arab-Israeli relations as inherited from Lyndon Johnson. This was a position of marked partiality toward Israel and of considerable aggravation in U.S.-Arab relations as exemplified by the rupture of diplomatic relations between six Arab countries and the United States. Moreover, upon his election to the presidency, Nixon found no peace in the Middle East, but—as an aftermath of the 1967 June war—a mere truce so often punctuated by violence as to deserve the name of "the war of attrition," particularly along the Suez Canal line separating the Israeli from the Egyptian forces.

To initiate an improvement in the situation even before his inauguration Nixon dispatched to the Middle East former governor of Pennsylvania William Scranton on a fact-finding mission. This tour

took Scranton as far east as Iran. On his trip he talked to the leaders of six countries (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel). Having crossed on December 13, 1968, through the Allenby Bridge from Jordan into the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Scranton was met by a group of Israeli and foreign newspapermen to whom he declared: "America would do well to have a more evenhanded policy. . . . We are interested, very interested, in Israel and its security, and we should be. But it is important to point out in the Middle East and to people around the world that we are interested in other countries in the area and have friends among them."⁸

Questioned what he meant by "more evenhanded," Scranton replied: "I think it is important for the United States to take into consideration the feelings of all persons and all countries in the Middle East and not necessarily espouse one nation over some other."⁹ In response to other questions the president-elect's special emissary stated that he felt "encouraged" following his visit in Cairo and that he found the Jordanian leaders "reasonable in their thinking" and desirous of "a just settlement."¹⁰

Although Scranton enjoyed Nixon's confidence, his statement elicited a somewhat critical comment from Ronald Ziegler, the president-elect's press aide. "These are Scranton remarks," he said, "not Nixon remarks."¹¹ Despite this implicit disavowal, Scranton spent two hours privately with Nixon upon his return to Washington, after which he stated: "We are very interested in Israel. But we are also interested in other nations there. . . . We must mend our fences."¹²

As could be expected, Scranton's statement engendered much criticism and hostility in Israel and among friends of Israel in the United States. Nixon must have rather soon come to the conclusion that any reference to "evenhandedness" was politically unprofitable if not actually dangerous. For this reason he avoided using this expression in his public pronouncements, and, in spite of the uproar it had provoked, he neither mentioned the Scranton mission nor made any reference to the fate of the Palestinian Arabs in his fairly detailed memoirs.¹³

In designing his Middle East policy Nixon seemed obsessed with the danger of a possible Soviet-American confrontation. This stemmed from his belief that the United States had an "absolute commitment" to save Israel from "being driven into the sea"¹⁴ and from his concern lest Soviet commitment to Arab victories and American commitment to Israeli victories might draw both superpowers into a confrontation

"even against our wills—and almost certainly against our national interests."¹⁵

Nowhere in his writings or public statements did Nixon subject the idea of a likely confrontation with Russia on account of the Arab-Israeli conflict to careful scrutiny or analysis. He seemed to accept as an axiom that confrontation with the USSR was virtually inevitable in case of an Arab-Israeli war.¹⁶ Moreover, Nixon had a tendency to oversimplify, if not actually to distort, the real origin of the Arab-Israeli feud by accepting the thesis that "the Soviets are the main cause of Middle East tensions."¹⁷ In reality the Arab-Israeli hostility could easily be traced to the establishment of Israel, the fact that a large mass of Palestinian Arabs had been driven from their homes and dispossessed, the preventive wars Israel had fought with attendant territorial conquests, and the Arab hostile reaction to these happenings. The Soviets were exploiting this mutual hostility for their own benefit and, by outwardly supporting Arab nationalism, were making serious psychological and political inroads in the area. But, contrary to Nixon's thesis, they were not the root cause. Actually, Nixon's view reflected his uncritical acceptance of Israel's political line. Its leaders had a vital interest in inducing Nixon, a man known for his opposition to Communism, to espouse the view that Israel's troubles with its Arab neighbors were primarily due to Soviet intrigue. This way, Israel could count on Nixon's support with greater certainty. In fact, the theme of Soviet mischief as the real cause of the protracted conflict between Israel and the Arabs had been reappearing in various conversations that Israeli leaders had with the president.¹⁸

However, it was not certain whether this view of the Soviets as the root cause of Middle East troubles represented his true feelings or merely a tactical turn of phrase to please his Israeli visitors. Thus, five years after publishing his *Memoirs*, he acknowledged that "[a]lthough the Soviet Union is the source of many of the conflicts in the Third World and profits from most of them, it is not the only cause. If the Soviet Union did not exist there would still be regional conflicts and civil wars. The Palestinian people would still fight for a homeland, Iran and Iraq would still be at war."¹⁹

Actually, Nixon's feelings about America's relations with Israel and the Arabs were not noted for their consistency. On the one hand he realized the strategic importance of the Arab world to the United States and the need to contain Soviet thrusts into it. "It was clearly in America's interest," he wrote, "to halt the Soviet domination of the

Arab Mideast. To do so would require broadening American relations with the Arab countries."²⁰ On the other hand he favored not only Israel's survival but also Israel's military superiority over its Arab neighbors. "Mrs. Meir, Rabin et al. must trust Richard Nixon completely," he asserted. "He does not want to see Israel go down the drain and makes absolute commitment that he will see to it that Israel always has 'an edge.'"²¹ He partly justified this conviction by his opinion that Israel "is the only state in the Mideast which is pro-freedom and an effective opponent to Soviet expansion."²² At the same time Nixon was disturbed by two considerations: one was that after its victorious war of June 1967 Israel was displaying an attitude of "total intransigence on negotiating any peace agreement that would involve return of any of the territories they had occupied. "Their victory," according to Nixon, "had been too great."²³ The other, he felt, was "the unyielding and shortsighted pro-Israeli attitude prevalent in large and influential segments of the American Jewish community, Congress, the media, and in intellectual and cultural circles."²⁴ He deplored this attitude and particularly the fact that not being pro-Israeli was equated by those circles with being anti-Israeli or even anti-Semitic.²⁵ Domestic politics in America were of constant concern to Nixon. He was aware that the Jewish constituency in New York, Pennsylvania, California, and possibly Illinois had voted "95 percent against him"²⁶ and he was determined to "carry" it with him, thus making it somewhat unclear whether national interests or domestic political considerations were the prime motivation behind his Middle East policy.

In organizing the foreign policy apparatus in the early days of his presidency, Nixon assigned the Middle East "exclusively" to Secretary of State William Rogers and Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph Sisco. He did it partly because he thought that Kissinger's "Jewish background would put him at a disadvantage during the delicate initial negotiations for the reopening of diplomatic relations with the Arab states."²⁷

Thus entrusted with the conduct of Middle East policy, Secretary Rogers rather early, in the first year of Nixon's presidency, came forth with a comprehensive proposal to achieve an Arab-Israeli peace, known as the Rogers Plan. The plan, announced on December 9, 1969, broadly followed United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (November 1967) and upheld the principle that Israel should return the occupied Arab territories in exchange for Arab pledges to end the state of war and respect Israel's territorial integrity. "Our policy," said Rog-

ers, "is and will continue to be a balanced one." (This was another way to confirm Scranton's "evenhanded" approach as the guiding idea.) "Therefore," he went on, "our policy is to encourage the Arabs to accept a permanent peace based on a binding agreement and to urge the Israelis to withdraw from occupied territory when their territorial integrity is assured as envisaged by the Security Council resolution." "Any changes in the pre-existing lines [boundaries]," he added, "should not reflect the weight of conquest and should be confined to insubstantial alterations required for mutual security. We do not support expansionism. We believe troops must be withdrawn as the resolution provides." Then he addressed himself to two specific questions—Arab refugees and Jerusalem. He called for a just and humane solution of the refugee problem and a Jordanian-Israeli agreement on the status of Jerusalem. "We cannot accept," he stated, "unilateral actions by any party to decide the final status of the city . . . we believe Jerusalem should be a unified city. . . . And there should be roles for both Israel and Jordan in the civic, economic and religious life of the city." In the concluding part of his statement Rogers said that "Whenever and wherever Arab states which have broken off diplomatic relations with the United States are prepared to restore them, we shall respond in the same spirit."²⁸ Because of its central provision that occupied territories should be returned to the Arabs in exchange for peace, the Rogers Plan was met with hostility by Israel. The next day the Israeli cabinet rejected all outside attempts to determine boundaries while Prime Minister Golda Meir expressed her bitter disappointment and called the situation "calamitous" and "a scandal."²⁹ Perhaps the plan might have been accepted had the United States chosen to exert pressure on Israel, but that was far from Nixon's intentions. It is at this point that the duality of Nixon's policy became evident. Although, as noted earlier, he had entrusted Secretary Rogers with the conduct of diplomacy toward Israel and the Arabs, in reality he followed Kissinger's rather than Rogers's advice on the matter. Like Israel, Kissinger was opposed to the Rogers Plan. He argued that the plan encouraged extremism among the Arabs and offended the Israelis while earning the scorn of the Soviets. Thus although Nixon instructed Rogers to propose the plan, he did nothing to insist on its being carried out. In fact, privately, through Leonard Garment, his White House adviser on Jewish affairs, he informed both Golda Meir and the Jewish community leaders in the United States of his doubts about the State Department's policy and implicitly assured them that State Department proposals he

was authorizing would not be enforced.³⁰ He treated the Rogers Plan not as a genuine peace proposal but rather as a tactical stratagem the purpose of which was to induce the Arabs to accept some sort of unspecified compromise. "I knew," he said in his memoirs, "that the Rogers Plan could never be implemented, but I believed that it was important to let the Arab world know that the United States did not automatically dismiss its case regarding the occupied territories or rule out a compromise settlement of the conflicting claims. With the Rogers Plan on the record, I thought it would be easier for the Arab leaders to propose reopening relations with the United States without coming under attack from the hawks and pro-Soviet elements in their own countries."³¹

Acceptance by Nixon of Kissinger's advice and his virtual betrayal of Rogers provided further evidence of his less than candid behavior in this foreign policy sector. In fact, his very selection of Kissinger as his national security adviser testified to the largely domestic political motivation of this choice. Nixon acknowledged in his memoirs his awareness that Kissinger, as aide to his rival for presidential nomination, Governor Nelson Rockefeller, had made "disparaging remarks" about Nixon's competence in foreign affairs. But he was not too thin-skinned about such taunts. He was ready to tolerate them if restraint would work to his political advantage. Hence, largely owing to Kissinger's "influence" (presumably with the pro-Israeli community in the United States),³² Nixon not only appointed him as his foreign policy assistant in the White House but actually encouraged him to overshadow and overrule Secretary Rogers on key issues.

THE JORDAN CRISIS OF 1970

By allowing the Rogers Plan to be stillborn Nixon left the Arab-Israeli conflict unresolved and at least three major policy questions unanswered. These were (1) to what extent should the United States aid Israel with arms and economic assistance to give it, as he had said, "an edge" over the Arabs; (2) what posture should America adopt in case of a crisis erupting between the radical and the conservative Arab camps near Israel's borders; and (3) what should be the American behavior if a new Arab-Israeli war were to break out?

Partly because of the earlier-noted "war of attrition" between Egypt and Israel, and partly because of Israel's quest for military advantage, serious pressures were being exerted by Israeli leaders to provide

their country with the most modern and sophisticated weapons America was producing and assure it of generous economic aid. During the first year of Nixon's presidency Israeli Premier Golda Meir came to Washington on a state visit in September 1969. There she asked for twenty-five F-4 Phantom jets and eighty Skyhawk fighters (both offensive aircraft) as well as low-interest loans of \$200 million a year for periods up to five years. Her request was seriously considered by the administration, which in principle consented to the deliveries. However, in March 1970 the president reached a decision to postpone the delivery of Phantoms because he feared that such a major arms deal might jeopardize his efforts to reestablish diplomatic relations with Egypt and Syria. As could be expected, his decision elicited Mrs. Meir's complaints, expressed in a letter to Nixon.

The suspension of arms deliveries, however, proved only temporary. Barely six months later a major crisis in Jordan not only precipitated the renewed flow of American arms to Israel but actually put relations between the United States and Israel on a new footing.

The crisis could be traced to the basic division of the Arab world into the radical and moderate (or conservative) camps. The continuous frustration of the Palestinian Arabs with their inability to regain their lost homeland led to the birth of militant factions seeking the fulfillment of their political objectives by violent and unorthodox means. It was mostly in Jordan that these Palestinians operated, and it was there that they established a virtual "state in state," defying King Hussein's regular administration and armed forces. In early September 1970 one of these extremist groups hijacked four civilian airliners, brought them to the Jordanian territory, and subsequently blew them up.

What began as a hijacking incident transformed itself by mid-September into a civil war between King Hussein's Jordanian government and the Palestinian guerrillas. Although anxious for the Palestinians to regain their homeland, King Hussein did not approve of terrorist methods and resented their defiance of his authority. It soon transpired that the Palestinians were not alone in challenging the king. Rather soon they found an active ally: this was Syria, at that time ruled by the left wing of the Baath (Arab Renaissance) Party, which was anxious not only to assist the Palestinians but also to depose King Hussein and establish a radical government in Jordan. In pursuance of this policy Syria dispatched to Jordan a column of a hundred tanks which, having crossed the border, proceeded toward the center of the country.

When Kissinger reported these military movements to the president, he said: "It looks like the Soviets are pushing the Syrians and the Syrians are pushing the Palestinians. The Palestinians don't need much pushing."³³

Nixon believed that the United States could not permit King Hussein to be overthrown by what he assumed to be a Soviet-inspired rebellion and stand idly by while Israel was being "driven into the sea."

On September 18 the Soviet government addressed a note to Washington stating its desire not to intervene in the conflict and expressing the hope that the United States desist from intervention and that it discourage the others (presumably the Israelis) from it. In response, a stern note from the White House was handed to the Soviets, while Secretary Rogers publicly called on Syria to stop its invasion. It is still unclear whether these statements had any effect on actual developments. On September 21 the White House received a report that about 300 Syrian tanks had entered Jordan, but the next morning most of them withdrew.

Nixon's dilemma was how exactly to react to Jordan's civil war and Syria's invasion. His method was to use Kissinger rather than Secretary Rogers in his political moves. What was even more important was the substance of his decision: he instructed Kissinger to tell the Israeli ambassador, Yitzhak Rabin, "that we would be fully in support of Israeli air strikes on Syrian forces in Jordan if this became necessary to avoid a Jordanian defeat."³⁴ In response, Ambassador Rabin suggested an Israeli ground action, because air strikes were not considered adequate. There is no available documentary evidence to show whether, in making this suggestion, Israel was motivated more by the desire to save Jordan from Syrian invasion or by its own ambition to seize more territory for itself. Nixon initially opposed Israel's ground action but, after a talk with Kissinger, decided to approve it in principle, subject to ascertaining King Hussein's view and consultation prior to final decision. Meanwhile, without much fanfare, Israel began a mobilization and two Israeli brigades started an advance into the Golan Heights, a move likely to endanger Syrian forces on their way to Jordan. Nixon also decided to put 20,000 American troops on alert and ordered additional naval forces into the Mediterranean.

Apparently anxious that their client should not become entangled in a risky military adventure, the Soviet Union exerted pressure on Syria to desist from invading Jordan. This contradicted Kissinger's

view, earlier noted, that the Soviets were "pushing the Syrians" to invade.

As it turned out, neither Israeli nor American forces were used. The commander of the Syrian Air Force, General (later President) Hafez Assad, refused to give air support to the invading Syrian tanks. At the same time the small but vigorous Jordanian Air Force bombed and strafed the invading Syrian column so effectively as to compel it to withdraw. Syria lost 120 tanks. King Hussein's government and the integrity of Jordan were saved without foreign help.

Outside assistance, however, came to Israel because, in the midst of the crisis, Nixon revoked his earlier suspension of arms deliveries and ordered more military aid and more Phantom jets sent to Israel.

In terms of foreign policy and strategy the central aspect of the Jordanian crisis was Nixon's willingness to use Israel to intervene militarily, apparently for preemptive purposes, in a conflict pitting one Arab country against another. This crisis helped cement the already close cooperation between Washington and Israel. On September 25, 1970, Kissinger conveyed, in Nixon's name, the following message to Israel's ambassador, Yitzhak Rabin: "The president will never forget Israel's role in preventing the deterioration in Jordan and in blocking the attempt to overturn the regime there. He said that the United States is fortunate in having an ally like Israel in the Middle East. These events will be taken into account in all future developments."³⁵ Describing this episode, Rabin later stated that "this was probably the most far-reaching statement ever made by a president of the United States on the mutuality of the alliance between the two countries."³⁶

THE OCTOBER 1973 WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

Following the election to his second term as president, Nixon urged Kissinger to take more energetic steps to reach a peace settlement between Israel and the Arab states. He felt that unless early action was taken by the United States during the first year (1973) of his second term, nothing would be accomplished during the forthcoming four-year period. Although he wanted Kissinger rather than Secretary Rogers to act in this matter, he reflected this time the State Department's desire for active U.S. diplomacy. Again, his main worry was Israel's intransigent position as well as "enormous pressures" from America's Jewish community. He was also concerned about "a hundred million

Arabs hating us and providing a fishing ground not only for radicals but, of course, for the Soviets."³⁷

Interestingly, although in general Kissinger executed loyally Nixon's directives, in this particular instance he voiced opposition to the president's program. Kissinger resisted America's active involvement in the peacemaking process, preferring a "stalemate" and maintenance of the status quo, which was a policy favored by Israel.³⁸ The status quo, it should be remembered, meant continued occupation by Israel of the Arab territories captured during the June 1967 war. Kissinger's resistance to producing a blueprint for a peace settlement could be ascribed to several causes. First, according to him, despite vigorous Soviet insistence on a plan that would restore the Israeli-occupied lands to the Arab world, the Arabs must be shown that no progress toward peace could be made in relying on the Soviets. Second, Israel, very self-confident after its 1967 victory, was more interested in retention of territory than in achieving peace, and Kissinger generally was inclined to agree with Israel.³⁹ Third, he felt that Israel must be given more time to acquire more arms and thus a greater sense of security. According to him, such a self-confidence was bound to produce greater flexibility in future peace negotiations by Israeli leaders. Fourth, Kissinger tended to deride the official American formula that acquisition of territory "should not reflect the weight of conquest," which he considered a State Department euphemism for insisting on a total Israeli withdrawal. Last but not least, Israel's prime minister, Golda Meir, for whom Kissinger felt "a deep tenderness"⁴⁰ definitely favored the status quo. "To me," he wrote, "she acted as a benevolent aunt toward an especially favored nephew, so that even to admit the possibility of disagreement was a challenge to family hierarchy producing emotional outrage."⁴¹

In spite of Nixon's insistence in the early period of his second term on active pursuit of the search for peace, his policy was not free of ambiguity. This was illustrated by his summit meeting with Russia's Leonid Brezhnev in Washington in June 1973. The Middle East was a major topic of their talks. Brezhnev pressed for the adoption of the following principles: withdrawal of Israel from all the occupied territories, recognition of national boundaries, free navigation through the Suez Canal, and international guarantees of the settlement. Although these principles bore a strong similarity to UN Security Council Resolution 242 (which the United States had sponsored) and the Rogers Plan, Nixon refused to accept them: "I pointed out," he wrote,

"that there was no way that I could agree to any such 'principles' without prejudicing Israel's rights."⁴²

In the ensuing contest between the State Department's quest for an active diplomacy and Kissinger's preference for procrastination, Kissinger's formula prevailed. There was indeed a stalemate in Israeli-Arab relations through a greater part of 1973.

Then, in the fall, a crisis erupted. On October 6, Yom Kippur, Egyptian troops launched an attack on Israeli positions, crossed the Suez Canal, and breached Israel's strongly fortified Bar Lev line in the Sinai Peninsula. It was the first time in the long history of turbulent Arab-Israeli relations that a surprise attack was mounted by the Arabs and not the Israelis. To be sure Egypt's President Anwar Sadat had repeatedly stated since his advent to power in 1970 that a military solution of the deadlock with Israel would be sought. But after so many unfulfilled promises Israeli vigilance had slackened, and it was at its minimum during Israel's holy day. The battle, as it developed, pitted greater tank forces against each other than had ever been previously experienced in the desert warfare of the Middle East. Under the command of General Shazly the Egyptians inflicted heavy losses on Israel. By the third day of the war Israel had lost some 1,000 men, 49 planes, and one-third (500) of its tank force. Its army was running out of ammunition. Simultaneously, Syria attacked Israeli positions in the Golan Heights.

On the day the war broke out Kissinger convened the official crisis-management body, Washington Special Actions Group (wsag), which debated whether the United States should supply additional arms to Israel. High-ranking representatives of the Defense and State departments opposed such a supply. Kissinger was the sole dissenter who favored sending arms to Israel, saying that if the United States refused aid, Israel would have no incentive to conform to American views in the postwar diplomacy. Realization of America's support, he argued, might cause Israel to moderate its territorial claims.⁴³ This thesis, incidentally, gave rise to a protracted debate in and out of government whether U.S. aid, by making Israel stronger, was likely to make it more accommodating or more intransigent toward the Arab world.

As for Nixon, his reaction to the war was clear. "We had to keep the interests of the Israelis uppermost during this conflict," he wrote.⁴⁴ Hence, on the fourth day of the war he ordered Defense Secretary James Schlesinger to carry out a massive airlift of American arms to Israel.

Soon thirty American C-130 transport planes were on their way. Within a few days the United States was providing Israel with a thousand tons of war matériel a day. All in all, 550 American missions to Israel carried out the task of supply and resupply, an operation of greater magnitude than the Berlin airlift of 1948-49. Israel received forty F-4 Phantoms, thirty-eight A-4 Skyhawks, twelve C-130 transports, twenty tanks, spare parts, and ammunition, a total of more than 22,000 tons of equipment.⁴⁵

Military supplies did not exhaust Nixon's eagerness to prevent Israel's collapse. On October 19 he requested Congress to appropriate \$2.2 billion in emergency aid to Israel, including \$1.5 billion in outright grants. This decision triggered a collective Arab response. At their meeting in Kuwait the Arab oil-producing countries proclaimed the oil boycott that provided for curbs on their oil exports to various consumer countries and a total embargo of oil deliveries to the United States as a "principal hostile country."⁴⁶

By that time Kissinger conducted American diplomacy not only as the president's White House assistant but, since September 22, 1973, as secretary of state. There was something unusual in this appointment. From the very outset of his presidency Nixon had wanted to be the initiator and executor of his foreign policy. He had excluded Secretary Rogers consistently and rather ruthlessly from major decisions because he did not want to have a strong and influential secretary of state. In appointing Kissinger to that position he chose a man of proven strength, even, as Kissinger averred, of some "arrogant"⁴⁷ assertiveness, and thus, in a way, contradicted himself. But, as Kissinger himself admitted, this unprecedented elevation of a foreign-born individual to one of the highest positions in the U.S. government had occurred at the time of the Watergate crisis when Nixon was desperately trying to save his presidency from impeachment. In choosing Kissinger he selected a man, to use Kissinger's words, with "a constituency of his own." "We both realized," wrote Kissinger, "that for Nixon my appointment was less an act of choice than a step against his will in the hope it would mitigate catastrophe."⁴⁸

Faced with the war in the Middle East, Nixon, as we have seen, did his utmost to ensure that Israel received the maximum aid possible. His next objective was to achieve a cease-fire. He sent his newly appointed secretary of state to Moscow and there, on October 22, Brezhnev and Kissinger jointly drafted a cease-fire which was promptly

endorsed by the United Nations and accepted by the warring parties. In the meantime, however, the Israelis, reinforced by the American airlift, launched a counteroffensive which resulted in the encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army (20,000 troops) east of Suez and the crossing of Israeli troops in a sector west of the Suez Canal. There followed a period of uncertainty whether, to help Egypt, the Soviet Union (already engaged in its own effort to resupply the Egyptian army) might, as it threatened, resort to unilateral action by sending Russian troops to the theater of war. On October 25 a group of U.S. government leaders constituting the National Security Council met in the Situation Room in the White House where they unanimously decided to put all American conventional and nuclear forces on military alert.⁴⁹ Nixon approved the proposal. Soon afterward he sent a message to Brezhnev, in which he denied violation of cease-fire by Israel⁵⁰ and warned the Soviet leader against Russia's contemplated unilateral military action.

Further fighting between Egypt and Israel involved the United States in intense activity to bring about a new cease-fire, provide relief (in terms of food, water, and medicines) for Egypt's besieged Third Army, and ultimately secure a more durable disengagement of forces. It is worth noting the difference in American attitudes with regard to the cease-fire agreements in the June war of 1967 and the October war of 1973. In 1967, when its campaign had captured considerable Arab territories, Israel was anxious to obtain a cease-fire in place, that is, along the actual lines reached by its army in the concluding stages of the war. The United States (especially Ambassador Goldberg at the UN Security Council) clearly favored Israel's position; when the cease-fire was proclaimed, the Israeli army was at the point of its farthest advance. By contrast, in the October 1973 war, when the Egyptians made a moderate advance across the Suez Canal into the Sinai Peninsula, the United States favored a cease-fire combined with the return of the belligerents to their original positions—a policy which if accepted by Egypt would have completely nullified its major military effort to regain at least a part of its own territory in Sinai.⁵¹

On November 5 Kissinger inaugurated the phase since known as "shuttle diplomacy" by traveling to Cairo, a trip followed by repeated visits to Israel, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Russia. He reached an agreement with Egypt's Sadat on resupply of the encircled Egyptian Third Army and was instrumental

in bringing about, on November 11, an Egyptian-Israeli agreement regarding cessation of hostilities and an interim disposition of forces, signed on "Kilometer 101" of the Cairo-Suez road by both belligerents.

Following the adoption of the "Kilometer 101 agreement" an international conference attended by Israel, Egypt, and Jordan, but boycotted by Syria, and cochaired by the United States and the Soviet Union was convened in Geneva on December 21–22, 1973. Basically, Nixon and Kissinger had not been in favor of such a conference inasmuch as it carried with it three features deemed undesirable: (1) Israel's fear lest it become isolated and targeted as an object of collective hostility; (2) the presence of the Soviet Union, which Nixon and Kissinger wanted to exclude from the peacemaking process and which was expected to endorse the most radical Arab demands; (3) the likelihood that it might pave the way to the participation of Arab Palestine (possibly under PLO aegis), which the U.S. government wanted to treat as an object of, but not a party in, international diplomacy. Thus the convening of the conference ostensibly looked like an American concession to the combined Soviet-Arab pressure. But in reality the conference—after much preliminary work by Kissinger—was designed more as a pro forma gesture to satisfy certain international sensibilities (it was formally called by the UN secretary-general) rather than as a serious meeting to deal with substantive problems. As Kissinger put it: "all of the key actors understood that the sole achievement of the conference would be its opening; the progress that was foreseeable would take place in other forums."⁵² This proved true. The conference consisted of a ceremonial dinner and one inaugural session full, as expected, of flourishing rhetoric, in which each party presented its stand. Then it adjourned, leaving further substantive negotiations to the recent belligerents, namely Egypt, Israel, and Syria. Such negotiations took place between Israel and Egypt and, subsequently, between Israel and Syria—with the United States serving as intermediary and catalyst. They resulted, after considerable bargaining, in two disengagement agreements. The first, signed on January 18, 1974, provided for a separation of forces between Egypt and Israel. It was a compromise that stipulated the presence of limited Egyptian troops all along the eastern bank of the Canal, a United Nations-supervised no-man's-land (disengagement zone) between Israeli and Egyptian areas in the western parts of Sinai, and deployment of limited Israeli forces in a belt of territory east of the disengagement zone but west of the strategic Giddi and Mitla Passes.

The second agreement was concluded between Israel and Syria on May 31, 1974. Its provisions broadly resembled those negotiated between Israel and Egypt. It dealt with the separation of forces in the Golan Heights which had been a scene of fierce fighting in October, when Syria first had made substantial military advances but later had lost much of the initially captured territory. By virtue of the disengagement agreement Israel retained most of the Golan Heights but also agreed to a no-man's-zone (including the ruined city of Quneitra) separating the two forces.

In territorial terms the two agreements did not bring about a tremendous change as compared with the prewar period. The real novelty was that the entire Suez Canal, instead of being a dividing line, found itself now under Egyptian control and that the no-man's-zones began to separate the forces of the belligerents, thus reducing the likelihood of new military clashes. Because of the successful conclusion of both agreements, the Geneva Conference was never reconvened.

Nixon's next task was to put an end to the Arab oil boycott. American efforts in this sector focused primarily on the largest oil producer, Saudi Arabia, whose leadership in the Arab boycott decisions was universally recognized. The initial Saudi position was that the oil embargo could not be lifted until Israel withdrew from the territories occupied in 1967, and Kissinger's personal plea with King Faisal during his visit in Riyadh on November 9, 1973, proved of no avail. Instead, Faisal, though courteous and benevolent, had treated Kissinger to a lecture about the dual conspiracy of Jews and Communists trying to take over the American government.

Although later Saudi Arabia and other oil producers gradually mollified their attitude by demanding that at least a beginning of Israeli withdrawal should take place (perhaps by acceptance of some timetable for evacuation) as a condition for their lifting of the embargo, no tangible progress was made. Frustrated with what he believed to be Arab obstinacy, on November 21 Kissinger publicly threatened American retaliation in response to the use of Arab economic weapons against the United States: "It is clear," he said, "that if pressures continue unreasonably and indefinitely, then the United States will have to consider what countermeasures it may have to take."⁵³ Because Arab oil was denied to the U.S. Navy and the embargo was proving very burdensome to American consumers, as exemplified by long lines of cars at gas stations, Nixon was contemplating sending a

special emissary to Saudi Arabia who would exchange certain American promises in connection with the forthcoming Geneva peace conference in return for Saudi assurances to lift the embargo. Kissinger, however, preferred not to engage in this sort of *quid pro quo*, and on his advice Nixon abandoned the idea. Instead, in a handwritten note to King Faisal the president pledged his total commitment to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, both establishing the principle of exchange of territory for peace as between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

The oil crisis acquired a new dimension when on December 23, at its meeting in Teheran, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), composed of both Arab and non-Arab member states, decided to increase the price of oil to \$11.65 a barrel, which in practice meant the quadrupling of the price as compared with the level of January 1973. Although OPEC's decision was not a purely Arab decision (in fact it was sponsored primarily by Iran and Venezuela) and was reached exclusively for economic gain as contrasted with the political motivation of the Arab embargo, it was rendered possible because of the October war and the resulting boycott decisions of the Arab states. In the name of the president Kissinger sent a message to the shah of Iran, vigorously protesting the price increase. The shah and OPEC, however, remained adamant and, in due time, the world learned of new increases which exceeded \$30 per barrel.

Because Western European countries grouped in the European Economic Community (EEC) had in the meantime taken a collective stand sympathetic to the Arab view on Palestine and critical of Israel, the Arab oil ministers meeting in Kuwait a day after OPEC's Teheran conference eased their production cutbacks but kept their embargo against the United States unchanged. This led Nixon, toward the end of December, to make a personal appeal to King Faisal to end the embargo and the oil production cutbacks. The appeal did not produce the hoped-for results.

It was the successful conclusion of the disengagement agreements between Israel and its Arab adversaries that influenced the course of events in the oil sector. This time it was Sadat of Egypt who tried to encourage an Arab consensus to end the oil sanctions. Eventually, after a number of messages exchanged between Washington and the Arab capitals, the oil ministers of seven Arab states at their meeting in Vienna on March 18, 1974, decided to lift the embargo against the

United States and, at their meeting in Cairo on July 11, agreed to remove all export restrictions.

OIL, REVOLUTION, AND STRATEGY

At the beginning of this book we identified three main elements that had brought the United States and the Middle East into a special relationship: the Soviet threat, Israel, and oil. Between 1947 and 1970 certain simple equations could be established. Effective containment of the Soviet threat meant that the Middle East's oil resources would be safeguarded for the benefit of the West. Similarly, excessive partiality to Zionist aspirations or to Israel was likely to pave the way for Soviet advances in the Arab world and possible difficulties in Western access to Arab oil. Already in 1946, at a conference in Bludan (Syria), the Arab League threatened to use oil as a weapon in its struggle against the Zionist program. The three military conflicts, those of 1956 (Suez), 1967 (Israel's smashing victory), and 1973 (Yom Kippur), broadly confirmed the validity of these equations. In the 1973 war the relationship between American aid to Israel and the availability of Arab oil became painfully explicit, through the denial of oil to the United States and a drastic rise in prices.⁵⁴ It adversely affected America's national security and the economy of the Free World.

During Nixon's "watch" another dimension of the triangular relationship—Russia-Israel-oil—emerged forcefully: the link between the type of government in a host country, oil, and strategy. That link had been in evidence during the earlier presidencies, but it did not produce an aggravation of the magnitude experienced under Nixon. Thus far the United States (and Western Europe) had generally equated the survival and success of their oil concessions with the prevalence of conservative regimes in the producing host countries. The Iraqi revolution of 1958 had made the first dent in this equation. Thus, under Abdul Karim Qassem revolutionary Iraq adopted, in 1961, a law nationalizing over 95 percent of Iraq Petroleum Company's (IPC) concession area. In spite of this radical move Iraqi oil production and exports continued unimpeded because only the nonproducing portions of the area were nationalized and Iraq, anyway, was anxious to sell its oil abroad. Under the circumstances, in spite of the inconvenience of having to deal with an erratic and radical leader in Baghdad, neither the United States nor Britain (a country with a high stake in the Iraqi

oil concession) opted for military intervention. Dictator Qassem's volte-face from his initial pro-Egyptian attitude to an anti-Nasser stance and his abandonment of the Pan-Arab ideology constituted a relevant factor in the evolving situation. The internationally owned IPC reached a compromise with Iraq's revolutionary regime, at least for a few years.

The case for intervention in Iraq aiming at Qassem's overthrow would have been contrary to the basic policy of the United States toward Third World revolutions. This policy could be summed up as nonintervention, acceptance of the *fait accompli*, and a search for accommodation. U.S. military intervention or response (such as had taken place in Lebanon in 1958 and during the Saudi-Yemeni crisis in 1962-63) would occur only if either of two conditions obtained: (1) if the revolution or the threat of it was actually (operationally) fomented by an external force; or (2) if the new revolutionary regime engaged in foreign aggression. This clearly was not at that time the case in Iraq, because its revolution, though ideologically inspired by Nasser and the Baath Party, was carried out by the Iraqis themselves and, at least for a few years (until it laid claim to Kuwait's territory in 1961), Iraq abstained from foreign expansion.

Moreover, the Iraqi revolution had occurred in the era of a "buyer's market," that is, excess of supply over the demand for oil. In the United States and other areas outside the Middle East there was a surplus producing capacity, and Arab and Iranian oil prices were low.

Beginning with 1970, however, the situation became reversed. An era of a "seller's market" was ushered in. It meant that demand for oil in the main consuming areas (the United States, Europe, Japan) began rapidly to grow. The United States' reliance on imports reached some 30 percent of its oil consumption and gradually increased (as contrasted with roughly 8 percent in 1947), while Western Europe's dependence on imported oil rose to 60 percent of its energy needs.

These market realities coincided with the revolution in Libya: In September 1969 Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi had overthrown King Idris and proclaimed a republic which espoused Nasser's Pan-Arab and socialist ideology tinged with Islamic fundamentalism. Before long, Qaddafi's revolutionary efforts focused on oil and the American Wheelus air base. Although the quest for the removal of the base had been pursued earlier by Libya's royalist government, Qaddafi intensified it and, in spite of the American-Libyan agreement of 1954 giving the U.S.

base rights for the next twenty years, adopted an attitude of defiance toward the West.

No wonder that, under the circumstances, some soul-searching took place in Washington as to the right policy to follow toward Libya. The issue actually boiled down to the question of whether American strategic or oil interests were sufficiently threatened to warrant some kind of intervention or covert action. In the late fall of 1969 the Washington Special Actions Group (wsag) debated the matter, having been presented with an interagency paper which stated *inter alia*: "We see no immediate threat to these [oil] interests, although such could result if the regime is threatened, or becomes increasingly unstable, or if there were a real confrontation over Wheelus, or in the event of renewed hostilities in the Middle East."⁵⁵

The paper concluded that U.S. strategy should be to seek accommodation with Qaddafi's regime and that U.S. oil interests should be America's primary concern. This concern should override U.S. interest in the Wheelus air base which, anyway, was described as being of marginal importance. Concurring with the paper, the wsag opted for a policy of accommodation. The quoted paper's view of Wheelus as of minor value may appear in retrospect as somewhat short-sighted. Wheelus was an important asset militarily and politically. As a training center it possessed unparalleled facilities and enjoyed an ideal climate for aviation. It served as a vital relay station between Europe and the Middle East. Without it access to the Middle East would have been much more difficult and complicated.

The policy of accommodation with Libya's revolution—in practice the policy of inactivity—prevailed. The fact that it was adopted reflected, to some extent, the earlier Kennedy policy of cultivating the "progressive," "development-oriented" regimes. According to Kissinger, working-level officials in the U.S. government espoused the thesis that "Third World radicalism was really frustrated Western liberalism," while in reality these radical leaders had a strong and doctrinaire anti-Western commitment.⁵⁶

Subsequent events put these optimistic theories to a severe test. On June 11, 1970, the Wheelus air base was evacuated, handed over to Libya, and renamed Uqba ben Nafi. By 1972 Qaddafi took a number of unilateral measures and delivered painful blows to the foreign oil companies—actions that had repercussions throughout the entire Middle East. In spite of his professed adherence to Islam and his initial re-

pudiation of Communism, he turned toward close cooperation with the Soviet Union and the "socialist" bloc, becoming a major Soviet arms client. His "cultural revolution," launched in 1973 somewhat like in China, brought havoc to Libya's administrative structure, economy, and educational system. Popular and relatively innocent forms of entertainment (such as sidewalk Italian-style wine-drinking cafés) were abolished and a big Christian cathedral in Tripoli was transformed into a mosque. Qaddafi also laid extensive claims to the open seas in the Gulf of Sidra and publicly championed a variety of terrorist and "liberation" movements around the globe. He "lionized" Cuba's Castro. In due time he engaged in subversion and military action against some of his neighbors, notably Egypt and Chad.

Nixon's role in the ripening deterioration of relations with Tripoli and a virtual collapse of American influence in Libya was, to say the least, one of disengagement. In his memoirs, Nixon does not mention either Libya, Wheelus, or Qaddafi, apparently treating them as of secondary importance. Although Kissinger devotes a medium-length section of his memoirs to the Libyan situation, he apparently attaches more importance to Qaddafi's oil policy than to the loss of the Wheelus air base (though, to render him justice, he is implicitly critical of the "do-nothing" attitude of the WSAC).

Although, as noted in our Introduction, in geopolitical terms Libya is a peripheral area to the Middle East proper, developments affecting the U.S. air base and the petroleum industry are worth noting as ones that have had an impact on the availability of oil from the Middle East and on the strategic position of the United States in the area.

CONCLUSION

As noted in a preceding section, the hot phase of the Arab-Israeli war and its aftermath came to an end in midyear 1974. It was characterized, insofar as American policy was concerned, by unprecedented assistance, military and economic, to Israel, more pronounced than the aid extended during Johnson's presidency during the 1967 war. Its notable result was that, under American auspices, first the cease-fire and then disengagement agreements were concluded between the belligerents, with Israel still holding most of the lands captured in 1967. These accords eventually paved the way toward peace, later concluded between Egypt and Israel. The United States succeeded in virtually

excluding Russia from substantial participation in the Middle East peacemaking process. Washington, under Nixon's and Kissinger's leadership, ostensibly played the role of an "honest broker." In reality its policy was significantly tilted in favor of Israel, which was repeatedly called an "ally" both by the president and by Kissinger. Because of its favorable treatment of Israel, the United States suffered a nearly crippling oil embargo and the whole economy of the Western world experienced adverse consequences due to the spectacular rise in oil prices.

The placing on alert of American nuclear and conventional forces at the height of the October war brought the United States to the brink of a military showdown with the Soviet Union. It followed Nixon's repeatedly expressed conviction that a war between Israel and the Arabs would almost automatically lead to a Soviet-American confrontation. It also reflected Nixon's belief that Israel should be regarded as a strategic asset to the United States, a belief that found strong adherents in the succeeding American administrations.

In fact twice during the Nixon presidency American forces were alerted for possible action in the Middle East (during the Jordan crisis and the October war), and, as one military observer noted, the United States was jeopardizing its own security by rushing massive military supplies to Israel in 1973.⁵⁷ Intensive arming of Israel was justified by Nixon because, ostensibly, "he did not want the United States to have to fight Israel's battles."⁵⁸ This could be explained as the extension of the Nixon Doctrine to apply not only to Southeast Asia and the Persian Gulf but to Israel as well. However, in view of his readiness to use American troops and even nuclear weapons in the Middle East, his ideas of *both* arming Israel and committing American forces were not wholly consistent with the philosophy of the Nixon Doctrine.

Nixon's move to extend to Israel \$2.2 billion in grants and loans in 1973 opened a new era in American foreign aid policy. From that time on Israel became the single largest recipient of American aid. Whereas the total U.S. aid to Israel in 1972 amounted to \$350 million, by 1974 it reached the figure of \$2,630 million, and from the mid-1970s it hovered around \$2 billion a year. In the 1980s it began to exceed that figure by substantial amounts. Military supplies have generally constituted some 70 percent of the total.

Nixon professed, especially in the early stages of each of his two terms, to follow an "evenhanded" or "balanced" policy toward the region. As his statement to Egypt's Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy

attested, he liked to assure the Arabs of his independence of pressures: "In the history of the United States, there was never a president who could make decisions against Israel or displeasing Israel, except Eisenhower and Nixon. No president of the United States has been able to resist the various forms of Israeli pressure and harassment. I don't want you to misunderstand me, I am not against minorities and I do not belittle the influence of Congress, but when the supreme U.S. national interest calls upon me to make the necessary decisions, I will make them unhesitatingly irrespective of the Israeli pressure."⁵⁹ Despite such a statement, Nixon's record is replete with assurances and actions of preferential treatment of Israel by his administration. If Lyndon Johnson's intervention in the 1967 war proved to be a turning point by forming a special relationship of support for and cooperation with Israel, Nixon's presidency dramatically deepened and broadened it.

6. The Ford Presidency

On August 9, 1974, Gerald R. Ford became president of the United States. He succeeded to the presidency as a result of Nixon's resignation in the wake of the Watergate scandal. The position he had held before his advent to power was that of vice president. In that capacity he had been given certain assignments by Nixon but, by and large, had not participated actively in the presidential decision-making process, and foreign affairs was not his forte. As president, his main concern was to "heal" the wounds the nation had suffered from the divisions and emotions generated by Watergate. In the foreign sector Ford's intention was to ensure the continuity of U.S. policy. This meant that the Nixon-Kissinger policy of détente with Russia would be further pursued and that a search for peace in the Middle East would be maintained. And, indeed, his Soviet policy was marked by such major steps as the Vladivostok agreements on nuclear arms in November 1974 and the Helsinki agreement on peace in Europe and human rights in August 1975. His détente policy had one notable exception: Russia was to be kept out, if possible, of the U.S.-mediated Arab-Israeli peace process.

The continuity in foreign policy was also, in Ford's mind, to be achieved by keeping Henry Kissinger as secretary of state. Not unlike Nixon, Ford was impressed by Kissinger's knowledge of foreign affairs. "It would be hard for me," he wrote, "to overstate the admiration and affection I had for Henry. . . . Our personalities meshed. I respected his expertise in foreign policy and he respected my judgment in domestic politics. . . . Kissinger was superb as Secretary of State."¹ Owing to this relationship of mutual respect and trust, Kissinger as a policy-maker grew in stature and strength and became more independent. This was illustrated particularly in the conduct of Ford's diplomacy toward the Middle East. That area claimed much of his attention during his brief term (two and a half years) and, in fact, became one of his chief

concerns from the outset of his presidency. "No foreign policy challenges occupied more of my time in the early months of 1975 than the deteriorating situations in both the Middle East and Indochina," he wrote in his memoirs.²

In procedural terms Ford's incumbency was characterized by the increased role Congress began to play in foreign policy and by the corresponding curb on the powers of the president. This was made clear by developments on two major substantive issues during Ford's presidency: the Cyprus crisis and Arab-Israeli relations.

CYPRUS AND U.S. BASES IN TURKEY

Since 1967 the triangular situation among Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus had gradually deteriorated. Turkey felt humiliated by the rebuke administered to it by President Johnson and resented submission to America's will in practicing restraint toward Cyprus. Careful reading of Turkish moods should have convinced the U.S. administration that, if any further communal troubles were to occur in Cyprus, Turkey would opt for invasion of the island.

In 1967 a military junta was installed in Greece. The junta pursued a strongly pro-Western policy and disapproved of President Makarios of Cyprus. Essentially dedicated to the aggrandizement of his own power, Makarios conducted a policy of strengthening his relations with the radical countries of the Third World and the Soviet Bloc. In 1972 he concluded an arms agreement with Czechoslovakia and in 1973 paid friendly visits to Malta and Colonel Qaddafi's Libya. At home he tried to extend his control over the Cyprus National Guard through a massive purge of the Greek officers (from the mainland), reducing their number from 650 to 50.

These moves made Makarios a persona non grata both in Washington and in Athens. The junta in Athens was encouraging plans to overthrow the Makarios regime and replace it by a government "more in sympathy with Greece."³ Considering the anti-Communist nature of the "colonels'" government in Athens and the need to stop the spread of pro-Soviet radicalism in the eastern Mediterranean, the idea of removing Makarios from power might have appeared logical from the American point of view. What was not taken into account by Athens was Turkey's reaction to new abrupt changes in Cyprus. According to Kissinger, the regime in Greece was "oblivious to the fact

that an overthrow of the constitutional arrangements on Cyprus would free Turkey of previous restraints."⁴

On July 15, 1974, Makarios was overthrown in a coup d'état engineered by the Athens government. A rather adventurous character, Nikos Sampson, proclaimed himself president of Cyprus. Sampson promptly declared his wish for *enosis* (union) with Greece. The coup produced a chain reaction: on July 19 Turkey, under Premier Bülent Ecevit, invaded Cyprus and occupied the largely Turkish-inhabited districts of Kokkina, Kyrenia, Lapithos, and Limassol. Next the colonels' junta in Athens, discredited by the events in Cyprus and their repressive policies at home, fell victim to a coup on July 23, which restored a democratic government under Premier Constantine Karamanlis. In mid-August this new government withdrew Greece from NATO's military structure, while Turkey extended its occupation to some 40 percent of Cyprus territory, stretching from Lefka in the west to Famagusta in the east. Some 200,000 Greek-Cypriot refugees flocked to the southern parts of the island. The situation became further aggravated when the American ambassador to Cyprus, Rodger Davies, was assassinated by Greek-Cypriot guerrillas on August 19.

Exactly one month later, on September 19, the U.S. Senate by a vote of 64 to 27 passed a resolution urging President Ford to halt American military supplies to Turkey. The ostensible reason given was that Turkish use of U.S. equipment on Cyprus was in violation of the American Foreign Assistance Act. The act had mandated that such equipment was to be used for defensive purposes only. The House of Representatives approved the Senate's measure five days later in a vote of 507 to 90. Worried about the adverse effects of this action on Turkish-American relations and the deterioration of security on NATO's eastern flank, the president vetoed the bill on October 14. However, on October 16 the House of Representatives adopted another resolution which would cut off military assistance to Turkey unless the president could show that the aid was not used for offensive purposes and that "substantial progress" toward peace in Cyprus was made. Again, fearing that the bill might impede negotiations on Cyprus, Ford vetoed it the next day but accepted a compromise that permitted aid to Turkey until December 10, 1974, provided Turkey would not send American supplies to Cyprus.

While this legislative process was taking place in the United States, the Turkish daily *Hurriyet* published a report about a possible dismantling of American bases in Turkey by Turkish authorities if

U.S. military aid were to be cut off. Furthermore, in early November Turkish university students in Istanbul, a politically conscious and easily inflamed social group, staged a demonstration accusing America of a "two-faced, treacherous policy in Cyprus."⁵

In spite of these signs of Turkish discontent with America's policy, U.S. military aid to Turkey was suspended on February 5, 1975. This constituted a major step in America's foreign relations and was entirely due to congressional decision. It filled Ford with somber thoughts about the role of Congress in shaping U.S. foreign policy. "When I was in the Congress myself," he wrote subsequently, "I thought it fulfilled its constitutional obligations in a very responsible way, but after I became President, my perspective changed. It seemed to me that Congress was beginning to disintegrate as an organized legislative body. . . . It responded too often to single-issue special interest groups. . . . Moreover, Congress was determined to get its oar deeply into the conduct of foreign affairs. This not only undermined the Chief Executive's ability to act, but also eroded the separation of powers concept in the Constitution."⁶ He also engaged in somewhat theoretical discussions with Kissinger on how America could resist "the ethnic awareness that tended to influence Congressional decisions affecting the Middle East, the eastern Mediterranean and the nations of black Africa."⁷ As in the first Cyprus crisis a decade earlier, a widespread opinion attributed congressional acts against Turkey to a Greek lobby. Turkish reaction to the arms ban was swift. Eight days later, the Turkish-Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş, proclaimed formation of an independent Turkish-Cypriot state.

Ford's response to Congress was not limited to philosophical musings. The president's executive agency, the National Security Council, on June 15, 1975, reached a decision that the U.S. ban on arms to Turkey was "a unilateral violation of the bilateral agreements with Turkey"—a step obviously designed to change the congressional policy. It had only a partial effect: on July 11 the House of Representatives Foreign Relations Committee consented to release \$184.9 million in arms sales to Turkey but did not restore aid grants. The committee was overruled some two weeks later by the full House, which decided by a vote of 223 to 206 not to lift the arms embargo. The House did it despite the ample warnings that Turkey might retaliate by banning the use of U.S. military bases (serving U.S. and NATO needs) on its territory. And indeed, the day after the House vote, on July 25, Turkey announced immediate closing of all American military installations

(numbering twenty-six), with the exception of the base in Incirlik, reserved for NATO use alone. Moreover, Turkey took several additional retaliatory measures. First, Turkish officials declared that certain U.S. bases would remain closed even if the U.S. ban were canceled. Second, Ankara's delegate to NATO stated that Turkey might seek other than the U.S. sources for arms—a threat that materialized soon after. Third, Turkey instituted restrictions on American ships using Turkish ports and on military overflights. (The latter curb might have adversely affected American plans to intervene in the Middle East in case of an emergency.) And fourth, Turkey rejected a belated American offer of \$50 million in military aid in exchange for reopening U.S. bases.

The congressional action in July, persisting in the denial of arms to Turkey, was considered a "slap in the face" by the president. "I considered this the single most irresponsible, short-sighted foreign policy decision Congress had made in all the years I'd been in Washington."⁸ No wonder, therefore, that when he went to Helsinki soon afterward to attend the European security conference, Ford encountered a disgruntled Turkish premier, Suleiman Demirel, who canceled his earlier-arranged meeting with Greece's Karamanlis and left for Ankara.

In addition some American bases in Turkey had served as monitoring stations to watch Soviet nuclear developments and activities; closing of American bases thus constituted a serious strategic setback not only to the United States but to NATO as a whole. As a NATO member, Turkey of course would also be affected. Yet Turkish frustration with American policy was so profound that Demirel's predecessor, Ecevit (now in opposition), called on Turkey's government to remove American military personnel and redesign its foreign policy more in line with East-West détente, that is, to open the door to closer Turkish-Soviet ties. In view of the fact that the U.S. official policy followed the détente line with the Soviet Union, it would have been awkward for the American government to urge Turkey to be firmer toward Moscow than Washington itself. Because of congressional invasion into foreign policy-making, the field constitutionally reserved for the president, American-Turkish relations became loosened, and America's position in the eastern Mediterranean took a turn for the worse.

Before long, various signs of this erosion became visible. As advocated by ex-Premier Ecevit, Turkey established closer ties with the Soviet Union, punctuated by such events as Soviet Premier Kosygin's

visit to Turkey in December 1975 to open a Soviet-financed Iskenderun steel mill and a subsequent joint Turkish-Soviet communiqué that both countries would "exert efforts to further expand and strengthen [their mutual] relations."⁹ Almost simultaneously a Soviet guided-missile submarine and a destroyer passed through the Turkish Straits in an apparent show of Turkish acceptance of such naval movement even though passage of submarines was subject to severe restrictions by the Montreux Straits convention of 1936. Furthermore, Turkey entered into closer trade and cultural relations with two countries of the Soviet Bloc, Czechoslovakia and Romania, and began cultivating such Soviet-tilting "neutralists" as Libya.

Considering that cancellation of the ban on U.S. arms deliveries to Turkey depended, according to congressional bills, on demonstrated "progress" in resolving the Cyprus dispute, it was bound to be considerably delayed because no such progress could be shown. On the contrary, the dispute dragged on, month after month and year after year, in spite of repeated negotiations between Athens and Ankara, Washington and these two capitals, and the United Nations resolutions urging a peaceful settlement and withdrawal of all foreign forces from Cyprus. In fact the dispute became aggravated when, in June 1975, Rauf Denktaş was elected president of the "Turkish Federated State of Cyprus," thus confirming the irrevocable nature of the new political entity in northern Cyprus, which no other state except Turkey recognized. Neither the return of the deposed Archbishop Makarios toward the end of 1974 and his reinstatement as president of Cyprus nor his death of a heart attack in 1977 influenced the course of events. The only actions during the Ford presidency that contributed to a modest degree to the lessening of Turkish-American tensions were the legislative and executive steps reducing the harshness of the arms ban. Thus on October 3, 1975, the U.S. Senate passed a bill easing the embargo. On the same day President Ford declared that the United States was anxious to rebuild the security relationship with Turkey. In response a Turkish government spokesman praised the Senate's action but cautioned that U.S. bases would not be reopened immediately. In December Secretary Kissinger and Turkey's Foreign Minister Ihsan Sabri Caglayangil reached an agreement in principle that could permit the reopening of U.S. bases, but no definite decision to reactivate them was as yet taken. Subsequent negotiations in early 1976 resulted in the conclusion in March of a four-year Turkish-American agreement according to which U.S. bases in Turkey would be reopened in exchange

for \$1 billion in American grants and loans. To make it binding, however, approval by Congress was needed. But members of the House warned Kissinger that the agreement would have "very rough sledding" unless it were accompanied by a settlement of the Cyprus issue. Kissinger (who faced a simultaneous problem of preserving U.S. bases in reluctant Greece) responded that to relate the Cyprus dispute to the problem of bases in Turkey would have "disastrous consequences."¹⁰

Until the end of the Ford presidency the fate of the bases was not completely determined. It was only under the succeeding Carter presidency that further negotiations led to the final resolution.

THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL: FORD'S REASSESSMENT AND SINAI II

While the Cyprus-Turkish imbroglio was following its tortuous course, another crisis was maturing: American relations with Israel. It was a consensus in Israel, Egypt, and Washington that unless further substantial progress on the road to peace was made soon, the disengagement of forces agreement signed on January 18, 1974, by Egypt and Israel (the so-called Sinai I) would disintegrate rapidly, and hostilities between the two countries would recommence. This was so because of divergent aims of the two protagonists. Egypt's objective was simple: it wanted to regain full control over Sinai, a province it had lost to Israel in 1967 and over which it had fought only a marginally successful war in 1973. True enough, the Egyptian Third Army had become entrapped by the Israeli forces, but both President Sadat and a large body of Egypt's public opinion ascribed it to the sudden rush of American arms to Israel rather than to Israel's own merit.¹¹

Israel's aims were more complex. Ideally, it would prefer not to make any further territorial concessions beyond the narrow belt of land it had relinquished to Egypt in Sinai I. If this proved untenable, Israel would be prepared to withdraw some thirty to fifty kilometers eastward to the vicinity of the Giddi and Mitla passes, while retaining control over them and over the oil fields of Abu Rudeis and Ras el-Sudr near the Gulf of Suez. In return, however, Israel would expect a political concession from Egypt, namely the renunciation of the state of belligerency. Finally, if such an arrangement were not attainable, Israel had a fallback position: to relinquish control over the oil fields but keep the Giddi and Mitla passes because their strategic value outweighed the economic value of the oil fields.¹²

Because Israel's U.S.-supplied arms during the 1973 war had given it a margin of military preponderance, Israel had a rather strong position and the only considerations that could soften its firmness, apart from the desire to avoid a new war, were American pressure and the coveted Egyptian pledge to terminate formally the state of belligerency. (We must bear in mind that Sinai I was merely a military disengagement agreement signed by the chiefs of army staffs of both countries, free of political commitments.) As for Egypt, it was weaker militarily than Israel, but it had two factors working in its favor: first, with its forces mobilized and flushed with self-confidence over their recent successful breaching of Israel's Bar-Lev line, Egypt was in a better psychological position to renew hostilities, even though basically it also strove for peace. Second, it could use the "Soviet option," that is, to renew and strengthen its ties with Russia and thus induce Washington to exact concessions from Israel. This was not an empty threat: it was announced that Russia's Brezhnev was about to visit Cairo in January 1975. Even though the trip was postponed, the likelihood of its materializing kept both Washington and Tel Aviv ill at ease.

President Ford's position, right after his assumption of power, could be summed up as the desire to prevent the renewal of war in the Middle East, the design to pull Egypt out of the Soviet orbit, and a diplomacy geared to the exclusion of the Soviet Union from the peace process, hitherto *de facto* reserved to American mediation.

For these reasons rather early in his presidency Ford made moves to persuade the two parties to take another meaningful step on the road to peace. In September 1984, within a month of taking office, he received in Washington Israel's Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, but instead of obtaining any concessions from him, he received three lists of arms, an emergency list and two long-range lists, which Israel hoped to secure from the United States. From the peacemaking point of view, the visit ended fruitlessly. It was followed by a number of trips Kissinger made to the Middle East in October and November 1974, as well as February and March 1975. None of these brought the hoped-for results. Ford blamed Israel for its intransigence, stalling, and inflexibility. "Negotiations between Israel and Egypt about the return of Sinai had reached a dangerous stalemate," he wrote subsequently. "For the past twenty-five years, the philosophical underpinning of U.S. policy toward Israel had been our conviction—and certainly my own—that if we gave Israel an ample supply of economic aid and weapons,

she would feel strong and confident, more flexible and willing to discuss a lasting peace. Every American President since Harry Truman had willingly supplied arms and funds to the Jewish state. The Israelis were stronger militarily than all their Arab neighbors combined, yet peace was no closer than it had ever been. So I began to question the rationale of our policy. I wanted the Israelis to recognize that there had to be some *quid pro quo*."¹³

Furthermore, while Ford acknowledged that a "substantial relationship" existed between Israeli and American security interests, he claimed that "in the final analysis, we have to judge what is in our national interest above any and all other considerations."¹⁴ Initially, Ford tended to agree with Kissinger's thesis that a "step-by-step" diplomacy was preferable to a "utopian" comprehensive peace settlement (which would include Palestine and Syria in addition to Sinai) and bilateral negotiations to multilateral conferences. But, if Israel persisted in its obstructionism, Ford was prepared to "turn to a comprehensive approach via a Geneva conference."¹⁵

In this phase of negotiations Kissinger's visit to Israel in March of 1975 proved decisive. Although in his talks with Premier Rabin he secured Israel's agreement to withdraw some thirty-five kilometers from the Suez Canal to the vicinity of the Giddi and Mitla passes, at the last minute the Israelis refused to move back past the crests of the passes and resisted American requests to submit detailed maps of the region that would specify the exact proposed location of their forces. Ford was incensed at what he considered Israeli "stalling." "Their tactics frustrated the Egyptians and made me mad as hell," he wrote in his memoirs.¹⁶ While Kissinger was still in Israel, Ford sent a cable to Premier Rabin in which he said:

I wish to express my profound disappointment over Israel's attitude in the course of the negotiations. . . . Failure of the negotiations will have a far-reaching impact on the region and on our relations. I have given instructions for a reassessment of United States policy in the region, including our relations with Israel, with the aim of ensuring that overall American interests . . . are protected. You will be notified of our decision.¹⁷

This message put an effective end to Kissinger's March mission. About to return to Washington, Kissinger was crestfallen. "I don't recall," wrote Rabin, "ever having seen Kissinger so moved. He may have

wished to reply [to Rabin's farewell words] but his voice cracked with emotion. . . . In addition to this upset over the failure of his mission, I could see his inner turmoil, as a Jew and as an American."¹⁸

Kissinger returned from Israel on March 23, deeply disenchanted with Israel's position and fearful lest Sadat be pushed into the camp of Arab radicals. The next day, March 24, he and Ford received congressional leaders of both parties and informed them of the reassessment of the administration policies in the Middle East. There was only one way a "reassessment" could have a practical meaning: to cancel or suspend further aid to Israel. And this indeed was what happened. As Rabin put it, it was "an innocent-sounding term that heralded one of the worst periods in American-Israeli relations."¹⁹ For six months, between March and September 1975, the United States refused to conclude any new arms agreements with Israel.

As could be expected, the announced reassessment upset the American Jewish community and Israel's well-wishers in Congress. Ford commented on this reaction by saying that "The Israeli lobby . . . is strong, vocal and wealthy, but many of its members have a single focus. . . . I said [to a Jewish friend from Detroit] . . . that my comments about reassessing our policies . . . were not just rhetoric. I was not going to capitulate to pressure, and if the impasse continued, I might have to go public on where we stood and why."²⁰ In another talk to the American Jewish leaders in the White House in April, Ford stressed the primacy of U.S. national interests: "this means . . . that the leaders of Israel and the American Jewish community here simply can't hold up a legitimate settlement and expect me as President to tolerate it."²¹

Then the president experienced a real shock. On May 21 seventy-six senators wrote him a letter urging him to be "responsive" to Israel's request for \$2.59 billion in military and economic aid. There were reasons to believe that the letter had been partly drafted by the pro-Israeli lobby, the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).²² Ford felt truly annoyed and thought the chance for peace was jeopardized. It was, since the September 1974 ban on arms to Turkey, the second major congressional intrusion upon the president's prerogatives. The letter naturally bolstered Israel's negative attitude regarding withdrawal from the Sinai. Ford subsequently described the Israeli position in these words: "Concessions will have to be made, . . . but we will make none of them. Sadat will have to make them all. And if Ford disagrees, we will show him who's boss."²³

Paradoxically, it was not so much Ford as Kissinger who became the principal target of Israeli displeasure. Even though such leaders as Rabin and Eban acknowledged his major contributions to Israeli security,²⁴ he now was attacked by Israeli diehards for "sabotaging" Israeli interests and, because he was a Jew, for bending backward to be "fair" to the Arabs and "out-Gentiling the Gentiles."²⁵

The president's "reassessment" led to another important step. Early in June 1975 he had a meeting with President Sadat of Egypt in Salzburg. To break the deadlock in Egyptian-Israeli negotiations Sadat proposed creation of a buffer zone around the Giddi and Mitla passes in Sinai, equipped with an early-warning station, which would be administered by American nonmilitary personnel. Because of instinctive Israeli suspicion of any suggestion emanating from the Arabs, Ford decided to present to Israel Sadat's proposal as an American plan. In Salzburg Sadat also requested U.S. arms for Egypt. Mindful of the likely objections of Israel, Ford refused to supply Egypt with offensive weapons. Instead, he promised delivery of C-130 transport planes.

A little later, in June, Rabin paid his second visit to Washington as Israel's premier. He was obviously "shaken" by Ford's reassessment decision, hence perhaps more receptive to the president's ideas. The neutral buffer zone around the Sinai passes "intrigued" him, but he made no commitments.²⁶ The president told him that the reassessment was not intended to penalize Israel but indicated that he favored a comprehensive Middle East settlement to be reached at the Geneva conference. This, to Rabin, sounded like a mixture of reassurance and an implicit threat because Israel feared that a multilateral Geneva decision, with international delimitation and guarantees of the borders, might mean an externally imposed settlement, a solution always opposed by Israeli leaders.

The summer months that followed were described by Ford as an American-Israeli "war of nerves" or "test of wills."²⁷ In August Kissinger resumed his travels in the Middle East. Even though nothing had been signed with Israel as yet, Sadat, as a gesture of goodwill and assurance of his peacelike intentions, decided to reactivate the traffic in the Suez Canal (closed because of the war operations since 1967), and on June 5, 1975, the canal was opened to international navigation. (The U.S. Navy and specialized West German firms had helped to clear the waterway of major obstacles.)

After much bargaining in Jerusalem and Aswan, the so-called interim agreement (Sinai II) was finally completed on August 31, 1975,

and formally signed on September 1. It was composed of two sets of documents. The first—the Israeli-Egyptian disengagement of forces accord—provided for the withdrawal of the Israeli army just east of the Giddi and Mitla passes and the advance of Egyptian troops to the line west of the passes. Both Israel and Egypt were allowed only limited forces in the adjacent zones. The area comprising the passes themselves was to constitute a buffer zone to be manned by American civilian personnel, as initially proposed by President Sadat. Moreover, Egypt was to regain control of the Sinai territory next to the Gulf of Suez, in which the Abu Rudeis and Ras el-Sudr oil fields were located.

The second set of documents consisted of the agreements between the United States on the one hand and Israel and Egypt on the other. The American-Israeli “memorandum of understanding” (not a treaty, hence not subject to Senate ratification) was of a confidential nature although in due time its key points became known. It provided for substantially increased American economic and military assistance to Israel, including delivery of large new quantities of sophisticated weapons (for example, F-16 fighter planes), and an American guarantee to supply Israel with oil to compensate for the return of the Gulf of Suez oil fields to Egypt. The United States also gave specific political pledges: not to initiate any moves in the Middle East without prior consultation with Israel; not to diverge from UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 as the sole basis for peace negotiations; to insist that all negotiations should be bilateral as between Israel and the Arab countries and not multilateral (as the Geneva conference foreshadowed); and not to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) or negotiate with it without Israeli consent and until the PLO formally recognized Israel’s right to exist and promised to adhere to UN resolutions 242 and 338.²⁸

The pledge concerning the PLO was a novelty because it constituted self-limitation of the United States’ sovereign right to recognize, or negotiate with, any individual or organization it might wish to deal with. Because it was not a ratified treaty obligation, its juridical validity lent itself to questioning. Politically, however, it conveyed the idea of subordinating an important sector of America’s foreign policy to Israeli guidance. Similarly significant were the arms supplies pledges. They opened the door to generous deliveries of sophisticated American weapons to Israel, so that in the period between the October 1973 war and June 1977, the Israeli military forces doubled their strength,²⁹ and Israel’s airforce, with 574 combat aircraft (as compared

with Britain's 550, France's 557, and West Germany's 509) became the third strongest in the world.³⁰ By 1985–86 it had reached 684 combat planes.

The final steps just before the signing of the agreement by Egypt were marked by a few tense moments. This was owing to some disagreements between one of Egypt's principal negotiators, Foreign Minister Fahmy, and President Sadat. A professional diplomat, Fahmy was less eager to conclude the agreement than the rather impulsive Sadat. Fahmy resented the fact that the essentials of the U.S.-Israeli "memorandum of understanding" were read to the Egyptians by Kissinger only some ten minutes before the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli agreement. Moreover, throughout the negotiations Fahmy had unbendingly insisted on the purely military character of the disengagement, refusing to add any political stipulations that would, for example, obligate Egypt to end the state of belligerency between the two countries. (In the long run Egypt was aiming at an end to belligerency but would expect Israel to make much more substantial territorial concessions and to obtain approval of its Arab allies.) Thus the language of the text Fahmy accepted contained the sentence that "the conflict between them [the parties] . . . shall not be resolved by the use of force but by peaceful means." But it also said that "It is not a final peace agreement." This was the formula that had been incorporated in the text of the Egyptian-Israeli general armistice agreement signed on February 24, 1949, at Rhodes (following the first Arab-Israeli war), and Fahmy was careful to use an almost identical language this time.³¹

Consequently, anxious to avoid any political implications, Fahmy restrained Sadat (in Kissinger's presence) from signing the document, refused to sign it himself, and left the conference room in a huff. When the meeting resumed, he advised Sadat that the document should be signed by the military chiefs of staff of Egypt and Israel. An impasse ensued, which was finally broken by a compromise when Sadat instructed his more accommodating prime minister, Mahmoud Salem, to sign on Egypt's behalf.

It should be pointed out that in striving, during the negotiations, to secure a pledge of nonbelligerency from Egypt, Israel was aiming at a political goal for which it was basically prepared to pay much more than a mere withdrawal of some thirty-five kilometers eastward. Thus during Kissinger's visit to Israel in March 1975 Prime Minister Rabin had suggested to him that Egypt sign with Israel a separate, full-fledged peace agreement for which Israel would return most or possi-

bly all the Sinai.³² This suggestion was consistent with Israel's long-range policy of separating Egypt from its Arab partners and removing it from the Arab "front-line" coalition and should be kept in mind when considering the merits of the subsequent agreements concluded during Carter's presidency.

The interim agreement of September 1, 1975, evoked different evaluations from Israel and Egypt. Although some Israelis were distrustful of any deal with the Arabs, especially one that would trade the return of territory for promises of peaceful behavior, Premier Rabin did not conceal his satisfaction. "The interim agreement," he wrote, ". . . turned the tide in Israeli-U.S. relations in terms of the scope of financial aid, the supply of arms (including F-16 fighter planes), and a number of fundamental policy matters."³³ And when, subsequently, President Ford approved a list of arms for delivery to Israel, costing \$500 million more than the amount recommended by the U.S. National Security Council, Rabin expressed his deep gratification "by the degree to which we had secured the president's understanding for our military needs."³⁴

By contrast, Egypt's Fahmy was less than enthusiastic about the agreement. When, just prior to signing, he heard from Kissinger about the terms of the U.S.-Israeli memorandum of understanding, he was dismayed. He felt that through this act American policy in the Middle East became subjected to an Israeli veto and that American taxpayers became committed to pouring enormous sums in economic and military aid to Israel. "This," he wrote, "was an unnecessarily high price to pay for withdrawal east of the passes."³⁵ Further, in his memoirs he questioned the value of the agreement, the terms of which were "merely to obtain Israeli surrender of a thin strip of Egyptian territory in the second disengagement."³⁶

CONCLUSION

If we consider that the Vladivostok and Helsinki agreements with Russia—the two major landmarks of the policy of détente—the ban on arms to Turkey with the attendant ramifications, the reassessment of relations with Israel, and the second Egyptian-Israeli disengagement agreement took place during Ford's term of office, his presidency, though brief, was indeed replete with major political and strategic developments. Perhaps the most significant feature of that era was the marked increase in the foreign policy role of Congress. It was con-

gressional intrusion into the presidential sphere that ultimately determined America's policy toward Turkey and toward Israel. In the case of Turkey the president was clearly overruled by Congress and resented it. In the case of Israel the president initially found himself on a collision course with Congress, particularly with the Senate majority, over his policy of reassessment, but with the passage of time he adjusted himself to the circumstances and began to follow a policy more to the liking of Congress.

In the formulation and execution of foreign policy Ford gave considerable latitude to his secretary of state, evidenced by Kissinger's assumed responsibility for certain acts such as the pledge not to recognize the PLO.

Kissinger's role in policy-making was the subject of varying judgments. Both Israel's Premier Rabin and Egypt's Foreign Minister Fahmy believed he "masterminded" the U.S. policy in the Middle East and either blamed or praised him for various acts of this policy. Rabin repeatedly acknowledged having a relationship of friendship with him even though they experienced difficulties in negotiations. As could be expected, Fahmy, who devoted an entire section of his memoirs to the characterization of Kissinger, was less charitable. "Kissinger," he wrote, "had no policy of his own, no theory about how to proceed toward a settlement. For all the fanfare, Kissinger in the Middle East was basically Israel's envoy."³⁷ Fahmy believed that during Nixon's presidency Kissinger's pro-Israeli tendency was to some extent kept in check because Nixon was strong and decisive and had no intention of permitting Israel to dictate America's policy, in contrast to Ford whom he described as not very knowledgeable about foreign affairs and relying excessively on Kissinger. Considering Fahmy's Egyptian identity, his praise of Nixon and denigration of Ford seems somewhat puzzling. In spite of Nixon's repeated assertions that he would never surrender to pro-Israeli pressures, he was definitely less than candid in his relations with the Arabs. It was he who nullified the Rogers Plan, and it was his order to rush arms to Israel during the October war that allowed the Israelis to encircle Egypt's Third Army. True enough, Ford also gave far-reaching economic and military support to Israel, but in the early phase of his term he was the only president since Eisenhower to suspend aid to Israel as part of his "reassessment" policy. This, no doubt, required a good measure of courage, a feature that Fahmy, in his rather severe judgment, seems to underestimate. Fahmy's evaluation of these two American presidents was probably influenced by his own

experience in negotiating the Sinai II agreement and particularly by his negative view of U.S. concessions to Israel regarding the nonrecognition of the PLO and the pledge of massive arms supplies.

Interestingly, it was Ford's rival for the presidency, Jimmy Carter, who, during the televised debate in October 1976, uttered rather harsh words, saying: "As far as foreign policy goes, Mr. Kissinger has been President of this country. Mr. Ford has shown an absence of leadership and an absence of grasp of what this country is and what it ought to be."³⁸ In his memoirs Ford described this attack as a "cheap shot" and asserted that "Of course I got Henry's advice on foreign policy, but I made the decisions myself."³⁹

7. The Carter Presidency

Historians will face a number of difficulties evaluating Jimmy Carter's presidency. A product of the Deep South, Carter combined profound religious devotion, attachment to high moral principles, patriotism enhanced by service in the Navy, and persistence in striving for idealistic goals, with political realism, willingness to compromise and, despite firm early resolves to uphold certain decisions and policies, a tendency to cave in, to the point of surrender, to strong pressures which in practice emasculated his earlier resolutions. Moreover, his presidency came at a time when the so-called WASP domination of the American political process, both foreign and domestic, gave way to a growth of ethnic pluralism (which he promoted), evidenced by political appointments such as Polish-born Zbigniew Brzezinski as the president's national security adviser and, in the later period of the president's term, Edmund Muskie, also of Polish ancestry, as secretary of state; Andrew Young and Donald McHenry, two prominent American blacks, as consecutive U.S. delegates to the United Nations; and two leading figures of Jewish background, Robert Strauss and Sol Linowitz, as presidential envoys in the Arab-Israeli negotiations. It also coincided with the militant emergence of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) as a major force in shaping America's policy toward the Middle East.

Like his predecessors, President Carter was aware of, and strove to counteract, the Soviet threat to the United States and the Free World in general, but this goal was conceived by him in the light of another priority: respect, on a global scale, for human rights. As he himself repeatedly acknowledged, promotion of human rights became the central tenet of his foreign policy.¹ This did not necessarily conflict, in fact it dovetailed, with his policy of warding off the direct Soviet danger because, in both their domestic and their foreign policies, the Soviets were a major violator of human rights. It did, however, pose

difficult dilemmas in two categories: (1) where two powers antagonistic to each other invoked human rights to justify their demands and (2) where the United States had to define its attitude toward a friendly, anti-Communist and yet authoritarian regime known for its violations of human rights. As this account will later demonstrate, Carter's policy in both categories was not always consistent.

Furthermore, Carter's foreign policy was emphatically a policy of peace. This does not mean that peace was not a goal pursued by every American president since World War II, but if a possible conflict arose between the pursuit of peace and the defense of America's vital interests, the idealistic promotion of peace might distort the hierarchy of values and put those interests in jeopardy. Carter's policies were not free of this inner conflict.

Like presidents before him, in foreign policy Carter faced a vast array of issues. Strategic arms limitations talks (SALT) with Russia, the China policy, renouncing control over the Panama Canal, unilateral arms decisions, cooperation with Western Europe, the Solidarity crisis in Poland, and Soviet-Cuban intervention in the Horn of Africa constituted major items on the president's agenda. However, Carter's foreign policy was dominated through all four years of his presidency by the Middle East.² It took more of his time and required more of his personal involvement than probably all other foreign policy issues combined. In the Middle East three problems of critical magnitude claimed the president's attention: the Arab-Israeli peace process, the crisis in Iran, and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

CARTER AND THE ARAB-ISRAELI FEUD

Before giving an account of Carter's actions that led to the Camp David accords in 1978, it may be useful to devote some attention to his basic perceptions and attitudes regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict.

As a candidate for the presidency, Carter had singled out for special mention his support of America's commitment to the security of Israel. Sharing the view of most other Southern Baptists, he believed that the homeland for the Jews was mandated by the teachings of the Bible, therefore ordained by God. He also thought that the United States and Israel were linked by a special tie as democracies. Finally, in his desire to thwart Soviet expansionist designs in the area, he looked upon Israel as a strategic asset.³

His personal exposure to the Middle East was somewhat limited

and one-sided. Like many aspiring political figures, he had visited Israel, but, according to his testimony, "I had no strong feelings about the Arab countries. I had never visited one and knew no Arab leaders."⁴ This imperfect exposure had an impact on his views on the energy problem and, in particular, on the oil crisis of 1973-74, when as a result of Nixon's decision to aid Israel during the October war the United States suffered from the Arab oil embargo. Carter viewed the denial of oil as "blackmail" rather than as a weapon in the Arab struggle, and he mentioned his awareness that, to many resentful American leaders, "the greatest nation on earth was being jerked around by a few desert states."⁵ Moreover, he felt so strongly about the Arab oil policy that, as a presidential candidate, he had stated during a debate with President Ford that if any country should ever again impose an embargo on oil against the United States, he would consider such a move "an economic declaration of war, and would respond instantly and in kind."⁶

These considerations influenced Carter's energy policy. In a memorable address to the nation on April 18, 1977, President Carter announced an energy program, likening it to "a moral equivalent of war." Its objectives were conservation, more domestic fuel production, development of alternate sources of energy, and reduction of both oil imports and consumption. To attain them he proposed deregulation of oil prices, a windfall profits tax on oil companies, and the establishment of a government-owned Synthetic Fuels Corporation. After much acrimonious debate Congress adopted, with various modifications, the required legislation. For the president this struggle against energy waste and excessive vulnerability from oil imports was so difficult and bruising that, as he averred, he saw in it "nothing exhilarating or pleasant."⁷

By the same token Carter considered the Arab boycott of Israel, instituted at the beginning of Israel's statehood, a "disgrace." Consequently, in the spring of 1977 he requested and obtained from Congress antiboycott legislation which covered both the primary and secondary types of boycott and imposed serious penalties on violators.⁸

Carter's human rights policy was also, in a special and beneficial way, relevant to Israel because in shaping his relations with the Soviet Union he asked for and secured Soviet agreement to relax restrictions on Jewish emigration from Russia. As a result, the number of Jewish emigrants gradually grew from 14,261 in 1976 to 51,320 in 1979.⁹ Paradoxically, only a modest portion of these totals (about 20 percent)

chose to go to Israel after being “processed” through a reception center in Austria, the majority opting for the United States or other countries as their destination. Nevertheless, the fact of increased emigration from Russia was important to Israel. It was therefore with dismay that the Israeli leaders and the U.S. government¹⁰ learned of Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky’s decision (viewed as pro-Arab despite his Jewish background) to close the reception center in Schönau Castle to prevent prospective emigrants to Israel from settling in the occupied West Bank in Palestine.

Rather early in his presidency Carter decided to take an “activist” approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It should be pointed out that, in spite of the Egyptian-Israeli and Syrian-Israeli disengagement agreements concluded during the Ford administration, the situation in the area remained tense and no formal peace treaty had been signed. While Israel seemed to favor the uncertain status quo, content to control the occupied Arab lands and hopeful that its overwhelming military superiority would give it protection from possible Arab revenge, the Arab world appeared restless, prone to revolutionary trends, and potentially open to renewal of closer ties with Russia. In short, the area’s situation was far from reassuring, and a minor incident caused by some Arab desperadoes and an excessively strong Israeli retaliation had the potential of initiating a major conflagration, with the possibility of involving both superpowers with unpredictable consequences for world peace.

During the Nixon and Ford administrations American diplomacy, carried out by Kissinger, followed a “step-by-step” line. This approach had the virtue of realistically achieving limited objectives and of reassuring Israel, which feared that a more generalized search for peace might be harmful to its interests. Carter and his advisers, however, favored a comprehensive peace settlement, which meant that any agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors should not be limited to separate deals with Egypt, Jordan, or Syria, but should *simultaneously* encompass all major outstanding problems. Carter believed that America’s passivity in this lingering conflict was dangerous and that both the radicalization of the Arab regimes and Soviet reentry into the area should be prevented.¹¹ He strove to have a peace that would be based on UN Resolution 242 of 1967, which would include Israel’s withdrawal from the occupied territories in return for secure boundaries and security guarantees and which would ensure justice for the Palestinians.

These objectives, however, were easier to proclaim as general principles than to implement in detail. All three of them were apt to pose serious difficulties. On the territorial question Carter embraced the idea of Nixon's secretary of state, William Rogers, that the boundaries between Israel and its Arab neighbors should return to the prewar 1967 lines, with only minor modifications. This idea was clearly disapproved by Israel.¹²

With regard to security Carter adopted the concept of two kinds of boundaries: those marking the confines of sovereignty and those (more extended for Israel) marking the limits of military presence.¹³ This concept, in turn, was bound to be strongly resisted by the Arabs.

It is interesting to note that on the basis of his visit to Israel in 1976 National Security Adviser Brzezinski had developed the view that territorial and security questions should be disconnected (an idea that influenced Carter's thinking): "Probably contrary to the expectations of my Israeli hosts," he wrote subsequently, "my trip to Golan and my travels within the country convinced me of the futility of seeking security through the acquisition of territory. It became clear to me that Israel could never acquire enough territory to compensate for Arab hostility and that therefore Israeli security would have to be decoupled from the question of territorial sovereignty."¹⁴

As for the Palestinians, Carter, explicitly motivated by his quest for human rights, believed that the "continued deprivation of Palestinian rights . . . was contrary to the basic moral and ethical principles of both our countries."¹⁵ Sharing the president's thoughts, Secretary Vance voiced the same concern: "Ejected from their homes, embittered, radicalized, living in squalor and desperation, the Palestinians remained the central, unresolved, human rights issue of the Middle East."¹⁶ Consequently, Carter went on record at least twice in the first half year of his presidency advocating a "homeland" for the Palestinians: on March 16, 1977, at a meeting in Clinton, Massachusetts, and on May 26, 1977, in a speech in which he added that the Palestinians should be compensated for the losses they had suffered.¹⁷

Carter's remarks caused an uproar in the Jewish community in America and serious concern in Israel. Moreover, his solicitude for Palestinian rights was complicated by the U.S. government's attitude toward the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). On the one hand, by virtue of the Arab League's decision adopted at Rabat in 1974, the PLO was designated as "the sole representative" of the Palestinian people. On the other, as noted in an earlier chapter, Kissinger as

secretary of state had given on September 1, 1975, a promise to Israel that the United States would not recognize or negotiate with the PLO so long as it did not acknowledge Israel's right to exist and did not accept United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338. In spite of his search for a just Palestinian solution, Carter accepted Kissinger's pledge: "I had reconfirmed this commitment and I always honored it."¹⁸ It is worth noting that Vance assessed Kissinger's pledge (which also included, as mentioned earlier, an American commitment to coordinate with Israel any future peace proposals) as a "high price" for a minor Sinai withdrawal. "The Israelis," he subsequently wrote, "interpreted [this] commitment as giving them a veto over the presentation of U.S. ideas for peace to the Arabs. It . . . was to make our task of finding a way to deal with the PLO close to impossible at a time when the Palestinian question had become a pivotal issue."¹⁹

And indeed, true to Vance's testimony, the matter of U.S.-PLO relations was more complex than Carter's statement indicated. In the first place there were instances of the U.S. government, on its own initiative, approaching the PLO when its services were needed. This occurred on at least two occasions, once during the Carter presidency and once under Reagan.

The first occasion took place in November 1979 when the American Embassy employees were taken hostage by Khomeini's revolutionary regime in Iran: the U.S. government, in its search for a solution, turned to the PLO (at that time on good terms with Iran's Islamic authorities) to intercede for their release. As a result, thirteen embassy employees (female and black) were set free.²⁰

The second appeal to the PLO was made in 1983 to provide protection to the personnel of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut when, following the bombing of the embassy, it was being evacuated from Lebanon. The PLO cooperated and the evacuation was carried out without incident. These, however, as noted by Assistant Secretary of State Nicholas Veliotis, were only "security . . . and administrative contacts" and not "substantive policy discussions."²¹

On the other hand, when considerable tension developed between the U.S. government and Israel in late August 1977 over the expansion of Israeli settlements in occupied territories, Carter and his advisers were actively considering repudiation of Kissinger's pledge and opening talks with the PLO. It was at this White House meeting that the president "indicated his increasing frustration with the Israeli position and his unwillingness to maintain a policy in which in effect we

are financing their conquests and they simply defy us . . . and . . . make a mockery of our advice and our preferences."²² At the same meeting Vance expressed similar sentiments and suggested that "if the Israelis open a single more settlement, we proceed to state that we no longer are bound by our self-imposed restraint on not talking with the PLO and should initiate talks with the PLO." Brzezinski supported Vance's idea.²³

Actually, the validity of Kissinger's pledge could be and was questioned by some authorities. The pledge was contained in a "Memorandum of Agreement," which was an executive act, not a treaty subject to Senate ratification. When queried, on October 7, 1975, by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the memorandum of agreement whereby American technicians were to oversee the disengagement of Egyptian and Israeli forces in Sinai, Kissinger had stated that memoranda of agreement are important diplomatic instruments engaging the good faith of the United States "so long as the circumstances that gave rise to them continue. But they are not binding commitments of the United States."²⁴

Communications with the PLO continued to be a sensitive matter under the Carter administration. Some, like Brzezinski, were of the opinion that "occasional, informal contacts" were permissible²⁵ and at some point necessary and that the United States "must not repeat the mistake of the French, who for years refused to deal with the FLN in Algeria."²⁶ Similarly, Secretary Vance, upon return from one of his trips to the Middle East, proposed that contacts with the PLO should begin. Vice President Mondale opposed the idea while the president remained indecisive.²⁷ When in the course of a reception at the United Nations in March 1977 the president shook hands with the PLO emissary, he felt the need to explain this accidental encounter in his memoirs.²⁸ Two years later, when Ambassador Andrew Young, at a party given by Kuwait's UN delegate in July 1979, met and conversed with Zehdi Labib Terzi, the PLO's representative at the United Nations, he was officially reprimanded and on August 15 resigned his post.

Peace based on Israeli withdrawal, security guarantees, and a homeland for the Palestinians thus constituted broader goals that Carter hoped to achieve by inducing Israel, Egypt, and possibly other Israeli neighbors to engage in negotiations. A number of subsidiary problems were bound to arise and had to be settled. The first important issue, however, was to agree on a proper procedure. Carter and his advisers were initially aiming at the revival of the multilateral Geneva

conference which, as we recall, had once been convened during the Ford era under American and Soviet cochairmanship. Although both the Ford and Carter administrations were reluctant to introduce the Soviets too actively into the peacemaking process, Vance advised the president that "the Soviet Union, with political interests in the region and as a patron of several Arab states, should be accorded a role in negotiations that would help to dissuade it from undermining our efforts."²⁹

Striving toward these procedural and substantive objectives, Carter designed during his first year in office a rather demanding schedule of talks with the Israeli and Arab leaders. Because he and his advisers felt that negotiations would unavoidably produce friction with Israel, they feared that postponing them to the third or fourth year of the presidential term was hazardous because "such conflict would be adversely reflected in the mass media and in financial support for the Democratic Party."³⁰

Thus the president's timetable included the following talks (mostly in Washington) in the spring of 1977:

March 7–8, with Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

April 4–5, with Egypt's President Sadat

April 25–26, with King Hussein of Jordan

May 24, with Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia

May 9, with President Hafez al-Assad of Syria (in Geneva, where Carter stopped after an economic summit in London)

Carter's meeting with Rabin was not successful; their ideas of peace were at odds. The president thought Rabin was cold and uncooperative. By contrast, much greater trust developed between Carter and Sadat, and there was no wide gap in their views. Conversations with Hussein and Fahd were friendly but, due to the prudence of these Arab leaders, noncommittal and inconclusive. The meeting with Assad in Geneva exposed Carter to the Syrian hard line, but it was held with a modicum of mutual friendliness.

In the meantime a major event occurred in Israel. The May elections in that country brought to power Menachem Begin, leader of the Likud coalition and formerly a militant chief of the fighting group Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Herut Party. His was the so-called revisionist program calling for territorial annexations and intransigence toward the Arabs. In July 1977 Begin paid Carter a visit in Washington. Their talks revealed a wide disparity of views. Begin defended Israel's right to establish and expand Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Carter reminded him that the United States opposed such actions as contrary to international law. He outlined to Begin his program, which consisted of five points: (1) achieve a comprehensive peace affecting all of Israel's neighbors; (2) peace to be based on UN Resolution 242; (3) peace would involve open borders and free trade; (4) peace would call for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territory to secure borders; (5) a Palestinian entity (but not an independent nation) should be created. Begin responded that he could accept all these points except the Palestinian entity.³¹

Progress toward the Geneva conference encountered various obstacles, the main three being the issue of Palestinian participation (opposed by Israel and favored by the Arabs), launching of new Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and an Israeli incursion into Lebanon (September 1977) in retaliation for Arab acts of terror inside Israel. A number of trips that Vance undertook to the Middle East proved of no avail. However, a diplomatic advance was made on the Soviet front: following Foreign Minister A. Gromyko's visit in Washington, the United States and the Soviet Union issued, on October 1, 1977, as cochairmen of the Geneva Peace Conference, a joint statement which called for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, based on (a) withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories; (b) ensuring the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people; (c) termination of the state of war and establishment of normal peaceful relations; (d) respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence; (e) ensuring the security of the borders through demilitarized zones, presence of UN troops or observers, and international guarantee; as well as (f) Soviet and American participation in the guarantees of the entire settlement.³²

These principles reflected Carter's thoughts on the problem and were welcomed by the Arab nations and the PLO, even though the statement made no mention of the PLO or the Palestinian state. The statement, however, provoked a violent rejection by Israel and, broadly, by the American Jewish community. As a result, the joint U.S.-Soviet statement was replaced within a few days by an American-Israeli statement which said that the Geneva Conference should be based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338. It was a significant American retreat under Israeli pressure, and it upset the Arabs.

Further consultations between Washington and Cairo and between Washington and Israel produced only minimal progress and proved inconclusive. Then suddenly the "Gordian Knot" was cut by

President Sadat of Egypt when on November 9, 1977, he publicly announced that he was ready to go to Jerusalem to talk directly to the Israelis. And indeed Egypt's president visited Jerusalem between November 19 and 21. There he addressed the Knesset, Israel's parliament, and offered Israel recognition and permanent peace based on justice, which would not be limited to a bilateral Egyptian-Israeli agreement but would also lead to return of occupied Arab territories including Arab Jerusalem, recognition of the Palestinian right to statehood, and secure boundaries subject to appropriate safeguards and international guarantees.³³

At first Sadat's sudden peace initiative caused some consternation in Washington, geared as it was to the reconvening of the Geneva conference, but soon Carter and his advisers adjusted to the new situation. There is no doubt that Sadat's move was unprecedented, very risky, and courageous considering that since 1948, that is, the creation of the State of Israel, no Arab government wanted or dared to recognize formally its existence and all Arab states remained in a state of official belligerency.

In fact, the early confusion in Washington over the procedural change gave way to mild optimism. These sanguine expectations, however, were cut short in the wake of Premier Begin's visit to Sadat in the Egyptian city of Ismailia on the Suez Canal in late December 1977. Begin brought with him a response to Sadat's peace initiative in the form of two projects, the first pertaining to Israeli withdrawal from Sinai and the second proposing autonomy for "Judea and Samaria" (Begin's name for the West Bank). The Sinai project envisaged (a) keeping the Egyptian army west of the Mitla and Giddi passes; (b) demilitarization of the rest of the Sinai (more than three-quarters of the area); (c) retention by Israel of its military airports in the Sinai; (d) retention by Israel of its settlements in the Sinai; (e) provision for a small Israeli force to protect these settlements. The Judea and Samaria project called for (a) an end to Israeli military rule; (b) Israel to be in charge of security and public order in these areas; (c) "Palestinian Arabs" to be granted administrative self-rule (in such fields as education, health, sanitation, etc., but not control over water resources); (d) the inhabitants to be entitled to choose between Israeli and Jordanian citizenship; (e) Israelis to be entitled to buy and own land in Judea and Samaria; and (f) the question of sovereignty over Judea and Samaria to be left in suspension for further discussion. Begin's proposals were

almost diametrically opposed to Sadat's ideas. They stunned and dismayed Sadat and members of his delegation.

Having learned of this wide disparity between Egyptian and Israeli views, Carter decided to intervene and, in a bold exercise of personal diplomacy, traveled to Aswan in Upper Egypt to see Sadat in January 1978. (The president was returning from a long trip which had taken him to Poland, Russia, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.) In Aswan he reached full unanimity with Sadat, resulting in the adoption by both of them of the "Aswan Formula" consisting of three major points: (1) establishment of normal peace in the area; (2) Israel's withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967 and secure borders; and (3) "The solution must recognize the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and enable the Palestinians to participate in the determination of their own future."³⁴ The Aswan Formula, later to be invoked in various negotiations, did not differ much from earlier Carter and Sadat proposals. Its novelty was that for the first time in a joint U.S.-Arab statement not only were "the legitimate rights" of the Palestinians recognized but also their specific right to participate in the decision-making process that would determine their future status. Moreover, from now on it became increasingly clear that Carter's thinking about the nature of peace was much closer to that of Sadat and that a profound gap divided their thinking from Begin's.

Between January and August 1978 the Middle Eastern diplomatic agenda was focused on two simultaneous processes: one was the general Arab reaction to Sadat's trip to Jerusalem, which was negative and even cost Sadat the resignation of his foreign minister, Ismail Fahmy, and Fahmy's acting successor, Mahmoud Riad; the other consisted of persistent American attempts to bridge the gap between the Egyptian and Israeli attitudes. Various high-level visits were exchanged. Vance resumed his traveling to Jerusalem and Cairo; Israeli cabinet ministers made trips to Washington; and in February Sadat and in March Begin visited Carter. Begin's visit was especially important because it demonstrated more clearly than ever before how far from Carter he stood in his ideas. In the course of a rather dramatic conversation the president read to Begin his understanding of the Israeli position. It contained the Israeli Premier's "six nos": (1) no political or military withdrawal from the West Bank; (2) no stoppage of the construction of new settlements or expansion of existing ones; (3) no withdrawal of Israeli settlers from the Sinai; (4) no application of UN Resolution 242 to the

West Bank-Gaza area; (5) no granting of real authority to the Palestinian Arabs; and (6) no voice for the Palestinian Arabs in determining their future. Begin termed it "a negative way" to express his position but "did not deny the accuracy of any of it."³⁵ Discouraged, Carter was about to withdraw from his mediating role. He felt that "Begin was becoming an insurmountable obstacle to further progress."³⁶ Neither Begin's next visit to Washington in May nor a tripartite conference held in Leeds Castle in England in July by the foreign ministers of Israel, Egypt, and the United States advanced the cause of peace. Moreover, two additional issues contributed to the aggravation of U.S.-Israeli relations: the contemplated sale of F-15 fighter planes to Saudi Arabia and the invasion in March, on a substantial scale, of Lebanon by Israel, again in retaliation for a PLO attack on the Israeli coast, which claimed thirty-five lives. Carter was particularly disturbed by the Israeli use of American arms, including the cluster bombs, contrary to the agreement made when they had been sold to Israel.³⁷

Two points deserve special attention during this tense period. First, despite the earlier acceptance of UN Resolution 242 by Israel, Begin claimed that the resolution did not apply to the occupied territories because, according to him, the war of 1967 was a war in self-defense for Israel and as such did not forbid Israel from acquiring territory by force.³⁸ This was a claim that in practice virtually annulled the UN-proclaimed principles of peace and President Johnson's statement of September 10, 1968, that "boundaries cannot and should not reflect the weight of conquest."³⁹

Second, in spite of the tensions and irritations with Begin, American aid to Israel, with a single exception, continued uninterrupted. This stemmed from the administration's conscious decision not to intensify Israeli insecurity through the use of aid as a means of pressure. The exception had occurred in the wake of the earlier Israeli incursion into Lebanon in September 1977 when the president sent a message to Begin warning him that unless Israel immediately put an end to this expedition all military aid to Israel would be halted. In response Begin ordered the withdrawal of his forces from Lebanon.⁴⁰ But as a matter of general policy Israel was being supplied with American arms regardless of political complications. According to Ezer Weizman, Israeli minister of defense, Israel "had received U.S. military assistance of stunning proportions, far exceeding what our forces had possessed in the Six-Day War. By my reckoning, some 20 percent of our

defense system is maintained by the American taxpayer, to the yearly tune of a billion dollars in military aid to Israel." To this, as Brzezinski pointed out, should be added U.S. economic aid, which between 1973 and 1982 amounted to about \$10 billion, nearly \$3,000 for each Israeli citizen, "an unprecedented level of aid to a single and not a particularly poor country."⁴¹

Throughout his presidency, but especially during the early formative period when his ideas crystallized, Carter was acutely conscious of the reactions of the American Jewish community to his confrontations with Begin and repeatedly held meetings with its leaders to inform, persuade, and reassure them. His task was not easy. Initially, many Jewish leaders shared his shock and misgivings when Begin came to power in Israel.⁴² In conferences Carter held with America's pro-Israeli leaders (who included some Christians) in the early part of 1978, they agreed with his view that Begin's settlements policy was a serious mistake and expressed surprise at Israel's claim that UN Resolution 242 did not apply to the occupied territories.⁴³ Gradually, however, the American Jewish community became reconciled to Begin's leadership and, to use Carter's words, "in public showdown on a controversial issue, they would always side with the Israeli leaders and condemn us for being 'evenhanded' in our concern about both Palestinian rights and Israeli security."⁴⁴ Beginning with the summer of 1977, the AIPAC launched an intensive campaign to put pressure against Carter's policy.⁴⁵ Carter and his team realized that AIPAC's influence was not negligible. Whenever a prominent American expressed a view critical of Israeli policies, he became a target of AIPAC-sponsored hostility. Such were the cases of Senator Fulbright, who in October 1973 charged that the Israelis controlled policy in the Congress, and of General George S. Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Brown had twice sounded critical of Israel: in October 1973, when he deplored the influence of the Israeli lobby in Congress and connected it with, as he saw it, Jewish ownership of banks and newspapers,⁴⁶ and in October 1976, when he stated that from the "pure military point of view to the United States, Israel has just got to be considered a burden."⁴⁷ Thus the president was torn between his desire to ensure Israel's security and his anger at Begin (of whose Irgun past he was aware), as well as his moral and political conviction that the rights of the Palestinians should be protected. Yet he was so anxious to make progress in his search for peace that he passed the word to

Moshe Dayan, Israel's foreign minister, on a visit to Washington in April 1978, that if Israel were to be more accommodating he would be prepared to consider a bilateral security treaty with it.⁴⁸

The president and his White House advisers were so concerned about this adversarial relationship that Brzezinski sought House Speaker "Tip" O'Neill's advice. In his reply O'Neill referred to the one weapon the president held in reserve but that had been used only once, during Eisenhower's term, namely going openly to the public (in some well-publicized speech). O'Neill told him "point blank that if the choice came down between the President and the pro-Israeli lobby, the country would clearly choose the President—but only if the choice was clearly posed."⁴⁹

CAMP DAVID AND ITS AFTERMATH

Frustrated by slow diplomatic process and domestic impediments, in July 1978 Carter decided to invite Sadat and Begin to the presidential vacation facility at Camp David in Maryland and lead the negotiations himself, with the firm resolve of reaching an agreement. It was a risky political gamble, internationally and domestically. If it failed, it would reflect adversely on the president's political fortunes.

The invitation (delivered by Vance personally to Begin and Sadat) was made public on August 8, and the conference began in Camp David on September 4 and lasted until September 17, 1978. The participants were confined to the strictly guarded wooded retreat, proceedings were secret, and the press was excluded. Later, details of difficult and exhausting negotiations were revealed in the accounts and memoirs of members of all three negotiating teams: by President Carter, Vance, Brzezinski, Harold Saunders and William Quandt of the American team; by Moshe Dayan and Ezer Weizman of the Israeli team; and by Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel of the Egyptian team. All these accounts reconstruct the day-by-day (or hour-by-hour) proceedings, and, apart from the matters of substance, they provide revealing information about the personalities involved, their idiosyncrasies, their mutual clashes, likes and dislikes.

Broadly, the procedure was as follows: the three parties met together only at the beginning of the conference. They presented on that occasion their respective proposals, which were quite apart from one another. From the very outset it became clear not only that the Egyptian and Israeli proposals showed marked differences but that Sadat

and Begin disliked and distrusted each other. To avoid further tensions and irritation Carter chose not to reconvene the tripartite meetings but to negotiate separately with Sadat and separately with Begin and serve as intermediary himself. His general method was to listen to one party's exposition, modify its proposals by persuasion if possible, and then try to "sell" them to the other party, which in turn could accept, reject, or change them, and Carter again would convey these proposals back to the first party. This process was repeated a number of times, with innumerable drafts and counterdrafts produced by the president himself and his negotiating teams.

The American delegation worked as a harmonious unit. Carter himself put in an enormous amount of energy, often working late into the night, conversant with and attentive to the smallest detail, including geography, topography, military matters, and language. Perhaps the one weakness of the U.S. delegation was that it did not have an expert in international law who could match the experience and finesse of the Israeli jurist Aharon Barak and of certain law-trained members of the Egyptian team. As a result, the Americans allowed some imprecisions or omissions (mostly to the Israeli advantage) to creep into the final documents.

It is also worth noting that there were differences among the three delegations as to their eagerness to reach an agreement. This was an important factor in the deliberations because the more anxious a given party was to conclude an accord, the weaker its political position tended to be. Of the three principal statesmen Carter had probably the greatest stake in aiming at an agreement, personally and politically. Next to him was Sadat, who strongly desired an agreement to vindicate his November 1977 Jerusalem trip and who was most anxious to preserve his newly forged friendship with Carter and the United States. Although the Israelis as a matter of principle desired a treaty with Egypt that would once and for all remove Egypt from the coalition of unfriendly Arab "frontline" states, Begin could well afford to return home without an agreement because this would only prolong the existing status quo which Israel accepted as tolerable and perhaps advantageous.

Furthermore, there was an important difference in the attitudes of the Egyptian and Israeli teams. The Egyptian team, composed of cabinet-level (Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel and Usama el-Baz) and supporting personnel, was impressively professional and paid attention to legal and language details, strongly determined to safeguard Egyptian

and Arab interests and not to isolate Egypt in the Arab world. Consequently, the team was harder to deal with and was less ready to accept concessions than Sadat, who was bored with detail, more interested in broader issues, and inclined toward sweeping gestures and impulsive moves. The opposite seemed to prevail on the Israeli side: while Begin was a "diehard," stubborn and unyielding to the point of obstructionism, often engaged in tedious and repetitious expositions of Jewish history and sufferings, and meticulously attentive to legal words and expressions, members of his team (especially Weizman and Dayan) were more willing to concede certain points and cultivate the goodwill of both the Egyptian and American delegations.

As for the substance of the negotiations, there were three distinct sets of proposals: American, Egyptian, and Israeli. The original American proposals tended to follow Carter's ideas developed since the inception of his presidency. UN Resolution 242 was to serve as a basis for the entire agreement. The aim was a comprehensive peace that would apply both to Egypt and to the West Bank-Gaza area and would provide for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and ensure some form of "homeland" for the Palestinians while involving other Arabs (Palestinians themselves and Jordan) in the peacemaking process. It would also call for an end to the Arab boycott of Israel. The part of the agreement dealing with Egypt would envisage complete Israeli withdrawal (though in phases) from the Sinai; military arrangements (such as limitations on the Egyptian forces and demilitarized zones) to satisfy Israel's quest for security; full peace (not merely an end to belligerency), which would include normalization of diplomatic, trade, and cultural relations; provision for reciprocal tourism; and free navigation in the hitherto contested waters (Suez Canal, Strait of Tiran). The American proposals regarding the West Bank aimed at the restoration of the 1967 borders with minor modifications; no more Israeli settlements; provision for an undivided Jerusalem with free access to the shrines of the three religions (Jewish, Christian, Moslem); distinction between the borders delimiting sovereignty and those geared to the maintenance of security (hence calling for some Israeli presence in the West Bank); Palestinian autonomy (but no statehood); Palestinian participation in determining the future of the area; a five-year transition period; arrangements for return of the refugees; and a link with Jordan.

The Egyptian proposals reflected Sadat's general principles that he was willing to go far to satisfy Israel's craving for security (such as

limiting Egypt's forces and offensive arms in the Sinai and accepting neutral monitoring stations) but was adamant on two basic issues: land and sovereignty. Thus he asked for complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Sinai (no airfields, or any other presence), removal of Jewish settlements (already established in the eastern part of the Sinai in the Rafah-El-Arish-Sharm el-Sheikh triangle), and payment by Israel of reparations for the occupation of Egyptian territory as well as for the oil Israel drew from the Sinai wells during the occupation. In return he agreed to full diplomatic recognition and peaceful normalization of relations with Israel. His proposals on the West Bank and Gaza were not as detailed as the Israeli or American but aimed at some form of Palestinian self-determination; he also insisted on the linkage of the Egyptian and West Bank parts of the agreement.

Israel's proposals were largely a reproduction of Begin's Ismailia program. Thus Israel was prepared to return the Sinai to Egypt but with important reservations: the Egyptian army was to stay only in the Sinai's westernmost zone, with the bulk of the Sinai up to the Israeli border remaining demilitarized; Israel was to keep its existing airports in the area as well as the already established Jewish settlements (with adequate military protection); and Israel was to enjoy freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal and the Strait of Tiran and to obtain assurance that Sinai oil would be available to it. On the West Bank and Gaza Israel was to withdraw its military government but be responsible for security and public order; Palestinian Arabs were to be given administrative self-rule ("full autonomy"), to be followed by a five-year transition period, and the choice between Israeli and Jordanian citizenship; and Israelis were to be granted the right to buy land in the West Bank. In addition, the treaty with Egypt was to be concluded first and the one on the West Bank-Gaza later. The Israeli plan contained no specific reference to Jerusalem or to the Jewish settlements.

In the course of the negotiations Begin expressed interest in concluding a mutual defense treaty with the United States. However, this time Carter resisted the suggestion, fearing continuing U.S. involvement: "For us to be a formal ally of Israel would make it impossible to mediate between Israel and the Arab nations."⁵⁰ Generally, Carter's conversations with Begin were difficult and tense. They were bringing this frequently smiling president to the point of high irritation. The three major points of contention were UN Resolution 242, Jerusalem, and the Jewish settlements. "We . . . had a heated discussion about the language of United Nations Resolution 242—'inadmissibility of ac-

quisition of territory by war," which Begin rejected as unacceptable and argued that the war of 1967 "gives Israel the right to change frontiers." "He was angry," wrote Carter in his memoirs, "and so was I."⁵¹ On Jerusalem the two leaders differed in that Begin considered the Arab part of the city an integral part of Israel while Carter classified it as part of the West Bank, hence as occupied territory.⁵² Israeli settlements were another bone of contention. In fact on this account alone Carter shared Sadat's doubt that Begin was negotiating in good faith. "I became angry," wrote Carter, "and almost shouted," when discussing this matter with Begin. "I accused Begin of wanting to hold onto the West Bank, and said that his home-rule or autonomy proposal was a subterfuge."⁵³ And in another exchange between the two leaders Carter spoke with emphasis to Begin about the proposed "full autonomy": "No self-respecting Arab would accept this. . . . If I were an Arab, I would prefer the present Israeli occupation to this proposal of yours."⁵⁴ The situation was further complicated by the fact that in addition to Kissinger's pledge of September 1975, President Ford had promised in a letter of December 1975 to coordinate with Israel any U.S. proposal for a peace settlement before submitting it to the Arabs.⁵⁵ Begin insisted on strict application of this promise.

By contrast, Carter's relationship with Sadat not only was harmonious but developed into genuine friendship. Sadat was willing a number of times to concede to Israeli demands either because Carter persuaded him or out of the desire to please him. Sadat's concessions baffled and often brought to grief his Egyptian aides; they caused one of them, Foreign Minister Kamel, to tend his resignation at the end of the Camp David conference. (Kamel's formal resignation took place after their return to Cairo. He was Sadat's third consecutive foreign minister to resign in protest over his policy.) At one point in the latter part of the conference, Sadat, exasperated by Begin's uncompromising stand, packed his bags and told Vance of his decision to leave. He relented and agreed to stay after Carter personally appealed to him that his departure would not only hurt the U.S.-Egyptian relationship and put the onus of failure on him, but also damage one of Carter's most precious possessions—their friendship and mutual trust.

It would be incorrect to draw the conclusion from the above remarks that Sadat was the only one to make concessions. On several points Begin also compromised, especially when Egyptian rights were concerned. In fact one may say that Sadat largely won his battle for the principle of Egyptian sovereignty in the Sinai. Thus he obtained Is-

rael's agreement to remove entirely its military forces and, after much bargaining, Israeli settlements in the Peninsula. The latter concession was probably the hardest for Begin to make. "My right eye will fall out, my right hand will fall off before I ever agree to the dismantling of a single Jewish settlement," he had exclaimed on one occasion. The fact that he did concede on this point strengthened Brzezinski in his view "that Begin can be both pressured and enticed."⁵⁶

Finally, on September 17 the agreement was reached. It was signed by Sadat and Begin with Carter as an official witness. It was composed of two basic documents: a Framework for Peace in the Middle East and a Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel, and the Accompanying Letters exchanged between Carter and Begin and Carter and Sadat.

The Framework for Peace in the Middle East began with a Preamble which designated UN Resolution 242, in all its parts, as the basis for peace between Israel and its neighbors; confirmed the validity of the UN charter and norms of international law; and expressed respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area. It also affirmed the parties' determination to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict through the conclusion of peace treaties on the basis of principles enunciated in the framework agreement.

In Part A (West Bank and Gaza) the signatories declared that Egypt, Israel, Jordan, "and the representatives of the Palestinian people" should participate in the resolution of the Palestinian problem. The parties agreed that a transitional period of no longer than five years should be instituted for the West Bank and Gaza as soon as a self-governing authority (administrative council) had been freely elected by the inhabitants of these areas. This authority should replace the Israeli military government. Jordan would be invited to join in the negotiations to achieve these ends. The delegations of Egypt and Jordan could include Palestinians as mutually agreed. Israeli armed forces would be withdrawn but some of them would remain ("redeployed") in specific security locations. The agreement would provide for internal and external security and public order. Israeli and Jordanian forces would participate in joint patrols to safeguard the security of the borders.

Not later than in the third year after the beginning of the transitional period, negotiations should start to determine the final status of the West Bank and Gaza and to conclude a peace treaty between Israel

and Jordan, with the participation of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the elected representatives of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. These negotiations should resolve the boundary lines and security matters and also recognize "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and their just requirements." All necessary measures would be taken to assure the security of Israel and its neighbors during the transitional period and beyond. The refugee problem should be resolved.

In Part B (Egypt-Israel) the parties pledged not to use force against each other and to aim at concluding a peace treaty according to the principles enunciated in a separate framework to govern Egyptian-Israeli relations.

In Part C (Associated Principles) rules to be applied to relations and peace treaties between Israel and each of its neighbors—Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon—were established. They encompassed full recognition, cancellation of economic boycotts, economic cooperation, and settlement of mutual financial claims—all under the aegis of the United Nations Security Council and with U.S. participation.

The second document—Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel—again reconfirmed the validity of UN Resolution 242, stipulated that a peace treaty should be concluded within three months, and proclaimed the following principles:

1. terms of the peace treaty to be implemented between two and three years after its signing
2. Egypt to regain full sovereignty over the Sinai
3. Israel to withdraw its forces from the Sinai
4. airfields left by Israel in El-Arish, Rafah, Ras en-Naqb, and Sharm el-Sheikh would be used for civilian purposes only
5. freedom of navigation and overflight for Israel through the Suez Canal, the Gulf of Suez, the Strait of Tiran, and the Gulf of Aqaba, the latter two proclaimed as international waterways
6. a highway to be constructed linking the Sinai and Jordan through Israeli territory near Elat, with free passage by Egypt and Jordan
7. specific military dispositions to be adopted:
 - a. maximum one division of Egyptian forces to be stationed within 50 kilometers (km) east of the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Suez
 - b. demilitarization of the rest of the Sinai Peninsula, with only UN police forces permitted within

c. Israel to limit its forces within 3 km east of the Egyptian border to four infantry battalions

d. three other battalions to supplement the civil police in keeping order "in the area not included above"

e. UN forces to be stationed in the Israeli-Egyptian border area and in Sharm el Sheikh, these forces to be removed only by approval of the UN Security Council

f. Israeli forces to withdraw from the Sinai in two phases: first, within three to nine months of the signing of the treaty, to a line extending east of El Arish to Ras Muhammad, and later to the international border

8. Following the conclusion of the peace treaty, normal relations should be established between Egypt and Israel.

The two framework agreements were supplemented by the Accompanying Letters exchanged between Carter on the one side and Sadat and Begin on the other. They clarified Egypt's and Israel's respective positions on the Israeli settlements in the Sinai (to be dismantled only after Knesset approval; lacking it the framework agreement would be null and void), Jerusalem (treated differently by each of the three negotiating parties), implementation of the comprehensive peace settlement, and the Israeli definition of terms. A separate letter signed by U.S. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to Israel's Minister of Defense Ezer Weizman committed the United States to help in relocating Israeli air bases in the Sinai to Israeli territory.⁵⁷

The Camp David agreements have been described here in considerable detail to stress their historical importance and also to indicate the changes they brought in the signatory parties' initial positions. There should be no doubt as to their importance: for the first time since 1948 Israel was formally recognized by an Arab country, one with which it had fought four wars and remained in a state of belligerency. From now on it was to establish a peaceful, regular relationship with that country, the most populous and important in the Arab world. Both sides to the agreements made significant concessions. Israel agreed to dismantle its settlements in Sinai as well as to withdraw entirely from the occupied Egyptian territory, although originally it had hoped to retain some of its presence in the area. As for the comprehensive peace settlement, Israel recognized that there were indeed "legitimate Palestinian rights" to be protected and that UN Resolution 242 was to serve as a basis "in all its parts," which meant

that the principles of Israeli military withdrawal and the nonadmissibility of territorial expansion by conquest were to be upheld.

To regain sovereignty over its territory Egypt paid a price by agreeing to the severe limitation of its military presence in the Sinai and, as yet without a formal document, to make its oil available to Israel. Egyptian hopes, however, were disappointed on several counts with regard to the West Bank and Gaza. Instead of proclaiming in clear terms Palestinian self-determination, the framework agreement provided a complicated and somewhat confusing formula for administrative self-rule (or autonomy) for the "inhabitants" (presumably Arab as well as Jewish) of these occupied territories and a lengthy transitional period to an unknown future. Israel's military withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza was hedged with so many reservations as to make its reality questionable in practice. Arab Jerusalem, which Israel had virtually annexed in 1967 and which the United States considered as occupied territory, was not even mentioned in the text of the agreement. Any reference to Jewish settlements in the West Bank was also omitted. The major and perhaps decisive flaw from the Egyptian point of view was the lack of any explicit linkage between the Egyptian and West Bank agreements. It was possible, therefore, that Egypt might first conclude with Israel a treaty of peace while a comprehensive settlement concerning the West Bank and the fate of the Palestinians might wait indefinitely. This is how most of the Egyptian delegation viewed the accords, and this is what had brought Sadat to the verge of leaving Camp David. The Egyptians were also dismayed that the United States, after some promising efforts, gave in to the Israelis and virtually accepted, with minor face-saving changes, Begin's Ismailia program of December 1977 which had so much outraged them at that time.

In evaluating the Camp David frameworks Egypt's Foreign Minister Kamel deplored the fact that the Carter-Sadat Aswan formula on Palestine was abandoned, that because of U.S. weapons Israel became intransigent and arrogant, and that Egypt, by concluding a separate peace treaty, was bound to become isolated in the Arab world, which he believed to be Begin's objective. He described Begin as "treacherous" and blamed Sadat for poor negotiating skills and a propensity to rashness and wastefulness. He also had harsh words for the American president. "Carter," he said, "had not Eisenhower's strength, just as Sadat had not Nasser's. The strength of both Carter and Sadat was more apparent than real. They spoke of noble principles, but these

were not ingrained in their souls."⁵⁸ Sadat, he asserted, "had capitulated unconditionally to President Carter who, in turn, had capitulated unconditionally to [Menachem] Begin."⁵⁹

As for Begin's motives—to give the Sinai back to Egypt but retain Israeli control of the West Bank—his collaborator at Camp David, Ezer Weizman, expressed the opinion that "renouncing the Sinai was highly painful for Begin. However, behind the willingness to give up the peninsula was the true Menachem Begin, alive and active. He must have decided to reach a compromise with the Egyptians in the south as a way of perpetuating some form of Israeli rule over Judea and Samaria. Whereas the Egyptians saw the Sinai agreement as the model for similar understandings with Jordan and Syria over the West Bank and the Golan Heights, Begin saw it as the precise opposite. As far as he was concerned, the withdrawal from the Sinai would be the end of the story."⁶⁰

The American view of Camp David was much more positive. Something akin to euphoria permeated Congress when Carter gave a report to a joint session of both Houses on the agreements. "The Camp David accords rank as one of the most important achievements of the Carter administration," wrote Vance. And although they deviated substantially from his and Carter's original positions, he defended them: "Some critics have charged that Camp David constitutes an abandonment of a comprehensive settlement in favor of a separate Egyptian-Israeli peace. This view was widely held in the Arab world, but it did not reflect the facts as we saw them."⁶¹

The ink was barely dry on the agreements when a serious conflict arose between Carter and Begin. After the signing ceremony Begin remained for several days in the United States to deliver a number of speeches to various groups. In these speeches he announced two major points: first, that Israel had the right to remain physically on the West Bank for an indefinite time, even beyond the transitional five-year period and, second, that Israel's program of building and expanding Jewish settlements in that area would continue. Begin claimed that the freeze on the settlements activity was to last only three months. On the contrary, according to Carter, this freeze was to apply during the next five years. Unfortunately, the Carter-Begin agreement on this issue was only verbal due to the neglect to include it clearly in the written text of the accords.

By November 1978 it seemed that the Camp David accords were coming apart. Carter felt that Begin, through his various pronounce-

ments in the United States and Israel, was disavowing the basic principles of the accords, that he was engaging in "provocations," and "acting in a completely irresponsible way."⁶² Impatient with him and concerned lest Russia benefit from the collapse of the agreements, Carter was nevertheless determined to bring about at least an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. In December he said to Vance, "I would be willing to lose my election because I will alienate the Jewish community, but I think it is important to prevent the Arabs falling under Soviet sway."⁶³ Begin's next visit to Washington in early March 1979 did nothing to advance Carter's peace plans. The prime minister was more interested in concluding an Israeli-American defense agreement. "His purpose," wrote Carter, "seemed to be to convince us that Israel should be the dominant military power in the area, and that it was our only reliable ally in the Middle East."⁶⁴

Exasperated by the slow progress of peace talks, Carter decided, for the second time, to intervene personally by going to Cairo and Jerusalem in the first part of March. His visit with Sadat was marked by cordiality and understanding on virtually all points discussed. According to Sadat, Begin either wanted to "back out" from the Camp David engagements or wait until after 1980, hoping for another American president who "may not be so equally balanced between the Israeli and Arab interests."⁶⁵ During his subsequent visit in Jerusalem, Carter asked Begin point blank whether he actually wanted a peace treaty because "my impression was that everything he could do to obstruct it, he did with apparent relish."⁶⁶

Returning to Washington via Cairo in mid-March, the president appointed Robert Strauss, former chairman of the Democratic Party, as special negotiator to implement the Camp David accords. This appointment made Vance less than happy. Until then Vance had been using his own career officers, Ambassador Alfred "Roy" Atherton and Assistant Secretary Harold Saunders, both gifted and experienced, as special emissaries in the Middle East. He viewed Strauss' appointment as undermining his position and threatened to resign. In selecting Strauss Carter had a domestic political motivation. He averred it when pleading with Vance to stay in office: "Cy, I don't want you to resign. I would rather drop the whole issue. But I do want Strauss to be up front because I need him as a political shield."⁶⁷

Finally, on March 26, 1979, Carter succeeded in inducing Sadat and Begin to sign, in Washington, the *Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty*. The treaty invoked the Camp David framework and generally followed

its provisions. Composed of nine articles and three annexes, it was accompanied by letters exchanged by President Carter with Sadat and Begin. One of these letters stipulated that Egypt and Israel would start negotiations within one month to implement Camp David's provisions relating to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.⁶⁸

What followed was a series of talks conducted in Washington, Egypt, and Israel in which the United States aimed at the creation of a Palestinian homeland while trying to ensure that Israeli security be safeguarded. These talks were held either at a ministerial level or through special envoys, such as Strauss or, since late October of 1979, Sol Linowitz. Egyptian and Israeli positions were far apart, while the United Nations was busy dealing with proliferation of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Israel's incursions into Lebanon in response to terrorist attacks. Virtually no progress was made. Furthermore, America's position with Israel became aggravated when in late February 1980 the U.S. delegate at the United Nations first voted on a resolution censuring Israel for its settlements policy and the perpetuation of its rule over Arab Jerusalem and then in an obvious surrender to Israeli and domestic pressures reversed his vote as a bureaucratic "error," in turn jeopardizing U.S. credibility in the Arab capitals. "The admission of error," said Brzezinski, "made the Administration look silly and the President look weak."⁶⁹

Carter himself was obliged to aver that these talks "accomplished little toward resolving the vital issues of Palestinian rights, voting privileges for Arabs in East Jerusalem, and the ultimate status of the West Bank."⁷⁰ Similarly, Vance admitted that the autonomy talks had failed. In his memoirs he ascribed the failure to six principal reasons: (1) lack of intense U.S. involvement in contrast to the Camp David role; (2) a political backlash in Israel because of the removal of the Sinai settlements and its retreat from the "full autonomy" concept; (3) PLO terrorism; (4) the PLO's unwillingness to recognize Israel's right to exist; (5) the coming elections in the United States; and (6) the Iranian hostage crisis (discussed later in this book), which drew the administration's attention away from the Arab-Israeli dilemma.⁷¹

Arab reactions to both Camp David and the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty were decidedly negative. Radical Arab states (Iraq, Syria, Algeria, Libya, South Yemen) led the political offensive against Egypt, punctuated by such Arab meetings as that of November 5, 1978, in Baghdad, warning Egypt against any further concessions to Israel, and that of March 31, 1979, when Egypt was formally suspended from the

Arab League. Moderate Arab governments, though desiring peace in the area, found it difficult if not outright impossible to defend Egypt and in Arab summits and conferences felt compelled to cast their votes with the radical camp. The Arab states' main objection was that, acting without consulting them, Egypt—the most powerful Arab country—had deserted their common front for the sake of a bilateral treaty with Israel. None of these states believed that Israel would fulfill its obligations regarding Palestine undertaken at Camp David and pointed to the inadequacy of the framework document in this respect. Moreover, they blamed the United States as an evil spirit which, under the guise of a peacemaker, became a real divider of the Arab world. If Carter had feared that the collapse of his peacemaking effort would reintroduce the Soviets into the area, the opposite appeared true: it is the American role in giving Israel the advantages of a separate peace with its most dangerous adversary and the betrayal, as the Arabs saw it, of the Palestinians (sometimes compared to Roosevelt's Yalta "sell-out" of Eastern Europe) that intensified anti-U.S. feelings. It gave greater opportunities for the Soviet Union to pose as a friend and protector of Arab rights and national dignity, to tighten its hold on radical client states, and even to make some psychological and diplomatic inroads into the moderate Arab camp.

From the Arab point of view Camp David looked like an Egyptian surrender and an Israeli victory. It is worth noting that the Arab evaluation of Sadat profoundly differed from the American one. At least two American leaders, Kissinger and Carter, expressed their admiration and warm friendship for the Egyptian president. Kissinger described him as a "great man" who "understood that a heroic gesture can create a new reality" and who "accomplished more for the Arab cause than those of his Arab brethren whose specialty was belligerent rhetoric."⁷² When speaking of one of his visits in Cairo, Carter said that he "felt a glow of welcome, warmth, and friendship,"⁷³ while Brzezinski testified that Carter "spoke of Sadat as his dearest friend" and "clear favorite" and that he and the president "would laugh at Sadat's inaccuracies and sweeping assertions, and yet at the same time we marveled at his courage and the grandiose scope of his historical vision."⁷⁴

By contrast, virtually every Egyptian statesman or military leader who personally participated in Sadat's war or peace diplomacy had a negative view of Sadat's methods and the results of his actions. Foreign

Minister Kamel accused Sadat of "fickle whims and indiscriminate changes of behavior without prior notice and consultation."⁷⁵ Another foreign minister, Ismail Fahmy, wrote of Sadat's trip to Jerusalem that "Sadat simply allowed himself to be wooed and manipulated by the Israelis until he was forced in a position where he would have either to admit he had made a mistake or sign a separate peace on Israeli conditions. . . . The Israelis must have known his weakness [for] the *grand geste*, for the unprecedented step and the dramatic move regardless of risk."⁷⁶ And, in another place, he characterized him as "fickle and undependable."⁷⁷

Writing in the same vein, Mohamed Heikal, the Egyptian minister of information and former editor of *Al-Ahram*, criticized Sadat for a separate peace with Israel, which brought back the Sinai to Egypt, an area "the Israelis had never really coveted," hence an illusory success, purchased at the expense of a Palestinian state, of the PLO, of Jerusalem, and of return to the 1967 frontier.⁷⁸ Finally, in his memoirs Lt.-General Saad el Shazly, who had commanded the Egyptian troops that breached the Israeli Suez defense line in 1973, expressed his indignation at Sadat's political interference with the well-planned military operations, resulting in the recrossing of the Suez Canal by the Israelis and entrapment of the Egyptian Third Army. "The President," he wrote of Sadat, "had thrown away the greatest army Egypt had ever assembled. . . . He had thrown away the greatest collaborative effort the Arabs had achieved in a generation."⁷⁹

To conclude this section an assessment of America's stake in Camp David may be in order. If the United States national interest demanded the strengthening of Israel at the expense of the Arabs by isolating Egypt from the Arab community and by leaving the issue of Palestine and related problems, such as the Golan Heights, vague and in suspension, then the objective was attained. If, on the contrary, Carter's original ideas about the need for a comprehensive settlement, respect for human rights by ensuring a Palestinian homeland, and a general evenhanded policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict, were to represent a U.S. national interest, then Camp David fell far short of its initial goals. Moreover, although the Carter administration could rightly point to the conclusion of the Egyptian-Israeli peace as a major achievement, it is debatable whether such a separate peace warranted the investment of the tremendous amount of presidential energy, exactly at the critical time of the approaching revolution in Iran. Israel, it

may be pointed out, had always wanted a separate treaty with Egypt⁸⁰ and, after Sadat's trip to Jerusalem, could have signed it without U.S. participation.

It could be argued, therefore, that engaging in almost superhuman efforts to persuade a clever and advantage-oriented leader such as Begin to reach an agreement Israel desired anyway amounted to a superfluous exertion while other pressing international problems were calling for the president's attention.

IRAN'S ISLAMIC REVOLUTION

Ever since Nixon's presidency, Iran had enjoyed a special, almost unique, status in U.S. foreign policy. In conformity with the Nixon Doctrine, Iran had become a virtual American surrogate in the Persian Gulf area. Iran's willingness and, as was believed in Washington, ability to replace Britain as the guardian of the Gulf's security were welcome from the American point of view. Nixon's decision to give Iran a blank check for arms supplies was translated into a consistent U.S. policy, of which Iran took full advantage by becoming one of the principal recipients of American weapons and by modernizing and enlarging its military establishment. The shah of Iran, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, was, in American eyes, virtually identified with his country. His periodic consultations with a succession of American presidents since Truman had established him as a friend and ally whose foreign policy priorities, especially his resistance to Communism and Soviet imperialism, had found admiration and approval in Washington.

Even though Iran, in spite of its 1906 constitution and the existence of parliament, could not claim to be a democracy, the shah's domestic policy was generally viewed in a positive light by official Washington. The much-advertised White Revolution, launched by the shah in 1963, contained enough progressive ingredients (such as enhancement of the status of women, benefits for the peasantry through land distribution, literacy campaign, educational reforms, and planned industrialization program) to earn him a reputation as an imaginative reformer despite some qualms about the authoritarian nature of his government. Moreover, the shah's foreign policy had also found approval in Washington. It was, in the first place, a nonadventurous policy of peace and such minor exceptions as the forcible occupation of the Arab islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa in the

Persian Gulf in 1971 had not erased the conviction that Iran was not bent on foreign expansionist conquests. Iran's role in helping the Sultanate of Oman to overcome its Marxist-inspired rebellion in the mid-1970s and its refusal to join the Arab oil embargo against the United States in 1973 earned the shah the reputation of a realistic statesman and staunch friend. The shah maintained a friendly relationship with such pillars of American-sponsored stability in the Middle East as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Jordan; settled peacefully his quarrel with Iraq in 1975; and—unofficially—maintained a working relationship with Israel, thus qualifying for a position of respect and prestige in the area and in world affairs in general.

Carter's advent to the presidency in 1977, as one observer noted, was a blow to the shah.⁸¹ This was because of Carter's frequently emphasized two goals of foreign policy: human rights and arms reductions. Insistence on human rights meant that authoritarian or repressive practices, even those engaged in by U.S. friends, would be viewed with a jaundiced eye by the new administration; and a policy of more careful scrutiny on the quality and quantity of arms supplied to foreign recipients would mean possibly severe limitations on the shah's ambitious military modernization program. In fact, soon after Carter's advent to power Iran's ambassador in Washington, Ardeshir Zahedi, voiced in private conversations his concern that the presidential human rights slogans were likely to cause confusion and disarray in Iran. This was so, as the ambassador knew well, because of the characteristic trait of Iranian political mentality—namely, to seek or suspect foreign clandestine inspiration of any significant event in Iran. A call for respect of human rights could easily be interpreted as American disapproval of the shah's domestic policies and as encouragement to the opposition.

For a number of years opposition in Iran was muted and almost clandestine. It had taken the shah a decade, since his counter-coup in 1953, to consolidate his power and silence the dissidents. After launching his White Revolution the shah became the only and supreme wielder of power. Opposition to his rule did exist, but it was virtually equated with treason and subversion and, as a political force, was disorganized and ineffective. The shah did not conceal his role as the sole source of authority but preferred to have it known as royal authoritarianism rather than a dictatorship.⁸² There was, in his mind, a difference between these two notions: a king had a legal and historical legitimacy, a dictator ruled by naked force. Moreover, objectively,

a dictatorship had a proclivity toward totalitarianism, that is, penetration of the all-powerful state into every area of individual and collective life, aiming at complete control of all human activities. By contrast, his royal authoritarianism tolerated a good deal of individual or collective freedom. Such matters as religion and its practice, education of one's children, pursuit of economic gains, ability to travel abroad and have foreign contacts, freedom to emigrate, and freedom to form clubs and associations were left to individual choice with no intrusion by the state, provided they were not a manifestation of political opposition.

Politically, however, the shah was not only supreme but was an "activist" aiming at a rapid transformation of Iran, a country lagging behind the West in many areas, into a modern industrial state, high in production and consumption, militarily strong, and culturally advanced. In the earlier days of his reign the shah had benefited from the advice of some experienced counselors who had the courage to tell him which policies or decisions were useful and safe and which were not. But as the shah advanced in age, experience, and power, while his erstwhile advisers died out or faded away, he became less tolerant of open or implied criticism; instead of independent advice, he began receiving words of praise and adulation. Surrounded by "yes" men, he was the constant object of obsequiousness, genuine or faked. Those praising his moves were often engaging in the time-tested Iranian exercise of "takieh" (or "ketman"), that is, a behavior calculated to conceal one's true feelings and to pretend that there was loyalty, conformity, and devotion where none of these existed.

So long as the economic boom, generated by huge oil revenues since 1973-74, lasted the shah could proceed successfully with his policies of modernization, development, and building a powerful military apparatus. But when a recession began in 1975-76, cracks appeared in the ostensibly stable structure. A number of negative aspects of the regime became increasingly visible. Urban construction demand had brought about disquieting demographic dislocations: the village poor flocked to the cities and crowded the peripheral shantytowns in unsanitary conditions, aggravating the conspicuous contrasts between the wealth of the upper classes and the poverty of the migrants. Corruption, always a bane in the Third World, became rampant and involved members of the royal family. Western-educated entrepreneurs, with easier access to the government and the imperial court, were amassing quick fortunes and becoming objects of envy by

traditional bazaar-based merchant classes. Prosperity and development brought to Iran dangerously large numbers of foreign technicians and managers, including some 35,000 Americans whose relatively high standard of living provoked the resentment of the Iranian populace. Inflation hurt the masses. Popular alienation from the regime grew apace; individual or small group acts of violence (including some assassinations) began to multiply, to be met with severe (but apparently not very effective) acts of repression by the shah's secret police, the SAVAK. Opposition to the regime began to crystallize by 1976-77 into a coalition composed of four discernible elements: (1) the National Front liberal-democratic intelligentsia, mostly consisting of professional classes, bureaucrats, and students, all still full of nostalgia for the past idealism of the Mossadegh era of the 1950s; (2) the bazaar merchants and their numerous artisan retainers and acolytes; (3) the Leftists of various brands (Tudeh Party, Mujahedin-e-Khalq, etc.); and (4) the Shiite clerical strata, consisting of the mullas and led by the *mojtaheds* (jurisprudents), of whom the highest ranking carried the title of ayatollahs. These groups had little in common with each other; their ideologies and political objectives were often mutually incompatible. But together they formed a formidable negative coalition with one common denominator: hatred of the shah and his regime.

While President Carter was aware of some violations of human rights in Iran, he was also impressed by the progress and development achieved under the shah's rule. Broadly, his attitude toward the shah in 1977, the first year of his presidency, could be described as ambivalent. It is fairly certain that he was not well informed of the depth and scope of opposition to the shah and was not cognizant of the influence that the words or policies of an American president were bound to have on the attitudes of the Iranians and of the shah himself.

Carter's ambivalence toward the shah was perhaps most eloquently demonstrated in 1977 during two visits these two heads of state paid each other. In November the shah, accompanied by Empress Farah, came on a state visit to Washington. The agitation against the shah among Iranian students in America was already a rather widespread phenomenon. These students and their radical American allies were taking full advantage of the permissive American legal system to engage not only in public pronouncements hostile to the Iranian monarchy but also to riot and break American laws in frequent manifestations of disorderly conduct. There is no doubt that they were taking a

cue from the presidential proclamations of the centrality of human rights in the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. Thus, when the shah and his retinue arrived in the compound of the White House to be greeted by the president and Mrs. Carter, a large contingent of Iranian demonstrators massed in close proximity to protest the shah's visit, armed with all sorts of manual weapons, such as nail-spiked boards and staves, iron pipes, etc. These protesters began attacking a peacefully assembled crowd of Iranian and other well-wishers who came to bid welcome to the Iranian royal pair.

Carter's administration failed to foresee such an eventuality, and the precautions taken by the Washington police proved shockingly inadequate. The U.S. government gave proof of being both clumsy and insensitive to the fact that its failure to protect a friendly monarch would be taken as evidence of either indifference or hostility and certainly would be regarded as an insult. The upshot of this deplorable riot was that to quell it the police used tear gas, which drifted to the outdoor platform on which Carter and the shah were exchanging greetings, causing both to choke and try to contain a stream of tears flowing down their faces. This was followed by the usual tour of conferences, during which Carter made allusions to human rights and liberalization reforms in Iran. As Carter himself averred, "it was a sensitive subject between us, because some news sources had attributed the disturbances in Iran to my frequent statements in support of human rights throughout the world."⁸³

At the end of the following month, in December, the president stopped for a brief visit in Teheran in the course of a lengthy journey that took him to Poland, the Soviet Union, and India. There was no exact symmetry or reciprocity in this visit because Iran was only *one* of the countries visited (whereas the shah had made a *special* trip to the United States) and the visit was extremely brief—merely forty-eight hours—in contrast to the longer stays in other countries. But then, unexpectedly, during the banquet the shah gave for the president, Carter made a surprising statement praising Iran as "an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world."⁸⁴ The statement, which was to haunt the remainder of his presidency, demonstrated either his ignorance of the disquieting situation developing in Iran or an uncalled-for hyperbole not quite suited to the circumstances.

And the circumstances in Iran very soon took a turn for the worse. In early January 1978 an article in the popular Teheran daily *Eteelaat*

(apparently planted by the Ministry of Information) attacked Iran's religious leadership, singling out Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini with allegations of immoral conduct and treasonous lack of patriotism. The reaction to the article was immediate. Under the aegis of religious leaders violent riots erupted in the holy city of Qum and other urban centers. Iranian security forces responded harshly. Their fire caused the death of a number of demonstrators. It is the Iranian Shiite custom to mourn their dead in forty-day intervals. These mourning processions invited further clashes between the aroused populace and the security forces, resulting in new victims and thus perpetuating the cycles of violence which in due time spread to such major cities as Tabriz and Isfahan.

In the meantime the principal target of the government's hostility, Ayatollah Khomeini, in exile in Najaf (Iraq) since the 1960s, took full advantage of his sheltered asylum to wage an unrelenting propaganda war against the shah, by preaching to the numerous Iranian pilgrims visiting Najaf and Kerbela the need for resistance to the regime, and by sending hundreds of cassettes with tapes of his inflammatory speeches to Iran. These speeches and sermons were subsequently broadcast in Iran's mosques, inciting the people to rise in revolt against the godless and corrupt monarchy and calling upon the soldiers to disobey orders and desert.

The Iranian government's response was inconsistent. On the one hand it used its security forces in harsh reprisals. These forces confronted the rioting mobs with lethal weapons because they lacked the nonlethal riot control equipment generally available to police in the Western world. On the other the shah began making conciliatory moves toward the opposition. He also made high-level personnel changes in his government. Thus Jamshid Amuzegar, an able but politically inexperienced technocrat, was replaced as prime minister by allegedly politically "savvy" Sharif Emami, a man with some links to the religious hierarchy but tarnished with a reputation for corruption. Sometime in the fall of 1978 the shah—to the shock of many of his loyalists—ordered the arrest of his former premier, Abbas Hoveyda, and of General Nematollah Nassiri, ambassador to Pakistan and formerly head of the dreaded SAVAK.

While the forty-day cycle of massive mourning demonstrations and violence continued, two major events further contributed to the shaking of Iran's political structure: in August 1978 a fire, undoubtedly caused by arson, erupted in a movie theater in Abadan, causing

the death of over 500 people. The government and the dissenters exchanged angry accusations as to the authorship of this tragic event. And in September, when martial law and curfew were introduced, a major massacre of the assembled crowds by the security forces took place in Jaleh Square in the working-class district of Teheran.

The shah oscillated between an urge to introduce a strict military regime and his frequently expressed (to foreign envoys) reluctance to use massive force against his own subjects. He was clearly looking for guidance from Washington while suspecting it of working for his downfall. Moreover, he suffered from an incurable disease—lymphatic cancer—which he kept to himself as a deep secret. This perhaps could, at least partly, explain his changing moods, switching from bouts of depression to unwarranted optimism. In the fall of 1978 the shah appointed a new prime minister, hitherto chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Gholam Reza Azhari, to head what was popularly referred to as “the military government.” Actually, most of the ministerial portfolios were, after a brief period, entrusted to civilians and, to avoid bloodshed, the shah opposed repressive measures against the dissenters on a massive scale. Moreover, General Azhari was a rather mild-mannered man, suffering from a heart ailment, who could hardly fit the definition of a rigid military leader. Furthermore the shah, as is often the case of more timid individuals, distrusted his own military chiefs and, to protect himself against a possible conspiracy, insisted that the commanders of the army, navy, and air force report to him separately rather than act jointly.

It was during the period of this ostensible “military regime” that the shah began consultations with such figures of the liberal National Front as Karim Sanjabi and Gholam Hossein Sadeghi. His idea was that by effecting reconciliation with these moderate civilian leaders he might avoid the need for confrontation with the more radical elements of the opposition, be it the “black” reactionaries of the mulla class or the “red” Marxists. Moreover, he gradually introduced various liberalization measures, such as the freedom of the press, the openness of the Majlis (parliament) debates, the ban on business activities of the royal family, etc. Most of these steps misfired: before committing themselves to cooperation, the National Front leaders invariably consulted with the exiled Khomeini (since October in Paris but stubbornly pursuing his revolutionary activity) and refused the shah’s overtures. Liberalization measures only whetted the aroused appetites of the opposition and encouraged it to bolder demands among which

the slogan of "death to the shah" and an end to the Pahlavi dynasty began to predominate. All of this became aggravated by the massive strike of workers and employees in a variety of state offices and enterprises, including the oil fields and banks. The strike, proclaimed in the early fall of 1978, reduced Iran's oil production from four to one million barrels a day and thus seriously undercut the government's main source of revenue and its ability to cope with the crisis. In a perverse manifestation of hostility Iran's bureaucratic class, one of the main beneficiaries of the shah's development policies, also turned against him by joining the protest marches and by having its women wear more and more conspicuously the veils or scarves symbolizing adherence to Islamic customs.

The above outline of Iran's revolutionary progression should suffice at this point as a basis for an account of American reaction to these events. First of all, one should perhaps ask whether the president and his advisers knew exactly what was happening in Iran and whether they understood its significance. It is not easy to give a clear answer to these questions. The American embassy in Teheran certainly reported to Washington the revolutionary ferment as it unfolded, but for a long time these reports did not indicate the gravity of the situation or point to the possibility of the monarchy's demise. In addition, as President Carter complained at a certain phase of the crisis, there was inadequate intelligence, and he was inclined to blame Admiral Stansfield Turner, director of central intelligence, for this failure.⁸⁵ Whether his criticism of the CIA was well founded remains a moot question if we consider that any open contact between official Americans and members of the opposition would automatically be seen by the shah as undermining his authority. Should such contacts occur clandestinely and be discovered by the shah's secret police, the result would be equally damaging to U.S.-Iranian relations. Iran was, after all, by virtue of the Baghdad Pact (later Cento) and other agreements, America's ally and, as a general rule, states were not supposed to spy on their allies. Thus the U.S. government was in large measure obliged to rely on information and evaluation provided by the Iranian government and its security arm, the SAVAK. The next question to ask is perhaps whether the evaluation of the Iranian situation provided to the president was correct. On this score serious doubts could be expressed. Competing assessments were submitted to Carter by the CIA, the State and Defense departments, and the national security adviser's staff, while private individuals and academic experts on Iran supplied their

own views. The most glaring differences among these evaluators pertained to their opinions of the nature of the opposition; these opinions, in turn, were often colored by their like or dislike of the shah and their liberal or conservative preferences.

Broadly speaking, the bureaucrats of the State Department responsible for Iran, particularly Henry Precht, country director for Iranian affairs, did not hide their hostility to the shah and were inclined to favor virtually any alternative to his rule as desirable.⁸⁶ Similarly, Patricia Derian, assistant secretary for human rights in the State Department, nurtured an inimical attitude toward the shah and vigorously opposed the sale to Iran not only of conventional weapons but also of American riot equipment (especially tear gas). The CIA was not conspicuous for its active contribution to the evaluation except for a report presented in August 1978 expressing the view that "Iran is not in a revolutionary or even a prerevolutionary situation."⁸⁷ Secretary of State Vance was not overly active in the unfolding of the Iranian crisis, being often absent—on foreign assignments—from Washington or preoccupied with Arab-Israeli affairs, disarmament, and other matters deemed more important. His general inclination was, in case of doubt, to side with his subordinates and to emphasize, as he did in a conversation with the shah on May 13, 1977, "that the president was committed to reaffirming the primacy of human rights as a national goal." On another occasion he expressed the opinion that "it would be hard to maintain public support for our strategic relationship with Iran if the shah failed to pay more attention to human rights."⁸⁸ This camp in the administration, noted for its hostility or neutrality toward the shah, was in turn opposed by National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski and Defense Secretary Harold Brown and his deputy, Charles Duncan, as well as by Secretary of Energy James Schlesinger. They viewed the shah as an important ally in the overall strategic map of the Middle East and considered the preservation of his rule an essential ingredient of the regional security, vital to the U.S. national interest.

Those academic experts whose voices were most frequently heard during the crisis were not only hostile to the shah but were almost invariably preaching that his removal from power would pave the way to democracy in Iran. These academics sought and succeeded in establishing contacts with the opposition, particularly with Khomeini in Paris and his nonclerical aides such as the American-educated Ibrahim Yazdi. Thus a U.S. scholar from Texas, James Bill, claimed in December 1978 that the religious leaders "would never participate in the

formal government structure,"⁸⁹ in clear disregard or ignorance of Khomeini's own assertion that "only the jurisprudent [that is, the religious leaders], and nobody else, should be in charge of the government."⁹⁰ Similarly, Professor Richard Falk of Princeton, having contacted Khomeini in early 1979, wrote in praise of him that Khomeini's entourage was "composed of moderate, progressive individuals" and that "Iran may yet provide us with a desperately needed model of humane government for a third-world country."⁹¹ Echoing Falk's opinion, another expert on Iran, Professor Richard Cottam, in touch with the opposition leaders, claimed that Khomeini's attitudes were "relatively moderate" and "centrist."⁹²

As for the president himself, he seemed never to make up his mind whether insistence on human rights in Iran or Iran's strategic value to the United States should be given priority. This question certainly transcended conceptual theorizing because the United States had a vast array of means to influence the course of events in Iran, perhaps decisively. These means included public presidential pronouncements, private advice to the shah, arms supplies policies, sales of riot-control equipment, training and upgrading Iran's military forces, or even using clandestine methods (as had been done in 1953 during the Mossadegh crisis) to effect changes in Iran. As the crisis worsened, Carter became more inclined to support the shah against his adversaries and on a few occasions sent him direct messages and once called him on the telephone. Thus in the fall of 1978 the president informed the shah "that whatever action he took, including setting up a military government, I would support him."⁹³

Later, as the year was drawing to a close, Carter still persevered in his policy of amity to the shah, but as he himself stated, this friendly attitude was almost always conditioned by advice that the shah should liberalize and reach accommodation with the dissidents. "Personally and through the State Department," he wrote, "I continued to express my support for the Shah, but at the same time we were pressing him to act forcefully on his own to resolve with his political opponents as many disputes as possible."⁹⁴ As Brzezinski described it in his memoirs, "The Shah was never explicitly urged to be tough; U.S. assurances of support were watered down by simultaneous reminders of the need to do more about progress toward genuine democracy; coalition with the opposition was mentioned always as a desirable objective."⁹⁵

This presidential ambivalence had been well demonstrated on the issue of arms to Iran. Presidential Decision Memorandum 13, issued

shortly after Vance's return from Teheran in May 1977, declared that arms transfers should be used only as an exceptional instrument of U.S. foreign policy. Limitations were placed on foreign sales, exempting only America's NATO allies, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Israel. But Iran was omitted from this privileged exempted list.⁹⁶ When announced, this decision deepened the shah's suspicion that Washington was indifferent to a close relationship with Iran. It may be added here that, as noted earlier, Iran—by virtue of various international commitments—was a formal U.S. ally while, for example, Israel was not. After Iran's ambassador, Zahedi, complained about this new policy, he was given all sorts of reassurances. They did not alleviate the shah's basic worry that Carter considered him a tyrant. A subsequent congressional debate on the sale of AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) to Iran, during which the shah was called a "brutal dictator" and which resulted first in the rejection and later, after the removal of certain parts of these aircraft, in the approval of the sale, further shook the shah's confidence in the sincerity and steadiness of America's policy toward Iran.

Moreover, at no time in 1977–78 did Iran enjoy anything resembling centrality in the U.S. Middle East policy. While much attention was lavished on Egypt and Israel, the first formal high-level meeting of the Special Coordination Committee of the National Security Council was convened only on November 2, 1978, although the condition of Iran had been deteriorating for ten months. It was chaired by Brzezinski and attended by Defense Secretary Harold Brown; Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher (in Vance's absence); General David Jones, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Admiral Stansfield Turner, director of the CIA; Brzezinski's deputy, David Aaron; and Captain Gary Sick, as note-taker. Those present decided that a presidential message should be delivered to the shah expressing U.S. support to him "without reservation," calling for his "decisive action" to restore law and order, if need be through a military government. But, following the old pattern in U.S.-shah communications, the message expressed the hope that the shah would renew his efforts to "promote liberalization and eradicate corruption."⁹⁷ The message was approved by Carter with minor changes and delivered to the shah by the U.S. ambassador in Teheran, William Sullivan.

On November 9, barely three days after the installation of Iran's military cabinet under General Azhari, Ambassador Sullivan sent to Washington a lengthy cable. Titled "Thinking the Unthinkable," it

contained an analysis of the Iranian situation in which he admitted for the first time that the monarchy might be abolished and replaced by an Islamic republic. Because, according to him, the two key elements in the changing situation in Iran were the military and the clerics, both anti-Communist, he advanced the thesis that the desirable outcome would be to effect accommodation between these two groups. Should this occur, bloodshed would be avoided, and Khomeini would return to Iran and assume a "Gandhi-like" role, that is, of a benevolent and peace-loving moral mentor, while moderate democratic elements would emerge as an influential element in Iran's body politic.

Sullivan's telegram opened a veritable Pandora's box in Washington. The earlier-mentioned rivalry between the State Department and Brzezinski resurfaced with full force. Those involved in U.S. decision-making became more clearly divided into those who saw the solution in Iran through the removal of the shah, intensified American contacts with the opposition, liberalization, and installation of Khomeini (the latter regarded as a moderate leader favoring democracy) and those who saw the need for the shah's decisive action to restore order, if necessary with the use of force. This latter view was strongly promoted by Brzezinski, to whom, as noted earlier, the strategic value of Iran to the United States took precedence over other, liberal-inspired considerations. "I felt strongly," he wrote, "that successful revolutions were historical rarities . . . and that an established leadership, by demonstrating both will and reason, could disarm the opposition through a timely combination of repression and concession. . . . I argued that the deliberate weakening of the beleaguered monarch by American pressure for further concessions to his opponents would simply enhance instability and eventually produce complete chaos."⁹⁸

When at a conference of principal Western leaders in Guadeloupe in early January 1979 the possibility of a military coup was considered, at which time Jimmy Carter expressed his concern about bloodshed, Brzezinski argued that "world politics was not a kindergarten and that we had to consider also what [would] be the longer-range costs if the military failed to act."⁹⁹ Brzezinski felt that if they acted early the military could impose effective control in a relatively bloodless way and pointed to the examples of Pakistan, Turkey, Brazil, and Egypt as ones in which the military proved their ability in seizing power and governing. "To me," he wrote, "principled commitment to a more decent world order did not preclude the use of power to protect our more immediate interests."¹⁰⁰

Brzezinski's view that the shah's rule should be preserved was strengthened by his concern that a weak and disorganized Iran might fall prey to Soviet expansionism. Soviet attitudes, initially neutral or ambivalent, became—as their controlled media indicated—increasingly critical toward the shah's regime, and thus seemed to confirm these fears. On November 18, 1978, the Soviet leader, Leonid I. Brezhnev, sent a message to Carter warning against any American interference in the internal affairs of Iran—a clear sign that Russia was bent on frustrating U.S. efforts to strengthen Iran and that it was anxious to identify itself with Iranian revolutionary opposition.

As for Ambassador Sullivan, he aligned himself with those who saw in the removal of the shah desirable consequences for Iran; he credited Khomeini with democratic proclivities and advocated U.S. contacts with Khomeini and the opposition. Working closely with the British Labour government's ambassador in Teheran, Anthony Parsons (no special admirer of the monarchy), he felt and recommended that the shah should leave or abdicate.¹⁰¹ His recommendations were often endorsed by Vance but put him clearly on a collision course with Brzezinski and the president. In fact, Carter became so critical of Sullivan's performance that he wanted to dismiss him in January 1979 but was restrained from doing so by Vance. Sullivan's merit was that he efficiently arranged the evacuation from Iran of some 35,000 Americans resident there. But, as regards the basic policy, according to Gary Sick, the officer in charge of Iran at the National Security Council, "unbeknownst to anyone in Washington, Ambassador Sullivan had progressed quite far . . . in his negotiations with the opposition leaders. . . . Very simply, not only was Sullivan operating entirely on his own without instructions from Washington, but he was acting in direct contradiction to U.S. national policy."¹⁰²

November and December 1978 as well as January 1979 witnessed numerous—almost frantic—activities of the U.S. government to salvage what remained of the Iranian royal authority and American interests. A special task force on Iran was formed, directed by David Newsom, under secretary of state. To supplement these efforts Brzezinski, with Carter's approval, established telephone communications with Iran's Washington ambassador, Zahedi, who spent some time in Iran in the fall of 1978. (This direct contact was highly resented by Vance and Sullivan.) Various emissaries were sent to Teheran to evaluate and report on the situation, which, especially during the holy month of Moharram (December), worsened appreciably. American visitors in-

cluded Secretary of the Treasury Michael Blumenthal, Robert Bowie of the CIA, and Senator Robert Byrd. In late November former Under Secretary of State George Ball was invited by the president to study and report on the Iranian situation. His recommendations were more in line with Sullivan's and Vance's thinking: he favored gradual transfer of power from the shah to the opposition and urged opening of U.S. contacts with Khomeini. Although Ball's report was rejected by the White House, Vance chose Theodore L. Eliot, former ambassador to Afghanistan, to contact Khomeini in Paris. However, before Eliot could set out on his trip, his mission was canceled by the White House, and Sullivan was instructed to inform the shah that the U.S. government no longer intended to have any talks with Khomeini.

This ostensible stiffening of the American attitude was, within a few days, countermanded by a new message to be relayed to the shah that "the United States government felt it was in his best interests and in Iran's for him to leave the country."¹⁰³

A few days before this message was delivered, two significant events occurred. The shah appointed one of the leaders of the liberal opposition, Shahpour Bakhtiar, as premier, and Carter, because he distrusted Sullivan's judgment, decided to send to Teheran General Robert Huyser, Deputy Commander of U.S. forces in Europe, to "reinforce the Iranian military's ties with Bakhtiar" and report directly to Washington.¹⁰⁴ Inasmuch as there was a possibility that Iran's army might disintegrate with the shah's imminent departure, the president wanted to strengthen the position of Bakhtiar as a constitutional prime minister by ensuring that the army would remain loyal to him and thus prevent the onset of revolutionary chaos. There was, however, a flaw in this thinking: Iran's armed forces were basically the shah's creation and loyal to him, not to an abstract concept of a "constitutional authority." Should the shah choose to remain in the country and fight for his survival, there was a good chance that the army, even though suffering from occasional desertions and the mullahs' antimonarchist brainwashing, would side with the ruler and defend him. But it was somewhat naive to expect that the army would defend an empty palace and meekly transfer its allegiance to a little-known former opposition leader in the name of constitutional principle.

Events were soon to prove that Huyser was entrusted with an impossible mission. The shah, accompanied by his family, left Iran for an extended "leave" on January 16, 1979. Formally, a regency council

took over his duties. For the military there remained only three alternatives: (1) to support Bakhtiar, (2) to seize power by a coup (for itself or for the shah), or (3) to surrender to the opposition. The first alternative, as we have seen, was most unlikely; the third assumed that the opposition would emerge victorious; hence Brzezinski (and some Iranian generals) favored, until the very last minute, a military coup. Huyser, though not successful in ensuring the army's support for Bakhtiar, nevertheless succeeded in persuading its leading generals not to stage a coup.¹⁰⁵

Thus a sort of psychological vacuum occurred. On February 1, 1979, Khomeini returned triumphantly from Paris and on February 10–11 a mutiny of *homafars* (air force technicians) resulted in a popular uprising that put an end to the monarchy in Iran. The military leaders capitulated, and some offered their services to the revolution. Appearing as supreme leader of Iran's Islamic Republic, Khomeini promptly appointed Mehdi Bazargan, a respected and pious figure of the liberal opposition, as prime minister. In spite of an attack on and temporary occupation of the American embassy by a frenzied revolutionary mob (during which Ambassador Sullivan comported himself with cool professionalism, thus avoiding bloodshed), the U.S. government recognized Bazargan's government and continued regular diplomatic relations with Iran. In contrast to the early predictions of American experts, religious leaders in Iran not only assumed full authority but actually emerged as executives and active participants in the new government. Moreover, there was no question of introducing democracy. Khomeini as the supreme leader (*fakih*) established a medieval-type religious totalitarian state that soon attracted the world's attention by its acts of intolerance, vengefulness, and repression, expressed in numerous imprisonments, torture, and executions. In fact the excesses of the shah's secret police paled in comparison with the cruelties of the new regime. A major exodus, by legal or illegal routes, of the Iranian secular intelligentsia and managerial class took place, while the religious leaders engaged in confiscations of private property, occupation of private homes, coercive measures toward women wearing Western dress, and haphazard distribution of available funds among the "deprived" classes. Revolutionary *komitehs* terrorized the population, seconded by the Revolutionary Guards (*pasdaran*) and youth volunteers (*basij*). Universities and schools were "Islamicized" as well as the military academies. Production in many sectors of the economy decreased, and some rationing was introduced.

In spite of the basically anti-American and anti-Western stance of the Khomeini regime, a semblance of normalcy returned to Iranian-American relations. A special Pentagon emissary, Eric von Marbod, concluded with Bazargan's government a "memorandum of understanding" calling for termination and restructuring of major arms contracts—an important step that prevented untold complications likely to ensue if the matter had been left unattended.

The highest point in this process of normalization was reached when, at an anniversary celebration in Algiers on November 1, 1979, Brzezinski met and conversed with Premier Bazargan and two other Iranian ministers (all three laymen).

THE HOSTAGE CRISIS

The gradual resumption of normalcy in U.S.-Iranian relations, however, suffered a complication when the exiled shah was admitted to the United States in November 1979 to undergo treatment in a New York hospital. The shah had been invited to live in the United States at the time of his departure from Iran and had he accepted the offer at that time probably no crisis would have occurred. But he delayed his arrival, choosing to stay in Egypt, Morocco, and the Bahamas for periods of time, until he found himself in Mexico, where his physical condition worsened. The White House and the State Department were aware of a danger to the American embassy in Iran should the shah be admitted to the United States. But his swiftly deteriorating health and the lack of appropriate medical facilities in Mexico led two prominent Americans, David Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger, to urge the president to permit his entry for humanitarian reasons and out of respect for the American tradition of political asylum, especially to a former ally now in need. Whatever misgivings he had had, Carter concurred with their judgment and agreed to the shah's admission.

By the time the shah came to the United States the mood in Iran had changed. Iranian revolutionary leaders had developed a suspicion that the American government might be plotting to restore the shah to power. As soon as the shah arrived in New York, Iran's militants (a street rabble and some fanatical students) on November 4 assaulted the American embassy in Teheran and captured a total of sixty-six individuals. The only staff members who avoided capture were Bruce Laingen, the U.S. chargé d'affaires, and two aides, who just happened to be in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at that time, where they

remained as virtual prisoners. There is no definite evidence whether the attackers were working entirely on their own initiative or had been abetted and instructed beforehand by Khomeini and his religious aides. Their action took the Bazargan government by surprise; Acting Foreign Minister Ibrahim Yazdi assured chargé Laingen that the captives would be released within forty-eight hours. Contrary to the expectations and promises of Yazdi and Bazargan, Khomeini's son Ahmad arrived at the U.S. embassy and in the name of his father praised the captors for their deed. As soon as Khomeini's attitude became known to Bazargan, he tendered his resignation and along with him Yazdi was also relieved of his duties. Thus the slender influence that secular democratic liberals had had on Iran's political process came to an end, and the religious figures, noted for their Shia fundamentalism and hatred of the "American Satan" and Western values, emerged dominant and monopolized most of the commanding posts in the Islamic republic.

What followed was a saga of Iranian cruelty, duplicity, violation of diplomatic rules, and utter disregard of elementary human rights on the one hand and, on the other, of American indecision, confusion, vacillation between the use of diplomacy and force to rescue the hostages, and of serious humiliation suffered by the U.S. government and military establishment.

By the norms of the civilized world Iranian behavior was noted for its barbarity and cynicism. Khomeini's regime soon released the captured women and, in a move calculated to exploit American racial dilemmas, the black male employees as well. But the white male captives underwent all sorts of indignities and ordeals, with Iranian captors repeatedly pointing loaded guns at their heads, blindfolding and chaining them, keeping them bound and stretched on bare floors for hours, etc. The hostages were also threatened with a possible trial on spy charges. At the same time the Iranian regime formulated far-reaching demands: that the shah should be extradited to Iran and that his wealth abroad should be seized and returned to the revolutionary authorities. It is interesting to note in this connection that, according to available information, in anticipation of a similar move against itself the Soviet government sternly warned the Khomeini regime that any act of violence committed against the Soviet embassy or personnel in Iran would be met with a swift and strong retribution. There is no record of any Iranian attack on Soviet institutions or employees during the Khomeini era.

The American government tried to resolve the dilemma by diplomatic means, through the use of various intermediaries (because diplomatic relations were in due time broken and the Iranian embassy expelled from Washington). "We . . . asked the Algerians, Syrians, Turks, Pakistanis, Libyans, P.L.O., and others," wrote Carter, "to intercede on behalf of the release of our hostages."¹⁰⁶ In mid-November Carter issued orders to stop U.S. imports of Iranian oil and to freeze some \$12 billion of Iranian funds on deposit in the United States. Further sanctions followed. The administration also made efforts to remove the shah from U.S. territory and find a place for him abroad. The matter was complicated by the refusal of President Lopez Portillo to readmit the shah to Mexico despite his earlier offer to do so when the shah was leaving for New York. Eventually, after presidential aide Hamilton Jordan made a trip to Panama, its "strongman," General Omar Torrijos, offered the shah asylum on the island of Contadora, which the deposed ruler of Iran finally reached after a transitional stay at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas.¹⁰⁷

As negotiations with the Khomeini regime about the hostages dragged on through a variety of emissaries, certain Iranian leaders appeared anxious to reach a settlement, both to relieve the economic pressure caused by American sanctions and to restore some of Iran's reputation which had become grossly tarnished in the international community. But whenever it seemed that an agreement for the release of the hostages was in sight, Khomeini would throw his support to the militants' extreme demands and the contemplated deal would be called off.

Exasperated, Carter and his advisers finally decided to resort to force. A seemingly ingenious plan of rescue was prepared, involving precise synchronization of moves among various branches of U.S. military and intelligence services. A special team, code-named "Delta," under the command of Colonel Charlie Beckwith, was to fly to a desert destination not far from Teheran from a gathering point on Masira Island in Oman and, through intricate maneuvers, rescue the hostages between April 24 and 26, 1980. Unfortunately, the planning was not flawless: it did not foresee a possible loss of any of the few helicopters to be employed in the action. So, when one of them was accidentally destroyed in the course of the operation (with several men killed), the rescue mission was aborted.¹⁰⁸ To Carter it was a major blow to his and American prestige and possibly contributed to his failure to be reelected to the second term. Moreover, the whole episode

further accentuated the simmering feuds within the administration and led to the resignation of Secretary Vance, already frustrated by his disagreements with the president and Brzezinski.

A month before this tragic failure, the shah, fearful for his safety in Panama, had left for Egypt, his plane refueling in the Azores. He claimed that Torrijos had been planning, in response to Iranian demands (and possibly for gain), to extradite him to Iran. Although Carter in his memoirs asserted that the shah's claim was false,¹⁰⁹ there is reason to believe that it was true because Torrijos had informed a French intermediary in negotiations with Iran that he would detain the shah in Panama under certain conditions.¹¹⁰ Moreover, acting on his own authority, Carter's chief of staff, Hamilton Jordan, gave instructions to stop the shah's plane in the Azores until further orders. These came somewhat later, rescinding the original instruction, and the shah left without further impediment.¹¹¹ His hasty departure from Panama in a chartered plane had been arranged by certain private American friends. In late July the shah died in Cairo.

In early September an emissary from Khomeini expressed—via West Germany—interest in resolving the hostage crisis. Later that month a war broke out between Iraq and Iran, thus causing Khomeini's regime to be more amenable to serious talks about the fate of American captives. Such talks were conducted in the fall of 1980 by Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Khomeini's delegate, Taba-Tabai, with the aid of Algeria. They resulted in a tentative agreement which covered four principal areas: (1) hostages to be released, (2) Iranian assets in the U.S. to be unfrozen, (3) Iranian claims on the shah's personal assets to be resolved in U.S. courts, and (4) Iranian claims and U.S. counterclaims regarding corporate and financial problems to be subjected to decisions of the International Court of Justice at The Hague. Even though Iran's revolutionary parliament approved these points in early November, the Iranians procrastinated with formal signing and, shortly before Christmas 1980, demanded that the United States transfer to Algeria \$25 billion as a guarantee against the settlement of future claims and counterclaims. Although through the summer and the fall the president had vacillated between use of force and compromise (for example by ordering the aircraft carrier *Con-
stellation* to sail from the Philippines to the Persian Gulf and then canceling his orders), this time he rejected Iran's demand as ridiculous and unacceptable and, in anticipation of a breakdown in further talks,

prepared to declare a state of emergency or to ask Congress to declare war on Iran.

Ultimately, on January 19, 1981, the agreement was signed but, with a typically mean streak, Khomeini delayed the release of the hostages until 12:30 P.M., January 20, that is, thirty minutes after Carter relinquished his office as president. Thus came to an end one of the most heartrending and humiliating chapters in America's history.

Even at the time of the crisis it seemed clear that Khomeini, while satisfying his irrational craving to hurt and humiliate America, used the hostage crisis to consolidate his Islamic revolution. Although the captors inflicted much physical and psychological suffering on the hostages, they did not kill any. In fact, depriving the American captives of their lives would not have served Khomeini's purpose; it could have aroused so much indignation among the American people as to lead to war against Iran and elimination of the Khomeini regime. Hence Carter's hesitant policy, geared above all to the safeguarding of the hostages' lives, and his reluctance to use force or the threat of it, though understandable perhaps lacked political realism.

Carter became a victim of indecision as to which principle should receive priority: a principle of restraint, which was consistently advocated by Vance and which, it could be claimed, helped extricate the hostages from captivity, or a principle of placing broadly conceived national interest and honor above all other considerations, as promoted by Brzezinski.¹¹² There is no doubt that, to Khomeini and other radical militants around the world, the hostage crisis revealed an element of vulnerability in the United States and other democracies, demonstrating that terrorist methods could be used successfully to achieve their objectives.

THE CARTER DOCTRINE

In the broad formulation of U.S. policy toward the Middle East, the countries constituting the Northern Tier have, since Truman and Eisenhower, played a vital role as bastions of the American regional security system erected to contain southward Soviet expansionism. With the system's European and south-Asian extensions these countries comprised—from west to east—Greece, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan. By virtue of the Truman and Eisenhower Doctrines as well as multilateral (Baghdad Pact, 1955) and bilateral (1959) agreements,

these countries became links in the protective security chain the United States had forged in the area and could qualify for the title of America's allies. There were two exceptions in this regional alliance system. Because of its revolution of 1958, Iraq defected and chose to follow a neutralist, partly Soviet-tilted policy since 1958. The other exception was Afghanistan, which because of its stubborn neutralism and tense relations with Pakistan had never joined this regional security system.

To the Afghans, a proud and martial people still largely in a tribal state of social organization, this independent status appeared preferable to any alliance ties in spite of the isolation, underdevelopment, and poverty it perpetuated.

Afghanistan's domestic politics were not a model of stability or moderation. Since World War II the country experienced a number of convulsions, the most important of which was a coup d'état that overthrew its monarchy and installed a republican government led by a royal relative, Daoud Khan, in 1973. Daoud's nonalignment policy led him to seek, for the sake of balance, relations with both the West and the Soviet Union on the basis, as he saw it, of equality. Ignoring the fact that political, social, economic, and cultural relations with Western democracies and Communist states can never follow an identical path because of basic ideological and "operational" differences, he sent considerable numbers of Afghan army officers to be trained in the Soviet Union. At the same time years of modernization, both before and during his rule, produced an urban intelligentsia and the less privileged classes that felt alienated. A Communist Party, with its two wings—the Khalq and the Parcham—came into being and began to attract various discontented elements. In combination with some Communist-oriented officers, back home from their studies in the USSR, the party staged a revolution which, in April 1978, put an end to Daoud's rule and instituted a Communist regime under the leadership of a former local clerk in the American embassy in Kabul, Mohammed Taraki.

Under Taraki and his successor, Hafizulla Amin, the revolutionary government, advised by some 3,000 Soviet "experts," enacted a number of drastic measures directed against the former ruling classes and noted for their hostility to religion, private property, and tribal rights and customs. All of this was accompanied by the usual paraphernalia of a totalitarian state: police controls, searches, imprisonments, confiscations, and executions. It did not take long for opposi-

tion to the new order to form. A loose coalition of religious and tribal elements arose and promptly took the warpath against the new rulers. Although rather disunited and divided into a number of separate groups, these *mujahedeen* (warriors for the faith) not only assumed control of large parts of the countryside but also made incursions into the regime-dominated urban centers. By the onset of winter 1979 Soviet troops entered Afghanistan in a massive invasion and soon occupied major strategic centers and highways. As is often the case in such situations, Moscow claimed that its troops came in response to Afghan President Amin's invitation. The truth was that Amin was promptly assassinated when the Soviets invaded, to be replaced by his rival in the Communist Party, Babrak Karmal. Although the Communist regime was appreciably strengthened, the rebel mujahedeen redoubled their efforts to defeat it and inflict as much harm as possible on Soviet troops. The rebels recruited their followers not only in tribal areas of Afghanistan but also among the numerous Afghan refugees in the frontier provinces of Pakistan.

While the likelihood of mujahedeen victory over the Marxist regime provided the immediate cause for the Soviet invasion, other more basic considerations were judged by Western observers and statesmen to have motivated the Soviet behavior. First, by virtue of its Leninist ideology, the Soviet Union never renounced its global objective of replacing capitalism with the "socialist" order. Second, access to the warm waters has been a historical Russian policy, both under the czars and under the Communists. And third, the Persian Gulf had been a region of explicitly stated Soviet territorial aspirations especially since World War II, according to the pact for the division of spoils concluded between Hitler and Stalin in 1940.¹¹³ Afghanistan of course is not strictly a Persian Gulf state. But it belongs to the area that broadly encircles the Gulf. Control of Afghanistan brings Russia so close to the Persian Gulf as to put the Gulf and, above all, the Strait of Hormuz within the range of its fighter aircraft. In moving into Afghanistan the Soviet Union took advantage of the disintegration of the Northern Tier security system in the wake of the Iranian revolution. If under the Communist regime established in April 1978 Afghanistan and the Soviet Union formed a client-patron relationship, after the Soviet invasion Afghanistan became a Soviet satellite on the model of the captive nations of Eastern Europe.

Initial American reaction to the Afghan developments was not noted by special alertness. As in the case of Iran, U.S. intelligence had

not made any intensive effort to penetrate the "jungle" of Afghan politics and relied in large measure on information supplied by the Iranian SAVAK. But the tendency in Washington was to discount SAVAK's intelligence as unduly alarmist. The mob attack by Afghan leftist extremists on the U.S. embassy in February 1979, resulting in the death of Ambassador Adolph Dubs, did not particularly affect the somewhat complacent evaluation of the Afghan situation by the U.S. government agencies.

For this reason the Soviet invasion produced something of a shock which called for a more decisive response. Although Afghanistan was a remote and isolated country with no involvement of U.S. oil or major trade interests, it was nevertheless a sovereign state whose independence and territorial integrity were brazenly trampled on by Russian aggression.

The U.S. response took the form of five distinct actions:

(1) Less than a month after the Soviet invasion, the president in his State of the Union message on January 23, 1980, pledged defense of the Persian Gulf as a threatened area in the following words: "Let our position be absolutely clear: An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States. It will be repelled by use of any means necessary, including military force."¹¹⁴

In justifying this important statement Carter invoked the "threat of this Soviet invasion to the rest of the region." He argued that a "successful take-over of Afghanistan would give the Soviets a deep penetration between Iran and Pakistan, and pose a threat to the rich oil fields of the Persian Gulf and to the crucial waterways through which so much of the world's energy supplies had to pass." And in his diary the president described it as "the most serious international development that has occurred since I have been President."¹¹⁵

Two observations should be made with regard to this presidential declaration, henceforth known as the Carter Doctrine. First, it was consistent with the historical legacy: any major Western power that exerted a dominant influence in the Persian Gulf (at least in the twentieth century) considered that area so vital to its security and economy as to warrant a fundamental public policy statement warning outside powers (Germany, Russia) to abstain from any aggressive designs upon it. Thus Britain's foreign secretary, Lord Lansdowne, on May 5, 1903, had declared: "We should regard the establishment of a naval base, or of a fortified port, in the Persian Gulf by any other Power

as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should resist it with all the means at our disposal."¹¹⁶

Second, although the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had "triggered" Carter's declaration, the administration's concern with the Gulf had been aroused somewhat earlier, in conjunction with the revolutionary takeover and chaos in Iran. A number of meetings of the interagency Special Coordinating Committee had been held in the summer and autumn of 1979 to review U.S. security policy in the Persian Gulf. In his memoirs Vance testified that "Brown, Brzezinski, and I agreed that we should move promptly to bolster our defense ties and military capabilities in the region." And, with a slight departure from Carter's earlier-noted explanation, Vance added: "All this preceded the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. These steps stemmed not from the invasion of Afghanistan, as some have suggested, but rather from the turmoil in Iran. The hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan simply accelerated measures already under way."¹¹⁷

(2) The next step taken by the administration in response to the Soviet aggression was to apply sanctions against the Soviet Union. A broad range of measures were contemplated by Carter: embargo on grain sales and on transfers of high technology, canceling fishing rights, curbing trade with Russia, canceling or restricting cultural exchanges, and withdrawing from the Olympics that were to be held in Moscow in 1980. Of these, some required cooperation of other friendly nations and of the United Nations, and some were controversial and questionable in terms of their effectiveness. The two most debated types of sanctions were the grain embargo because of its adverse effects on American farmers (and on the president's reelection prospects) and the boycott of the Olympics. Despite the domestic political risk that it posed, the grain embargo (with Canadian, Australian, and a fleeting Argentinian cooperation) was applied and, at least for the remainder of 1979, proved effective. Similarly, although it caused deep disappointment to many American athletes, the boycott of the Olympics was also applied. Other, less controversial sanctions followed.

(3) The third important step was to form a special military command, the Rapid Deployment Force, for possible action in the Persian Gulf region. Such a force was obviously needed to fill the vacuum created by Iran's defection from the allied ranks. It posed a number of logistical and organizational problems, involving the coordination among various American services, and of diplomatic challenges per-

taining to U.S. relations with friendly Arab countries on the western and southern shores of the Gulf. These countries, owing to their basic anti-imperialist stance and their reluctance to appear as too closely involved with Israel's friend and supporter (as the United States appeared in the eyes of their public), were generally opposed to granting the United States any air, military, or naval bases and yet were interested in American protection from the dangers posed by Khomeini's revolution or Soviet penetration. Thus the effective defense of the Gulf transcended the purely local arrangements and was tied to broader and more fundamental aspects of the U.S. policy in the Middle East.

(4) To counter imposition of Soviet rule over Afghanistan, Carter initiated support for the Afghan anti-Communist guerrillas, a policy which in due course—and with some intensification—was inherited by a succeeding administration. The odds in this unequal struggle of primitive and poorly armed tribesmen against the overwhelming Soviet power seemed to favor the Soviet totalitarian colossus. Yet the stubbornness and heroic devotion of the Afghans drew the Soviets into a protracted and virtually unwinnable warfare, sometimes compared to America's predicament in Vietnam. "I was convinced," wrote Carter, "that the Soviets would already have moved into Poland if they had not been bogged down in Afghanistan and condemned by most nations of the world for it."¹¹⁸

(5) Soviet invasion in Afghanistan paved the way for improvement of U.S.-Pakistan relations. Even though the authoritarian type of Pakistani government under President Zia ul-Haq had on occasion drawn some rebukes from Washington, Carter consulted with Zia and used, with his concurrence, Pakistani territory as a conduit for arms supplies to the Afghan freedom fighters.

CONCLUSION

As Carter himself testified, in the foreign sector the Middle East had dominated his presidency. According to Brzezinski, Carter's "personal involvement in the foreign policy process was assertive and extensive. . . . Never has a President engaged himself as deeply in the Middle East problem."¹¹⁹

In dealing with the Middle East Carter faced three principal chal-

lenges: the Camp David negotiations, the Iranian revolution and the hostage crisis derivative from it, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Although he succeeded in having the Camp David accords signed, only half of his peace plan was accomplished, namely a separate peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. It will probably remain a long-debated question whether his tremendous investment of time, concentration, and energy on this issue was justified. Critics could argue that Carter's effort was like exerting a great force to open a door that basically stood open, because it had been a long-cherished and acknowledged objective of Israel to conclude a separate treaty with Egypt and, through it, remove Egypt from the Arab coalition of frontline states. Although a valid argument could be made that Carter's effort smoothed the way to peace, badly needed in this strategic and volatile region, one could also question whether a partial solution to the Arab-Israeli feud had built a truly durable foundation for peace or merely postponed the day of final reckoning.

Carter's policy toward the Iranian revolution was vitiated at the very outset by the primacy he gave to human rights as the basic tenet of his foreign policy. Again, as in the case of Camp David, the matter is bound to remain controversial. What is truly more important for America as the leader of the Free World? To insist on democracy everywhere that would mirror American values or to defend those strategic strongholds that realistically protect Western civilization from the onslaught of the most totalitarian and aggressive state in human history—the Soviet empire? The downfall of the monarchy in Iran was due to a complex mix of causes. The United States had enjoyed great influence on events in that country ever since Truman, and while we know that the shah's fatal illness might explain in part his indecision and hesitation, we also know that in Iran both government and public were extremely sensitive to any signal from Washington and, as Brzezinski put it, were "psychologically dependent" on the United States.¹²⁰ The unanswered question, therefore, is how decisive American attitudes and policies were in producing the revolution in Iran. Were they the essential or merely a contributing factor in the drama that unfolded? Carter's reluctance to encourage a military coup and through restraint avoid bloodshed might appear as humane and justified, but if one considers the consequences of this restraint: the crumbling of the laboriously erected Northern Tier security system and the advent to power of Khomeini's regime, noted for its

unspeakable atrocities, one may pose a valid question as to which value was more important to preserve.

As to the third major issue Carter faced in the area, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, it was a logical outcome of the Iranian debacle. The Soviets were clearly encouraged by U.S. indecision and felt that they could occupy another sovereign country with impunity. Here, however, their calculations proved defective: they did not reckon sufficiently with the Afghans' fierce love of freedom and with Carter's sensitivity to the strategic value of the Persian Gulf. The president's response took the form of the Carter Doctrine, an American commitment exceeding the pledges made under Truman's policy of containment and more comparable to the Eisenhower Doctrine.

It is noteworthy that it required an Iranian threat to put hostages on trial and a Soviet occupation of an independent country to stiffen Carter's attitude and to induce him to plan a resort to force. The January 2, 1981, entry in the diary of this peace-loving president carried an ominous sentence: "I also instructed my people this weekend to prepare for a breakdown in negotiations and possible hostage trials. I will declare a state of emergency or ask Congress to declare war on Iran."¹²¹

Like most U.S. presidents, Carter was acutely aware of the domestic consequences of his foreign policies. In his diary (November 4, 1980) he wistfully observed that most of the difficult and controversial decisions he had to make in foreign policy cost him votes among his "natural" Democratic constituents: "Jews, Hispanics, blacks, the poor, labor, and so forth."¹²² Among those difficult decisions he listed the Camp David accords, the hostage crisis, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The implication of this remark was that, facing the choice, he was invariably giving primacy to national interest over domestic politics. In the same vein his loyal collaborator, Brzezinski, expressed the opinion that "When national security was involved, political considerations always took second place in Carter's decision-making. Indeed, Carter made hardly any effort to disguise his disdain for domestic politics."¹²³ As a general rule this was probably an accurate statement. But there were also significant exceptions to this rule, for example when Carter appointed Robert Strauss as special Middle East negotiator, saying to Vance, "I do want Strauss to be up front because I need him as a political shield."¹²⁴ Moreover, preoccupied as he was with the forthcoming presidential elections, Carter made it clear at the time of Strauss's appointment that he was no longer

interested in discussing Middle East problems and, when queried by Vance about Israeli settlements on the West Bank, he half-jokingly evaded the issue by asking Strauss to "take care of it."¹²⁵

In conclusion it is probably safe to assert that of all the complex issues in foreign policy that Carter had to deal with, the Iranian crisis—revolution and hostages—was decisive in contributing to his one-term presidency.

8. The Reagan Presidency

Upon his advent to power in 1981, President Reagan found the Middle East in a state of considerable disarray, replete with problems that originated in preceding presidencies. During his first year in office the Middle East was a scene of three armed conflicts: the warfare pitting the Soviet occupation army against the resistance forces in Afghanistan; the war between Iraq and Iran that had begun during the last year of the Carter era; and the continuing civil conflict in Lebanon, aggravated by the cross-border raids by Palestinian guerrillas and Israeli troops. All these armed conflicts had the potential of spreading into larger areas and igniting further turbulence which might end in the intervention of foreign powers, hence the need for careful vigilance, skillful exercise of diplomacy, and formulation of clear policies aiming at preservation of peace and defense of American interests.

The challenges to the administration were further compounded by the stubbornly hostile attitude of the Islamic regime of Iran which, despite the release (for a heavy price) of the hostages captured at the U.S. embassy, incited terroristic actions against American citizens in Lebanon and elsewhere and sponsored subversive activities in Saudi Arabia and other pro-Western Gulf states. Terrorism, in fact, was being used as a weapon not only by a variety of disaffected groups but also by some governments, with Libya figuring high on the list of suspected or actual perpetrators.

Relations with Syria also were tense. That country sheltered the most intransigent and violence-prone Palestinian elements while openly displaying its hostility to the more moderate forces led by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chairman, Yasir Arafat. Syria's sulky mood could be, in large measure, traced to the fact that part of its territory, the Golan Heights, was under Israeli occupation and that the Camp David peace process had passed over Syria's grievances and did not even mention Syria by name.

Hovering above most of these difficult problems was the deadlock reached in the Arab-Israeli feud. The Palestine autonomy talks were stalemated. The United States was adhering to the self-imposed (in 1975) ban on any negotiations with the PLO and unwilling to dissuade Israel from pursuing an acquisitive policy in the occupied territories. America's relations with Israel were a recurring theme during the Reagan administration. The administration came forth with two peace initiatives to resolve the Palestinian problem: one in the first twenty months of Reagan's presidency and the other in its last year. Between these two there was no intensive effort to resolve the issue. U.S.-Israeli relations were complex and related to the American domestic scene. They will be reviewed later in this chapter. Some aspects and incidents of these relations stood out as particularly dramatic, especially those pertaining to Lebanon and Iran. They will be singled out for special treatment in this study.

Reagan's initial policy toward the Middle East could be described as a search for a "strategic consensus" which would bring about America's cooperation with Israel and certain "moderate" Arab states in common opposition to Soviet designs in the region. The strategic consensus idea was especially promoted by Reagan's first secretary of state, General Alexander Haig.¹ It was based on two assumptions: first, that one could count on mutual understanding and cooperation between Israel and these Arab states and, second, that Arab moderates shared America's view of the Soviet Union as the principal threat to their security. Already in the first year of Reagan's presidency it became obvious that both assumptions did not correspond to the political realities in the area.

To expect any kind of cooperation between Israel and the Arab states meant to disregard the deep feelings of suspicion and enmity that had separated them for nearly four decades. The reality was that neither Israel nor the Arab moderates considered Russia as their main danger. Israel was definitely obsessed with Arab threats to its security, and although it might be anxious to enter into bilateral defensive agreements with Washington, it did not remove the Arab countries, moderate or radical, as the primary object of its security concerns. By the same token conservative Arab oil states, such as Saudi Arabia and the Gulf emirates, might be emphatically opposed to Communism and Soviet infiltration, but Israel was still seen by them as the main enemy.

Similarly, to Jordan, a country whose West Bank had been under

Israeli occupation since 1967, it was not Russia but Israel that constituted its chief security threat. During the Reagan administration Jordan underwent a gradual process of alienation from America. Its requests to purchase defensive arms from the United States were rebuffed by Congress; its plans (initially coordinated with Washington) to establish its own Rapid Deployment Force for possible use in the Arabian Peninsula were also thwarted by the U.S. government's change of mind; and the proliferation of Israeli settlements in the West Bank filled it with apprehension lest this occupied territory change irreversibly its demographic character and become annexed by Israel.² In 1983 and 1988 King Hussein paid visits to Moscow, in both cases—because of American refusals—negotiating the purchase of military equipment.

Finally, while it is true that in 1972 Egypt, another "moderate" explicitly mentioned by Haig, had put an end to its client relationship with Moscow, during the October war of 1973 it was resupplied with arms by Russia, and by the time Reagan ascended to power it had made a number of moves to restore normalcy in its relations with the Soviet Union. In practice, the strategic consensus proved to be a stillborn concept.

Whatever the fate of the strategic consensus idea, the Reagan administration had to define its attitude toward the three earlier-noted armed conflicts in the region. In the case of Afghanistan the policy was to extend semicovert assistance, through Pakistan, to the Afghan freedom fighters. A separate section in this chapter will be devoted to this matter.

As for Lebanon, where the internal civil strife was connected with the armed flare-ups between Israel and the PLO, the administration aimed at lessening frictions by mediating cease-fires and strengthening the central government's authority. This segment of U.S. policy will be reviewed in greater detail later. In the Iraq-Iran war the United States followed a policy of official neutrality. In practice, however, it tilted toward Iraq. It was feared in Washington that the victory of Iran's fanatical theocracy might, in a dominolike fashion, result not only in extension of control over Iraq but also in collapse of other, more conservative Arab countries in the region, with incalculable consequences to American security interests. The president's policy carried an implication that the United States was not only attuned to the promotion of peace and protection of friendly countries against external aggression but that it was also geared to the preservation of certain

governments against revolution or subversion. In this vein in October 1981 the president declared that he would not permit Saudi Arabia to become "an Iran," thereby implicitly extending American guarantee to the stability of the Saudi political structure.³

THE TRAGEDY IN LEBANON

America's policy toward Lebanon in the 1980s cannot be isolated from broader regional concerns. It should be seen within the context of American-Israeli and American-Syrian relations. Lebanon is a pluralistic society, with a multitude of communities of religious or ethnic character. Because of its parliamentary constitution and regularly held general elections it has earned the name of democracy, particularly when contrasted with the authoritarian states in the region. Lebanon's democracy, however, is of a special, confessional type. A citizen's identity and loyalty to his confessional group or to a community dominated by a hereditary chieftain (*zaim*) is generally more pronounced than his loyalty to a more abstract concept of a nation. These confessional groups have tended to maintain their own armed militias, often strong enough to challenge Lebanon's official military forces. The most important of these communities have traditionally been the Maronite Christians (an Eastern rite affiliated to Rome), the Sunni and the Shii Moslems, and the Druze. Mutual rivalries, hatreds, and vendettas among these groups have plagued Lebanon's political life during the Ottoman era and in the early part of the twentieth century. When, following World War I, France assumed a League of Nations mandate over Syria, it not only separated Lebanon as an autonomous state (centered on the Lebanese mountains and the coastal plain and inhabited mostly by Christians) but also enlarged its boundaries by adding to it large areas to the north, south, and east, inhabited by a Moslem (Sunni or Shii) majority. France's interest, however, dictated favoring the Christian group, and a census conducted in 1932 gave the Christians a 52 percent majority, thus legitimizing their dominant position. In addition to the official constitution granted by France in 1926, a constitutional custom was adopted whereby Lebanon's president would be a Christian Maronite, the prime minister a Sunni Moslem, and the parliament speaker a Shii Moslem. The Ministry of Defense would ordinarily be assigned to a Druze.

During World War II, in 1943, when the Lebanese were struggling for emancipation from French control, the so-called National Pact, an

unwritten document, not only confirmed this confessional distribution of powers but also introduced a formula by virtue of which Christians would renounce their loyalty to France in return for the Moslem renunciation of special ties to the surrounding Islamic countries, to foster a Lebanese identity and loyalty. Upon achieving independence the Lebanese confessional communities honored the National Pact for a number of years even though the demographic base of the pact had changed, with Christians becoming a minority and the Moslems (with a rapidly increasing Shia sector) attaining a majority. Christians, especially the Maronites, continued to hold a leading position in the political and economic spheres, with the Shia element, concentrated largely in the south, definitely relegated to an inferior status. As time went on, these sociopolitical cleavages became more pronounced. There was enough inflammable material in the situation to warrant an explosion but, perhaps due to the Phoenician legacy that had laid the foundations to their trading civilization, Lebanese factions repeatedly composed their differences by compromise. This was the status quo that prevailed until the late 1950s, when external forces began to intrude upon the Lebanese political process. Of these, three especially deserve mention: Egypt's Nasser and his followers, who penetrated Lebanon's body politic and also used Syria as a vehicle; the Palestinians whose number in Lebanon totaled nearly half a million, especially after expulsion of the PLO from Jordan in 1970; and the Israelis. It is the presence or consecutive intrusion of these elements that upset the uneasy balance of Lebanese politics and served as a catalyst of domestic upheavals and international conflict. Thus Lebanon experienced a rebellion and foreign intervention in 1958, which was ended with the election of a new president, General Chehab, noted for his conciliatory attitude toward Egypt's Nasser and Lebanon's Moslems.

In the mid-1970s Lebanon was plunged into a new civil war, caused by basic socioeconomic inequalities but triggered by the intrusion of the Palestinian elements. This war acquired an international dimension in 1976 with the entry of Syrian troops. These came initially as saviors of the beleaguered Maronite regime but stayed on as an occupation force in eastern Lebanon, with the post facto approval of the Arab League as part of an Arab "Deterrent Force." The civil war abated somewhat, but despite various attempts at restructuring Lebanon's political system, it never came to a formal end. Lebanon's army began to disintegrate, while numerous armed militias wielded power in their home districts.

America's interest in Lebanon was limited. Its greatest asset in the country was the American University of Beirut, with a fine campus and a prestigious hospital, but from the geopolitical point of view Lebanon could not match the importance of populous Egypt, rich Saudi Arabia, or ideologically awakened Syria. Unfortunately, Lebanon's weakness acted as a magnet for foreign interference, and the presence of Palestinian militants on its territory, with their repeated raids into Israel, led to massive Israeli reprisals causing much suffering in the southern, Shia-populated districts. In 1978 Israel mounted a regular invasion of Lebanon but, following American and UN admonitions, withdrew. In 1980–81 border tension was on the increase, threatening an outbreak of more serious hostilities. To prevent this President Reagan sent to the area his personal emissary, Philip Habib, who after much shuttling among Middle Eastern capitals succeeded in producing, on July 24, 1981, a cease-fire between Israel and the Palestinian guerrillas. Thus a peaceful condition was restored to the sensitive border area, and for nearly a year, except for a rare minor violation, the cease-fire was honored by both parties.

This tranquility was abruptly shattered when, on June 6, 1982, Israel launched a major invasion of Lebanon, euphemistically called "Operation Peace for Galilee." Tactically, the date was well chosen because it coincided with the war over the Falklands between Britain and Argentina when the attention of Western leaders was bound to be diverted. Israel's defense minister, General Ariel Sharon, had initiated the invasion (with Premier Begin's and Likud Party's concurrence) with two strategic objectives in mind: (1) to destroy the existing military formations of the PLO and (2) to establish a Maronite-ruled state in Lebanon that would form an alliance with Israel and cede to it Lebanon's territory south of the Litani River. Likud's longer-range plans envisaged inducing the Palestinian militants to overthrow King Hussein's monarchy in Jordan and replace it with their own political structure. Jordan, declared Israel's Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir at a press conference in Cairo on February 23, 1982, is "the Palestinian state."⁴ This way pressure for Palestinian self-determination in the West Bank would be lessened, and the territory would become ready for annexation by Israel. Although these plans—for Lebanon and Jordan—bore the marks of bold strategic concepts, they were clearly the product of a militaristic school of thought oblivious to finer points of responsible statesmanship and showing scornful disregard of demographic and psychological realities in the region.

In advancing into Lebanon Israel declared that the cease-fire had been violated by the PLO when Israel's ambassador in London, Shlomo Argov, was critically wounded by an assassin's bullet in early June. (Actually, the PLO had disclaimed responsibility for the act, which was committed by an anti-Arafat splinter group of the terrorist Abu Nidal.) Moreover, citing the need for the security of its northern settlements, Israel assured Washington that its advance would stop at forty kilometers north of its border. This pledge was not kept. Israel's army moved rapidly northward and soon reached the outskirts of Beirut. In its offensive Israel also engaged the Syrian army stationed in the central-eastern parts of Lebanon, inflicting heavy casualties on Syria's Soviet-equipped air force (some eighty aircraft destroyed) and on its SAM missile emplacements, although Syria had made no aggressive move toward Israel.

Although Israel's army initially stopped south of Beirut, the respite was only temporary, to avoid incurring major casualties in street-by-street fighting inside the city. Israel's next step was to subject West Beirut to an intensive, nine-week-long bombardment, which demolished a good many buildings and which, especially on "black Thursday," August 12, was so destructive as to beg comparison with the heaviest bombings of urban centers in World War II. Moreover, beginning with July 4, Israel denied food, water, and fuel for several days to some 500,000 civilians in the city. By August 31, 1982, Israel's invasion resulted in 19,085 killed and 30,302 wounded among Lebanon's inhabitants, mostly in the civilian sector. Israel itself acknowledged that by November 19, 446 of its own soldiers were killed and 2,383 wounded, although independent estimates pointed to substantially larger numbers.

This is perhaps the proper moment in this account to inquire about the U.S. attitude and policy toward this conflict. The first observation that should be made is that the United States was aware long in advance that Israel had planned this invasion but did not exert any significant effort to prevent it. There are several well-established facts to prove the accuracy of this statement. Thus, in October 1981, when Haig talked to Premier Begin at Sadat's funeral in Cairo, Begin informed him that Israel had begun planning a move into Lebanon.⁵ Apparently anxious to cultivate the goodwill of the U.S. administration, on January 20, 1982, Begin reassured Reagan that Israel would not invade Lebanon.⁶ However, in February General Yehoshua Saguy, chief of Israeli military intelligence, during his visit in Washington told

Haig and the officials in the Pentagon of the contemplated Israeli advance into Lebanon. This was followed by a report by NBC commentator John Chancellor on April 8 that "Israel's military operation in Lebanon would take the form of a major war." On May 7, during his visit in London connected with the Falklands crisis, Haig received a message from Begin stating that it might well become "imperative and inevitable" to remove the threat against Israel by mounting an operation in Lebanon.⁷ Later in May Haig held conversations with Sharon and Israeli ambassador Moshe Arens in Washington, during which he was informed that an Israeli offensive into Lebanon was imminent.⁸ Haig's reactions to these repeated forewarnings were probably bureaucratically correct: in each case he discouraged the contemplated Israeli action by saying (with Reagan seconding) that "the United States would never tell Israel not to defend herself from attack, but any action she took must be in response to an internationally recognized provocation, and the response must be proportionate to that provocation."⁹ In the political sense, however, this American reaction was mild and not specific. Above all, it did not truly constitute a firm warning and did not threaten the suspension of aid to Israel or any other sanctions. It lacked the affirmative tone even in the choice of words: "the United States will *not support* such an action."¹⁰

This being the case, the letter that Haig sent the Israeli premier on May 28, virtually on the eve of the invasion, urging restraint did not impress Begin. "Mr. Secretary, my dear friend," responded Begin, "the man has not been born who will ever obtain from me consent to let Jews be killed by a bloodthirsty enemy and allow those who are responsible for the shedding of this blood to enjoy immunity."¹¹

According to an Israeli military commentator, Ze'ev Schiff, "Washington knew about highly visible concentration of forces on the borders of Lebanon and that Israel intended to invade Lebanon with a large army. Thus Washington's vague murmurings and apparent indifference were interpreted by the Israeli government as a green light for Operation Peace for Galilee."¹² Moreover, Israel expected the United States to welcome an invasion of Lebanon if it delivered a blow to Soviet allies, defined as the PLO and Syria.¹³

Once the invasion began the American reaction was negative but weak. On June 8, 1982, the UN Security Council drafted a resolution condemning Israel for the invasion while the president, Haig, and National Security Adviser Clark were in England. Clark passed a note to Haig that the president had decided to support the resolution.

Opposing this decision, Haig appealed directly to Reagan: "I advised him that the United States must veto the resolution not only because it placed the entire blame of hostilities on Israel but also because sanctions were implied. . . . Reagan, listening intently, agreed that we must veto."¹⁴ And indeed, Jeane Kirkpatrick, U.S. delegate to the United Nations, was promptly instructed to veto the resolution.

On June 9 the president wrote a letter to Begin asking Israel to accept a cease-fire the next day. Reagan's envoy Habib took a similar message to Syria's president, Hafez al-Assad. In response Begin procrastinated, apparently anxious for his army to gain as much ground as possible in its advance before ceasing the hostilities. On June 10 the president signed a new letter to Begin, "calling in harsh terms for an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon."¹⁵ Haig again objected on the ground that the letter was too demanding and likely to make Israel more inflexible. Reagan conceded, and the letter was not sent.

As the hostilities progressed, Reagan repeatedly voiced his disapproval of Israeli actions but without a firmness that might induce Israel to modify its policy. Thus on June 30 at a press conference the president denied that the United States had given Israel a "green light" to attack Beirut but approved of Israel's demand that all PLO forces should leave Lebanon. On July 15 the president made plans to inform Congress that Israel had violated the Arms Export Control Act by using American-supplied cluster bombs in Lebanon. The next day, in a message to Congress, the State Department said that Israel "may have violated" the provisions of the act, a rather timid phrasing considering the incontrovertible evidence that such bombs had been used. On July 19 the president issued an order halting further shipments of cluster bombs. (Later this order was rescinded.) On August 4 Reagan warned Israel that its actions were "disproportionate" to the provocations experienced but received on the same day a prompt rebuke from Begin, at that time visiting New York, that nothing could bring Israel "to her knees." On August 10, after fierce Israeli air attacks on West Beirut, the president called Begin to voice his "outrage" but did not back it up by suspension of military or economic aid.

On August 18, 1982, with the help of American mediation, agreement was reached between the Lebanese government and the PLO on a cease-fire and the evacuation of the PLO from Lebanon. Israel accepted the plan. The Palestinian fighters were to be dispersed in various Arab

countries, as far as South Yemen. (They eventually transferred the PLO headquarters to Tunisia.) The evacuation began on August 21. To ensure a smooth implementation of this agreement, a multinational peace force consisting of U.S., French, and Italian troops was dispatched to Lebanon. It contained an American contingent of 800 marines, who took up positions in the port district of Beirut. It is worth noting that this was not a United Nations force, largely because Israel objected to the UN sponsorship. UN peacekeeping forces generally were composed of military units supplied by neutral or less engaged nations so as to avoid the participation of the superpowers. (A separate United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, UNIFIL,¹⁶ had been stationed in southern Lebanon since 1978 but was powerless to stop Israel's advance in 1982.) The American component of the multinational force was to be present in Lebanon for thirty days but, owing to a rather prompt evacuation of the PLO, it was withdrawn after seventeen days.

By that time a new trend appeared in American policy. While pressing for an early end to the hostilities, both the president and Haig began to refer to the Lebanese events as a "new opportunity" for peace.¹⁷ Haig in particular (still in charge of the State Department but soon to be replaced by Secretary of State-designate George Shultz) reasoned that, with the defeats suffered by the PLO and Syria, the two forces that had destroyed the authority of the Lebanese government, the time had come to restore that authority by removing all foreign troops, Syrian, PLO, and Israeli from Lebanese territory.

Ostensibly, this looked like a sensible idea because, as noted earlier, many of Lebanon's misfortunes stemmed from interference of foreign elements in its politics. But two reservations could be made regarding this concept. First, there was something almost cynical in calling a controversial invasion of one country by another an "opportunity" for peace. If this yardstick were to be used with regard to other international conflicts, one might as well say that World War II, with its forty to fifty million dead and atrocities committed by Hitler and Stalin, provided a great opportunity to bring peace to the world by establishing the United Nations and having a convention on genocide adopted. Second, the concept of concurrent evacuation of all foreign forces from Lebanon (later embraced by Secretary Shultz) disregarded the different circumstances that had brought these forces into Lebanon. There was especially a difference between the presence of Syrian troops and the Israeli forces. Syria was an Arab country, as was Leba-

non, and its presence there was sanctioned by the Arab League. To equate the two situations was bound to produce vigorous Arab objections.

This new approach to the Lebanese crisis coincided with rather momentous developments in Lebanon itself: on August 23, 1982, Bashir Gemayel, the leader of Maronite militias, called "Lebanese Forces" (Phalanges and allied groups), was elected president of Lebanon. He promptly entered into secret talks with Israel to establish an alliance designed to ensure Maronite supremacy and eliminate both the Palestinian and the Syrian influence in Lebanon. His advent to power and his program dovetailed with General Sharon's plans for that country because initially Bashir Gemayel viewed close ties with Israel as preferable to Lebanon's links with the surrounding Moslem states. Yet he experienced a rude awakening when, at a meeting with Begin and Sharon in northern Israel on September 1, he was presented with Israeli demands that included appointment of an Israeli puppet, a renegade Major Haddad operating in southern Lebanon, as minister of defense in Gemayel's government and a number of other points that would have converted Lebanon into a virtual Israeli satellite. Torn between his original ideas and the reality of Israel's ambitions, Bashir was not destined to see the resolution of his doubts. He was assassinated (probably by a rival Christian faction) on September 14, barely three weeks after his election. On September 21 he was replaced as president by his elder brother, Amin Gemayel, whose policy, while still based on the premise of Maronite supremacy, tended to favor a realistic accommodation with Syria.

In the interval between Bashir's death and Amin's election a major event shook Lebanon and attracted worldwide attention. On September 16 the Israeli troops, in violation of the cease-fire, completed their occupation of West Beirut. Between September 16 and 18 militants of the Lebanese Forces entered the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila on the outskirts of Beirut and in cold blood massacred, according to Israeli count, 328 men, women and children, with 991 persons listed as missing. The reputation of both the United States and Israel was sullied by this barbaric act. When the cease-fire and the agreement for the evacuation of the PLO had been reached, the U.S. government had pledged to protect the civilian Palestinians (including the families of PLO combatants), yet nothing was done to implement this guarantee. As for Israel, it had just gained control of the area in which the refugee camps were located, and it was an Israeli military

commander who allowed the entry of the "Lebanese Forces" militia (mostly Phalanges) into the camps, although he should have known of their hatred of the Palestinians and their thirst for revenge (even if misdirected) after Bashir Gemayel's assassination.

The massacre evoked worldwide indignation and even public outcry in Israel, whose reputation as a country of humane values and justice was severely damaged. In fact, it eventually led to an official inquiry into the behavior and possible guilt of responsible military officers including General Sharon.

One of the immediate consequences of the massacre was the dispatch on September 29 of a new contingent of U.S. marines, some 1800 strong, to Lebanon. Initially their mission was to separate the Israelis from other forces in the Beirut area, with undetermined period of duty, presumably until all foreign forces withdrew from Lebanon. While they were stationed in Beirut's airport district, Israeli troops were in control of the nearby Shouf mountains. This new presence of U.S. marines did nothing to improve the situation in Lebanon, where foreign troops and local militias held sway in their respective areas, while a general climate of lawlessness, insecurity, kidnappings, and car bombings permeated the country. A new disturbing factor was the presence of Iranian terrorists and their affiliated Shia groups, like the Party of God (Hezbollah) operating from their center in the Bekaa Valley. These groups were particularly hostile to America, partly because of Khomeini's guidance and partly because the Shias resented America's support for Israel. On April 18, 1983, an explosion destroyed the U.S. embassy in Beirut, killing forty-six people and injuring close to a hundred. The semisecret Islamic Jihad (Holy War) group, a follower of Iran's Khomeini, claimed responsibility.

In the following month, under the prodding of Secretary Shultz, negotiations held between President Amin Gemayel and Israel led to the conclusion on May 17 of a peace agreement by which Israel undertook to withdraw from Lebanon, provided Syria would withdraw simultaneously. Syria's response was negative: it did not agree that its position should be equated with that of Israel. Feeling slighted, Syria's President Assad refused to see the U.S. special envoy, Habib, who had come to Damascus the day after the signing of the agreement. Under the circumstances Israel felt in no hurry to remove its troops. These troops, however, were subjected to frequent harassment by various Moslem and Druze militias, and the toll in soldiers' lives appeared so onerous to Israel (where public criticism of the unpopular war was

mounting) that by August 29, 1983, it reached a decision to withdraw from the Shouf mountains to a safer line (Awali River) in the south. Israel's partial withdrawal, however, left the U.S. marines in a cross fire between the Lebanese army (aided by the Maronite militias) in Beirut and the Druze-Shia coalition which promptly reoccupied the Shouf area. Moreover, the original task of the marine contingent—to separate Israeli forces from their adversaries—lost its *raison d'être*.

The Lebanese government of Amin Gemayel, in an attempt to regain authority, directed its troops to subdue the Druze in the Shouf. In the exchanges of fire the marines, located in the middle, suffered repeated casualties, but when the Druze artillery purposely or unwittingly hit American positions, the U.S. fleet off the Lebanese coast responded by firing its guns at the Druze strongholds. In justifying American naval action the administration announced that its purpose was to assist the Lebanese army in capturing the Druze positions. By taking this stand the U.S. government was "rewriting the Marines' mission," from one of an international peacekeeper to one of a party in the Lebanese civil war, this time to help the Maronite minority in its bid to impose its will over the Moslem-Druze majority.¹⁸ Moreover, because Syria actively supported the Shia-Druze coalition, before long American naval aircraft became embroiled in the conflict as well, with two U.S. planes shot down by Syrian fire and one pilot captured. (The U.S. involvement on the Maronite side had crystallized as early as December 1982 when Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam announced that the United States would train and equip 28,000 soldiers of the Lebanese army by the end of 1983.)

On October 23, 1983, a truck loaded with 2,500 pounds of TNT drove into the U.S. marine headquarters in Beirut causing a massive explosion; 265 Marines were killed. The suicidal driver was probably an Iranian-backed Shiite Moslem. In justifying American presence President Reagan stated soon afterward that the United States had "vital interests" in Lebanon and that American troops were there to prevent the Middle East from becoming "incorporated into the Soviet bloc."¹⁹ Apparently the reasoning behind this statement was based on a *sui generis* chain reaction theory: the Shiites and Druze were receiving aid from Syria, Syria was being armed by Russia, ergo Russia threatened the takeover of Lebanon. In making this statement, however, the president did not clarify how America's vital interests were to be protected by a modest contingent of 1,800 men. By mid-November the "vitality" aspect of the American presence in Lebanon seems to

have evaporated: if a "collapse of order" were to occur in Lebanon, Reagan explained, it would be a reason for the marines to leave.²⁰ By February 1984 the marines were evacuated from Lebanon. Soon afterward, on March 5, Gemayel's Lebanese government, out of consideration for Syrian and domestic Moslem sensitivities, canceled its May 17, 1983, agreement with Israel. And, as before, Israel continued to control its "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

Thus the sad episode of the United States involvement in Lebanon came to a somewhat inglorious end. Most of the participants in this tragic imbroglio emerged severely hurt: Israel saw its reputation damaged, suffered significant casualties (equivalent to 10,000 dead and 40,000 wounded in the United States), and failed to achieve its long-range objectives. True enough, some 7,000 PLO militants had left Lebanon, but still nearly half a million Palestinians remained, with a new generation of frustrated youngsters ready to revive their military organization. The Maronite-dominated government of Lebanon, in control of only a small portion of Lebanese territory (East Beirut and the coastal strip around Junieh), saw its plans of an Israeli-Christian alliance crumble while incurring the displeasure of Syria and exposing itself to increased armed defiance by the Moslem and Druze sections of its population.

The United States suffered multiple injuries. It appeared to the world, especially to the Arabs, as a conniver in the Israeli aggressive scheme. By not honoring its guarantee to protect Palestinian civilians left in Lebanon after the evacuation of the PLO, it broke its word and undermined credibility in its honesty. It also squandered its reputation as an impartial mediator by taking sides in the Lebanese domestic conflict and supporting the supremacist ambitions of the Maronites over other segments of the Lebanese population. By casting repeated vetoes when the UN Security Council was censuring Israel for invasion, it gave evidence of timidity when a show of adherence to international standards of peaceful behavior was needed. And finally, it suffered a tragic loss of American lives when the marine barracks were bombed. U.S. objectives in intervening in this conflict, never too clearly defined, remained unfulfilled.

The only winner appeared to be Syria and, perhaps, indirectly Russia. Syria's initial loss of eighty aircraft and of missile emplacements was promptly compensated through massive rearmament by the Soviet Union. Syria's military machine was substantially upgraded, and thousands of Soviet soldiers were brought in to man a

larger number of technologically advanced weapons, thereby posing a greater challenge to Israel than that existing before the invasion. Moreover, by attacking Syria's defenses with superior American-made weapons, Israel revealed both to Syria and to Russia which weapons systems in Syria's arsenal required replacement or improvement. Thus the officially proclaimed U.S. policy to thwart Soviet influence in the area not only failed to attain its goal but ended in producing opposite results.

THE REAGAN DOCTRINE AND AFGHANISTAN

As noted in the preceding chapter, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan at Christmastime 1979. In a quick turn of events Afghanistan's Communist president, Hafizullah Amin, was killed and promptly replaced by another Moscow protégé, Babrak Karmal. Within a few days Soviet troops, totaling 115,000 to 120,000 according to Western estimates, occupied the main urban centers in the country. The Soviet invasion put into motion two phenomena in Afghanistan: a massive exodus of the Afghan population, which found shelter mostly in refugee camps in Pakistan and partly in Iran, and the birth of an Afghan resistance movement, mostly of tribal origin but combining patriotism with religious zeal, under the name of mujahedeen. These freedom fighters distinguished themselves by extraordinary bravery and spirit of sacrifice. Organized into seven major groups, they lacked unified command yet they proved effective in denying the Soviets and the Afghan regime's army access to some 80 percent of the Afghan territory. As the years went by, they also began inflicting grievous defeats on the Soviet and Afghan troops and, from the mid-1980s on, by acquiring effective antiaircraft weapons, they began shooting down increasing numbers of Soviet helicopters and planes. The warfare was fierce on both sides, the Soviets resorting to such devices as scattering booby traps from the air in the guise of children's toys that maimed or killed peasant youngsters who happened to pick them up.

The Soviet invasion and Afghan resistance produced two American presidential doctrines: President Carter viewed the Soviets' southward expansion primarily as a threat to the Persian Gulf and, in this light, he pronounced his doctrine of the Gulf's defense in January 1980; in the early days of his administration President Reagan articulated a principle, hence known as the Reagan Doctrine, that the United States should assist any insurgency directed against a total-

itarian Communist dictatorship. This doctrine was repeatedly reconfirmed by the president. In his State of the Union Message of February 1986, Reagan said: "You are not alone, freedom fighters. America will support you with moral and material assistance, your right not just to fight and die for freedom, but to fight and win for freedom."²¹ And on January 25, 1988, in another State of the Union Message, the president first appealed to Congress to sustain the freedom fighters in Nicaragua and then spoke of the Afghan question: "So, too, in Afghanistan, the freedom fighters are the key to peace. We support the Mujahidin. There can be no settlement unless all Soviet troops are removed and the Afghan people are allowed genuine self-determination. I have made my views on this matter known to Mr. Gorbachev. But not just Nicaragua or Afghanistan; yes, everywhere, we see a swelling freedom tide around the world—freedom fighters rising up in Cambodia and Angola, fighting and dying for the same democratic liberties we hold sacred. Their cause is our cause. Freedom."²²

In the name of this doctrine, in April 1985 the president signed an order giving high priority to the task of removing the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. To accomplish this objective the administration resorted to the following actions: (1) It devoted substantial funds to rebel Afghan assistance. For example, the amount earmarked for this purpose rose from \$122 million in 1984 to \$280 million in 1985; it was steadily maintained at a high level, the total for the years 1981–88 exceeding \$2 billion. (2) The administration supplied the Afghan mujahedeen with vast quantities of arms, increasing their quantity and quality as the years went by. While in the early stages (1982) of this effort the arms supplied consisted mostly of bazookas, mortars, grenade launchers, mines, and rifles, the turning point was reached in March 1986 when Reagan approved delivery of the first Stinger missiles (surface-to-air) that the rebels began using in September of that year. Since that time the mujahedeen are believed to have shot down 270 Soviet aircraft. (3) A parallel effort was exerted to supply the mujahedeen with appropriate means to transport these weapons through the territory of Pakistan to the battle zones in Afghanistan. It took the form of the delivery of some 700 Tennessee-bred mules. (4) Cooperation was ensured with a number of states also anxious to support the mujahedeen effort. Thus Egypt provided training for the Afghan freedom fighters in guerrilla warfare; China cooperated by supplying them with rocket launchers and other weapons; and various Islamic countries, led by Saudi Arabia, helped with money and other supplies.

Assistance to the Afghan rebels was one of the largest operations of this kind mounted by the U.S. government, dwarfing by a big margin such assistance as was intermittently supplied to the Nicaraguan Contras. In contrast to Nicaragua, the Afghan effort had the full support of Congress. It was carried out mostly by the Central Intelligence Agency.

In addition to the aid to the Afghan resistance, the U.S. government had applied, in the early stages of Soviet occupation, certain sanctions against the Soviet Union. These included an embargo on the sales of grain, instituted under the Carter administration (on January 4, 1980). These grain sanctions, however, were abolished on April 24, 1981, under Reagan, who claimed that it had put an inequitable burden on American farmers. Actually, in lifting the embargo the president was fulfilling an electoral campaign promise.²³

On account of Afghanistan the Soviets were subjected also to pressures emanating from the United Nations. Beginning in 1982-83, UN Under Secretary General Diego Cordovez had been active in trying to bring about some agreement between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan that would pave the way to Soviet evacuation of Afghan territory. Progress in these intermittent talks (held mostly in Geneva) was very slow, but the momentum picked up after Mikhail Gorbachev's advent to power in Moscow in 1985. It was becoming clear that the Soviet government was anxious to disentangle itself from the Afghan adventure. It was not difficult to pinpoint its motivations: Soviet military losses were mounting; in spite of the occupation of the urban centers and a hold on the roads linking them, the countryside area under Soviet control was actually shrinking; Islamic nations at a number of conferences and individually had repeatedly condemned Soviet occupation as did the United Nations and many Western countries and their media; moreover, continued Soviet military presence in Afghanistan put a serious obstacle on the road to détente with the United States, which Gorbachev was promoting. Ideally, the Soviet Union would have preferred to secure, in advance of its withdrawal, some agreement between the Kabul regime and Pakistan that would (a) forbid Pakistan from permitting the use of its territory as a base and conduit of aid to the Afghan guerrillas and (b) provide for some Afghan coalition government which, by uniting the Communist leaders with the guerrilla chiefs, would minimize the damage to their puppet rulers in Kabul in the wake of Soviet withdrawal. But when on February 8, 1988, Gorbachev announced the

Soviets' basic decision to evacuate from Afghanistan, he said that Soviet troop withdrawal was not linked to the success of efforts to form a coalition government because this was a purely internal matter to be resolved by the people of Afghanistan. It was thus clear that the Soviet decision to withdraw was, for all practical purposes, virtually unconditional. Gorbachev, in a self-defensive mood, explained that withdrawal was a sign of wisdom, not weakness.

Perhaps to save face, in the same declaration Gorbachev stated that the timetable for Soviet withdrawal would depend on the guarantee of noninterference in internal Afghan affairs, but that such a guarantee had been achieved (presumably through an agreement with the United States) and that May 15, 1988, was set as the date for the start of Soviet troop withdrawal.²⁴

Indeed, in their intermittent negotiations in February and March Secretary Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze had reached a basic agreement on Soviet evacuation. The United States undertook to cease its aid to the guerrillas in response to Soviet troop withdrawal, which was to be completed in nine months. When queried subsequently in a televised appearance in Washington as to the date of aid cutoff (at the beginning, middle, or end of Soviet evacuation), Shultz gave a noncommittal answer. Apparently the vagueness of his response as well as the pledge to stop aid itself produced uneasiness bordering on alarm in the Senate.

Seventy senators subsequently addressed a letter to the administration protesting the U.S. pledge and demanding that stoppage of aid should be symmetrical, that is, applied equally to the American aid to the freedom fighters and Soviet aid to the Afghan Communist government. The Senate's concern was understandable: while the Soviets declared their readiness to withdraw from Afghanistan, they gave unmistakable signs that they wanted to leave behind a well-entrenched Afghan puppet government facing a lesser challenge from the rebels because of the cutoff of U.S. arms deliveries. Moreover, the Soviets had made at least two disturbing political moves that put in question their good faith in this diplomatic transaction. First, they sponsored the creation of a new administrative province in northern Afghanistan which, even after their evacuation, might serve as a secure base for Soviet activities. Second, they issued a veiled (but rather transparent) threat to Pakistan by reviving the contentious Pushtunistan issue (a border zone in Pakistan to which Afghanistan had frequently laid territorial claims). Thus on March 31, 1988, during his visit in Bul-

garia, Shevardnadze declared that the Afghan-Pakistani border remained an outstanding issue which might prove to be a stumbling block to the evacuation agreement. In addition, a joint Soviet-Afghan communiqué issued in Tashkent on April 7, while promising evacuation, approved "national reconciliation" in Afghanistan (that is, coalition of Communist and resistance elements) as the only "correct line" to be pursued.²⁵

These moves on the Soviet part and the Senate's pressure had the effect of stiffening the State Department's attitude on arms cutoff. In various pronouncements the administration adopted the senators' view and began to insist on reciprocity with the Soviets with regard to postevacuation arms supplies to both sides.

Finally, on April 14, 1988, four agreements (in this text referred to by their numbers) were concluded in Geneva. Two bilateral agreements were signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan:

- (1) on the Principles of Mutual Relations;
- (2) on the Voluntary Return of the Refugees.

The other two documents constituted:

- (3) the Declaration on International Guarantees, signed by the Soviet Union and the United States;
- (4) the Agreement on the Interrelationships for the Settlement of the Situation Relating to Afghanistan, signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan and also by the Soviet Union and the United States as witnesses. To it was added an Annex embracing a Memorandum of Understanding.²⁶

In the mass of verbose and somewhat repetitive articles these documents contained, it was the last (no. 4) of the agreements that provided for Soviet evacuation in the following words: "In accordance with the time frame agreed upon between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Republic of Afghanistan there will be a phased withdrawal of the foreign troops which will start on the date of entry into force mentioned above [May 15, 1988]. One half of the troops will be withdrawn by 15 August 1988 and the withdrawal of all troops will be completed within nine months."

Other key provisions could be summarized as follows:

Pakistan and Afghanistan mutually pledged to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as their nonalignment and "to prevent within its territory the presence, harboring, in camps and bases or otherwise, organizing, training, financing, equipping and

arming of individuals and political, ethnic and any other groups for the purpose of creating subversion, disorder or unrest in the territory of the other High Contracting Party." (document no. 1)

Afghan refugees currently present in Pakistan will be given the opportunity to return voluntarily to their homeland and will be granted the right to move freely, work, enjoy freedom of religion, and benefit from the rights and privileges accorded other Afghan citizens. This repatriation will be organized and supervised by mixed commissions which will "have access to the relevant areas within the territories of the High Contracting Parties." (document no. 2)

The United States and the Soviet Union undertake "to refrain from any form of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan." (document no. 3)

It is "essential that all the obligations deriving from the instruments concluded as component parts of the settlement be strictly fulfilled." (document no. 4)

The UN secretary general's representative will supervise and inspect compliance of the parties with the concluded agreements. His inspection teams, headed by a senior military officer, will operate from Kabul and Islamabad. The teams will have freedom of movement and immediate access to the parties' respective territories. (annex)

Some features of this settlement deserve comment. In the first place the Soviet pledge to withdraw troops was referred to only in the last (no. 4) of the reviewed documents as an agreement reached between the USSR and Afghanistan. In other words, in Geneva there was no direct written pledge made by Russia to the United States. Secondly, the texts of documents 1, 3, and 4 seemed to forbid any party, including the United States, to lend any assistance to the mujahedeen; they also restrained Pakistan from allowing its territory to be used to keep mujahedeen bases or for transit purposes.

Third, all these restrictive provisions were to apply immediately when the agreements became officially valid on May 15, 1988. All this seemed to confirm the view that the United States would be obligated to stop aid to the guerrillas via Pakistan as soon as the Soviets began to evacuate.

The Geneva accords were concluded in an atmosphere of mutual distrust bordering on hostility, especially between Pakistan and Afghanistan. During the signing ceremony no speeches were delivered and silence prevailed. Cabinet ministers of the signatories entered and

left the conference room by separate doors in a way strangely reminiscent of the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia that had put an end to the Thirty Years War in 1648.

The fragility of the Geneva agreements was further underlined by differing interpretations revealed immediately after signing. Thus Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze drew a distinction between Soviet aid to "the legitimate government of Afghanistan" and American assistance to the rebels. He claimed that, according to the signed agreements, Pakistan would have no right to make its territory available for further support to the guerrillas.

By contrast, Secretary Shultz held the view that as long as the Soviets supplied the Kabul regime with arms the United States was entitled to supply the mujahedeen. In a press conference following the signing ceremony he declared: "There is nothing in the agreement that restricts the U.S. in any way." He added that "we have made it clear to the Soviet leaders before the signing that it is our right to provide military aid to the resistance. We are ready to exercise that right. But we are prepared to meet restraint with restraint."²⁷

The American view was shared by Pakistan, whose Acting Foreign Minister Zain Noorani also claimed after signing that the agreements did not restrict Pakistan's right to assist the freedom fighters. "Where is there any restriction?" he asked.²⁸

Yet, according to UN officials, the United States and the Soviet Union had reached a private agreement stipulating that both sides would stop resupplying the Afghan belligerents once the evacuation began while reserving the right to match the deliveries by the other party.²⁹

These ambiguities inherent in the Geneva agreements led some American legislators to question the wisdom of signing the accords. Critics argued that in agreeing to the settlement in Geneva the United States was either insincere because it could not simultaneously aid the rebels and be faithful to the agreements or that, unnecessarily, it limited its freedom of action even though the Soviets were to withdraw from Afghanistan anyway. It was the valiant struggle of the mujahedeen, they claimed, rather than U.S. or Pakistani willingness to sign pacts that had led Moscow to decide on evacuation.

Other doubts were generated by the general distrust of Russia. The most prominent doubter proved to be President Reagan himself. On April 21, barely a week after the Geneva agreements, Reagan expressed his belief that despite their pledge to withdraw, the Soviets

still strove to prop up "their discredited, doomed puppet regime" in Afghanistan and that they still sought "to pose a threat to neighboring Pakistan." "The Soviets," said Reagan, "have rarely before—and not at all in more than three decades—left a country, once occupied. They have often promised to leave, but rarely in their history, and then only under pressure from the West, have they actually done it." "In the meantime," he added, "they know that as long as they are aiding their friends in Kabul, we will continue to supply the Mujahedeen by whatever means necessary."³⁰

This cold-war-style talk, reminiscent of the "evil empire" rhetoric of the earlier period of the Reagan administration,³¹ seemed to demonstrate the importance that "regional issues" were playing even during the era of a new détente on the eve of the president's May 1988 Moscow summit.

THE ARMS FOR IRAN AFFAIR

There were in the 1980s two broad currents in Middle East politics that contributed to the chain of events known as the Iran-Contra Affair or, to use a less charitable appellation, Irangate. One current was international terrorism; the other, the state of American-Iranian relations.

Terrorism was not a new phenomenon in the Middle East. Since World War II a variety of groups had indulged in it. A good number of movements fighting for independence from colonial status had conducted a nonconventional warfare either through guerrilla operations or through acts of individual terrorism. Later, once independence was achieved, former terrorist chiefs would often become leaders of governments and their earlier violent exploits would acquire a halo of nationalist sanctity. And, not infrequently, such leaders would claim that their early acts of violence were moral and justified as patriotic struggle for liberation, while their enemies, guilty of similar behavior, were branded as murderers and criminals.

As early as the 1970s, but especially in the 1980s, a new type of nonconventional warfare emerged: state-sponsored terrorism. A weaker state, as a rule of a revolutionary type, would try to achieve some objectives, foreign or ideological, by resorting, directly or indirectly, to terrorist tactics. According to the State Department, "Iran is currently [1988] one of the world's most active states supporting international terrorism and subversion against other countries."³² Iran's

sanctioning of terrorism was expressed by a high-ranking ayatollah, Sadeq Khalkhali, who in May 1979 openly advocated killing of "those who enter . . . a war against God and His prophets and who try to spread corruption on earth. No one who kills any of these persons can be arrested as a terrorist by a foreign government inasmuch as he will have carried out the orders of the Islamic Revolutionary Court of Iran."³³ Although terrorism was directed at various nationalities, Americans became its principal target.

As far back as December 1983 a truck-bomb attack was carried out against the American and French embassies in Kuwait. A pro-Iranian militant group, Dawa (The Call), was identified as responsible for the act. In a swift move Kuwaiti authorities seized and tried seventeen suspects and sentenced them to long prison terms. This drama engendered a chain reaction: a number of subsequent kidnappings, hijackings, and assassinations could be traced to the imprisoned terrorists' associates who attacked their targets to revenge the stiff sentences or to demand the prisoners' release.

In 1985 seven Americans were captured in Lebanon at one time or another. In mid-June of that year, TWA flight 847, with 135 U.S. citizens aboard, was hijacked en route from Athens to Rome. And in October an Italian cruise ship, *Achille Lauro*, with a number of American passengers, was seized by the Abu Abbas group in the Mediterranean. Gradually, the area of terrorist actions enlarged. In early April 1986 a bomb attack on a disco in West Berlin patronized by U.S. soldiers inflicted a heavy loss of life. (In this particular case the Libyan government of Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi was identified as the sponsor of the attack, which led a few days later, on April 15, to massive retaliation by the American Navy and Air Force aircraft aimed at Qaddafi's compound in Tripoli. Two U.S. pilots were listed as missing in action, while close to twenty Libyans died in the attack.)

A more detailed treatment of the phenomenon of terrorism, its causes, *modus operandi*, and remedies, deserves a book-length analysis.³⁴ For the purposes of the present study, suffice it to say that in the Middle East in the 1980s there were two major sources of terrorism: the disgruntled Palestinian extremists and groups affiliated with Khomeini's regime in Iran. Palestinians enjoyed the support, at one time or another, of certain radical Arab countries.

The Iran-affiliated groups operated mostly in and from Lebanon and were often identified as Hezbollah (Party of God), Islamic Jihad (Holy War), or Dawa of Shia religious persuasion. They "specialized"

in individual kidnappings, their victims being often innocent civilians, educators, clergymen, and others with no connection to foreign policy or intelligence activities.³⁵

The second confluent providing a background to our story was the state of U.S.-Iranian relations. In spite of the Algiers accord of late 1980 which, as noted earlier, had brought freedom to the American embassy hostages in Teheran, these relations remained in a state of hostility and tension. The United States had broken diplomatic relations with Khomeini's regime already in 1980 and applied to Iran trade sanctions and an arms embargo. Iran was also officially designated as a terror-sponsoring state. One friendly American gesture was to convey to Teheran information that alerted it, in 1983, to the Soviet and Tudeh Party's subversive activities inside Iran. Although, thus forewarned, Iran took strong defensive and repressive measures that effectively reduced Communist threats to its stability, it did not reciprocate with any show of goodwill, the anti-American tone of its pronouncements continuing as before. By the same token a parallelism expressed in a negative attitude of both Iran and the United States toward the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was not sufficient to produce a lessening of tension. It was probably outweighed by the U.S. policy of formal neutrality in the Iraq-Iran war, a policy perceived in Teheran as hostile to Iran.

A new chapter in American-Iranian relations was inaugurated in mid-1985, with initiatives for change launched by certain White House staff members and by the government of Israel. On June 11, 1985, Howard Teicher and Donald Fortier, officials of the National Security Council (NSC) submitted to Robert McFarlane, the national security adviser, a memorandum (officially called the draft National Security Decision Directive-NSDD) in which they recommended that the U.S. government should "encourage Western allies and friends to help Iran meet its import requirements . . . includ[ing] provision of selected military equipment."³⁶

In a parallel action a little earlier, in May 1985, Michael Ledeen, NSC staff consultant, had gone to Israel, where he discussed with Premier Shimon Peres the state of Israeli intelligence about Iran. Two months later, in early July, Israel presented to the U.S. government the first of three consecutive requests regarding American-Iranian relations. The request was submitted to National Security Adviser McFarlane by David Kimche, director of Israel's Foreign Ministry. Kimche informed him that Iranian officials had conveyed to Israel their inter-

est in a discourse with the United States and that, to prove their "bona fides," they were willing to influence the Hezbollah (a Shiite group in Lebanon) to release American hostages in Beirut. Kimche also told McFarlane that the Iranians would expect some benefit for themselves from such a dialogue, probably in the form of weapons.

Within a few days of Kimche's visit, shortly before the president went to the hospital for his cancer surgery, McFarlane told him of Kimche's proposal. Reagan expressed interest in the proposal and said that "we should explore it."

In mid-July Israel addressed to Washington a second request. This time the request came from Premier Peres through his consultant and special emissary, Adolph Schwimmer, an arms dealer. Schwimmer informed McFarlane of a recent contact with the Iranians through another go-between, Manuchehr Ghorbanifar (an Iranian arms merchant), who had been told that Iran could obtain the release of the seven Americans captured in Lebanon in exchange for 100 TOW missiles from Israel. McFarlane promptly cabled Secretary Shultz (then on a trip to Asia) telling him of this proposal and also informed the president, then in the hospital recuperating from his cancer operation. In response Shultz consented to "a tentative show of interest without commitment." Both McFarlane and Donald Regan, White House chief of staff, later testified that the President encouraged them to "go ahead" and "open it up."³⁷ (The president, however, had no recollection of such a meeting.)

The third Israeli request came on August 2, 1985, when Kimche again visited McFarlane in Washington. Israel's proposal was essentially a repetition of the earlier request for an exchange of 100 TOWs for the seven hostages but with a plea that the United States agree to replace the missiles thus sold by Israel to Iran. McFarlane discussed this proposal with the president and the members of the National Security Council. Although Secretary of State Shultz and Secretary of Defense Weinberger opposed the idea of an arms-for-hostages swap, the president gave his approval of the proposed deal (including the Israeli purchase of replacements from the United States), provided that only modest amounts of arms would be transferred to Iran, that they would not change the military balance, and would not include major weapons systems. Reagan also indicated that the United States was interested in a political relationship with Iran.

When McFarlane subsequently informed Kimche of the presi-

dent's decision, he stressed that the U.S. purpose was a political agenda with Iran, not an exchange of arms for hostages.

On August 30, 1985, Israel transferred 100 TOWs to Iran. This was followed by the delivery of another 408 TOWs on September 14, 1985. A day later, Rev. Benjamin Weir, the first of the hostages, was freed by his captors.

Two observations are in order in connection with these events. First, it is not clear whether the president had given advance permission for the TOWs delivery or whether he approved it after it was done. (In his statements to the Tower Commission which investigated the case in 1987, Reagan stated: "I cannot recall anything whatsoever about whether I approved replenishment of Israeli stocks around August of 1985.")³⁸ At any rate, according to the commission's report, the "President never opposed the idea of Israel transferring arms to Iran."³⁹

Second, the initiative for these arms transactions had definitely been pressed by Israel, while the United States seemed merely to accept rather than originate (on the highest levels of government) the idea of special deals with Iran. In fact, the U.S. government was deeply divided on this issue, beginning with the opposition voiced by Secretaries Shultz and Weinberger even in the earliest stages of the initiative as soon as the Teicher memorandum (NSDD) was first presented. By contrast, according to the Tower Commission report, "Israel had long-standing interests in a relationship with Iran and in promoting its arms export industry. Arms sales to Iran could further both objectives. It also offered a means of strengthening Iran against Israel's old adversary, Iraq. . . . In addition, elements in Israel undoubtedly wanted the United States involved for its own sake so as to *distance the United States from the Arab world* and ultimately establish Israel as the only real strategic partner of the United States in the region."⁴⁰ The report further said: "Iran desperately wanted U.S.-origin TOW and HAWK missiles . . . Israel was more than willing to provide these weapons to Iran."⁴¹

Beginning in November 1985 arms transactions with Iran entered a new phase, during which the quantity and range of weapons delivered increased dramatically. Thus, according to a new Israeli proposal made by Israel's Kimche to Lt. Colonel Oliver North of the NSC (and transmitted to Vice Admiral John Poindexter, McFarlane's deputy, soon to succeed him—on November 30, 1985—as national security adviser), first 80 and later 40 HAWK missiles were to be delivered to

Israel, later to be followed by 3,300 TOWs. In submitting this plan, Kimche said that Israel intended to provide these arms to moderates in Iran who would oppose Khomeini. In this new phase another important change occurred: the United States became directly involved in arms deliveries to Iran. Until then, the transactions had been handled by Israel, assisted by a group of intermediaries which consisted of the earlier-mentioned Ghorbanifar (acting as chief contact with Iran); three Israelis: Schwimmer, Yaacov Nimrodi, and Amiram Nir; and a Saudi arms dealer, Adnan Khashoggi, a man enjoying a special relationship with key Israeli officials. While these men continued to participate in negotiations and financial transactions, from now on Col. North, on behalf of the NSC and assisted by retired Air Force General Richard Secord, began to play a leading role in directing the arms traffic to Iran. A presidential "Finding," signed by Reagan on January 17, 1986, instructed the Central Intelligence Agency to purchase 4,000 TOW missiles from the Department of Defense and transfer them directly to Iran. Thus, in the Tower Commission's words, "The United States became a direct supplier of arms to Iran," and the president wrote in his diary: "I agreed to sell TOWs to Iran."⁴²

In spite of the large numbers of TOWs delivered to Iran in February 1986 (from the United States via Israel), no hostages were freed. Yet "the United States continued to pursue the initiative and arranged for another delivery of arms two months later."⁴³ In fact Iran's thirst for more weapons grew apace. In March the Iranians—through Ghorbanifar—asked for 240 different spare parts for the HAWKS.

Although the Tokyo summit issued a condemnation of international terrorism on May 3, in mid-May the president authorized a trip to Teheran of a secret U.S. team to discuss outstanding issues with the Iranian officials. The team was headed by former National Security Adviser McFarlane and included Col. North, Howard Teicher, two other American officials (from the NSC and the CIA) and an Israeli, Amiram Nir, who in Iran was presented as an American. The delegation arrived in Teheran on May 25 and left on May 27, 1986. The aircraft on which it traveled carried one pallet of HAWK spare parts, without McFarlane's prior knowledge. These parts were removed by the Iranians from the plane, apparently without his permission.

No high-level Iranian officials met the delegates, and such talks as McFarlane held with those who appeared at the airport proved futile. McFarlane's demand for prompt release of the hostages was not met,

while the Iranians insisted on immediate delivery of all the HAWK spare parts.

In spite of the failure of McFarlane's mission, contacts with Iran were not cut off. On July 26, 1986, a second hostage, Father Lawrence Jenco, was released in Beirut. In subsequent memoranda to Poindexter, Col. North expressed the opinion that the release was "undoubtedly" a result of McFarlane's expedition and recommended delivery of the remaining HAWK spare parts as well as a further meeting with the Iranians in Europe. The president approved this proposal on July 30, and additional spare parts were delivered to Iran on August 3.

It has been frequently pointed out by the critics of ransoming the hostages that such endeavors act only as encouragement of further terrorist acts. Indeed, in September and October 1986 three more Americans in Beirut, Frank Reed, Joseph Cicippio, and Edward Tracy, were captured as hostages.

Under the circumstances the U.S. government faced the dilemma whether to continue its frustrating contacts with Iran or acknowledge defeat and put an end to the procedures thus far employed. The "dribbling" method in freeing the hostages used by the Iranians, however, paid them handsome dividends. In spite of repeated disappointments, the White House persisted in its design to exchange arms for hostages. This time the NSC, frustrated with the services and unkept promises of Ghorbanifar, sought another channel of communications with Iran. The choice fell on a relative of an influential Iranian official; he was introduced to the Americans by Albert Hakim, a U.S. citizen of Iranian origin.

Contacts through this second channel led to three meetings between Col. North and the Iranians: one in Washington in September and two in Frankfurt in early and late October 1986. At each of these meetings the Iranians invariably asked for more arms. In Washington the parties contemplated the creation of a secret eight-man U.S.-Iranian commission to work on future relations. On their first trip to Frankfurt, Col. North and his associates carried a Bible inscribed by the president for the Iranians. On the second visit in Frankfurt the two parties discussed a nine-point agenda for U.S. relations with Iran. It covered the delivery of substantial new amounts of arms to Iran, the possible release of seventeen terrorists imprisoned in Kuwait, and military intelligence (presumably to be supplied to Iran by the United States). As a quid pro quo, the Iranians promised release of one or

perhaps two American hostages kept in Beirut and "further efforts to create the condition for release of other hostages."⁴⁴ On October 29, 500 more TOWs were supplied to Iran by Israel, this time with American authorization, and promptly replaced by the United States. On November 2 the third hostage, David Jacobsen, was freed in Beirut.

The financial side of all these operations was complex. It involved services of various intermediaries and use of Swiss bank accounts. The one feature that is relevant to this story is that Iran was charged for the arms higher prices than those the CIA had paid when acquiring them from the U.S. Department of Defense. The amounts resulting from this difference constituted a *sui generis* profit which was used by the NSC to assist the Contra insurgents in Nicaragua at a time when, due to congressional decisions, they were short of funds. Inasmuch as this aspect of the affair pertains to U.S. policy in Central America and the functioning of American government agencies, it does not properly belong to this story.

All in all, four arms deliveries were made by the United States in 1986. They ceased when on November 3 of that year a Beirut magazine, *Al-Shiraa*, published an account of the U.S.-Israeli-Iranian transactions. The paper's story was in turn based on revelations printed in late October in a small Hezbollah newspaper in Baalbek, a center of pro-Iranian militants in Lebanon. Earlier, in mid-October, a series of leaflets disclosing these secret dealings had been circulated in Tehran.

Thus came to an end a chain of activities that brought the United States, Israel, and Iran into a special ad hoc relationship. Iran emerged as a clear winner because it achieved its main purpose—to acquire arms that it badly needed without changing its basic foreign policies or modifying its form of government. To the extent to which Israel viewed the arming of Iran as desirable, it also scored some successes, although one could legitimately debate whether the strengthening of an expansionist and fanatical Islamic regime such as ruled Iran was in Israel's true interest.

The United States appeared as a clear loser. Even if its motivations were quite honorable: to free the hostages and build a political bridge to Iran's regime, the method chosen left much to be desired. By its plan to exchange arms for hostages the administration sanctioned the principle of blackmail and implicitly encouraged further excesses of this kind (as amply proven by the abduction of three new hostages in the

fall of 1986). The United States became subject to charges of duplicity in its international behavior by officially discouraging other states from supplying arms to Iran and placing a formal embargo on its own arms exports while secretly delivering them itself. Its purpose to establish some working contact with Iran was fuzzy in its concept because it was not clear whether Washington sought improvement of relations with Khomeini's regime or aimed at undermining it by dealing with Iran's "moderates" (of whom there was not much evidence). In any case, by relying excessively on suspect intermediaries, the United States remained largely in the dark as to the identity of the people at the Iranian end of the line with whom deals were being made. According to testimony presented post facto to the Tower Commission by Ghorbanifar (the principal intermediary in the first stage of the affair, yet called a "crook" by the Iranians serving as a second "channel"), initially the United States seemed to be dealing with a more or less unified group of regime Iranians in Teheran but, when the second channel was used, the American team relied on contacts with only one faction, that of Iran's parliament speaker, Hashemi Rafsanjani. This in turn led to an internecine struggle among competing factions in Iran and, eventually, to the exposure of the whole affair by Rafsanjani's rivals. Even though probably self-serving, Ghorbanifar's testimony might have contained an element of truth.

Although the American operatives in these transactions could experience momentary glee from charging Iran more for the arms than they had paid for them, their main prize—release of all the hostages—eluded them throughout the entire period of the affair. The Iranian side proved sly and treacherous and broke its word repeatedly by releasing only three hostages, one by one, at rare intervals (soon to be replaced by three new captives). In terms of business acumen the Americans appeared to be poor bargainers, easily misled by opponents with a "rug merchant" mentality.

A serious blow was delivered to U.S. credibility in the Arab world, especially among the states of the Arabian Peninsula whose survival had been of traditional concern to the United States. These states, threatened by the subversion and military power of Iran's Khomeini regime, had their faith in America profoundly undermined. True enough, the president tried to minimize the damage by resorting to defensive rhetoric. Thus on November 13, 1986, he declared: "The charge has been made that the United States has shipped weapons to

Iran as ransom payment for the release of American hostages in Lebanon, that the United States undercut its allies and secretly violated American policy against trafficking with terrorists. . . . Those charges are utterly false. The United States had not made concessions to those who hold our people captive in Lebanon. . . . I authorized the transfer of small amounts of defensive weapons and spare parts for defensive systems to Iran. . . . These modest deliveries, taken together, could easily fit into a single cargo plane."⁴⁵ Such presidential statements did not sound convincing. In the just-quoted November 13 speech, the president defined the goals of the U.S. Iranian initiative in the following order: (1) "to renew a relationship with the nation of Iran," (2) to end the war between Iran and Iraq, (3) "to eliminate state-sponsored terrorism and subversion," and (4) "to effect the safe return of all hostages."⁴⁶ However, from various sources it became known that, as a deeply compassionate man, the president repeatedly inquired about the hostages and that their release overshadowed other motivations as the real priority.⁴⁷ In addition to humanitarian considerations, the president was also conscious of the domestic political aspect of the situation. According to one testimony, at a meeting at the White House, "the President noted that it would be another Christmas with hostages still in Beirut, and that he [the president] was looking powerless and inept because he was unable to do anything to get the hostages out."⁴⁸ The president was certainly aware that failure to resolve the embassy hostage crisis in 1979 had materially contributed to Jimmy Carter's defeat at the polls in 1980.

The Iran-Contra affair engendered two investigations. One was conducted by the president's Special Review Board composed of former Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, retired National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and ex-Senator John Tower as chairman. On February 26, 1987, it published a report (commonly known as the Tower Commission Report) in which the essential facts of the dealings with Iran were presented. Later, a joint congressional committee held lengthy hearings and in turn published its own report. The latter, though more detailed in certain respects, did not bring any new major revelations, at least in the Iranian part of its findings.⁴⁹

In assessing the arms-for-Iran affair, perhaps most significant was the fact that the whole chain of transactions had originated in Israel and conformed more to Israel's national interest as perceived by its government than to the stated goals of United States foreign policy.

U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE GULF

It will be recalled that the Carter Doctrine of January 1980 had pledged defense of the Persian Gulf against "any outside force" attempting to gain control of this vital stretch of water. In reality its intent was to protect the Gulf against possible encroachment by the Soviet Union in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In the mid-1980s this doctrine was to undergo a test under President Reagan, and in practice it was implemented by him but with a modified emphasis: its sharp edge was directed mostly against Khomeini's Iran and only remotely against the Soviet Union.

The Iraq-Iran war that had broken out in September 1980 provided a background for the chain of events that culminated in U.S. military intervention in the Gulf in 1986-88. That war, fought mostly on land, generated fears that it might spill over into the Gulf region and endanger free navigation through the Strait of Hormuz as well as the security of the coastal Arab states around the Gulf.

Even though, technically, Iraq had started the war (in response to serious provocations by Iran), as of mid-December 1981 it proclaimed its willingness to put an end to it. Iran, however, was not interested in a negotiated peace. Motivated by religious-revolutionary zeal, Iran's leaders persisted in the continuation of the war. The price they demanded for peace was high: in February 1983 Iran's President Ali Khamenei declared that the leaders of the Iraqi regime must be punished, and in September 1984 Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, ruled out any compromise with Iraq to end the war.

The Iranian leadership's early optimism that, being three times more populous and driven by militant religious zeal, Iran would attain victory over the "impious and heretical" Iraq did not materialize. Although much smaller in size and manpower, Iraq enjoyed superiority in the air (some 500 aircraft against 50 to 100 in Iran), a steady supply of arms from Russia and France, and a better disciplined army contrasting with the large but somewhat ill-coordinated Iranian forces composed of the remnants of the shah's army and the Revolutionary Guards of the new regime. Iran's strategy was to defeat Iraq by repeated offensives, initially in the southern and central sectors of the front and later in the north, in which human waves of volunteers (often ill-trained teenagers) were expected to overwhelm the less numerous Iraqi troops. Moreover, by concentrating, early in the war, on the Basra

sector, Iran succeeded in destroying Iraq's maritime oil terminal in the Gulf, as a result of which Iraq's oil exports had to rely exclusively on land-based pipelines through neighboring territories.

By contrast, Iraq's strategy was defensive because, conscious of its inferior numbers, Iraq avoided squandering its manpower on risky operations. Its emphasis was on air attacks on Iranian oil installations: the Kharg Island terminal and other facilities in and around the Gulf so as to deprive Iran of its oil revenue and thus achieve a speedier conclusion of the war. Iraq also attacked tankers carrying Iranian oil. These attacks were carried out in the war zone (that is, Iran's territorial and adjacent waters) and were not directed against neutral or nonbelligerent shipping, which means that Iraq did not attack ships servicing non-Iranian ports in the Gulf. Moreover, Iraq enjoyed steady injection of funds from the oil-rich Arab states in the Gulf area, the total of which was estimated to have exceeded \$30 billion by the mid-1980s.

Because Iran had no pipeline outlets through other countries, it depended totally on the Gulf as a transit area for its oil exports. Iraqi air attacks on Iran-bound shipping thus seriously hurt Iran's economy. To safeguard its oil exports Iran issued repeated warnings and threats addressed to producers and consumers of Arab oil. Iran's leaders threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz and cut off supplies of oil to states aiding Iraq.

In the meantime the so-called tanker war was escalating. According to Lloyd's of London maritime insurance firm, 47 ships were attacked in the Gulf in 1985, 107 in 1986, and 178 in 1987. As of July 1987 the total number of ships attacked during the preceding six years was 333. From the mid-1980s on Iran began to interfere with and attack neutral shipping in the Gulf. Iran's navy stopped and searched 300 foreign merchant ships in the fall of 1985 alone, attacked some vessels sailing to or from the Arab ports in the lower Gulf, and in 1986, began laying mines in the Gulf waters. (The precedent for mine-laying had been set in the summer of 1984, when mines were scattered in the Gulf of Suez and the vicinity of Bab el-Mandeb in the Red Sea by unknown parties. Some ships were damaged or sunk as a result. Inasmuch as Radio Teheran broadcast gleeful comments on these events, Iran was widely suspected. But Egyptian sources were inclined to attribute the mining to Libya. An international team of ships eventually swept the mines away.) This intensification of the Gulf hostilities coincided with Iran's advances on the Iraqi front on land. In February 1986 Iranian forces captured the Iraqi Fao terminal on the

Gulf and reached Kuwait's border, while also penetrating Iraq's Kurdish region near Suleimaniya. Iran's attitude hardened, and some bravado crept into its pronouncements. In March 1986 the speaker of the Iranian parliament, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (deemed second in importance to Khomeini), declared that any American intervention in the Gulf would result in "insecurity for Americans around the world."⁵⁰ And in July he warned that Iran would punish any Gulf state that gave money to Iraq. Iran's belligerent actions toward third parties were aimed increasingly at Kuwait, whose oil installations, territory, and shipping were becoming Iran's preferred target.

Kuwait possessed enormous oil riches but was socially and militarily vulnerable. The majority of its small population (barely exceeding one million) was of foreign origin of whom the Shiites, often pro-Iranian, constituted a substantial segment, sometimes of dubious loyalty. In the military sense Kuwait could survive only by relying on the assistance of outside powers. Its basically friendly relationship with the United States, however, was marred by repeated American refusals to sell it the arms that it needed and, since November 1986, by the revelation of U.S. arms-for-hostages dealings with Iran. Yet, despite these disappointments, Kuwait was confident that it was in America's interest to ward off Iranian threats to its economy and sovereignty. This explains why on December 10, 1986, it asked the United States to put eleven of its tankers under American registry, in the hope that the U.S. Navy would escort and protect them through the Gulf waters. Implied in Kuwait's initiative was the idea that if the United States refused, Kuwait would turn to the Soviet Union to seek protection. At the same time Kuwait took steps to lease three tankers from the Soviet Union. Moreover, in the course of ensuing negotiations Kuwait made an unpublicized offer to grant the United States a floating base in its territorial waters. Although in order to protect the Gulf effectively the United States needed bases in the Arabian Peninsula, Washington rejected the offer, apparently to avoid deeper involvement in defense of Kuwait's territory.

Kuwait's request, however, to protect its shipping drew a more positive response. On March 7, 1987, the president reached a decision to place Kuwait's eleven tankers registered under American flag under U.S. protection; this represented a logical next step in evolving U.S. policy. Already in the days of British dominance in the Gulf (before 1971), the United States had maintained a small naval force of four ships in its waters, with supporting facilities in Bahrein. The Carter

Doctrine marked a definite political commitment which was followed by the creation of the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF). In December 1982 the Reagan administration formed the U.S. Central Command (CENCO), consisting of RDF and other units and covering the area from Egypt to Pakistan and from Iran to Kenya, but excluding Israel, Syria, and Lebanon. Reagan's decision to sell the AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia marked another step in America's engagement in the Gulf. Iran's threats to block the Strait of Hormuz elicited a number of statements from the State Department and the White House that freedom of passage through the strait would be safeguarded. On October 19, 1983, the president declared: "I do not believe the free world could stand by and allow anyone to close the Straits of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf to oil traffic through those waterways."⁵¹ At a press conference on February 22, 1984, Reagan reconfirmed his commitment in virtually identical words. Although officially neutral in the Iraq-Iran war, the United States veered toward alignment with Iraq and further estrangement from Iran. Early in 1984 Iran was placed by the administration on the terrorist list, and in November of that year the long-suspended diplomatic relations were resumed with Iraq. The March 7, 1987, decision to reflag Kuwaiti tankers thus came as no surprise.

What followed was a sequence of events that further involved the United States in Gulf diplomacy and defense. On May 17, 1987, an American warship, the USS *Stark*, was mistakenly attacked and crippled by an Iraqi air force pilot, with a loss of twenty-eight lives. Iraq termed it an error, apologized, and offered to pay for damages; its apology was accepted. This event, however, led certain Iranian leaders to claim that America was a "paper tiger," unable to protect its interests. It also strengthened their seeming conviction that they could harass U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf with impunity. These forces were increased by mid-1987 to nearly forty warships. At the same time an aircraft carrier was positioned in the Gulf of Oman, east of the Strait of Hormuz.

On June 15, 1987, the president justified America's pledge to reflag Kuwaiti vessels by declaring that if the United States did not take steps to protect the shipping in the Gulf the Soviet Union would.⁵²

Next month, two further steps toward U.S. involvement in the Gulf defense were taken. On July 20 the United States joined in a unanimous UN Security Council vote calling for a cease-fire between Iraq and Iran (Resolution 598). Two days later the U.S. Navy began

escorting the reflagged Kuwaiti tankers through the Gulf. And on September 2 Washington gave Iran a September 4 deadline to accept cease-fire or face a worldwide arms embargo. Iran's attitude was that of continued defiance. For a number of years it had turned a deaf ear to pleas from a variety of international bodies—the Organization of Islamic Conference, the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the Non-Aligned Movement—to end the war and seek peace with Iraq. Now in September 1987 it rebuked a similar plea of Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, UN secretary-general, who visited Teheran. Iran was perhaps emboldened by the American failure to persuade other nations that the UN cease-fire resolution be followed by a global embargo of arms for Iran. Two countries, Russia and China, expressed reluctance to join such an embargo. The Soviet Union held the view that it could accept an embargo only if it were enforced by an international naval force (presumably consisting of Soviet warships as well). As for China, it was more interested in selling arms in the area than in banning them. And, indeed, in the summer of 1987 Chinese Silkworm missiles made their appearance on the Gulf coast of Iran, to be used soon against Arab coastal targets and international shipping in the Gulf.

Whatever the ultimate motivation—to enhance its revolutionary legitimacy, to intimidate the Arab Gulf states, or to prove that America was a giant on clay feet that cowardly retreated when threatened with violence—in the summer of 1987 Iran stepped up its belligerent activities against neutrals in the Gulf. This brought about the first military clashes with American forces. In late September a U.S. Navy helicopter hit and damaged an Iranian warship, *Iran Ajr*, which was caught in flagrante delicto laying mines in the Gulf waters. And on October 19, when an Iranian Silkworm missile struck a U.S.-flagged Kuwaiti tanker, *Sea Isle City*, injuring eighteen crewmen in Kuwait waters, the American naval force destroyed two Iranian offshore oil-drilling platforms (one equipped with radar installations) at Rashadat.

After this punishing blow Iranian actions against American or protected ships somewhat abated but, for unexplained reasons despite the discrepancy of power, Iran resumed its aggressive behavior in the spring of 1988. In mid-April a mine deliberately planted by Iran struck and almost sank an American frigate, the *Samuel B. Roberts*. The National Security Council promptly reached a decision to retaliate in force. On April 18 U.S. naval units destroyed two more Iranian oil platforms—Sirri and Sassan in the southeastern part of the Gulf—and, when subsequently attacked by Iranian warships, they sank and crip-

pled six of them. Through this action half of the Iranian naval force was lost.

American action involved coordination of ships and helicopters, the landing of marines on one of the oil platforms, and use of laser-guided bombs. It is worth noting that in the early phase of Iranian mine-laying the U.S. Navy faced a shortage of minesweepers. The Pentagon's official explanation for this insufficiency was that minesweeping was a task basically assigned to NATO allies. The belated arrival in the Gulf of some European and American minesweepers and minesweeping helicopters eventually filled the existing gap in the naval equipment.

America's gradual military involvement in the Gulf generated a public debate in and out of Congress. Doubts were expressed about the wisdom of U.S. engagement, and fears were voiced lest the United States become drawn into the war in a way reminiscent of Vietnam. Certain critics insisted that the president was bound by the War Powers Resolution of 1973, which mandated that the president report to Congress within forty-eight hours if U.S. forces were involved in hostilities or situations "where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances." Such forces must then be withdrawn within sixty days (with an extra thirty days' grace) unless Congress decides to authorize their presence. The War Powers Resolution had been opposed by all presidents since 1973 as unconstitutional because it was viewed as encroaching on presidential powers. Moreover, it was criticized as giving comfort to the enemy who would know in advance that, unless Congress approved the deployment of U.S. forces, they would automatically withdraw in ninety days.

There was also a debate about the objectives of the U.S. policy in the Gulf. Partisan critics of President Reagan were prone to blame him for a "cowboy" trigger-happy attitude. In all fairness, however, it should be pointed out that the basic commitment to defend the Gulf had been made by his Democratic predecessor, Carter, and that Reagan was only implementing a presidential doctrine which in 1980 was accepted without protests.

To clarify United States goals in its Gulf policy, on September 24, 1987, soon after the naval clash with *Iran Ajr*, the president issued a statement in which he said that "Iran policies create a threat that could seriously interrupt freedom of navigation and the free flow of oil in the Gulf." Then he defined U.S. policy as consisting of three parts:

- I. Bringing ever-increasing international pressure to bear for a negotiated end to the war and to stop its spillover.

2. Steadfastly continuing to help our friends, the nonbelligerent nations of the Gulf, to defend themselves against Iranian threats; and

3. Prudently pursuing cooperative efforts with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and other friends to protect against jeopardizing freedom of nonbelligerent navigation.⁵³

Beyond this official justification it was widely believed that United States strategy aimed at keeping the Soviet Union away from the Gulf and at restoring American credibility in the moderate Arab states, severely impaired by the Iran-Contra affair.

Although he was sometimes described as aloof and detached by his critics,⁵⁴ Reagan took an active interest in the Gulf crisis. According to Secretary of Defense Frank C. Carlucci, "The President was intimately involved in every step of the way. He chaired more NSC meetings on the Persian Gulf than any other single subject."⁵⁵

U.S. response to Iranian provocations, especially after the destruction of the first two oil platforms, was variously called "prudent yet restrained" and "careful and measured" by administration officials. It was indeed very limited in its scope and intensity, clearly avoiding massive confrontation with Iran. As such, it was also subject to public debate about its adequacy. Even though, as noted, the basic policy of involvement in the Gulf defense was questioned, the need to respond promptly against attacks on vessels under the American flag was broadly accepted. "Retaliation is the course we should follow," declared Les Aspin, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.⁵⁶ There were voices, however, that viewed the "measured" response as inadequate and as encouraging Iran's recklessness. The very restraint of such a course was decried as dangerous because it gave Iran freedom of initiative as to when and where to choose the next American target, without fearing major retribution for its actions. Such voices advocated a powerful response, possibly preceded by a warning that it would be coming if Iran dared to attack American personnel or property. What was needed, claimed Col. Harry G. Summers, Jr., former adviser to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was "an overwhelming response to an insignificant action." The aim of such a response, he argued, "was to make the cost of aggression disproportionate to any conceivable gain."⁵⁷ Likewise, Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security adviser to President Carter, deplored the policy of restraint. "The United States," he wrote, "has the capacity to destroy not only important Iranian military assets but also vital economic facilities and to impose a total naval blockade of all Iranian maritime trade. In brief,

the United States can render Iran helpless in its war with Iraq."⁵⁸ Iranian awareness, he claimed, that such a massive response was forthcoming would permit vessels under American flag to sail unescorted. This sentiment was echoed three weeks later by the earlier-mentioned Congressman Aspin, who advocated mining of Iran's waters. "Mining," he wrote, "placed around two Iranian islands could shut down 100 percent of Iran's oil exports, eliminating 95 percent of its foreign exchange earnings."⁵⁹

In his criticism of the current American strategy John Lehman, former navy secretary in the Reagan administration, claimed that the Carter Doctrine, on which American actions in the Gulf were based, was no longer adequate. Instead of a unilateral approach to the defense of the Gulf, he favored constructing "a regional security arrangement with oil producers and consumers, who would bear a proportionate share of the cost of maintaining forces to guarantee gulf security."⁶⁰

U.S. active involvement in the Gulf posed another problem, already alluded to in connection with Kuwait's offer of a floating base. Arab states of the lower Gulf felt insecure and looked for American protection but did not rush to grant base rights to the United States, preferring the U.S. Navy's presence "beyond the horizon." As Professor Terry L. Deibel of the National War College explained, "Fearing the fate of the Shah, the rulers of South-West Asia could not risk open identification with the superpower that armed and bankrolled Israel, nor were they willing to risk a U.S.-Soviet crossfire on their territory."⁶¹ Eventually this issue was partly resolved by establishing two floating bases in the middle of the Persian Gulf which, with their sophisticated equipment, could be compared to fortresses and served the needs of the navy, army, air force, and marines. By mid-1988 various units of the combined American forces had surrounded ("caged") and neutralized two main Iranian strongholds in the Gulf from which much of the mining and other warlike activity radiated, the Farsi and Abu Musa islands. By that time the United States had enlarged its responsibilities in the Gulf by gradually assuming protection of neutral ships under other than American flags (though not by regular escorting). In spite of its naval setbacks Iran did not abandon its aggressive policies. In June 1988 Iranian speedboats attacked and damaged a German freighter and a British tanker. Advocates of a more resolute American posture could point to these incidents, involving repeated damage to ships and loss of human lives, as evidence that, short of an

overwhelming reprisal, the policy of prudent restraint did not seem effective.

There was also a movement, advocated by some American observers and actually practiced by various governments in the region, to reduce the importance of the Gulf by building a network of pipelines that would bypass the Strait of Hormuz. The first was Iraq, which, faced with the destruction of its Fao Gulf terminal and the refusal of Syria to grant transit rights through its territory, sought outlets through Turkey and Saudi Arabia, ensuring exports of some two million barrels a day by the newly constructed or enlarged pipelines. Similarly, uncertain of the safety of its exports through the Gulf and unable, due to the complications in Lebanon, to use its old Tapline abutting in Sidon, Saudi Arabia began redirecting a substantial part of its oil to the Red Sea by a newly constructed Petroline. Establishment of a pipeline linking the Abu Dhabi oil fields with a terminal on the Gulf of Oman by a desert route was also under active consideration. And, finally, Iran itself, insecure because of continuous bombing of its shipping by Iraqi aircraft, was planning construction of pipelines through Turkish and Soviet territories as well as a domestic pipeline that would avoid the heavily damaged Kharg terminal and carry its oil to Jask, east of the Hormuz, in the Gulf of Oman. While all these plans and projects had the obvious potential of downgrading the Gulf as a major oil exports waterway, the Gulf was still bound to serve as the principal route of access for imports of other merchandise to the coastal states.

A technical yet important question that arose was the structure of the American chain of command for the Gulf operations. That structure appeared cumbersome and complex. The Middle East Force—a naval contingent under Rear Admiral Harold Bernsen—was under the commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet in Hawaii. But it constituted a part of the joint task force headed by an admiral whose headquarters was located on one of the large ships in the Indian Ocean. This joint task force, composed of navy, army, air force, and marine units, was subordinated to the Central Command (CENCO) headquartered at McDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. The CENCO, in turn, was under the orders of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This structure had rather elongated and twisted lines of communication. Moreover, although operations in the Gulf were being performed jointly by units from all the services, Rear Admiral Bernsen's authority was limited only to the

command of the naval forces. Information from the Pentagon indicated that in the winter of 1987–88 steps were being taken to improve the structure and ensure greater effectiveness of the chain of command.

America's involvement in the Gulf defense became substantially modified with two important occurrences in the area, one tragic, the other giving grounds for cautious optimism. The first was the downing on July 3, 1988, of an Iranian airliner flying south over the Strait of Hormuz (a war zone) from Bandar Abbas to Dubai. The airbus was shot down by the U.S. cruiser *Vincennes* at the time of the warship's naval engagement with Iranian speedboats, her crew mistakenly believing that she was about to be attacked by an Iranian F-14 fighter plane. About 290 civilian passengers, mostly Iranian, were killed. Upon learning of the incident President Reagan issued a statement expressing sorrow at the loss of lives, and a message conveying "deep regret" was sent by the U.S. government to Iran. The message stopped short of apology and pointed out that the accident had occurred as a result of a conflict that should have ended long ago. At the same time administration officials began considering payment of compensation to the victims' families. In spite of earlier criticism of the navy's role in the Gulf by certain congressmen, this time leading members of Congress voiced support for the *Vincennes* action as justified because taken in self-defense.

The second event was the formal acceptance by Iran two weeks later, on July 18, of a cease-fire with Iraq as enjoined by UN resolution 598. In a letter to the UN secretary general, Iran's President Ali Khamenei referred to the destruction of the Iranian airliner as a sign of the aggravation of the war which began "engulfing" even innocent civilians.⁶²

Iran's decision to desist from further fighting was dictated partly by its military reverses in land warfare and its naval defeats and partly by its crumbling economy and diplomatic isolation. To put an end to it Iran in the course of the summer had begun negotiating with Britain and France to restore severed diplomatic ties. It had also made, before the airliner incident, a conciliatory move toward the United States by sending—through third parties—messages that indicated its desire to open a dialogue. According to Secretary Shultz, these messages elicited a positive response from Washington.⁶³ Subsequent news dispatches spoke of Iran's conditional willingness to intercede in the release of hostages still held in Lebanon, with a proviso that the

remaining Iranian assets in the United States be “unfrozen.” Subsequently, from Teheran came the news in the fall that the American embassy building, occupied since the hostage-taking in 1979 by Iranian revolutionary groups, was being emptied and refurbished as if in anticipation of resumption of diplomatic relations. It was a moot question whether the airline disaster had precipitated Iran’s decision to accept the cease-fire on the Iraqi front, but judging by President Khamenei’s letter to the UN secretary-general, it might have been a contributing factor.

The end of active hostilities between Iran and Iraq was welcomed by Washington (less so by Israel and Syria, both facing now a fifty-division strong, well-equipped Iraqi army, flushed with a spirit of success). It also had its effect on U.S. actions in the Gulf and, more broadly, on America’s policies in the region. By late summer 1988 the Department of Defense announced that the presence of the navy in Gulf waters would be reduced and escorting of the reflagged Kuwait tankers would cease.

Iran’s “olive branch” gesture initially met with suspicion from Iraq, which delayed its own acceptance of the cease-fire despite its earlier peace initiatives. Following UN mediation, in the early fall both parties were eventually brought to a negotiating table in Geneva to discuss a long-term peace settlement.

It was at this juncture that a new complication arose, this time between the United States and Iraq. In the late summer and early fall Iraq was reported to have used poison gas against its Kurdish insurgents, some of whom had fled and sought asylum in Turkey. Accusations of a similar type had previously been made by Iran complaining about Iraq’s use of gas against Iranian troops while the war was still in progress. At that time the United States had not allowed the matter to become a cause célèbre, limiting its statements to broad disapproval of the use of chemical weapons, perhaps because there was no incentive to give comfort to Iran.

However, once the hostilities stopped and the Iraqi army turned with preponderant strength against its domestic foe—the Kurdish rebels—considerable uproar over the use of gas ensued in both Europe and the United States. True enough, a team of Turkish doctors that examined sick Kurdish refugees in Turkey absolved Iraq from blame; however, Iraq, while steadily denying the use of gas against the Kurds, refused permission for any foreign medical commission to investigate the matter in its territory.

This time the American reaction became much stronger than in the earlier case when Iran was Iraq's main target. In early September Secretary Shultz accused Baghdad of using gas against the Kurds and on September 10 the Senate voted sanctions against Iraq. These included an \$800 million cut in credits and credit guarantees, a ban on exports of sensitive equipment to Iraq, and a prohibition of U.S. imports of Iraqi oil. On the 28th of the same month the House of Representatives broadly confirmed the Senate version of the sanction by a vote of 388 to 16. This congressional move was welcomed in Iran and Israel, both negatively disposed toward Iraq. On September 11, however, a massive anti-American demonstration was staged in Baghdad. An editorial in the semiofficial daily *Al-Thawra* (formerly edited by the current Iraqi foreign minister, Tareq Aziz) attacked the "American Knesset and its masters" while claiming that sanctions were inspired by the "Zionist lobby" to divert attention from the Palestinian uprising.⁶⁴ Thus, following certain historical precedents, a realignment in the position of formerly belligerent and nonbelligerent powers occurred as soon as the war came to an end.

U.S. intervention in the Persian Gulf led to the deployment of the largest contingent of American forces in a crisis situation since the Vietnam war. It constituted both a test and a culmination of the defense policy during the Reagan era. It marked a continuity linking the Carter and Reagan presidencies. The wide-ranging debate on policy goals and execution not only conveyed a healthy sign of a democratic system at work but also gave a lesson in America's responsibility as a leading power of the Free World in safeguarding a more peaceful and decent world order.

THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL: TIES AND TENSIONS

"Israel has never had a greater friend in the White House than Ronald Reagan." This was the first sentence of a chapter dealing with the Middle East in Haig's memoirs.⁶⁵ Four years later, in 1988, a similar thought was echoed by Israel's Premier Shamir. Speaking to reporters, he declared: "This is the most friendly administration we have ever worked with. They are determined that the strong friendship and cooperation will continue and even be strengthened despite the differences that crop up from time to time."⁶⁶

These statements reflected the reality of the basic relationship

between Israel and the United States during the Reagan era. The president himself voiced identical sentiments on a number of occasions. When welcoming Premier Begin to Washington in September 1981, he said: "You may rest assured that the security of Israel is a principal objective of this Administration and that we regard Israel as an ally in our search for regional peace and stability."⁶⁷ This policy derived from various considerations: the belief that Israel was a true democracy, that it shared America's cherished values, and that it was a "strategic asset"⁶⁸ to the United States. The president strove to form an almost symbiotic relationship with Israel.

In pursuing this policy Reagan ensured that Israel would maintain a qualitative military superiority over all other countries in the Middle East. "I am determined to see," he said in a letter to Begin in 1982 (addressed as "Dear Menachem") "that Israel's qualitative edge is maintained. . . . Any decision on future sales to Jordan or any other country in the region will be made in the context of my Administration's firm commitment to Israel's security and the need to bring peace to the region." He concluded the letter by referring to the "unique bond between the United States and Israel."⁶⁹

A similarly preferential treatment was accorded Israel in military and economic aid. It was one of the few fields where the executive branch and Congress—regardless of party affiliation—worked together in exemplary harmony. The U.S. government's aid to Israel between 1949 and 1985 amounted to \$28.1 billion, of which \$14.6 billion were outright grants. If we add to it Export-Import Bank loans and contributions from private individuals, institutions, and Israel bonds, the total assistance to Israel during that period was \$43.2 billion.⁷⁰ Government aid between 1979 and 1983 averaged about \$2.7 billion a year, but from 1986 on it amounted to about \$3 billion a year. It was divided into loans, usually of thirty-year duration (as compared with thirteen-year terms for other countries), and grants. When in the late fall of 1982, the administration proposed \$2.6 billion in aid to Israel, the Senate Appropriations Committee on December 2 increased the amount by \$475 million. Moreover, periodically, certain sums initially earmarked as loans were "forgiven." This proneness to be generous to Israel was not the exclusive characteristic of the Reagan administration. The trend, as noted earlier in this study, had begun on a substantial scale during the Johnson term of office and became intensified during the Nixon era. During the Reagan administration assistance to Israel reached extremely high levels.⁷¹

There was from the beginning of Reagan's presidency a definite trend to favor Israel, even if some of its policies were controversial. A typical case was that of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. According to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 (regulating international laws of occupation) any forcible demographic displacements in occupied lands were forbidden.⁷² However, when elected president, shortly after inauguration, Reagan gave an interview to five newspaper reporters in which he declared that the Israeli settlements were "not illegal."⁷³ Although he qualified this statement by calling Israel's rush to establish settlements "ill-advised" and "unnecessarily provocative," he never disavowed his belief in their legality, thus helping Israel in its thesis that it was entitled to place its settlers in the "liberated" lands of Eretz Israel.

Throughout the two terms of Reagan's presidency, relations with Israel figured prominently on the U.S. foreign policy agenda. This was largely due to the problems Israel had with its Arab neighbors or, more broadly, to Israel's own search for security, expressed in some actions that met with disapproval by the U.S. government. They led to inevitable tensions between Washington and Israel because American and Israeli national interests were not identical. Cases of tension, however, alternated with cases of rapprochement, in which the Reagan administration did much to forge closer ties between the two nations. Some of the issues thus posed stood out as particularly important. They will be briefly reviewed in the lines that follow.

Israel's Attack on Iraq's Nuclear Facility

On June 7, 1981, Israeli warplanes bombed and destroyed a nuclear reactor in Osirak near Baghdad in Iraq, which was being constructed by French, Italian, and Dutch technicians. Officially the plant was to serve Iraq's production of energy for peaceful uses. Israel, however, suspected that once Iraq acquired the capacity of producing nuclear power it might use it for warlike purposes, hence Israel opposed any nuclear development in Iraq. It further justified its action as taken in self-defense by pointing out that Iraq, as a country that never signed an armistice since 1948, was formally in a state of war with Israel. It should perhaps be added that Israel for many years past had been developing its own nuclear capacity in its facility at Dimona. (Its activities in this field were revealed in 1986 in England by an Israeli defector, Mordechai Vanunu, who claimed that between 120 and 200

nuclear weapons had been produced at Dimona. Vanunu was subsequently abducted in Italy by Mossad, brought to trial in Israel, and sentenced to life imprisonment for espionage and treason.) In carrying out this raid Israel used American-made F-16 jet bombers accompanied by F-15s. Moreover, Israel's planes overflew the territory of Jordan and Saudi Arabia to accomplish their mission.

The attack caused concern in the administration. There was a possibility that the bombing might have released harmful radiation. On June 10 Secretary Haig wrote a letter to Congress informing it that U.S.-supplied aircraft were used in the attack and that "a substantial violation of the 1952 agreement may have occurred."⁷⁴ (This was a reference to the U.S.-Israel Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement of July 23, 1952, by which Israel had pledged to use American-supplied military equipment "solely to maintain its internal security, its legitimate self-defense," and not to "undertake any act of aggression.")⁷⁵

Shortly after the attack the U.S. government condemned the Israeli air strike, "the unprecedented character of which," according to Under Secretary of State Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., "could not but seriously add to the already-tense situation in the area."⁷⁶ In Stoessel's testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on June 17, 1981, three claims of Iraq were brought out: (a) that its nuclear program was aiming only at peaceful uses of nuclear energy; (b) that it had ratified the nuclear nonproliferation treaty while Israel had not; (c) that its facilities had been inspected in January 1981 by the International Atomic Energy Agency, that no violations were found, and that all enriched uranium supplied to Iraq was accounted for.

The hearings before the committee revealed the dichotomy between the supporters of Israel and those who were critical, as they saw it, of Israel's misuse of American-supplied weapons. Thus, addressing Under Secretary Stoessel, Representative Stephen Solarz (D.-N.Y.) expressed his amazement and chagrin at Stoessel's unwillingness "to characterize the purpose of the Iraqi nuclear program as being one designed to provide them with the capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons. . . ." "What do you think," asked Solarz, "was the Iraqi purpose in going forward with this program? Was it to give them the capacity to replace oil as a source of energy in their country?"⁷⁷ However, Representative Paul Findley (R.-Ill.) sounded critical of the government arms sales policy: "To my knowledge," he declared, "this new administration has not seen fit to issue any warnings whatever to the State of Israel concerning the use of U.S.-supplied weapons."⁷⁸

There appeared also a difference in emphasis between the State Department and the president. "We have condemned," said Stoessel, "the Israeli attack and cannot but be dismayed by the damage which has been done to the search for peace in the Middle East."⁷⁹ The president's response to the attack was, first, to suspend, on June 10, 1981, the scheduled delivery of four F-16 planes to Israel. But on June 16 Reagan took a more conciliatory stance by declaring: "One has to recognize that Israel had reason for concern in view of the past history of Iraq, which has never signed a cease-fire or recognized Israel as a nation, has never joined in any peace effort for that."⁸⁰

In spite of the momentary stir it caused, Israel's raid did not leave any lasting effects on U.S.-Israeli relations. It did, however, pose the question of the general orientation of American policy in the area. The dilemma was summarized by Representative Hamilton when he asked during the committee hearings: "What happens to the administration's strategic consensus as a result of this raid, where we tried to persuade Middle East states that the Soviet Union was the greatest threat to the Middle East? What happens to Mr. Sadat, who the papers say has been badly embarrassed as a result of all this? What happens to the whole question of arms in the area?"⁸¹

The AWACS Controversy and Arms for Saudi Arabia

The strategic consensus concept was exposed to another trial during the first year of Reagan's presidency when Saudi Arabia requested, and the administration agreed, to acquire from the United States a small number of AWACS aircraft (in addition to sixty-two F-15 fighter-bombers initially promised by the Carter administration). These radar-equipped, technologically superior planes were needed as a protection against possible attacks by revolutionary Iran, whose regime was hostile to Saudi Arabia both on account of its monarchical structure and because the Saudi kingdom was financially supporting Iraq in its war with Iran. Actually, as a transitional step, four of these aircraft, manned by American crews, had been loaned to the Saudis in 1979. Then, in 1980, when the sale of the AWACS and F-15s was first broached, sixty-eight senators, in a letter to President Carter, protested it. When the matter was revived in 1981, Israel mounted a vigorous offensive against the sale. On the occasion of Haig's visit in Jerusalem, Premier Begin told him: "If you sell these planes to the Saudis, Israel will be militarily transparent," while Yitzhak Shamir, his foreign minister,

exclaimed: "arms for the Saudis! Saudi Arabia is no moderate nation where Israel is concerned."⁸² Israel's objections were seconded by its friends in the United States, and, following the earlier pattern, in late June fifty-four senators sent a letter to President Reagan expressing "deep concern" over the proposed sale. In September Begin came on an official visit to Washington and, in spite of his prior assurances not to lobby against the Saudi arms transaction, engaged in an intensive campaign in the Senate. His behavior drew criticism from William Clark, the deputy secretary of state, soon to be appointed national security adviser, and even provoked the ire of the president, who said that "it is not the business of any other nation to make American foreign policy."⁸³

Finally, following Reagan's personal intervention with a number of senators, on October 29, 1981, after some six months of fierce struggle, the arms package for Saudi Arabia was approved by fifty-two forty-eight votes in the Senate. (Reagan had just come back from the Cancún economic summit in Mexico, with barely six days left to persuade the Senate.) Although it marked a signal victory for the president as a "great communicator," the passage of the arms authorization was not without price: all sorts of restrictions were placed on the use of the AWACS planes while the F-15s were to be sold with smaller than normal fuel tanks and denuded of bomb racks. Because of the president's intensive personal involvement, Israel did not win this political battle, but it clearly gave notice to the United States that, in practice, any sales of American arms to the Arabs would be subjected to the Israeli veto. It also carried the message that in the congressional contests between the Israeli premier and the U.S. president (unless he exerted extraordinary efforts), Israel was likely to prevail. Above all, the whole story demonstrated how widely divergent were the aims and perceptions of Israel on the one hand and of the United States and Saudi Arabia on the other and how futile it was to count on their adherence to the strategic consensus concept.

The "test of wills" that the AWACS case supplied was repeated on at least two other occasions during the Reagan presidency. Underpopulated and underdeveloped, yet because of its oil resources enormously rich, Saudi Arabia felt vulnerable to aggression from a variety of quarters. Her actual or potential enemies included at one time or another Nasser's Egypt, Socialist Yemen and Communist-leaning South Yemen, Khomeini's Iran, and Israel, while the two Baath-dominated regimes of Iraq and Syria (ideologically hostile to monarchies) filled

the Saudis with apprehension and ambivalence. Stubbornly attached to independence, its own traditional way of life, and its preeminent status as the cradle of Islam, the Saudi kingdom placed strong emphasis on defense. From the mid-1970s on it embarked on an ambitious program of military preparedness and modernization. Because the Americans were, among all foreign powers, most instrumental in developing Saudi oil production and other technological innovations, the kingdom looked to America also as a principal provider of arms and builder of its military facilities. In this quest, however, the Saudis invariably encountered considerable opposition in the U.S. Congress, the latter very sensitive to Israeli objections against supplying Saudi Arabia with military hardware.

In 1986 Saudi plans to upgrade their air defense system by acquiring aircraft and other military equipment in the United States were thwarted by Congress. Disappointed, the Saudi government then turned to Britain, which agreed to sell it seventy-two Tornado interceptors as well as other aircraft. The transaction was reported to be worth between seven and eight billion dollars.

In spite of this experience Saudi Arabia still strove to secure more arms from the United States, anxious as she was to erect an effective system of defense against Iran, seen by Riyadh as hostile, aggressive, and engaging in subversion. (Diplomatic relations between the two countries were severed in 1987.) This new quest for arms was strongly resisted by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which wielded considerable influence in the U.S. Senate. Finally, in a bold move to free herself from excessive dependence on America, Saudi Arabia signed on July 8, 1988, a major arms agreement with Britain providing for the supply of combat aircraft, helicopters, mine-sweepers, and the construction of airbases. The total cost of the arms package was initially estimated at \$34 billion to \$36 billion by some American sources⁸⁴ but was stated to be as high as \$68 billion by the Saudi deputy minister of information.⁸⁵ U.S. administration officials and various independent observers viewed this Saudi-British deal as a blow to American influence in the Middle East and a setback for U.S. business and labor, with an expected loss of 750,000 jobs, as well as a major defeat in the administration's struggle against the trade deficit. In explaining the kingdom's decision a Saudi official declared: "We would prefer to buy weapons from the United States. American technology is generally superior. But we are not going to pay billions of dollars to be insulted."⁸⁶

According to Robert G. Neumann, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, by refusing to sell arms to Saudi Arabia the United States not only suffered "a colossal loss of American jobs and investment,"⁸⁷ but also forfeited influence on how those arms might be used. This was so because earlier American-Saudi arms transactions usually included certain safeguards that would minimize the improper use or location of such weapons (implicitly protecting Israel against abuse).

The Strategic Cooperation Agreement

After the tensions and irritations caused by the attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor and the AWACS dispute, the administration felt inclined to soothe the ruffled feelings by offering Israel some quid pro quo. For some time Israel had aimed at the creation of a more formal bond which would commit the United States to a closer military cooperation. This time the administration responded by concluding with Israel, on November 30, 1981, the "Strategic Cooperation Agreement." The agreement's main points could be summarized as follows:

- The United States and Israel to form a committee to arrange for joint military exercises and provide for the use of Israeli ports by the Sixth (Mediterranean) Fleet of the U.S. Navy.

- Israel to agree to the prepositioning on its territory of military supplies for use by the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force.

- The United States to resume the delivery to Israel of American cluster bombs (temporarily suspended).

- Israel to build, with partial U.S. financial assistance, the Lavi fighter aircraft which it was free to market abroad. (This provision was rescinded a few years later.)

- U.S. aid to Israel for military purposes to be increased by \$425 million per year.

- Israel and the United States to conclude a trade agreement that would allow duty-free and tax-free imports and exports for both countries, giving Israel a preferential treatment in comparison with other U.S. trading partners.⁸⁸

The agreement took the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), an act of the executive branch not subject to Senate ratification inasmuch as it was not a treaty. Formally, it did not constitute an alliance, hence frequent references of the president and political leaders to Israel as an ally did not carry with them the weight of a legal

commitment to declare or enter a war on Israel's side in the sense envisaged by the U.S. Constitution. Politically, however, it represented a major move of American involvement on Israel's side, and, since there was no corresponding pact signed with any Arab state, the United States could no longer claim to act as an impartial mediator or arbiter in the Arab-Israeli conflicts. The Strategic Cooperation Agreement aroused much resentment in the Middle East. It was formally reconfirmed at the time of Reagan's second peace initiative, on April 21, 1988.

The Golan Heights Annexation

The ink was barely dry on the Strategic Cooperation Agreement when a new crisis in U.S.-Israeli relations occurred. "Crisis" is perhaps too strong a word because it has a connotation of depth or gravity. "Strain" might be more adequate. On December 14, 1981, Israel annexed the Golan Heights, a Syrian region northeast of Lake Tiberias which had been under Israeli occupation since 1967. It was the first time since Israel's incorporation of East Jerusalem under its jurisdiction in 1967 that a sizable tract of another state's land was formally added to Israel's territory. Israel's unilateral move produced the expected reactions. Egypt called it a direct blow to peace. Syria urged the UN Security Council to impose sanctions on Israel. The ten nations of the European Common Market condemned the act of annexation. Similarly, the UN Security Council adopted by unanimous vote a resolution calling Israel's action "null and void" and demanding that Israel rescind forthwith its decision.⁸⁹

The United States was caught unprepared. According to the State Department, "The Israeli action was taken with no advance notice to us or discussion with us. We are particularly disappointed that the Government of Israel took this action just as we were facing a serious political crisis in Poland and only a few weeks after we signed a memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation." On December 15, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger stated that the annexation constituted a "clear violation" of UN resolutions and Camp David agreements.

Reagan's reaction was also negative. "The President," declared the Department of State, "has instructed Secretary [Casper S.] Weinberger and Secretary Haig not to proceed at this time with discussions in-

tended to implement the memorandum of understanding signed on November 30 of this year."⁹⁰

The administration's actions met with criticism in Israel. Ariel Sharon complained that the suspension of the agreement raised doubts about U.S. credibility while Premier Begin blamed the United States for treating Israel like a "vassal state."⁹¹

In subsequent testimony before the House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, given on March 3, 1982, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Peter Constable declared that the Strategic Cooperation Agreement was not suspended because it "never went into effect." "The President decided," he explained, "that it should be put in abeyance following the Israeli annexation of the Golan." When questioned by the committee chairman whether the Strategic Cooperation Agreement would be resuscitated if Israel rescinded its Golan annexation, Constable said that, to the best of his knowledge, no such decision had been taken by the president.⁹² His statement meant that repudiation of the act of annexation by Israel was not necessarily the condition for the revival of the agreement. Because of further complications caused by the crisis in Lebanon (see the preceding section in this chapter), the agreement remained dormant for two years. This did not prevent the administration from cooperating with Israel in a variety of ways, which included sales of arms although on a somewhat reduced scale.

On October 29, 1983, President Reagan signed National Security Council Directive 1111 to revive the U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation. In late November Premier Shamir visited Washington. His visit coincided with the aggravation in Syrian-American relations engendered by the war in Lebanon. (It was at that time two U.S. pilots overflying Syrian positions had been shot down by Syrian forces). On November 29, 1983, the U.S.-Israeli Strategic Cooperation Agreement was formally reinstated.

The Reagan Peace Plan

When Secretary Shultz came into office in midsummer 1982 he promptly launched a new peace initiative. Endorsed by the president and formally announced on September 1, 1982, it became known as the Reagan Peace Plan. It came at the time of Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Referring to the Lebanese turmoil in the preamble, the president reiterated the view held by the administration since Haig's tour of

duty as secretary of state: "The Lebanon war, tragic as it was, has left us with a new opportunity for Middle East peace." Reagan expressed pride that a successful evacuation of the PLO from Beirut was accomplished thanks to the United States mediation. He complimented Premier Begin and President Mubarak (of Egypt) for their courage in arranging a successful completion of Israel's withdrawal from Sinai (on April 25, 1982) and declared that "the Camp David [agreement] remains the foundation of our policy." "The question now is," he stated, "how to reconcile Israel's legitimate security concerns with the legitimate rights of the Palestinians." Although the president insisted that the final shape of peace would have to emerge from negotiations among the interested parties, he took a definite position in his preamble on the security of Israeli borders. Inasmuch as, he said, "in the pre-1967 borders, Israel was barely 10 miles wide at its narrowest point," he was "not about to ask Israel to live that way again." He then offered his plan, consisting of the following points:

1. Autonomy for the Palestinian inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza. Autonomy to be preceded by a five-year transition period, the purpose of which "is to prove that the Palestinians can run their own affairs and that such Palestinian autonomy poses no threat to Israel's security."

2. "The United States will not support the use of any additional land for the purpose of settlements during the transition period." Immediate settlement freeze by Israel is needed to create confidence of the Arabs.

3. No independent Palestinian state should be created. But peace is not "achievable on the basis of Israeli sovereignty or permanent control over the West Bank and Gaza."

4. "Self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance" for peace.

5. Arab-Israeli conflict should be resolved on the basis of UN Resolution 242 according to the principle of "exchange of territory for peace."

6. "It is the United States position that . . . Resolution 242 applies to all fronts, including the West Bank and Gaza."

7. "Jerusalem must remain undivided, but its final status should be decided through negotiations."

In the concluding part of the plan the president stated that "the United States will oppose any proposal . . . that threatens the security

of Israel. America's commitment to the security of Israel is ironclad. And, I might add, so is mine."⁹³

Chronologically, the Reagan Plan was proposed between two peace plans emanating from the Arab side. On August 7, 1981, Crown Prince (later King) Fahd of Saudi Arabia gave an interview in which he enunciated eight principles as guidelines toward a "just settlement" of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This "Fahd Plan" envisaged (1) Israel's withdrawal from all Arab territory occupied in 1967 including Arab Jerusalem, (2) dismantling of Israeli settlements built on Arab land since 1967, (3) freedom of worship for all religions in the holy places, (4) affirmation of the right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and compensation for those who do not wish to return, (5) a transitional period for the West Bank and Gaza not exceeding several months, (6) creation of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, (7) "all states in the region should be able to live in peace," (8) a UN guarantee to execute these principles.⁹⁴

Barely nine days after the announcement of the Reagan Plan, on September 9, 1982, twenty Arab League states meeting at an Arab summit conference in Morocco proclaimed their nine-point "Fez Plan" for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Its principles were almost identical with those of the Fahd Plan, even in terms of their sequence, with one minor difference: point 4 of the Fez Plan, instead of speaking of the return of the Palestinians to their homes and compensation, proclaimed their right to "self-determination and inalienable national rights," "under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative, and compensation for those who do not wish to return."⁹⁵ The difference is called by us minor because the principle of self-determination is anyway envisaged by point 6 of both plans, which calls for the creation of an independent Palestinian state, hence its separate mention is somewhat redundant.

The comparison of the three peace plans reveals some differences and similarities. The differences centered on three main points: (a) while the two Arab plans called for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, the Reagan Plan advocated only a Palestinian autonomy in association with Jordan; (b) the Arab plans favored return of east Jerusalem to Arab rule, while the Reagan Plan said Jerusalem should remain undivided but was ambivalent on its final status (to be determined by negotiations); (c) the Fez Plan (but not Fahd's) made explicit mention of the PLO as the Palestinians' sole representative,

while the Reagan Plan didn't mention the PLO. These differences were not negligible but they were counterbalanced by important similarities, of which the following deserve notice: (a) in essence all three plans subscribed to the formula of exchange of territory for peace, that is, the principle originally enshrined in UN Resolution 242 of 1967; (b) Israel's sovereignty or permanent control over the West Bank and Gaza was repudiated by all three plans; (c) the three plans opposed any further proliferation of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, with the two Arab plans actually demanding the dismantling of those already in existence; (d) all three plans, explicitly in the Reagan Plan and implicitly in the Arab plans, recognized the existence of Israel as a state [by calling for peace "among all states of the region" [Article 7 in each Arab plan]].

Although the differences between the Reagan and the Arab plans could not be easily glossed over, the similarities were important enough to warrant cautious optimism that all three plans were reconcilable. Israel's view toward all of them, however, was negative, its most important objection being the principle of exchange of territory for peace. Israel's leadership, particularly such figures as Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, and Ariel Sharon of the Likud group, rejected the notion that UN Resolution 242 applied to all Arab lands under Israeli control since 1967. They claimed that Israel had fulfilled the resolution's intention by relinquishing Sinai to Egypt in exchange for a peace treaty of 1979 and that the West Bank and Gaza (the main objects of controversy as the lands inhabited by the Palestinians) were not occupied territories—hence not subject to UN Resolution 242—but "liberated areas" which Israel intended to retain under its control. The issue really boiled down to the choice between the status quo with the attendant resentment of the subjugated Palestinian population and a change toward a negotiated peace. Israel's Likud leadership clearly favored the first of these two alternatives and was willing to live with its dangers and inconveniences, relying on its overwhelming military force. The Israeli cabinet gave formal expression to this attitude by rejecting, on September 2, the Reagan Plan. It claimed that the plan had "deviated" from Camp David and that it could create a serious danger to Israel. It rejected negotiations with any party as proposed by the United States, and it announced plans for the establishment of forty-two new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

Thus the Reagan peace initiative came to a somewhat inglorious end. Immediate concerns stemming from the Lebanese conflict took

priority in the U.S. government's agenda. For all practical purposes the peace plan was abandoned, not to be pressed for a number of years through the 1980s. It was not revived until 1988, under a modified form.

Shadows and Lights

In its relations with Israel the Reagan administration encountered a number of issues likely to cause strains and irritations. These were sweetened by acts of friendly cooperation. A recurring theme was the severity of Israeli reprisal strikes against the suspected PLO concentrations in Lebanon, usually by air and sometimes by land, in response to acts of terror committed by the Palestinian commandos against Israeli targets: a bus, a school, a market, or a military objective. As a rule reprisal strikes were carried out by well-organized military units, on a much larger scale than the acts that provoked them, and used superior military equipment with deadly blows dealt not only to the would-be perpetrators (if they were hit at all) but also, and often primarily, to the civilian population of the villages and towns under attack. The disproportionate force employed in such massive raids was usually deplored in Washington. In special cases, such as the invasion of Lebanon or the bombing of the nuclear reactor in Iraq (which were discussed earlier in this chapter), the use of American-made weapons for other than defensive purposes was questioned. American objections to such Israeli behavior were often diluted in two ways: they never took the character of a strong unmodified condemnation, and official U.S. spokesmen often mentioned an Arab terrorist act or provocation leading to an Israeli reprisal as if to attenuate the gravity of Israeli action. In addition, if the matter came to the UN Security Council, the United States delegate either vetoed the condemning resolution or abstained from voting. If the UN General Assembly was censuring Israel for the excessive use of force, the usual American policy was to vote against it or to abstain. Not infrequently, this voting pattern put the United States and Israel in a minority of two against the overwhelming UN majority. What was noteworthy in such situations was the fact that the U.S. position differed not only from that of the numerous Third World and Soviet Bloc countries (which could be expected), but that it also went counter to the attitudes of America's Western allies.

One of the unresolved problems remained that of dual citizenship. In the early years of Israel's existence consecutive U.S. administra-

tions used to issue warnings that acceptance of public functions or military duties in the service of a foreign state might deprive a person of American citizenship. It is not clear how strictly this rule was being enforced. By the 1980s cases of dual Israeli-American citizenship, apparently accepted by the U.S. government, had multiplied. A minor cause célèbre arose with the activities of the American-born Rabbi Meir Kahane, a leader of the U.S.-based Jewish Defense League who, having moved to Israel in 1971, plunged into an intensive political crusade, claiming that democracy and the state of Israel are mutually incompatible and advocating mass expulsion of Arabs from the territories under Israeli control. In 1984 he was elected to the Israeli parliament (Knesset), and it was then that the question of the legality of his dual citizenship arose. In October 1985 the State Department declared that because of his acceptance of a seat in the Israeli parliament Kahane was no longer a U.S. citizen. When Kahane protested and brought the matter before American courts, the State Department argued that according to Kahane's own statements he owed no allegiance to the United States and wanted to keep his American citizenship only to have continued access to this country.⁹⁶ It would seem, therefore, that acceptance of a public office in Israel was not in itself sufficient to deprive an American of his citizenship and that additional evidence regarding true allegiance was deemed necessary by the U.S. government to prove its case.

Another troubling issue was that of Israel's arms sales to South Africa and certain Latin American countries. Trade with South Africa, because of its apartheid policies, was subjected to restrictive UN-imposed sanctions which were honored by the United States but in some cases (especially military sales) evaded by Israel.⁹⁷ There is no record of any major U.S. intercession with Israel to desist from such activities. As for the sales of weapons to Latin America by Israel, objections had been voiced by Washington already in the 1970s because of restrictions mandated by the U.S. government on resale of American-made military equipment to Third World countries or on sales of the Israeli-manufactured arms that had American-component parts.⁹⁸ There is no evidence that the Reagan administration, despite some unhappiness over Israeli behavior, allowed this matter to reach the proportions of a serious crisis in mutual relations.

In the sensitive field of military technology, 800 devices designed to trigger nuclear explosions were illegally exported to Israel in 1985, a case that led to the indictment of an American businessman. Sim-

ilarly, search warrants were issued to certain officials in the Israeli defense mission in New York, and some American firms were charged with attempts to pass to Israel secret technology for manufacturing upgraded cluster bombs.

In November 1985 a Pentagon civilian employee, Jonathan Jay Pollard, was arrested and indicted for espionage on behalf of Israel. In the course of his trial it was revealed that he had stolen and passed to his Israeli contacts over a substantial period a mass of highly classified defense documents, an act that seriously compromised American security. The matter was aggravated by revelations that Israel's intelligence service, the Mossad, had been partly penetrated by Soviet secret services and that Pollard was a member of a larger Israeli espionage organization active in the United States. Israel's government (at that time headed by Premier Shimon Peres) disclaimed responsibility, saying that Pollard had acted without its authority. This went counter to Pollard's revelation that "the highest levels of the Israeli government" had thanked him for passing U.S. military secrets to Tel Aviv.⁹⁹ On March 4, 1987, Pollard was sentenced to prison for life. Despite its gravity, however, the case did not produce a major strain in American-Israeli relations.

In the fall of 1986 Attorney General Edwin Meese publicly revealed that certain officials of the U.S. government, acting in concert with Israel, had arranged for the supplying of American weapons to Khomeini's Iran. Because this matter exceeds the bounds of a bilateral American-Israeli relationship, it is treated in a separate section of this chapter. Suffice it to say at this juncture that, in spite of ample evidence of Israeli involvement in the affair, no major difficulties had arisen between Israel and the United States as a result. In his public statements the president avoided any critical reference to Israel's role in the revealed scheme and the congressional investigators also steered clear of focusing on Israel.

For a number of years, even preceding the Reagan administration, Israel had been anxious to see the American Embassy moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Committed as it was to the UN Palestine partition resolution of 1947, the United States initially resisted Israel's requests because Jerusalem and its adjacent area had been designated as an international, UN-controlled territory. Later, Israel's annexation of Arab East Jerusalem further reinforced America's unwillingness to move its embassy to Israel's capital. Jerusalem's character as the third holiest site (after Mecca and Medina) of the Moslem world was a factor

in Washington's reluctance to move its embassy. In 1984, however, responding to Israel's insistence, certain congressmen initiated a movement to legislate that the embassy be transferred.¹⁰⁰ This initiative was opposed by the State Department, which appeared to be more sensitive to the possible adverse reaction in Moslem countries than was Congress. It also objected to it on constitutional grounds as usurping the president's authority.¹⁰¹ As of mid-1988 no law mandating the transfer had as yet been passed. Israel and its friends in Congress tended to blame the State Department "Arabists" (officials in the Bureau for South Asia and the Near East) for obstructionism. Except for recorded statements that Jerusalem, as noted earlier, should be unified, the president did not pronounce himself on the embassy move. In a matter of this sensitivity, however, it might be assumed that he did not object to the department's stand on the issue.

If the congressional initiative on the Embassy transfer could be viewed as a reaffirmation of American-Israeli friendship, an even stronger evidence of its strength was supplied by Israel's consent to allow the construction of U.S. radio transmitters on its territory. For several years the U.S. government had been searching for a suitable site to place the transmitters of the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, and Radio Liberty, which beam their broadcasts to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Inquiries and requests addressed to most of the Middle Eastern states met with no success, and yet this was the geographical area that was optimal from the technological point of view. Israel was the only country that agreed in 1986 to host these transmitters, even though it did so reluctantly and with some trepidation lest its decision aggravate the situation of Soviet Jews, many of whom were anxious to emigrate. Some American officials termed this Israeli gesture "an inestimable service."

The Shultz Peace Plan of 1988

Beginning in December 1987 considerable turmoil disturbed the uneasy tranquility in the Gaza Strip, whose crowded population was growing restive under wretched economic conditions and Israeli occupation. What became known as the Arab "uprising" soon spread to the larger area of the West Bank. It was a sui generis resistance, in which young Arabs, with a few minor exceptions, did not use firearms but, in a loose way, pelted rocks at Israeli military and security forces. As these riots extended into the first months of 1988, Arab merchants

in the occupied territories sometimes would close their shops, while Arab laborers commuting to work in Israel would go on strike. It was the first time that active Arab resistance occurred on a massive scale within the areas controlled by Israel during the decades of occupation. Israel had never before faced a similar situation inasmuch as resistance to it usually came from Palestinian groups operating from the neighboring countries. In spite of its overwhelming military superiority Israel was not prepared to face such an internal turbulence. Its troops first responded by firing at the most aggressive rock throwers (often teenagers) but later Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin issued orders to stop shooting and resort to beating the protesters. In a still later stage Israeli troops began using plastic bullets, ostensibly non-lethal when fired at distant targets; these, however, resulted in some killings and maimings when used in close-range situations. By the fall of 1988 close to 300 Palestinians had been killed by the Israeli forces and many more wounded. Arab stone-throwing and the firing of tear gas by Israeli troops were filmed by foreign TV network crews, and for several months the American public was shown almost daily the riots as they were occurring against the background of narrow alleys and slums of the Arab-inhabited areas. Scenes of beating of the captured youths by Israeli soldiers were especially vivid. Even though lacking any affinity to the Arabs, the public in the United States and Western Europe experienced a wave of sympathy for the Palestinian "underdogs" in the situation. There was evidence that even America's Jewish community, generally favorable to Israel, felt disturbed by demonstrated cases of military brutality.

Faced with this explosive unrest, Secretary Shultz launched, in January 1988, a new peace initiative. His proposals were discussed with the Israelis, Jordanians, Egyptians, and unspecified Palestinian leaders. The procedure envisaged by Shultz was spelled out in his letter dated March 9, 1988, to Premier Shamir of Israel. The objective of the negotiations, wrote Shultz, was to achieve "a comprehensive peace providing for the security of all the states in the region and for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

Negotiations between Israel and each of its neighbors would begin on May 1, 1988. Israel would negotiate with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on arrangements for a transitional period and would complete them in six months. Seven months after the start of transitional negotiations, final status negotiations would begin, to be completed in one year. The transitional period was to begin three months after the

conclusion of the transitional agreement and would last three years. Both the transitional and the final settlement were to be based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, in all their parts. The United States would participate in both (transitional and final) negotiations and would submit a draft proposal. Two weeks before the opening of the negotiations, an international conference would be held. It would be convoked by the UN secretary-general and be attended by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (the United States, USSR, U.K., France, and China) and the parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The parties to each bilateral negotiation might report to the conference, but the conference "will not be able to impose solutions or veto agreements reached."¹⁰²

The proposal that, procedurally, negotiations should be placed under the umbrella of a UN-sponsored conference constituted, on the part of the United States, a reluctant concession to Jordan's King Hussein who, to protect himself from Palestinian radicals, insisted on such an arrangement. Both Israel and the United States feared that the presence of the Soviet Union at the conference might inject unrealistic maximalism into the posture of the Arab parties. Several weeks earlier Shultz had expressed his misgivings by saying: "An international conference as an event in itself, for itself, has no appeal to us. We don't see that it has a chance to do anything except cause problems." And he added sarcastically: "I don't see that the United Nations has distinguished itself in this area."¹⁰³ For this reason the role envisaged for the international conference was purely ceremonial. It would inaugurate and possibly close the proceedings but, as noted, the essence of the bargaining would take place in direct bilateral negotiations.

As for the substance of American peace proposals that were to be submitted to the parties at the beginning of the negotiations, the press reported the following main points:

- a limited Palestinian autonomy in the occupied territories during a three-year transition period;

- Israel to give up its control and claims to sovereignty over at least part of the occupied territories in exchange for peace.

Otherwise nothing more specific (except references to UN resolutions in the Shultz letter to Shamir) was revealed.

The peace initiative involved considerable diplomatic activity. President Mubarak of Egypt came to Washington in January 1988, both expressing his concern over the troubles in the West Bank and Gaza

and encouraging U.S. peace moves. After his visit Shultz made a trip to talk to the leaders of Israel and its neighbors.

Facing Israel's negative attitude to his peace initiative, Shultz appealed to Israel to modify its concept of defense and to address the "ticking demographic time bomb" (that is, a steady natural increase in the Arab population under Israeli control) as well as to consider that, in the age of the missile, the concepts of defensible borders would have to be revised for the sake of achieving stable peace.¹⁰⁴

His plan and his pleas, however, seemed to fall on deaf ears. In early March Premier Shamir virtually rejected the American proposals. A major demonstration of some 50,000 Israelis in Tel Aviv voiced strong support for his stand. In a parallel move the PLO also objected to the peace proposals because they did not explicitly provide for PLO representation in the negotiations and did not mention Palestinian self-determination as an objective.

It was in this political climate that Shamir saw Reagan during his visit in Washington in mid-March. Shamir made clear to the president his disagreement with the peace plan: he objected to the proposed international conference (even though his foreign minister, Shimon Peres, leader of the Labor grouping, favored it), he criticized the reduction of the transitional period from five (as agreed at Camp David) to three years, and reiterated his view that by returning Sinai to Egypt in 1981 Israel had fulfilled UN Resolution 242 and did not feel obligated to relinquish its rule over the West Bank and Gaza.

Under the circumstances the cordiality with which he was received at the White House and the assurances of continued support for Israel that the president conveyed to his visitor were not easy to explain. To be sure Reagan did utter words of warning during the departure ceremony in the White House: "And those who say no to the U.S. plan—and the Prime Minister has not used this word—need not answer to us. They will need to answer to themselves and their own people as to why they turned down a realistic and sensible plan to achieve negotiations." He also asserted that "The United States will not slice this initiative apart and will not abandon it."¹⁰⁵ The president's utterances represented a mixture of hardly warranted optimism and an intimation of renouncing any prospect of using economic or military aid as a means of inducing Israel to take a more conciliatory approach. In fact, the administration had made a decision, even before Shamir's visit, to speed up the delivery to Israel of 75 F-16 jet fighters.

The other decision was to respond positively to Israel's request for "institutionalization" of the Strategic Cooperation Agreement (initially concluded in 1981) so that it would remain valid for five years, even after the Reagan administration left office. This decision was conveyed by Secretary Shultz to Premier Shamir during his visit in Washington. As noted in a preceding section, this new memorandum of understanding was signed on April 21, 1988.

In spite of Shamir's rebuffs, Shultz persisted in his peace endeavors and, in April, revisited the Middle East capitals. Shortly before his trip he made a move that disturbed Israel. At the end of March he conferred with two American professors of Arab descent, Edward Said of Columbia University and Ibrahim Abu Lughod of Northwestern University, both members of the Palestine National Council, a body affiliated with the PLO. Shamir voiced sharp complaints to these talks as violating the 1975 U.S. pledge that barred negotiations with the PLO. This event happened to coincide with the purchase by Saudi Arabia of missiles from China (to which Israel also strongly objected, with an intimation that it might launch a preventive attack on the Saudi kingdom) and thus marked, at least temporarily, a low point in U.S.-Israeli relations.

Before the end of his visit in Israel, which brought no tangible results, Shultz made sure that Israel's consent was a *sine qua non* for success of his peace initiative. "If Israel says no, we won't go over Israel's head to an international conference. We are too good friends for that."¹⁰⁶

The Shultz peace initiative encountered a new challenge when in early June 1988 Yasir Arafat's aide, Bassam Abu Sharif, published an article in London's *Arab Mirror* in which he advanced the idea of a two-state solution for the territory of Palestine, explicitly accepting UN resolutions 242 and 338 and declaring the Palestinians' readiness to negotiate peace with such Israeli leaders as Peres (foreign minister) and Shamir (prime minister) "or anyone else the Israelis choose to represent them."¹⁰⁷ If this proposal were to become official PLO policy, the main obstacle to any U.S.-PLO negotiation could thus be removed. A new obstacle, however, might arise on the part of Israel, whose leadership had become inured to consider the PLO as a terrorist organization and thus keep it out of the civilized pale. Reports from Israel indicated that Israel's government had become "panicky" upon learning that the PLO might adopt a policy of recognition. Should such a course be

pursued consistently by Arafat and his group, it had the potential of introducing a new element into the U.S.-sponsored search for peace.

Another twist in the peace process occurred when on July 31, 1988, King Hussein of Jordan announced that henceforth his government would cease paying the salaries of some 21,000 Arab school teachers and civil servants in the occupied West Bank. This decision signified that Jordan was relinquishing its responsibilities for that territory and leaving it to the care of the PLO. The king's move was accompanied by the dissolution of the Jordanian parliament (in which the West Bank was represented by a number of deputies) and the cancellation of certain development projects. Hussein's decision became subject to various interpretations. These ranged from the belief in the king's genuine wish to sever ties with the West Bank to the theory that his move was only tactical and that in the long run he desired the reunification of the West Bank with the main body of Jordan.

Whatever the king's true motivation, his official disengagement from Palestine affairs could possibly shift the point of gravity in the peace process from Amman to the PLO and affect the fate of the Shultz initiative which, in procedural and substantive terms, had originally rested on the assumption of Jordan's participation in the negotiations leading to peace.

Echoing to some extent Abu Sharif's article, PLO leader Arafat addressed the European parliament in Strasbourg in mid-September 1988. "I am ready," he declared, "to meet at the United Nations with any Israeli representative. We set no preconditions for such a meeting. . . . I extend to the Israelis the hand for peace negotiations."¹⁰⁸

These statements and actions emanating from the Arab side did not seem, however, to effect changes in the official American attitudes. Only two days after Arafat's speech on September 16, 1988, Secretary Shultz, in a comprehensive review of American policy toward the Middle East, reiterated the administration's view that the Palestinians "are entitled to political participation and economic decisions that affect their lives" but that the status of the occupied territories must not be determined by unilateral acts of either Arabs or Israelis. Hence he pronounced himself against a "declaration of independent Palestinian statehood or government in exile." Shultz also rejected the idea (lately advanced by Arafat) that Israel might return to 1947 boundaries as proposed in the U.S. Palestine partition resolution.

Israel, he stated, "must be prepared to withdraw, as Resolution 242 says, 'from territories occupied in the recent conflict.'" ¹⁰⁹

THE PLO VOLTE-FACE

In 1987–88 another problem arose, alternately aggravating and improving American-Arab and American-Israeli relations. It could be divided into two phases. During the first phase there arose the question of PLO offices in the United States. American laws passed earlier by Congress had targeted foreign terrorist activities, requiring the government to publish each year a list of countries that sponsor or abet international terrorism. Iran, Libya, Syria, and Iraq had figured at one time or another on this list, the length of which had fluctuated with the passage of time and political circumstances. According to its interpretation of the law and deeming the PLO to be a terrorist organization, in 1987 the Justice Department closed the PLO office in Washington and later, in March 1988, issued an order to close the office of the PLO observer mission to the United Nations in New York. These steps were challenged in American courts by PLO representatives as contrary to the constitutional principle of freedom of speech and association. Moreover, the UN Secretariat objected to the closing of the New York office as a violation of the UN headquarters agreement concluded after World War II with the United States. The General Assembly, in an emergency session, also condemned America's action and passed a resolution, by a vote of 143 nations, to ask the World Court for an advisory opinion. Furthermore, UN officials stated that if the United States closed the PLO mission's office, the UN might transfer the next General Assembly from New York to Geneva.

The issue provoked a public debate. Israel's delegate to the United Nations, B. Netanyahu, wrote an article in the *New York Times* titled "Oust the PLO's Mission at the U.N.," ¹¹⁰ while the *Arab News* in Saudi Arabia declared: "The U.S. decision to close the PLO mission to the United Nations is yet another example of the craven submission of the U.S. government and Congress to Israel and its American lobby." ¹¹¹ But in a show of independence an editorial in the *New York Times*, while affirming that the PLO is a terrorist organization, argued for the retention of its mission at the UN on legal grounds, exactly as Libya and Iran keep their missions there. ¹¹² In late April 1988 the World Court issued a unanimous ruling that the United States must submit this matter to international arbitration. The ruling was viewed as a

setback for Washington. And in late August the Federal District Court in New York issued a decision that, by virtue of the UN headquarters agreement of 1947, the PLO had the right to maintain its New York office, accredited as it was to the United Nations. Conforming to the recommendation of Secretary Shultz and against the advice of the Justice Department, President Reagan decided not to appeal the verdict. This, in essence, appeared to close the first phase of the problem.

The second phase began in the fall of 1988 when the Palestine National Council (PNC, a 450-member parliament-in-exile, chaired by Yasir Arafat, chief of the PLO) took two decisive steps at its meeting in Algiers, November 12–15: it accepted UN resolutions 242 of 1967 and 338 of 1973 (the latter reaffirming 242 and ordering a cease-fire) which recognized implicitly Israel's right to exist in peace and security; and it proclaimed an independent Palestinian state, basing it on UN partition resolution 181 of 1947. By doing this the PNC endorsed a two-state solution and abandoned its long-professed aim of achieving a unified secular democratic state for the whole of Palestine. Both acts met with less than enthusiastic reception in Washington and Israel. Arafat's next step was to declare his intention of addressing the UN General Assembly to confirm these Palestinian decisions before an official world forum. His request, however, for an American entry visa met with Secretary Shultz's denial even though top government officials advised the secretary to grant a visa. These included Richard Murphy, assistant secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs; Michael Armacost, under secretary for political affairs; General Colin Powell, national security adviser; and Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci, as well as the U.S. delegation to the United Nations. Explaining his decision, Shultz stated that, as head of the PLO, Arafat was an "accessory to terrorism" and for security reasons could not be allowed to enter the United States. Shultz's refusal provoked much criticism at home and abroad. The UN General Assembly, by a vote of 151 to 2, deplored the U.S. action. UN officialdom felt the decision, like the previous attempt to close the PLO mission, was contrary to the headquarters agreement. Similarly the consensus of international lawyers was that the United States had violated universally accepted rules. "It is quite clear that the U.S. decision is wrong legally," declared former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.¹¹³ Other critics viewed Shultz's refusal as violating the time-honored freedom of speech. Regrets were also voiced that his denial of a visa had come at a time when, after a long period of negativism, the PLO was making a serious move toward

acceptance of and peace with Israel. A number of foreign statesmen, including leaders of America's allied countries, expressed shock and pleaded to permit Arafat to enter and speak.

It seemed that, despite the Algiers resolutions, Shultz was determined to follow Israel's line of complete rejection of the PLO. This was noteworthy in view of the fact that, in 1974, the Arab summit had designated the PLO as "the sole representative of the Palestinian people" and that even certain serious voices in Israel had earlier argued for realistic recognition that for the Palestinians the PLO is the only legitimate body representing them. "We will have to negotiate with the Palestinians, the majority of whom, in any referendum, would vote for the PLO. . . . The U.S. does not determine the composition of the Soviet delegation to negotiations, and Israel's presumption in trying to determine the composition of the Arab delegation is an absurdity bound to fail. The wish for a local Palestinian representation detached from the PLO . . . is merely delusion," had declared Yehoshafat Har-kabi, former head of Israeli military intelligence in the *Jerusalem Post*.¹¹⁴ In a similar vein former Under Secretary David D. Newsom had written: "PLO leaders claim privately that they are prepared to renounce their basic position [of nonrecognition of Israel]. . . . No way exists to find out whether that is, indeed, the case other than to engage the PLO in negotiations."¹¹⁵

Domestic and foreign appeals to Shultz to reconsider his decision proved of no avail. In response the UN General Assembly passed a second resolution, by a vote of 154 to 2, to hold its plenary session in Geneva in mid-December to enable Arafat to address it. As before, the United States and Israel were the only two countries casting a dissenting vote. Between the New York and the Geneva session, on December 7, Arafat met five prominent American Jews in Stockholm to clarify PNC's Algiers decisions and issued a new statement in which he confirmed that the PLO "accepted the existence of Israel" and rejected terrorism. Sweden's Foreign Minister Sten Andersson had been instrumental in arranging for this meeting and prodding Arafat to use the formula that would conform to American specifications.

On December 13 Arafat announced at the UN General Assembly in Geneva the decisions taken in Algiers and made an appeal for peace negotiations. To Secretary Shultz, however, this was not sufficient. He insisted that, to remove any doubts and ambiguities, Arafat must clearly state that the PLO (a) accepts UN resolutions 242 and 338; (b) recognizes Israel's right to exist; (c) renounces (rather than "con-

demns") resort to terrorism. The next day (December 14), at a press conference in Geneva, Arafat formally accepted Shultz's three points (repeating almost verbatim the secretary's phraseology). He prefaced his remarks with some irritation by saying: "Enough is enough." Within a few hours, when his speech became available in Washington, Shultz, in his own and the president's name, accepted Arafat's statement. He also declared that the U.S. ambassador to Tunisia (site of the PLO headquarters), Robert Pelletreau, was being designated as the only channel of communications with the PLO. Queried by media representatives about his change of policy, Shultz replied: "I didn't change my mind. They [the PLO] made their statement clear."¹¹⁶

Notwithstanding this play of words, there is no doubt that the announced willingness to engage in a "substantive dialogue with PLO representatives" constituted, after fifteen years of political boycott, a major reversal in U.S. policy. Subsequent comments by President Reagan, however, hedged the new American posture with some reservations, namely that if Arafat fails to back up his words by deeds (especially with regard to terrorism), the United States will not hesitate "to break off communications."¹¹⁷ Such reservations were bound to pose certain problems, notably: (a) was every act of resistance (such as the just ongoing Palestinian uprising—*intifada*—in the occupied territories) to be considered "terrorism," and (b) would a terrorist act committed by an extremist Palestinian group dissenting from Arafat's line be deemed as annulling his promises?

In both the visa imbroglio and the acceptance of Arafat's reassurances in Geneva, Secretary Shultz appeared as an active initiator of official U.S. decisions. True enough, the president went on record as approving them, but his role, in the last weeks of his second term, seemed more that of an endorser rather than originator of policy. By agreeing to contacts with the PLO, the United States took an important, though not irreversible, procedural step in its search for peace. However, a number of substantive problems remained to be solved. These included—to name the most vital: persuading Israel to accept the UN-sanctioned principle of exchanging territory for peace; the issue of an independent Palestinian state; the existence and proliferation of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories; the arrangements for a possible return and compensation of refugees; and the delineation of boundaries that would ensure the peace and security of Israel and its neighbors.

9. Conclusion

In reviewing the eight presidencies, from Truman to Reagan, as they related to the Middle East, one is bound to note the continuity in their basic approaches to the area and the persistence of three main themes on which their concerns have focused: the Soviet challenge, the Arab-Israeli feud, and the role of oil.

Yet with this continuity it is also evident that considerable differences have existed in their perceptions and actual policies. There were differences in knowledge of and exposure to the Middle East. Only two presidents, Eisenhower and Nixon, had substantial experience in international affairs prior to their presidencies. While familiarity with the foreign scene was, in principle, desirable and useful, it was not *per se* a guarantee of a wise policy. Thus Truman, a man with an essentially provincial and domestic experience, proved to be a pioneer in the formulation of new policy toward the area that radically diverged from Roosevelt's attitudes and which, with all bluntness and clarity, explained to the American people the Soviet threat and the need to counteract it. Yet, Truman had underestimated the complications that were bound to occur in the area as a result of Israeli-Arab antagonism. His policy in this respect seemed to have been dictated primarily by domestic considerations, as he himself had frankly acknowledged.

In this he contrasted with Eisenhower, who was probably the only one of the eight presidents here studied who was impervious to domestic pressures. Eisenhower's policy toward the area constituted an amalgam of practicality with a high moral principle, as evidenced by his stand during the Suez crisis.

Perhaps the most vulnerable to domestic pressures was President Johnson, on both the Israeli and the Turkish issues. Although initially determined to place U.S. national interest above other considerations, Nixon and, to some extent, Carter both succumbed to domestic pressures in their dealings with the Middle East.

Of the three persistent themes of American policy in the area, the conviction that the Soviet threat should be contained was a dominant one, because everything else—survival of Israel and other independent states in the region and accessibility to oil supplies—depended on it. But the perception of what constituted the greatest Soviet challenge differed depending on the president and the circumstances. Under Truman, who had inaugurated the policy of containment, the danger appeared primarily as a likelihood of direct Soviet aggression, at that time directed against the countries of the Northern Tier. Eisenhower basically shared this view but extended his protection to the Arab states as well. Both viewed the Soviet threat as interwoven with the upsurge of Communist subversion in Middle Eastern countries. During the later presidencies, especially Nixon and Carter, an awareness had grown that there was still a third way in which Soviet infiltration could hurt American interests by alienating peoples of the Middle East from the United States and thus creating an opportunity for the Soviet Union to enter the breach posing as a friend of the nations in question.

There were also different schools of thought as to how to cope with the Soviet challenge, the successive presidents veering from one to another. Should a military protection be extended to the Middle East and, if so, in what form: permanent stationing of troops, presence of advisers, maintenance of bases, deployment of warships? Should defensive alliances be formed on a regional scale? Should the United States cooperate with its Western allies in the defense of the Middle East or should it distance itself to avoid charges of imperialism? Should the United States consciously inherit Britain's role as the dominant power in the area? In answering these questions various presidents engaged in building a chain of defensive alliances, by including two Mediterranean countries, Turkey and Greece, in the North Atlantic Treaty Alliance (NATO), by sponsoring (though not joining directly) the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), and by extending American protection to or arming such countries as post-Nasser Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and certain Persian Gulf states. They also acquired a variety of maritime and air bases and other military facilities.

A number of presidents have formulated basic policies known as "doctrines," the object of which was invariably the Soviet Union. All of these doctrines—Truman, Eisenhower, Nixon, Carter, and Reagan—referred directly or indirectly to the Middle East. All of them, except Nixon's, proclaimed the need to resist Soviet advances by assuming and enlarging American military and political commitments

in the area. Only Nixon's doctrine, though acknowledging Soviet challenge, tried to transfer more responsibility for defense from the United States to the regional countries while pledging more arms and aid to them.

The two other persistent themes in the American policy toward the Middle East, namely Israel and oil, vied with each other for priority throughout the eight presidencies. Initially, during the early presidencies—Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy—they seemed to be balanced. Later, Israel appeared to gain greater weight. The basic question, once Israel was hurriedly recognized as an independent state by Truman, was whether the United States would support its existence or, in deference to Israel's plea for greater security, accept and help in Israel's territorial expansion and emergence as the dominant military power in the area. In this respect Johnson's presidency seemed to constitute a watershed. American assistance to Israel grew by leaps and bounds during the Johnson and Nixon eras, regardless of which political party was in power in Washington, and remained at a high level during Carter's and Reagan's terms.

Two events deserve mention in this connection: Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the signing of the Strategic Cooperation Agreement during the Reagan era. In the first case the United States implicitly gave a "green light" to Israel's foray into a neighboring country, and in the second it accorded Israel a de facto status as an ally. Aid to Israel on a historically unprecedented scale, in practice without strings attached, permitted Israel to rebuff various regional peace initiatives proposed by Washington and use American-supplied arms in disregard of the officially imposed restraints.

The third persistent theme, oil, has been seen by many as the principal reason for America's interest in the Middle East. Initially, access to oil had been the successive administrations' main concern. It was to be assured by successful diplomatic and commercial arrangements with the producing states. It is for this reason that Washington favored political stability, generally of a conservative nature, in these states. The scene began to change after 1971 when Britain relinquished its imperial control of the Persian Gulf, and the possibility of a power vacuum occurred. In the name of the Nixon Doctrine this vacuum was to be filled by Iran, linked as it was to the American security system in the Middle East. With the overthrow of the shah Iran turned from an ally into an adversary, threatening not only the United States interests but the stability of the entire area. In the wake

of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Carter had proclaimed his doctrine of the defense of the Persian Gulf. It became Reagan's task to implement this pledge by intervening militarily in the Gulf, although it was revolutionary Iran that became the principal target of U.S. military measures.

Development of a network of oil pipelines by the coastal states pointed to the possibility of downgrading the Gulf as a vital strategic waterway. But in the long run pipelines presented no safe solution for the oil producers. They were vulnerable to easy physical destruction, could be closed by a fiat of a foreign government through whose territory they passed, and could become a captive of extortionate financial demands. For many of the Persian Gulf coastal states their ready access to the Gulf was the main reason for their survival and prosperity. It is doubtful that, because of temporary disturbance of the freedom of navigation caused by the Iraq-Iran war, these coastal states would readily renounce the use of the Gulf. Whether by design or by an accident of history, the United States assumed a protective role in the Gulf, and it was hard to imagine how it could abdicate this responsibility without causing a major shift in the power relationships in the world.

In addition to the three main themes just discussed the United States had to face what could be broadly called the local political climate in the area. Again much depended on presidential perceptions of the peoples and cultures in the Middle East. What did the successive presidents really think about the Arabs? Was an Arab, in their minds, a Hollywood stereotype—a man with a turban, with baggy pants, smoking a narghile, and watching dancing girls? Or was he a hard-toiling peasant, a modern bank executive, or an intellectual connected with a newspaper or a university? Was there any implicit anti-Arab racism in presidential attitudes? In this respect perhaps the surest answer would be provided by Carter, who seemed genuinely to respect Arab dignity and who formed a deep friendship with Egypt's Sadat. The attitudes of the other presidents were a matter of speculation.

Similarly uncertain were presidential perceptions of a variety of liberation movements. As Americans, U.S. presidents were expected to believe in the right of nations to self-determination and to endorse the principle of racial equality. But were they prepared to implement these principles in practice with equal justice to all concerned?

Local political systems posed another baffling issue. Should they be accepted as they were in the name of the adage that every nation has

a government it deserves, or should the United States promote efforts to reform them or, in some cases, undermine them if their behavior seemed to threaten civilized norms of life? This was linked with the problem of the desirability or propriety of U.S. intervention in internal affairs of other states. Such intervention was practiced in 1953 in Iran to restore the shah to power and in Lebanon in 1958 to prevent its being overwhelmed by the Nasserite elements. U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1982 had less clearly defined goals, and this is perhaps the ultimate reason why it ended in a catastrophe.

All the presidents have faced the question of whether support of Israel should be treated in isolation or whether it had an impact on other regional problems. There were observers who, after the Arab summit meeting in Amman in 1987, believed that Arab attention had definitely shifted from the issue of Palestine to that of resistance to Iran's revolutionary expansion. To some extent this might have been true, but it did not mean that henceforth Arab attitudes and actions could be completely divorced from the Arab-Israeli feud. The best evidence of the linkage between the Israeli and Iranian concerns in the policies of the Arab states was supplied by the Gulf governments' reluctance to grant the United States base rights in their territories. These governments feared that popular opposition to visible cooperation with Israel's main benefactor might remove them from power.

It has also been asserted that in the 1980s religious fundamentalism, especially in its Shia version, has overshadowed Arab nationalism as the main ideological issue in the area. There is no doubt that Arab nationalism experienced its apogee during the Nasser era, with its dynamic and aggressive quest for unity and Egypt's domination, and that its sharp edge has blunted since Sadat's advent to power. But to draw from this a conclusion that it has abated as a profound motive force in the area's politics would be erroneous. A good example of its persistence was presented by the willingness of the Iraqi soldiers to fight and die for their Arab homeland rather than follow Khomeini's appeals to Islamic Shia solidarity in Iraq's war with Iran.

While there were differences of emphasis in the policies of the eight presidents reviewed in this study, all of them seemed to realize that the Middle East is a major risk area that, in addition to the proliferation of local conflicts, has the potential of drawing the superpowers into a major confrontation, with incalculable consequences for the peace of the world and the survival of civilization.

Notes

1. THE TRUMAN PRESIDENCY

1. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs of Harry S. Truman*, vol. 1: *Years of Decision* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1955), 380.
2. *Ibid.*, 523.
3. *Ibid.*, 547, 550.
4. *Ibid.*, 551–52.
5. *Ibid.*, 557, 558.
6. *Ibid.*, 560.
7. Harry S. Truman, vol. 2: *Years of Trial and Hope* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956), 93.
8. *Ibid.*, 2: 95.
9. *Ibid.*
10. NANA dispatch, *New York Times*, August 25, 1957. Truman's statement about this ultimatumlike message to Stalin has not been confirmed by the officially released U.S. documents. Certain scholars, notably Professor Rouhollah K. Ramazani, have expressed doubts whether such a message was ever sent. See Ramazani, *Iran's Foreign Policy, 1941–1973: A Study of Foreign Policy in Modernizing Nations* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975), 138–39.
11. Harry N. Howard, *Turkey, the Straits and U.S. Policy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 227.
12. *Ibid.*, 231–32.
13. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 95, 96.
14. *Ibid.*, 2: 97–101.
15. Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: Norton, 1969), 219.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Text in Ralph H. Magnus, ed., *Documents on the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1969), 63ff.
18. *Ibid.*, 67ff.
19. Expression used by Secretary of Labor Lewis Schwellenbach. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 104–5.
20. Margaret Truman, *Harry S. Truman* (New York: Pocket Books, 1974), 376–77.
21. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 102.
22. Walter Millis, ed., *The Forrestal Diaries* (New York: Viking, 1951), 219.

23. Margaret Truman, *Harry S. Truman*, 374–75.
24. In a letter to his mother quoted by Margaret, *ibid.*, 377.
25. Joseph M. Jones, *The Fifteen Weeks* (New York: Viking, 1955), 3, 113.
26. *Ibid.*, 7.
27. Acheson quoting Joseph Jones, in Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 220.
28. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 102, 105.
29. *Ibid.*, 2: 106.
30. Millis, *Forrestal Diaries*, 318.
31. Text in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, eds., *The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict* (New York: Penguin, 1984), 64ff.
32. Text in *New York Times*, June 13, 1946; also quoted by Acheson, *Present at the Creation*.
33. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 132.
34. *Ibid.*, 2: 140.
35. *Ibid.*, 2: 133.
36. *Ibid.*, 2: 134–35.
37. *Ibid.*, 2: 135.
38. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 169.
39. *Ibid.*, 170.
40. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 149.
41. *Ibid.*, 2: 162.
42. *Forrestal Diaries*, 322.
43. "I have no desire to send 500,000 American soldiers there to make peace in Palestine." Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 136.
44. *Ibid.*, 2: 149.
45. *Ibid.*, 2: 166–67.
46. "By the time I took my duties as Under Secretary in September 1945, it was clear that the President was directing policy on Palestine." Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 169–70.
47. "Byrnes' attitude was one of washing his hands of the problem . . . and leaving it to the President and Acheson to handle. The result was naturally to diminish the authority of the Department in decisions regarding Palestine and to enhance that of the White House." Evan M. Wilson, *Decision on Palestine: How the U.S. Came to Recognize Israel* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), 59.
48. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 165.
49. *Ibid.*, 2: 153.
50. *Ibid.*, 2: 158.
51. Margaret Truman, *Harry S. Truman*, 419.
52. *Ibid.*, 425.
53. *Ibid.*, 420.
54. *Ibid.*, 427.
55. According to Truman, Jacobson "had never been a Zionist" (Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 160). By contrast, Acheson refers to him as "a passionate Zionist" (Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 169).
56. For a thorough discussion, see Samuel Halperin, *The Political World of American Zionism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1961), 191ff.
57. Truman, *Memoirs*, 2: 140.

58. Thus William A. Eddy, *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud* (New York: American Friends of the Middle East, 1954), p. 37; Evan M. Wilson, *Decision on Palestine*, 58; Millis, *Forrestal Diaries*, 322; Emmanuel Neuman, "Abba Hillel Silver, History Maker," *American Zionist*, February 5, 1953; and John S. Badeau, *The Middle East Remembered* (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1983), 115.
59. Eddy, *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud*, 37. The four envoys were William A. Eddy, minister to Saudi Arabia; S. Pinkney Tuck, minister to Egypt; George Wadsworth, minister to Syria and Lebanon; and Lowell C. Pinkerton, consul general in Jerusalem.

2. THE EISENHOWER PRESIDENCY

1. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 682.
2. *Ibid.*, 679.
3. *Ibid.*, 511.
4. Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years*, vol. 1: *Mandate for Change 1953-56* (New York: Doubleday, 1963), 159.
5. Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, 683.
6. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 1: 162.
7. Kermit Roosevelt, *Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 8.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, 11. For a discussion of Peter the Great's testament, see George Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1949), 10-11.
10. *Ibid.*, 11-12.
11. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 1: 162-63.
12. This was to conform to the pattern set by Prophet Mohammed, who in A.D. 622, facing opposition in Mecca, fled or "migrated" to Medina, eventually to return triumphant to Mecca (Roosevelt, *Countercoup*, 161).
13. *Ibid.*, 179.
14. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 1: 164.
15. *Ibid.*, 1: 165.
16. Technically the Users' Association plan was adopted at a second London conference held on September 12, 1956.
17. Text in *New York Times*, October 14, 1956. The full six principles were: (1) Free and open transit through the canal without discrimination. (2) Sovereignty of Egypt to be respected. (3) Operation of the canal to be insulated from the politics of any country. (4) The manner of fixing tolls and charges to be decided by agreement between Egypt and the users. (5) Fair proportion of the dues to be allotted to development. (6) In case of disputes unresolved affairs between the Suez Canal Company and Egypt to be settled by arbitration with provisions for payment of sums found to be due.
18. "Crusaders for the faith" were guerrilla-type commandos.
19. On the news of the Anglo-French attack the White House was "permeated with an atmosphere of . . . cold, suppressed rage" according to Arthur Larson, *Eisenhower: The President Nobody Knew* (New York: Scribner's, 1968), 54.
20. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, vol. 2: *Waging Peace, 1956-1961* (New York: Doubleday, 1965), 190.

21. Ibid. For a useful discussion of "innocent passage," see Majid Khadduri and Herbert Dixon, "The Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba," in Majid Khadduri, ed., *Major Middle Eastern Problems in International Law* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1972), 84ff.
22. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 2: 20.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 2: 25.
25. Expressed in his letter to Prime Minister Eden, dated October 11, 1956. Ibid., 2: 54.
26. Ibid., 2: 96.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 2: 83.
29. On Eisenhower's policy of resort to the UN, see Larson, *Eisenhower*, 56ff.
30. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 2: 41.
31. Ibid., 2: 43-44. See also Larson, *Eisenhower*, 84.
32. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 2: 41.
33. Ibid., 2: 25.
34. Ibid., 2: 29-30.
35. Ibid., 1: 29, 56.
36. Ibid., 2: 28.
37. Ibid., 2: 79.
38. Ibid., 2: 74.
39. Ibid., 2: 56.
40. Ibid., 2: 30-31.
41. Thus Herman Finer, *Dulles over Suez: The Theory and Practice of His Diplomacy* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964).
42. Larson, *Eisenhower*, 15.
43. Quotations are from the text in Magnus, *Documents on the Middle East*, 87-92.
44. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 2: 180.
45. Ibid., 2: 182-83.
46. Ibid., 2: 194-95.
47. Ibid., 2: 196-97.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., 2: 198.
51. Ibid., 2: 204.
52. Robert Murphy, *Diplomat among Warriors* (New York: Pyramid Books, 1965), 442.
53. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 2: 269.
54. Ibid., 2: 271.
55. Ibid., 2: 278.
56. For more detail, see Harold Macmillan, *Riding the Storm, 1956-1959* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 213ff.
57. Ibid., 520; Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 2: 279.
58. Eisenhower, *White House Years*, 2: 185.
59. For a detailed work on this subject, see Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War 1958-1967: A Study of Ideology in Politics*, 2d ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1967). See also George Lenczowski, "The Arab Cold War," in Willard A. Beling, *The*

Middle East: Quest for an American Policy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1973).

60. Macmillan, *Riding the Storm*, 219. In this sense, see also Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 618ff., and Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 8ff.

3. THE KENNEDY PRESIDENCY

1. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 349.
2. Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 298–99; see also Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 539; and Lewis J. Paper, *The Promise and the Performance: The Leadership of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Crown, 1975), 27.
3. Quoted from Kennedy's press conference in Paris, June 2, 1961. Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 356.
4. For an analysis of Soviet ideological innovations, see George Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances in the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1972), 13–22.
5. Quoted in *ibid.*, 14.
6. Kennedy's interview with John Fischer of *Harper's* in 1959, quoted by Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 507.
7. Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 508.
8. Sorensen, *Kennedy*, 546–47. In reality Khrushchev did not show such an equanimity when Nasser applied repressive measures to the Communists in the U.A.R. On two occasions Khrushchev violently attacked Nasser for his behavior, one time calling him a "hot-headed young man" who "took upon himself more than his stature permitted." See Lenczowski, *Soviet Advances*, 87n. and 108.
9. For an eyewitness testimony, see Robert F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1969).
10. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days*, 93–94.
11. *Ibid.*, 108–9.
12. Quoted by Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 553.
13. *Jewish Post and Opinion*, June 21, 1968. Quoted in M. T. Mehdi, *Kennedy and Sirhan: Why?* (New York: New World Press, 1968), 37.
14. Paper, *Promise and Performance*, 334.
15. Quoted by John Badeau, *The American Approach to the Arab World* (New York: Harper, 1968), 88.
16. Walt Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Development* exerted a major influence on the thinking of the Charles River Group and of Kennedy himself. See Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 587–89.
17. Quoted by Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 592.
18. Ralph H. Magnus, ed., *Documents on the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1969), 110–11.
19. Badeau, *The American Approach*, 45.

20. Paper, *Promise and Performance*, 189–90, and J. S. Badeau, *The Middle East Remembered* (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1983), 175.
21. By signing a collective telegram to President Truman in May 1948 (Badeau, *The Middle East*, 114). Later, he wrote that “the American connection with Israel is a liability, not an asset” (Badeau, *The American Approach*, 26).
22. Indicative of the more “balanced” mood in those days was a remark made by Chairman Fulbright during the confirmation hearings in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: “Well, what we don’t want to do is to send a pro-Israeli to Egypt” (Badeau, *The Middle East*, 173).
23. *Ibid.*, 175.
24. Quoted by Badeau, *The Middle East*, 176.
25. Paper, *Promise and Performance*, 190; also Badeau, *The Middle East*, 177.
26. Badeau, *The Middle East*, 28.
27. *Ibid.*, 242.
28. Badeau, *The American Approach*, 55, and Badeau, *The Middle East*, 206.
29. Dana A. Schmidt, *Yemen: The Unknown War* (New York: Rinehart Winston, 1968), 186.
30. Magnus, ed., *Documents on the Middle East*, 113.
31. Quoted by Schmidt, *Yemen*, 187.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, 188.
34. Badeau, *The Middle East*, 209.
35. Schmidt, *Yemen*, 189.
36. Manfred W. Wenner, *Modern Yemen: 1918–1966* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), 204, and Schmidt, *Yemen*, 192.
37. Paper, *Promise and Performance*, 191.
38. In this sense, Badeau, *The Middle East*, 200, 210; Schlesinger, *Thousand Days*, 567.
39. Wenner, *Modern Yemen*, 207.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Badeau, *The American Approach*, 144.

4. THE JOHNSON PRESIDENCY

1. George W. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982), 340.
2. *Ibid.*, 341.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*, 344.
5. *Ibid.*, 345.
6. *Ibid.*, 347.
7. *Middle East Journal* 18, no. 2 (Spring 1964): 215.
8. George S. Harris, *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945–1971* (Washington, D.C. and Stanford, Calif.: American Enterprise Institute and Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 111.
9. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern*, 349.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*

12. Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, 118.
13. Charles Foley and W. I. Scobie, *The Struggle for Cyprus* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1975), 163.
14. The Zurich-London Accords.
15. Text in Ralph H. Magnus, ed., *Documents on the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1969), 128–29.
16. Foley and Scobie, *Struggle for Cyprus*, 163.
17. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern*, 350.
18. Quoted by Foley and Scobie, *Struggle for Cyprus*, 163.
19. Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, 114.
20. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern*, 352–53.
21. *Ibid.*, 353.
22. Magnus, ed., *Documents on the Middle East*, 134.
23. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern*, 358.
24. Edward Weintal and Charles Bartlett, *Facing the Brink: An Intimate Study of Crisis Diplomacy* (New York: Scribner's 1967), 36. Quoted by Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern*, 359.
25. Harris, *Troubled Alliance*, 123.
26. Abba Eban, *An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1977), 355.
27. Lyndon Baines Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963–1969* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1971), 297.
28. Eban, *Autobiography*, 355.
29. Yitzhak Rabin, *The Rabin Memoirs* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 64, 65.
30. U.S. Agency for International Development. Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination, *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants, and Assistance from International Organizations. Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945–June 30, 1969*, 19.
31. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 64.
32. *Ibid.*, 70, and about Ben-Gurion statement “I very much doubt whether Nasser wanted to go to war,” 75.
33. Egypt's official name was at that time “The United Arab Republic.” In this chapter and others the name Egypt is used.
34. Moshe Dayan, *Story of My Life* (New York: Morrow, 1976), 338, 339, 345; Rabin, *Memoirs*, 71, 77–80, 89.
35. Eban, *Autobiography*, 341–43; Dayan, *Story of My Life*, 342.
36. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 85.
37. Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 291.
38. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 88.
39. *Ibid.*
40. Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 293.
41. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 90.
42. Speaking of his visit in Washington toward the end of May 1967, Eban stated: “What I found in this information was the absence of any exhortation to us to stay our hand much longer” (*Autobiography*, 385). Similarly, on June 7, with regard to Syria, Eban observed: “One White House adviser . . . went on to reflect that it seemed strange that Syria . . . might be the only one which seemed to be getting off without injury. . . . I deduced from these remarks that official Washington would not be too grieved if Syria suffered some penalties from the war which it had started.” And he

- concluded: "It was plain to me that an Israeli military success on the Syrian front would not incur displeasure in Washington" (*ibid.*, 421–22).
43. "The first shot in the literal sense was, of course, fired by us, and fired well, destroying 70 percent of the warplanes of the Arab states on the first day" (Dayan, *Story of My Life*, 379, see also 353). As for Johnson, he said, "I regretted that the Israelis had chosen to strike at the Arab forces assembled at their frontier, just as I regretted Nasser's refusal to accept promptly our proposal for a ceasefire accompanied by the reopening of Aqaba and mutual withdrawal from Sinai" (Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 303).
 44. Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 298.
 45. At the UN, "the deadlock seemed complete. The Soviet Union refused to accept a ceasefire without condemnation of Israel, while the United States would accept a cease-fire only if it contained no condemnation and no paragraph on withdrawal" (Eban, *Autobiography*, 415). Similarly, the Israeli daily *Davar* stated: "To this day, the United States has not uttered a single word against our military actions" (*ibid.*, 428).
 46. Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 291.
 47. *Ibid.*, 303.
 48. Eban, *Autobiography*, 430–31.
 49. National Security File, NSC History—Middle East Crisis, May 12–June 19, 1967. The May 23 memo signed by H.H.S. [Harold H. Saunders] and the attached table, "President's Decisions, Israeli Aid Package 23 May 1967," signed by W. W. Rostow are in vol. 1. A note to the President about a delay in some shipments, signed by Marvin [Watson], dated June 5, 1967, 6:55 P.M., is in vol. 4. These originally Top Secret materials were declassified on January 6, 1982, and May 9, 1983. Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Austin, Texas.
 50. James M. Ennes, Jr., *Assault on the Liberty: The True Story of the Israeli Attack on an American Intelligence Ship* (New York: Random House, 1979), 96.
 51. *Ibid.*, 78.
 52. *Ibid.*, 125ff.
 53. *Ibid.*, appendix S, p. 285. Lt. Ennes was one of the officers of the *Liberty*. For another description of the attack, see Anthony Pearson, *Conspiracy of Silence* (London, Quartet Books, 1978).
 54. Emphasis mine; Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 300–301.
 55. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 109–10.
 56. Eban, *Autobiography*, 421.
 57. Dayan, *Story of My Life*; Nadav Safran, *From War to War: The Arab-Israeli Confrontation, 1948–1967* (New York: Pegasus, 1969), 375.
 58. In this sense, Ennes, *Assault on the Liberty*, 211–12.
 59. Johnson, *Vantage Point*, 300.
 60. *Ibid.*, 299.
 61. A statement by Israeli cabinet minister Moshe Shapira to Abba Eban after the cessation of hostilities. Eban, *Autobiography*, 272.
 62. *Ibid.*, 362.
 63. *Ibid.*, 400.
 64. *Ibid.*, 360; emphasis mine.

65. Ralph H. Magnus, ed., *Documents on the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1969), 204–5.
66. *Ibid.*, 206.

5. THE NIXON PRESIDENCY

1. Quoted by Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 224.
2. Quoted in *ibid.*, 225.
3. For an analysis of Britain's imperial lines of communication, see Halford Hoskins, *British Routes to India* (New York: Longmans, 1928).
4. See, for example, *The Gulf: Implications of British Withdrawal* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Special Report Series No. 8, 1969).
5. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 1262.
6. *Ibid.*, 1264.
7. *Ibid.*, 1265.
8. Ralph H. Magnus, ed., *Documents on the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1969), 223.
9. *New York Times*, December 10, 1968.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Newsweek*, December 23, 1968, 36.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon*, 2 vols. (New York: Warner Books, 1978).
14. *Ibid.*, 1: 596, 599.
15. *Ibid.*, 1: 591.
16. In Nixon's *Memoirs* this is a recurring theme. See *ibid.*, 1: 309, 425, 591.
17. *Ibid.*, 1: 598.
18. For example, conversations with Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin on August 17, 1970, and with Prime Minister Golda Meir on September 18, 1970. "Mrs. Meir said that 'Israeli problems were not caused primarily by the Arabs. They were the direct result of the Soviet presence and Soviet military equipment'" (*ibid.*, 1: 600). This was in consonance with Mrs. Meir's tendency to minimize the reality of Arab resistance to Israel's supremacy, as exemplified by her earlier statement in June 1969 that the "Palestinians do not exist" (quoted by George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, 4th ed. [Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980], 453).
19. Richard Nixon, *Real Peace* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1983), 74.
20. Nixon, *Memoirs*, 1: 591.
21. *Ibid.*, 1: 596.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*, 1: 350.
24. *Ibid.*, 1: 595.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*, 1: 596.
27. *Ibid.*, 1: 591.

28. Text in *New York Times*, December 11, 1969, and in *Department of State Bulletin*, January 5, 1970.
29. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 377.
30. *Ibid.*, 372, 376.
31. Nixon, *Memoirs*, 1: 593.
32. *Ibid.*, 1: 421.
33. *Ibid.*, 1: 598.
34. *Ibid.*, 1: 601.
35. Yitzhak Rabin, *The Rabin Memoirs* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 189.
36. *Ibid.*, 189.
37. Nixon, *Memoirs*, 2: 306–7.
38. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 359. Also Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1982), 221.
39. With reference to his role as a peace negotiator in the subsequent Arab-Israeli war, Kissinger wrote: "I joked that Eban's definition of objectivity was 100 percent agreement with Israel's point of view. By that standard I had failed miserably; I had been supportive only 95 percent of the time" (Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 833).
40. *Ibid.*, 840.
41. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 370.
42. Nixon, *Memoirs*, 2: 430.
43. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 478.
44. Nixon, *Memoirs*, 2: 477.
45. *Aviation Week and Space Technology* 99, no. 24 (December 10, 1973). Quoted by Cheryl A. Ruthenberg, "The Misguided Alliance," *The Link* 19, no. 4 (October–November 1986).
46. For details, see George Lenczowski, *Middle East Oil in a Revolutionary Age* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1976), 13ff.
47. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 419.
48. *Ibid.*, 423.
49. Present at the meeting were Secretary Kissinger, Chief of the White House Staff General Haig, Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, General Scowcroft, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Moorer, and CIA Director Colby. Nixon, *Memoirs*, 2: 498.
50. In all likelihood Nixon's denial did not correspond to the facts. The Israeli commanders had pleaded with Premier Golda Meir to give them "two or three days more" beyond the UN-imposed cease-fire date to complete the encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army. "The issue of the Third Army," wrote Kissinger, "was quite simply that Israel had completed its entrapment well after a cease-fire (that we had negotiated) had gone into effect" (Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 569, 602).
51. Speaking of the UN Security Council debate, Kissinger said: "There would . . . be a strong temptation to adopt a resolution in favor of an immediate cease-fire in place. We wanted to avoid this while the attacking side [i.e., Egypt] was gaining territory, because it would reinforce the tendency to use the UN to ratify the gains of surprise attack" (Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 471).
52. *Ibid.*, 794.
53. *Ibid.*, 880.

54. For details, see George Lenczowski, *Middle East Oil in a Revolutionary Age* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1976).
55. Quoted by Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 860.
56. *Ibid.*, 859.
57. A statement of General Ira C. Eaker, former commander of American air forces in the Mediterranean. *Strategic Review*, Winter 1974 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Strategic Institute), 21, 23.
58. Kissinger, *White House Years*, 371.
59. Ismail Fahmy, *Negotiating for Peace in the Middle East* (London: Croom Helm, 1983), 49.

6. THE FORD PRESIDENCY

1. Gerald R. Ford, *A Time to Heal* (New York: Berkley Books, 1980), 126, 128.
2. *Ibid.*, 238.
3. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 1189.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *The Middle East Journal* 29, no. 1 (Winter 1975): 79.
6. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 146.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, 293.
9. *New York Times*, December 30, 1975.
10. *Middle East Journal* 30, no. 3 (Summer 1976): 437.
11. In the October 1973 war "American tanks were transported to Sinai, to the Egyptian town of Al-Arish. . . . the Israeli counterattack often referred to as the Deversoir Bulge was purely America's doing—and the doing of the Pentagon in particular." (Anwar el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity: An Autobiography* [New York: Harper & Row, 1977], 290.)
12. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 251.
13. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 238.
14. *Ibid.* See also Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, on "Israel's interests put before those of the United States herself" during the Johnson and Nixon administrations, p. 288.
15. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 239. See also Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, on "unattainable comprehensive Arab program," p. 471, and on the "step-by-step" approach, p. 615.
16. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 240.
17. Quoted by Rabin, *Memoirs*, 256.
18. *Ibid.*, 258.
19. *Ibid.*, 261.
20. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 241.
21. *Ibid.*, 278.
22. Cheryl A. Rubenberg, "The Misguided Alliance," *The Link* 19, no. 4 (October–November 1986): 10.
23. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 279.
24. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 261, and Eban, *Autobiography*, 599.
25. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 278.
26. *Ibid.*, 283.

27. Ibid., 298.
28. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 274, and Fahmy, *Negotiating*, 164.
29. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 290.
30. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance*, 1977–78 (London, 1977), 20, 23, 24, 37.
31. Fahmy, *Negotiating*, 166–67.
32. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 254.
33. Ibid., 274.
34. Ibid., 277.
35. Fahmy, *Negotiating*, 164.
36. Ibid., 168.
37. Ibid.
38. Ford, *A Time to Heal*, 408.
39. Ibid.

7. THE CARTER PRESIDENCY

1. Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 277.
2. Ibid., 429.
3. Ibid., 274–75.
4. Ibid., 275. Compare to Kissinger's statement on his assumption of office as national security adviser: "My personal acquaintance with the area before 1969 was limited to three brief visits to Israel during the 1960s." *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 341.
5. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 92.
6. Ibid., 278.
7. Ibid., 124.
8. Ibid., 278.
9. Ibid., 149.
10. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser 1977–1981* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1983), 440–41.
11. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 279, 290; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 99.
12. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 281; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 91, 100.
13. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 280.
14. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 84.
15. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 277.
16. Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 64.
17. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 91; *Middle East Journal* 31, no. 4 (Autumn 1977): 469.
18. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 281.
19. Vance, *Hard Choices*, 162–63.
20. Ibid., 378; Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 458.
21. Quoted by Juliana S. Peck, *The Reagan Administration and the Palestinian Question: The First Thousand Days* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1984), 66.

22. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 105.
23. *Ibid.*, 106.
24. Quoted by Seth P. Tillman, *The United States and the Middle East: Interests and Obstacles* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 224.
25. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 96.
26. *Ibid.*, 276.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 281.
29. Vance, *Hard Choices*, 164.
30. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 88.
31. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 290–91.
32. Text in Vance, *Hard Choices*, 463.
33. Text in Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, 330ff.
34. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 303.
35. *Ibid.*, 312.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*, 311.
38. Mohamed Ibrahim Kamel, *The Camp David Accords: A Testimony* (London: KPI, 1986), 25.
39. Text in Magnus, *Documents on the Middle East*, 210.
40. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 107.
41. Ezer Weizman, *The Battle for Peace* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981). Quoted by Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 236.
42. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 284.
43. *Ibid.*, 308.
44. *Ibid.*, 287.
45. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 97.
46. *Washington Post*, November 13, 1974. Mentioned by I. L. Kenen, *Israel's Defense Line: Her Friends and Foes in Washington* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1981), 301.
47. *New York Times*, October 19, 1976.
48. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 249.
49. *Ibid.*, 97.
50. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 355.
51. *Ibid.*, 374.
52. *Ibid.*, 395; Vance, *Hard Choices*, 230–31; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 270.
53. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 349.
54. *Ibid.*, 376–77.
55. *Ibid.*, 373.
56. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 263.
57. All the relevant texts in Vance, *Hard Choices*, 464–75.
58. Kamel, *Camp David Accords*, 87.
59. *Ibid.*, 358.
60. Weizman, *Battle for Peace*, 190–91. A segment of this statement is quoted by Kamel, *Camp David Accords*, 51, 52.
61. Vance, *Hard Choices*, 228, 229.
62. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 405–6.
63. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 277–78.

64. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 414.
65. *Ibid.*, 418.
66. *Ibid.*, 421.
67. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 439.
68. Text of the Treaty in Vance, *Hard Choices*, 476–97.
69. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 442.
70. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 492.
71. Vance, *Hard Choices*, 254.
72. Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, 646–47.
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74. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 24.
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76. Fahmy, *Negotiating*, 283.
77. *Ibid.*, 296.
78. Mohamed Heikal, *Autumn of Fury: The Assassination of Sadat* (New York: Random House, 1983), 99, 105.
79. Lt.-General Saad el Shazly, *The Crossing of the Suez* (San Francisco: American Mideast Research, 1980), 271.
80. Rabin, *Memoirs*, 254; Dayan's statement in West Germany, November 30, 1977, *Middle East Journal* 32, no. 2 (Spring 1978): 186.
81. Gary Sick, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 25.
82. Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 66, 173, 317–28.
83. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 436, 437.
84. *Ibid.*
85. Sick, *All Fall Down*, 49, 104–5; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 367.
86. Sick, *All Fall Down*, 80–83, 141–42.
87. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 438.
88. Vance, *Hard Choices*, 318, 316.
89. James Bill, "Iran and the Crisis of '78," *Foreign Affairs* (Winter 1978–79), 336. Quoted by Sick, *All Fall Down*, 194.
90. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islamic Government* (New York: Manor Books, 1979), 55. Translation of Khomeini's lectures delivered to Islamic students of theology in Najaf in 1969–70. Also to be found in Khomeini's *Islamic Government* (Washington, D.C.: International Learning Systems, n.d.), 32.
91. Richard Falk, "Trusting Khomeini," *New York Times*, February 16, 1979; quoted by Sick, *All Fall Down*, 195. According to Sick, three years later Falk described the Khomeini regime as "the most terroristic since Hitler" (195).
92. Sick, *All Fall Down*, 64–65.
93. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 439.
94. *Ibid.*, 442.
95. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 356.
96. Vance, *Hard Choices*, 319.
97. Sick, *All Fall Down*, 79.
98. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 355.
99. *Ibid.*, 380.

100. Ibid., 396.
101. William H. Sullivan, *Mission to Iran* (New York: Norton, 1981), 182, 214. Also Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 444, 449.
102. Sick, *All Fall Down*, 159–60. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 362.
103. Sullivan, *Mission to Iran*, 230.
104. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 444, 447. For more detailed instructions Huyser received, see General Robert E. Huyser, *Mission to Tehran* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 17–18.
105. Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, 156; Sick, *All Fall Down*, 167, 178.
106. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 458.
107. For details of these negotiations, see Hamilton Jordan, *Crisis: The Last Year of the Carter Presidency* (New York: Putnam, 1982), 83–95.
108. For details, see Col. Charlie A. Beckwith and Donald Knox, *Delta Force* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983).
109. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 501.
110. Jordan, *Crisis*, 224.
111. Sick, *All Fall Down*, 319.
112. For a discussion of these alternatives, see Vance, *Hard Choices*, 308, 380; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 480–81; and Sick, *All Fall Down*, 347–48.
113. *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939–1941: Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*, Department of State Publication 3023 (Washington, D.C., 1948), 257, 259.
114. Text in *New York Times*, January 14, 1980, and in Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 483.
115. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 472–73.
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117. Vance, *Hard Choices*, 369–70.
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119. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 521.
120. Ibid., 377.
121. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 591.
122. Ibid., 569.
123. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 521.
124. Ibid., 439.
125. Ibid., 438.

8. THE REAGAN PRESIDENCY

1. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., *Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1984), 169–70.
2. These fears were articulated in Hassan bin Talal, Crown Prince of Jordan, *Palestinian Self-Determination: A Study of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip* (New York: Quartet Books, 1981), 43ff.
3. *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, October 1, 1981), 1067.
4. *Middle East Journal* 36, no. 3 (Summer 1982), 391. For Sharon's plan for Lebanon (conforming to the long-range strategic scheme formulated by David Ben-Gurion

- in 1948 and again in 1954), see George W. Ball, *Error and Betrayal in Lebanon* (Washington, D.C.: Foundation for Middle East Peace, 1984), 27–29. For Zionist and Ben Gurion's claims to southern Lebanon, see George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, 4th ed. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), 375–76.
5. Haig, *Caveat*, 326.
 6. *Ibid.*, 332.
 7. *Ibid.*, 330.
 8. Ze'ev Schiff, "Green Light, Lebanon," *Foreign Policy* 50 (Spring 1983), 73ff.
 9. Haig, *Caveat*, 327.
 10. *Ibid.*, 326; emphasis added.
 11. *Ibid.*, 330.
 12. Schiff, "Green Light," 74.
 13. *Ibid.*, 73.
 14. Haig, *Caveat*, 339.
 15. *Ibid.*, 341.
 16. UNIFIL had troops from Fidji, Finland, France, Ghana, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Senegal, and Sweden.
 17. *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, 1082; Haig, *Caveat*, 342.
 18. Ball, *Error and Betrayal*, 76.
 19. *Middle East Journal* 38, no. 2 (Spring 1984), 286.
 20. Ball, *Error and Betrayal*, 76.
 21. *New York Times*, April 17, 1988.
 22. *New York Times*, January 26, 1988.
 23. Haig, *Caveat*, 110–11.
 24. *Pravda*, February 9, 1988.
 25. *New York Times*, April 8, 1988.
 26. Text of the four documents in *New York Times*, April 15, 1988.
 27. *Ibid.*
 28. *Ibid.*
 29. *Ibid.*
 30. *San Francisco Chronicle* quoting *New York Times*, April 22, 1988.
 31. The term "evil empire" was used by Reagan on March 8, 1983, at a speech in Orlando, Florida (*Weekly Compilation*, March 14, 1983).
 32. "Iran's Use of International Terrorism," *Department of State Bulletin*, January 1988, 50.
 33. *Ibid.*
 34. For such an analysis, see Robert H. Kupperman and Darrell M. Trent, *Terrorism: Threat, Reality, Response* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1979), and Amir Taheri, *Holy Terror: Inside the World of Islamic Terrorism* (Bethesda, Md.: Adler and Adler, 1987).
 35. See *Department of State Bulletin*, January 1988, 52–53, for a chronology of Iranian-sponsored terrorist incidents.
 36. *Report of the President's Special Review Board* (Washington, D.C., February 26, 1987), 3: 4. Hereinafter referred to as the Tower Commission.
 37. This and other brief quotations containing no more than a few words are taken from the Tower Commission.

38. Tower Commission, 3: 7.
39. *Ibid.*, 3: 8.
40. *Ibid.*, 3: 4; emphasis added.
41. *Ibid.*, 3: 4, 5.
42. *Ibid.*, 3: 12.
43. *Ibid.*, 3: 14.
44. *Ibid.*, 3: 19.
45. *New York Times*, November 14, 1986. *Weekly Compilation*, November 24, 1986.
46. *Weekly Compilation*, November 24, 1986.
47. Tower Commission, 3: 6. Also Donald T. Regan, *For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), 10, 11, 17.
48. Tower Commission, 3: 11.
49. U.S. Congress. Select Committee to Investigate Covert Arms Transaction with Iran, *Report of the Congressional Committees Investigating the Iran-Contra Affair*, with supplemental, minority, and additional views (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1987).
50. *Middle East Journal* 41, no. 3 (Summer 1987): 419.
51. *Weekly Compilation*, October 24, 1983, 1491.
52. *New York Times*, June 16, 1987.
53. *Department of State Bulletin*, November 1987, 43.
54. Regan, *For the Record*, 142–43.
55. *Council Briefings*, Council on Foreign Relations, New York, no. 11 (February 1988): 5.
56. *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), August 28, 1987, 4.
57. *Los Angeles Times*, October 22, 1987, part 2, 7.
58. *Washington Post*, August 6, 1987, 21.
59. *International Herald Tribune* (Paris), August 28, 1987, 4.
60. *Wall Street Journal*, August 5, 1987, 9.
61. "Hidden Commitments," *Foreign Policy*, no. 67 (Summer 1987): 52.
62. Text in *New York Times*, July 19, 1988.
63. *Ibid.*, July 6, 1988.
64. *Arab News*, Jeddah, September 12, 1988.
65. Haig, *Caveat*, 167.
66. *Washington Post*, April 22, 1988.
67. *Weekly Compilation*, September 14, 1981.
68. Haig, *Caveat*, 180.
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70. Report of the Comptroller General of the United States, "U.S. Assistance to Israel," General Accounting Office, June 24, 1983.
71. *Foreign Assistance Legislation for Fiscal Years 1986–87*, part 3 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1985).
72. Morris Greenspan, *The Modern Law of Land Warfare* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959), 268.
73. *Mideast Observer*, February 15, 1981, and *JINSA* [Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs] *Newsletter*, February 1981. Quoted by Michael Saba, *Armageddon Network* (Brattleboro, N.Y.: Amana Books, 1984), 53.
74. *Department of State Bulletin*, August 1981, 79.

75. Ibid.
76. Ibid., 79–80. Also *Israeli Attack on Iraqi Nuclear Facilities*, Hearings before the Subcommittees on International Security and Scientific Affairs, on Europe and the Middle East, and on International Economic Policy and Trade of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Ninety-Seventh Congress, First Session, June 17 and 25, 1981 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981), 3.
77. *Israeli Attack*, 12.
78. Ibid., 15.
79. Ibid., 5.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid., 9.
82. Haig, *Caveat*, 179.
83. Ibid., 189–90.
84. *New York Times*, July 9, 1988.
85. *Washington Post*, October 22, 1988.
86. *New York Times*, July 11, 1988.
87. Ibid.
88. Text in *Department of State Bulletin*, January 1982, 45–46.
89. *Department of State Bulletin*, January 1982, 60.
90. Ibid.
91. *Washington Post*, December 20 and 21, 1981.
92. *Developments in the Middle East, March 1982*. Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, March 3, 1982 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982), 15.
93. Text of the plan and the quotations from the president's speech are to be found in *The Unfinished Business of the Peace Process in the Middle East*, Report of a Study Mission to Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, France and England, November 6–20, 1982, under the Auspices of the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983), 66–68. Also in *Weekly Compilation*, September 1, 1982, 1081–85.
94. Text in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, eds., *The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict*, 4th ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), 623–24.
95. Text in *ibid.*, 664.
96. *New York Times*, February 5, 1986.
97. For details, see Jane Hunter, *Undercutting Sanctions: Israel, the U.S., and South Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Middle East Associates, 1987).
98. For details, see Jane Hunter, *No Simple Proxy: Israel in Central America* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Middle East Associates, 1987).
99. *Washington Post*, February 28, 1987.
100. For details, see *Legislation Calling for a Move of the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984).
101. *Department of State Bulletin*, April 1984, 65.
102. Text of the letter in *New York Times*, March 10, 1988.
103. *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 31, 1988.
104. In testifying before a congressional committee on March 10, 1988.

105. *New York Times*, March 17, 1988.
106. *Ibid.*, April 5, 1988.
107. Abu Sharif's article was subsequently reprinted by the *Washington Times* (June 14, 1988) and the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (vol. 7, no. 3, July 1988) and partly summarized by the *Washington Post* (June 23, 1988).
108. *Arab News*, Jeddah, September 15, 1988.
109. *New York Times*, September 17, 1988.
110. *Ibid.*, March 8, 1988.
111. *Arab News* (Jeddah), March 15, 1988.
112. "Looking Foolish on the P.L.O.," *New York Times*, March 4, 1988.
113. *Time*, December 12, 1988, 37.
114. *Ibid.*, February 13, 1988, 9.
115. "Who Speaks for the Palestinians?" *Christian Science Monitor*, May 5, 1988, 13.
116. *New York Times*, December 15, 1988.
117. *Ibid.*

Note on Primary Sources

Memoirs of the presidents and of their close aides: secretaries of state, national security advisers, and other cabinet-level or subcabinet members of consecutive administrations, provide the main source for this volume. Here and there memoirs of foreign statesmen, to the extent to which they throw light on presidential policies and attitudes, are also utilized. So are the memoirs of certain civilian and military officials entrusted with special tasks.

Other primary sources are official documents. We have relied on them as supplementary materials which, though useful, cannot, with their own bureaucratic language, match the candor and directness of memoirs. Broadly, four main categories of documents have provided information relevant to this study: (1) Department of State Bulletins, (2) Weekly Compilations of Presidential Documents, (3) Minutes of congressional hearings (such as those held by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee), and (4) official government reports, emanating either from the Executive Branch (e.g., those of the Agency for International Development, especially useful for data on U.S. foreign aid) or from Congress.

Memoirs are listed in the Bibliography along with secondary sources that refer to individual presidencies or case studies.

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