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Iran, Persian Gulf and Relations with the United States: The Myth of Hegemony (1968-75)

Submitted by

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Declaration

"This thesis is the result of my own work. Material from the published or unpublished work of others which is used in the thesis is credited to the author in question in the text."

…….Mr. Adnan Riaz Sheikh,
SGIA-IMEIS,
University of Durham.
31st May 2011

Table of Contents

IRAN, PERSIAN GULF AND RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES: THE MYTH OF HEGEMONY (1968-75) 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS 3

ABSTRACT 8

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 9

INTRODUCTION 10

Project Background: Discourse anomalies of Iran's diplomatic posture towards of the Gulf and western Asian security, academic prejudices and possibilities for neo-revisionism 10

Core research questions and Auxiliary assumptions 13

Research Issues, preliminaries and project perimeters 18

Central Aims of Research 27

Methodology, Case studies and Data analysis 31

Project Outline 32
Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework 32
Chapter 2: 35
The Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsula axis (1956-75): External threats, regional hegemony and the politics of security, resources and ideology 35
Empirical Chapters 3-9: 37
American interests in the Indian Ocean (1968-75): The Iran-Saudi strategic competition under the Soviet-radical Arab threat and the politics of arms, islands and oil trade 37

CHAPTER 1: 41

Theoretical Framework 41
1.1. Introduction 41
1.2. Preliminary Hypothesis 43

1.3. The Melian Fallacy: Morality, alliance or self-help in International relations? 44

1.4. Neo-realism: Systemic influences, the structure and the paradox of the (Three) 'Statist' interests 46
1.4.1: Balance of Power: Counter-coalitions, band-wagonning and cooperation 48
1.4.2. Systemic Shifts: Bipolar systemic "stability", rise of contenders and allies 51
1.4.3. Systemic Transformation: Structural change and rise of revisionist state 53
1.4.4. Regional hegemony, deterrence and power 56

1.4.5. Defensive Realism: State expansionism, restraint and 'structural modifiers' 58

1.5. International System and the Regional Security Complexes: A 'sectoral' analytical approach..... 62
1.5.2. RSCs: 'Autonomous, Overlaid, Penetrated and non-Security' 69
1.5.3. Conclusion 72

1.6. Security Communities: Shared interests, non-security and structure-agency transformation 73
1.6.2. 'Values are what actors make of': the politics of security, identity and development of norms 77
1.6.3. Power and Community: the realist contribution 79
1.6.4. Security Communal phases: 'Nascent, Ascendant, Mature and Disintegrating' 81

1.7. Conclusion 84

CHAPTER 2:..... 88

THE PERSIAN GULF AND EXTERNAL POWERS, NATIONALISM, HEGEMONY AND SECURITY COMMUNITY: A NEO-HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE (1956-75) 88

2.1. The Strategic context of Soviet and regional powers' interests in the Middle East:..... 89
2.1.1. Some geopolitical generalizations and region-specific Soviet interests 89
2.2.2. The Soviet-Conservative Epoch 1962-80: The strategic Space between the two Détentes: 94
2.1.2. Soviet interests in the Mediterranean and engagements with Turkey, Egypt and Syria (1956-70) 97
2.1.3. Power Transition in the Middle East and new sub-security systems (1967-72) 101
2.1.4. The case for Soviet "intervention" in the Persian Gulf (1968-79) 105
2.1.5. The reality of Soviet-Iraqi collaboration and the Communist-Kurdish link (1958-75) 110

2.2. The political economy of islands, ideology and security: Intra- Gulf pre-emptions and collaborations 114
2.2.1. Introduction 114
2.2.2. The Upper Persian Gulf islands: politics of resources, nationalism and the legacy of modern Irano-Arab rivalry (1950-75) 117
2.2.3. Territorial rivalries in the lower Gulf (1968-74): politics of resources or pretentious Nationalism? 128
2.2.4. Bahrain: Resources, Hegemony and the "pride complex"? 133
2.2.5. Conclusion 137

2.3. 'Independent Nationalism' in the post-1956 phase: Cooperative Security, the British- Egyptian threat to Gulf and security discourses 140
2.3.1. Introduction 140
2.3.2. From Western Alliance to the Gulf post-1956: 147
2.3.3. Pan-Arabism vs. the "pan-Gulfism" : the pre-1968 politics of the Arab Um'mah and entrenched "Khiligiin" 157
2.3.4. Iranian options in the Gulf (1968-75): National interest, Communal Arab sentiments and "Franchised" security 162
2.3.5. From Gulf to Indian Ocean post-1972: Nixon Doctrine and the anomaly of the Shah's security Discourse 174

2.4. Arabian Peninsula: A Saudi-centric sub-security complex Vs. Gulf security community 184
2.4.1. Introduction 184
2.4.2. Some Generalizations about the "non-littoral" powers of the Arabian Peninsula 188
2.4.3. Dhofar-Buraimi: "buffers" for Saudi security? 192
2.4.4. The Soviet-Marxist encirclement and Saudi countermeasures (1967-80) 198
2.4.5. Dhofar-Oman: the last Frontier of Saudi security 204
2.4.6. Saudi encirclement of southern Arabia and the Trucial Coast: 207

2.4.7. The Gulf Security, Saudi interests and the Iranian "threat": 211

2.5. Conclusion 214

CHAPTER 3: 216

THE "*PAX-SAUDICA*": IRAN, RADICAL NATIONALISM AND THE MARXIST-SOVIET THREAT IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULAR POLITICS (1967-68) 216

3.1. Introduction 216
3.2. Saudi hegemony on southern Arabia and the case for US deference 218
3.3. Southern Arabia: the Saudi encirclement (post-1967) 223
3.4. The 'twin-Pillars' of security and territorial hegemony: southern Arabia meets the Persian Gulf 227
3.5. Saudi hegemony on southern Arabian-Trucial Coast: the collapse of 'Twin-Pillars' 233
3.6. Bahrain, Arabi and Abu Musa islands: Resource struggle, historical "Irredenta" and US policy 234

CHAPTER 4: 242

THE "JOHNSON DOCTRINE" AND POLITICS OF REGIONAL SECURITY (1967-68) 242

4.1. Burden-sharing, financial interests and arms build-up in the Gulf: 242
4.2. Southern Arabia: strategic linkage with America's Indian Ocean policy? 247
4.3. Nurturing Iran-Saudi cooperation: the contours of Nixon Doctrine and arms policy 250

CHAPTER 5: 259

THE 'NIXON DOCTRINE', IRAN AND THE GULF: AMBIGUITIES, EXPECTATIONS AND DISSONANCE (1969-70) 259

5.1. 'Oil-for-Weapons': A paradigm for Shah-Nixon relations? 259
5.2. Islands and Security: the politics of American "Hands-On" policy post-Shatt al-Arab? 272
5.3. Abu Musa: resource rivalry or irredentist nationalism? 280
5.4. The Soviet threat, Iranian vulnerability and islands 285
5.5. The Arms-Oil-Abu Musa 'linkage': policy imperatives vs. political convenience 288
5.6. Arms Policy (1970-71): politics of convenience or contrived "diversification"? 295

CHAPTER 6: 304

"THE NIXON DOCTRINE": THEORISTS AND DISSENTERS 304

6.1. Introduction 304
6.2. "Hands-On" US policy and the politics of islands 307
6.3. SNIE-34-70: dichotomous interests vs. regional aspirations 311
6.4. The "Kissinger Doctrine" and Bahrain: alternative to Iranian 'pillar' or impediment to regional security? 320

CHAPTER 7: 331

THE NIXON-KISSINGER SUPPORT OVER ABU MUSA AND THE BRITISH ROLE: A QUID PRO QUO ON BAHRAIN? 331

7.1. Introduction 331
7.2. Abu Musa Controversy: the British role and US pressures 332

7.3. Bahrain in the Indian Ocean politics: US assurances as liability for Persian Gulf? 339

CHAPTER 8:..... 345

THE PRE-1972 THREAT PERCEPTIONS: RETRENCHMENT AND SOVIET INFLUENCES 345

8.2. The post-1972 Iran-US relations: strategic divergence and virtues of regional integration..... 354

CHAPTER 9:..... 360

REVISITING 'NIXON DOCTRINE' IN THE POST-1972 GULF: LOCAL VULNERABILITIES- US INTERESTS 360

9.2. Détente and Gulf security (post-1972): vindicating Persian 'lessons of history' 364
9.3. The "arrival" of Indian Ocean and the "end" of Bahrain! 375

CHAPTER 10: 383

CONCLUSION..... 383

10.1. The systemic stability problematique and client ambitions 383
10.2. The case of regional autonomy under bipolar stability 385
10.3. Regional hegemony as precursor to integration 386
10.4. Détente and American priorities 388
10.5. US-Iran relations: the case of arms race in the Persian Gulf 390
10.6. The paradoxes of the Nixon "Doctrine" 392
10.7. The Shah's "ambitions", retrenchment and defence through "consensus" 393
10.8. The Kurdish factor in the US Middle Eastern policy: A contradictions of objectives! 394
10.9. The future of IR Theory and the International relations of the Middle East 395

APPENDICES 404

Appendix- I:..... 404
a). The Soviet-Iraqi relations: Arms, development, the Communist influence and the Kurdish factor..... 404
b). The Kurdish factor and external power interests in Iraq's political development 408
c). An appraisal of the Communist "influence" in the Ba'athist Iraq (1968-75) 413
d). Conclusion 418
Appendix-II..... 420
Iran's strategic posture in the Gulf after: US presence and the dilemmas of Soviet vulnerability:..... 420
a). Introduction 420
b). The Politics of US emergence in the Gulf post-1972, Iranian reasons and the Soviet "option":..... 426
c). Soviet Threat, the US Defensive Imperatives and Iranian Strategic Calculations 434
d). Détente, Soviet Threat to the Gulf and the politics of the US Defence priorities in the northern Indian Ocean during 1972-80 436
d). Conclusion 441
Appendix-III..... 443
Foreign and Common Wealth Office position on declassification of diplomatic records: Re-British relations with Iran and Ra'as al-Khaimah(1968-71)..... 443

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 445

Archival Sources..... 445

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Abstract

A host of negative perceptions about Western interests in keeping the Shah of Iran on throne and encouraging his aggressive posture during 1968-79 abound the anti-Imperialist narrative across the Persian Gulf. Negative references to the Shah's stance against his Gulf and Westerly neighbours, such as claims on Bahrain, Abu Musa and the Tunbs Islands; instigating the Iraqi Kurdish rebellion and threatening to detach Pakistani Baluchistan during 1972-75 notwithstanding, his otherwise hostile behaviour in the OPEC threatening oil embargos against the West, as well actions in Dhofari rebellion during 1970-75, can only be explained as positive contributions towards the Arab cause and acting against Western interests. In addition, while the Shah acted against various Soviet protégés in the Gulf and western Asia during 1969-78, the Soviet countenance to his regional policies after his demanding American withdrawal from Bahrain in 1968 contradicts his acting on behalf of US interests or keeping the conservative Arabs incheck, or harbour expansionist ambitions.

Analysing "Top-Secret" diplomatic correspondence detailing the Shah-US undertakings on these controversies, this study instead claims that the Shah wanted closer relations with all the conservative Arabs and revolutionary Iraq to protect the region from the US "bargains" with the Soviets. He actually protected his Sheikhly Arab neighbours from the Western military threat during 1968-71; extended direct security guarantees to Saudi Kingdom and Pakistan during 1972-75; and never harboured ambitions to take a security role under Nixon Doctrine thrgouh an aircraft Carrier navy well after 1971.

The work discovers that the Shah had actually become resistant to President Johnson and Nixon's advice on Iran's security and relations with the Soviet Union, after refusals to provide necessary defensive weapons; threatening the Shah with arms embargoes and refusing any security guarantee to Iran from the Soviet, Nasserite or the Marxist threats during 1967-72.

In fact, the study suggests that contrary to the stated objectives for US stationingthe MIDEASTFOR in Bahrain as security presence, Nixon intended to increase his bargaining position viz-a-viz the Soivet vulnerability along the southern borders; seek Soviet restraint against Europe and agree to Strategic Arms Limitations. The Shah was assured supplies of high-tech arms as a "recompense" for quiescence over US presence and Détente, and act as a conduit for arms to Pakistan after the 1971 War.

The Shah's interest in containing revolutionary Iraq after 1972 through the Kurds is also demonstrated as contradictory to Kissinger's motives for Shah to act along Soviet borders and "neutralize" Iraq from the anti-Israeli quation. This study uncovers that the Shah did not act unilaterally against Saddam during 1972-75, but received support from King Faisal, Hussein and Kuwait, whereas, Nixon and Kissinger were duly warned by the CIA about the Shah's "heavy-handed" tendencies against Arab neighbours; the dangers of triggering an arms race - without commensurate Iraqi threat -and which could elicit Soviet counter-actions should Iran threatened its southern borders or regional clients.

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Introduction

Project Background: Discourse anomalies of Iran's diplomatic posture towards of the Gulf and western Asian security, academic prejudices and possibilities for neo-revisionism

Iran's foreign policy trajectory during the Cold War has animated most debates on the US-Gulf relations since the fall of Shah in 1979, which blame the US-Western Great powers' support to his hegemonic policies against his weaker neighbours in the Persian Gulf, Arabian Peninsula and the South-western Asia after 1968, as a surrogacy of Western "Imperialism" ; controlling its oil wealth and exploiting its strategic importance against the Soviet Union . Most interpretations of Iran's strategic posture in the region during 1968-79 by a large body of the Gulf and western Asian analysts in both the Western and the Arab world at large, tend to blame the political legacies of the region and various security, territorial and ideological conflicts between Iran and the Gulf Arabs on the Shah. Purportedly driven by some megalomania or imbibed by an Aryan racial superiority which stoked his hegemonic ambitions over the entire Gulf-western Asian region-- and to some even the entire Indian Ocean--to revive Persia's Imperial glories, through a Western-supplied military power, the most common anomalies of the Shah's anti-Western behaviour under his "independent nationalist" theory is commonly ignored by most revisionist scholars.

In order for the Shah to impose Iran's hegemony on the region and becoming a direct benefactor to the West's resource and the Cold War-related ideological/security interests-- the US and Imperial Britain are variously blamed for propping-up the Shah as a favourite henchman to prevent its domination by some radical Republican Arab power or directly under the Soviet Union . Both (neo)Imperial great powers of the Capitalist system are assiduously blamed by almost every revisionist scholar and the anti-Western revolutionary Arab leader of the Saddamist, Nasserist or Qaddafist hue, for encouraging the Shah's aggressive policies ; contributing towards Iran's military prowess through a "no-questions-asked" arms sales policy; and supporting his territorial claims against the weaker Arab monarchies of the Gulf as a way of keeping his Gulf neighbours in-check, while winking at his despotic rule over Iranian people.

A conscious delegation of the entire Gulf-Arabian Peninsula and a post-1971 western Asian region to the exclusive Iran hegemony under this "American Shah", by both the Johnson and Nixon Administrations, after the British withdrawal from the East of Suez, is argued by revisionist academics and historians alike, as to have played a vital role in maintaining the Shah as a "Gendarme of the Persian Gulf", without recourse to empirical studies on more robust social-scientific criteria, and instead "ontologize" the politically-motivated narratives of the anti-Iranian and anti-Western populism through selective historiographies, elite interviewing or discourse analysis ,with a strong anti-Shah bent. Not only such academic preferences since 1970s to blame everything Gulf (or even about the Af-Pak relations) on the Iranian "hegemony" have been fairly fashionable in the Gulf-Iran studies that interpret regional conflict as causative of the Iran-Western entente. In fact, failure to conduct sound documentary analysis of the Iran-US relations during 1968-75 as a serious academic pursuit has rendered its "structural" effects feeding into a larger corpus of sensationalist historiographies, media documentaries or even crude anti-Iranian analyses about the Republican Iran of today, by various experts and pundits of the future of the Iran-US relations.

Out of some sheer political convenience or journalistic arrogance, the tendency to read, and make the lay person in both the West and the Gulf understand, the Shah's role as an appendage of the exclusive US strategic interests-- in whose achievement, the Shah was a mere follower, without any say whatsoever--and hence illegitimate representative of his people-- has provided convenient "academic" data for the both the current Islamic Republicans and the Gulf monarchs(Wikileaks' leaking some most pernicious lower-level US diplomatic but high-level Arab leaders' words against Iran notwithstanding), to seek populist legitimacy from their constituencies. One of the recent , albeit the most jaundiced and arrogant tendency of this political reductionism has morphed into a quasi-academic genre of political dossiers against those Middle Eastern regimes whom the US either intends to invade or use the "Arab Spring" as a bogeymen for the takeover of Islamic-fundamentalist or at times crude terror states. Conducting mostly narrative-based, expressionist studies-- with a strong political bent-- that rely heavily on secondary works, this neo-historical reductionist trend [1]

[1] In a his British Award winning book: *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror* by Stephen Kinzer(2008: John Wiley and Sons), details the events of Iran's nationalization of her British –owned oil concessions during 1951-53 by the nationalist Prime Minister Dr. Mossadiq and, interprets the political consequences of the British-American removal of the first-ever democratically elected leader through a covert CIA-MI-6 operation under the ubiquitous Kermit Roosevelt. According to this highly dubious account, for

just before the Third Gulf War (2003) is a novel way of serving caution on the US decision-makers not to attack Iran, lest it encourages the Islamic Republic's export of terrorism across the region and development of the Weapons of Mass Destruction, under the caveats of the "folly of attacking Iran. In fact, nothing can be more dangerous, than a pseudo-empirical narrative, which lacks recourse to the direct sources of firsthand information, and tries to link the Shah's dealings with the US and Britain during 1968-75 as the direct cause of the regional and incumbent regime's enduring bitterness with the West. in order to "prove" the case that the Shah's personal and covert relations with the succession of five US Presidents since 1953, was a deliberate Imperial conspiracy to keep the Shah on the throne, and work against his own people and against the neighbours, the Iran studies must overcome the acute handicap of ignoring one of the most credible evidence, which was recorded during the period by its practitioners, for reasons of posterity (if not for institutional memory), but ignored by otherwise well-acclaimed academics and political commentators .

As the introductory review of project in this introductory chapter will point out that the Shah's relations with both Johnson and Nixon over the Gulf-western Asian security were anything but cordial, and how the current literature fails to explain the Shah's various anti-Western postures, for him to be blamed for various intra-Arab rivalries as well as Nixon-

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which no credible source or documentary account, or even the operative's own interview is cited, the author desperately tried to prove that it was the American CIA ,which brought the "dictatorial" Shah back to his throne as a Western "henchman" to get their way against Iran's legitimate rights of national independence. As a meta-theoretical background to explain Mossadiq's uncompromising attitude and nervous displays of passions and tragedy in front of the world media, the authors depicts most Iranian nationalists and clerical leaders' political philosophy as imbibed by an abstract uncompromising Shi'a theory of of political action which endorsed defeatism and even self-flagellation to the point of self-destruction and a legacy of the uncompromising, 1st and the 3rd Imams Ali and Hussein, who struggled against despotism and tyranny . This work desperately tries to efface the Islamic Republicans as a terrorist regime, bent on exporting global terrorism; subverting every "moderate", western –leaning power in the region from the post-2003 Gulf-Iraq, through the post-1992 Afghanistan and to the Levantine Lebanon-Israel region through proxy wars under Hezbollah, Hamas and Syria. Representing a new genre of political historiographies and state-sponsored covert operations, this book is akin to another political dossier by Con Coughlin Saddam: the Secret life: Macmillan 2002, written just before the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Kinzer develops a direct link between the current regime's political discourses against the West, and the US policy which kept the Shah on his throne until 1979 whose backlash is seen in the pent-up Iranian grievances; hence resort to export of violence and terror. Conducting interviews with certain shady intelligence characters and various anti-Shah personages, mainly Mossadiq's son and his artisan, as well as relying heavily on secondary accounts, the work is a desperate fiat of abstraction, journalistic wit and anti-Imperialist reductionism, in demonstrating that the Americans had virtually had no interest in the Iranian oil or with the Shah himself, in so far as he was touted by the CIA, other "mediators" and even by Churchill as the best guarantee against the Communist threat. Partaking from its secondary sources, this book is another reflection of the academic tendencies that argue that President Eisenhower was "innocently" as well as uncritically misled by the CIA, John Foster Dulles or the Joint Chiefs of Staff's hyperbole that Mossadiq will either hand-over Iran to the Communists, or the Soviets themselves will take over Iran to reach the warm waters of the Indian Ocean.

Kissinger's manipulation of the radical Arab-Soviet or the Marxist threat during 1968-75 to arm-twist the Shah's following their line.

Undertaking analyses of these rarely consulted repositories of diplomatic records, declassified during 2006-09, to explain the realities of the US-Shah relations and what he intended to for his country and his neighbouring Arabs and western Asian partners, even labouring under the Soviet –Marxist threat, this project explores the logical ends of the Gulf politics and its interaction with the international systemic powers whom even the Shah could not defy, which sought to sell Iran and the Gulf Arab's security to the Soviets by Nixon and Kissinger, during 1969-75.

This project would demonstrate that the traditional historical understandings about the Shah's role towards the Gulf Arabs and western Asia, and towards the Soviet Union, during 1968-75, as an unquestioned Western "ally" or a staunch "anti-Communist", are "forensically" unsound; are impressionistic and even pseudo-empirical and at their worst self-serving accounts by its key participants, namely Kissinger and some Gulf Arab regimes.

Core research questions and Auxiliary assumptions

What were Iranian foreign policy objectives towards the Persian Gulf and western Asia during 1968-75? Given the nature of the impending power vacuum and hegemonic incentives provided by the British withdrawal from the region during 1968-71-- as well as American preoccupations in Vietnam, security in Europe and peace in the Middle East --were they animated by the historical revisionism; seeking territorial expansion or re-asserting Persian imperialist hegemony. In addition, did Iran under the rule of the Shah(1941-79) actually acted as a surrogate to Western powers or as a benevolent "peace-maker" on behalf of regional Arab partners through cooperative security to thwart domination of both the Western and Communism, and if so what common interests animated this cooperation against the external powers during the period?

What was the nature and "quality" of the Shah-Nixon epoch, with regards to America's Cold War-related interests towards the Soviet Union, the conservative Gulf Arabs; and the radical Egypt, PDRY and Iraq, as well as some trans-regional revolutionary-Marxist movements? To what extent the US arms sales to the Shah contributed towards Iran posing a threat to its weaker neighbours in the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula and western Asia, and what

objectives they were intended to achieve through building up Iran's military deterrent during 1956-75?

On a regional-systemic power calculus of the US-Gulf region, how the Johnson and Nixon-era policy planners viewed Iran's evolution in the region after the 1967 War and letting the Shah develop an "independent" security posture towards the regional and the Soviet Union to the detriment of the US northern Indian Ocean and the broader Middle Eastern interests? Was it due to the both Administrations' "unwillingness" to supplant the British imperial role in the Gulf after 1971; refusal to confront the Soviet-radical Arab or the Marxist-Communist threats to the region during 1968-71 or the Shah's own strategic calculations about the Soviet threat and diplomatic isolation in the region which acted to moderate his aggressive behaviour towards the conservative Gulf Arabs, during the British withdrawal from the East of Suez? Also, how did the Iran-US interests in western Asia and towards the Soviet Union evolve during 1966-73 on separate Iran-Soviet and the US-Soviet tangents –under the post-1969 Détente -- while the Johnson and Nixon Administrations were heavily dependent upon the Soviet "restraints" towards the Arab-Israel conflict, the Gulf and the South-western Asia (Afghanistan, Pakistan and India) due to pre-occupations in the Southeast Asia, and security of Europe? In other words, did the Gulf and western Asian allies of the West receive the main brunt of the US global priorities during 1968-75 whose centre of gravity had already shifted away from Iran's vulnerable peripheries in the Northern Tier and western Asia since early 1960s which forced the Shah and King Feisal to be deferent to the Soviet security interests in the northern Indian Ocean through opposition to the US presence in the region?

As a neo-revisionist take on the Iran-US relations during the Cold War, was it the US itself, which posed a certain threat to Iran's vital security interests during 1968-75 which compelled the Shah to seek a new balance in relations with the US and the Soviet Union through cooperative relations with the Gulf Arabs and western Asian neighbours after Nixon's refusal to underwrite the Gulf security through accession to the Gulf Defence Pact, but at the same time trying to acquire Bahrain and other Indian Ocean bases?

On a specific regional- Soviet tangent, was the Shah's opposition to the US presence in Bahrain was designed to secure Soviet "deference" to achieve Iran's vital interests in the region—whether against the conservatives Arabs; against the radical Arab nationalists or regionally subversive forces in the Western Asia – in return for which the Shah was equally willing to "defer" to the Soviet security interests along the vulnerable Soviet southern borders

during 1968-75? If so, then what "regional" quid pro quo could possibly delivered for each other's interests by such ideologically antagonistic neighbours to the prejudice of the US and other regional powers ,and what counter-measures the US policyplanners under Nixon Administration took to prevent the Shah-Soviet entente? How did the Shah's failure to acquire Bahrain after 1968—and its acquisition by the US-- prompted the Shah's defiance to the US base interests and what strategic assurance was forthcoming from Nixon to the Shah through arms supplies and support towards re-taking of certain strategic islands?

How did the US policy planners accommodate the Iran-Saudi interests in the territorial, resource and ideological pre-eminence in their exclusive Arabian Peninsular and the Gulf patrimonies within a broader Indian Ocean policy during 1968-75, in the due knowledge of their hegemonic implications for the security of the weaker neighbouring states as well as increasing vulnerability from the Soviet-Maoist inspired radical Arab and Marxist threats? How did the Saudi Kingdom, as an Arabian Peninsular-Red Sea- Persian Gulf power and as a "2nd pillar" of the Gulf security respond to the intra-regional threats and of the trans-regional influences of radical pan-Arabism, Marxism and the Nasserite-British threats to its four flanks? How the exclusive Saudi foreign policy against the British, Nasserist and the Soviet threats affected the political evolution of the Arabian Peninsula and its relations with Iran during 1956-75?

Did the Iran-Saudi geopolitical discourses in the security, ideological and economic domains, during the British withdrawal phase (1968-71) and its putative US-Soviet "over-lay" contravene their dyadic hegemonic interests against each other or against other pro-Western regimes in the broader region, or were these consistent with the Soviet-US sense of the international systemic principles of bipolar stability and de-escalations along the northern Indian Ocean? Was this effectively a case of the two emerging middle ranking powers of the international system asserting their regional freedom of action without disrupting the cardinal "ordering" principles of the international system and if so , to what extent did the Nixon-Kissinger Indian Ocean strategy of reaching a separate "deal" with the Soviet Union and China, contributed to the Shah's interest in reaching his own "Détente" with the Soviet Union and the Gulf powers, eventuating in the 1973 oil price "shocks"?

What actions did the other major regional powers of the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula for instance Iraq, North Yemen, the PDRY, and minor powers like Oman, Bahrain and the UAE, adopt during 1950-75, in contravention to an Iran-Saudi contrived regional security "system"

to affect their specific national security interests --or deter a single power hegemony over this system-- ? What was the nature of various their specific territorial, resource, access or ideological rivalries with Iran and Saudi Arabia which made the transcendence of the region from an Iran-Saudi hegemonic Regional Security Complex to a Gulf Defence Community impossible?

On the contrary, is there any validity to the claim that the Persian Gulf acted as security-economic monolith against both the West and the Soviet Union, when the US failed to deliver on the legitimate national interests of both radical/conservative powers through accession to a Gulf Defence Pact during 1968-75? In other words what external threats impinged on the region's political, economic and security autonomy in the context of Détente; the Marxist-Arab-Communist threats, and OPEC's conflict with the Western industrial powers to provide unifying forces to its central powers to oppose superpower presence in the region during 1968-75? As an antidote to a Gulf-specific balance of power theory, do the theoretical manifestations of a Regional Security Complex and Security Community-- with its enduring conflict formations and global power "penetrations" as well as cooperative discourses, help explain the Gulf-Arabian Peninsular diplomatic anomalies in the pre-GCC phase, where there did actually exist a certain consensus and action mechanism amongst its peer competitors against the internal and external threats during 1968-79? Additionally, if so, how its response and constitution of "threats" depended upon its hegemonic powers' diplomatic capability, and how the Soviet Union-- as its "central" RSC power—countenanced the rise of Iran against its regional allie4s, when it had the capability to prevent it during 1960-75?

In this regional balance of power struggle between Iran and the broader pan-Gulf Arab monolith—under the Saudi, Iraqi or the Nasserite leade4rship-- what counter-actions did the later coalition(of both conservative-radical Arabs of the region) take to circumvent Iran's rise to regional pre-eminence?

As an over-arching security objective of the broader US Indian Ocean policy along the southern Soviet borders, and an enduring legacy for the Iran-Gulf Arabs' vulnerability to this day, and the former's relations with the US and Soviet Union, what was the global strategic significance of Bahrain, and other Arabian-Red Sea bases to threaten the Soviet security which impelled both Iran and the Saudi Kingdom to unite against the US-Western presence in the region during 1967-75?

As a useful corrective to the Shah-US entente against the conservative-radical Arabs during the period, what exclusive roles did Nixon, Kissinger and other Administration officials play in this struggle to mediate various ideological, resources and territorial conflicts during 1969-75, to prevent Soviet interference, who alongside Iran were at the same time also engaged in crippling oil embargoes against the West? Is it logical to believe than the US and the Western powers allowed their regional allies to destroy the relationship whose security umbrella guaranteed their own survival against the radical Socialist Arabism or the Marxist-Communist subversions?

Last, but most importantly, what was the Shah's contribution towards the western Asian security as deterrence to the Soviet advance across the Arabian Sea during 1971-75, while the Shah failed to get clear-cut US guarantees against the Afghan- Iraqi-Indian subversions to the Pak-Iran "Baluchi"- belt after 1971? Can it be empirically determined that during the British withdrawal from the East of Suez and before the Iraq-Soviet Defence Treaty (1972) that the Shah had reached some tacit understanding with the Soviet Union over the security of his eastern periphery, where he could prevent further US presence along the Soviet-Afghan borders through providing direct security to both south Asian antagonists, if the Soviets guaranteed the Indo-Iraqi "restraint"?

What was the nature of the Shah-Nixon "deal" over security of the Gulf and western Asia during 1972-74, under which the latter agreed to sell him any number and range of high-tech weapons-- he had hitherto refused to supply since 1969-- despite his interests in reaching a global "deal" with Brezhnev over the security of Europe; achieving nuclear disarmament and peace on the Arab-Israel front? Interpreting in its central context of the Shah-US strategic relationship, was the "carte-blanche", actually a "military" guarantee-- as opposed to a security guarantee-- against the Soviet or the Iraqi threat; a wilful policy to underwrite the Shah's military aggressive policies to keep the Gulf's radical-conservative Arabs and western Asian powers under check; or a "recompense" for his quiescence over the Nixon-Brezhnev "deal", which delivered the Iran-Iraq sub-complex, the Gulf and western Asia to the exclusive Soviet "jurisdiction" in return for European security?

As an over- fact of contemporary relevance, could we objectively attribute the Nixon-Kissinger policy towards the Gulf and western Asia during 1969-74, as well as support to the Shah's military build-up against the Soviet- radical for triggering the Iran-Iraq War on the one side, in 1979-80, and to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 which the Shah had pre-

empted by supporting the anti-Daud elements after 1973, on the other hand. In other words, could Nixon's failure to anticipate Soviet ambitions along its southern Indian Ocean periphery and his deliberate appeasement to Brezhnev during 1969-74 be objectively attributed to the ultimate failure of the US contrived security architecture in the Gulf and western Asia under Carter (1976-80), or upon the Shah's aggressive diplomacy in the region, as well as on the local intra-Arab conflicts?

Research Issues, preliminaries and project perimeters

This project tries to explore the time-honoured charge that the Shah of Iran was acting as an "American Shah" during 1968-75 in the region by working against the interests of his Gulf Arab and western Asian neighbours; was a doctrinaire anti-Communist; and unquestioned American ally as claimed by certain Western diplomats; . Academically sound and based in credible empirical evidence, we will argue this and other substantive research questions(raised above)in the light of the privileged accounts of the Shah-US and mainly Gulf Arabs' undertakings over the Islands, resources and ideological threat, posed by the regional contestants for supremacy over each other and to their quasi-conservative partners during 1968-75,

During the Cold War, a substantial corpus of academic and security analysis works on Iran's vulnerability at the hands of the Soviet Union since 1921, and after 1960s, from the revolutionary pan-Arabism under Nasser, and afterwards from the radical Iraq or Marxist subversions, started to mushroom, the departure point of which theories, was the overwhelming Communist- Soviet threat which animated the Iran-US relations, since the Soviet evacuation form northern Iran in 1946. The Soviet threat before 1972 is determined by this revisionist narrative as omnipotent through the Soviet support to the Communist Tudeh Party during 1946-54, and afterwards through direct threats to Iran's accession to the Western pacts or making available its territory for anti-Soviet activities along its southern borders. Iran academia labours under the assumption that it was the Soviet threat until 1962 which obligated the Shah to seek direct security through alignments with the West under his "positive nationalism", as a departure from "neutralism" as unsuccessfully practised by Reza Shah and his predecessors, or the Positive and Negative "equilibria" under, Mossadiq or his predecessors during 1941-53. Historical studies of the Iran-Great powers' relations before the Second World War argue about the continuous security logic of this Soviet threat which

became manifest during the Soviet occupation of Northern Iran during 1916-18 despite Iran's professed neutrality in the Great power conflict, while was almost institutionalized by Lenin's underwriting the Socialist Republic of Gilan during 1919, in return for which Lenin arm-twisted Iranian government to sign a treaty of Friendship and Neutrality in 1921. The myths about the rise of Reza Shah to the helm of Iranian affairs after 1921 as a British henchman and his re-taking southern Iran from the hands of the secessionist Sheikh Khazaal of Mohammerah in 1924, is a well-rehearsed theme of Iran's continuous attachment with the principles of non-alignment and hence its continuous search for security through certain "disinterested and distant" Third Powers (mainly the US, but also through the Nazi Germany, the Gaullist France and China after 1971). Without going into the specifics of the Reza Shah's pragmatism of siding with Nazi Germany during 1941, until the British-Soviet occupation of Iran which effectively dividing it into the two spheres of northern and southern influence until 1946, and how during this occupation, various Iranian nationalist premiers continued to wean the US into Iran's oil politics through behind-the-scene deals ,which invited Soviet counter-demands for likewise concessions and hence refusal to evacuate northern Iran, we can generally depart from the controversy as attributed by most scholars as "triggering" the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union. Whether or not the case of Premier Qavam arranging Stalin's withdrawal in March 1946, or the Iranians' had covertly assured the Soviets about reducing the British strategic footprint gradually through nationalising the British oil company during 1951-53, remains one of a myth to-date, President Truman's "ultimatum" to Stalin to evacuate northern Iran or face reprisals elsewhere along the Turkish-Greek fronts, is similarly an equally ambiguous assertion, which even the Shah never acknowledged until his ouster in 1979. Sounding ever grievous about the US refusal to confront Stalin as early as 1960, and Iran never rewarded for its services towards the defence of the Free World during the Second War through financial help after the War, the Iran scholarship however , and on its own, simplistically determines, that well after 10 years of this hitherto unconfirmed threat by the US--, which according to the Shah conditioned his lack of faith on the weaker powers' dependence upon the US—it was the continuous Soviet threat which condemned the Shah to maintain Iran's links with the West through the security pacts like the Baghdad and the post-1958 CENTO and epitomized in the solidity of the Iran-US exclusive relationship through further guarantees by President Eisenhower against the "direct" or the "indirect" Soviet--Communist threat under the Executive Agreement(1959) as a "recompense" to the US non-

accession to the CENTO or as a direct guarantee to the Shah's regime. And as they say, the rest is history, the Iran scholars of the Shah's hey days, labour under the point, that even after a brief flirtation with the Soviet Union during 1962-71, under which the Shah was able to receive Soviet endorsement of its occupation of the Abu Musa and the Tunbs Islands, after the Soviet arms supplies to Iran's arch adversary in the region, Iraq in 1972, and seeing the clear and present danger of the Soviet "pincer" along the Af-Pak and Iran's Baluchi belt after 1972, the Shah was obliged to go back into the US folds, as the only reliable guarantor to Iranian security, while ignoring the sore points of the Iran-US relations during 1968-71. This academic logic of Iran's abiding faith in the US security umbrella and latter's continuously under-writing the Shah's own regime well until 1979 ignores the point that despite the US guarantees, the Shah had variously initiated a dialogue with Khrushchev since 1956 for a 50 year non-Aggression Treaty, to resolve Iran's security dilemma of encirclement in a hostile Arab-Soviet neighbourhood, against which no US president from Kennedy to Nixon was able to give iron-cast guarantee except through the assurances of the US invoking its Constitutional procedures and Presidential judgment. , which in the end, led to President Carter's failure to militarily intervene to save the Shah from the Islamic Marxist and Tudeh for fear of the Soviet reaction.

For some meta-historical theorists of both the Iranian nationalist and Western hue, this complex history of the Perso-Arabic antagonism since the Arab conquests of the 7th century A.D, and its cultural-lingual effects on the Iranian Zoroastrian heritage and Imperial prestige and relations with the Sunni Ottoman Turks during the 16th- early 20th century is ingrained in the Iranian folklore and memory never to put faith in security through dependence upon the Soviets, the Arabs or any other country, but on self-defence for which Reza Shah, the Great, tired to re-dress through a careful balancing of Iran's relations with the Soviet Union through bilateral treaties, and with the Kemalist Turkey, Iraq and Afghanistan through a binding, but "neutralist" Sa'ad Abad Pact in 1937, as the first manifestation of a security community against third party interference in the region.

Nevertheless, despite the continuous domestic dissonance against the external power hegemonic debates on Iran and the Gulf, to have animated the Iran-US relations to this date, some scholars still point out that with the receipt of a clearer US guarantee against the non-Soviet threat under the Executive US guarantee, the Shah had, at the same time rejected explicit Soviet offers of a 50 year non-aggression Treaty, under the pre-condition, that Iran

renounced its obligations under the Western Pacts, which obligated it to make available Iranian territory for subversive, military or intelligence-gathering activities against the Soviet Union, which the Shah had already assured to Khrushchev since 1956. Making Iran available its territory for intelligence facilities against the Soviet anti-ballistic missiles and satellite tests in the Central Asia(especially in the Kazakhstan), the Shah did in any case, , until his fall, which the likes of Kissinger acknowledge as a patent proof of his sincerity to the defence of the Free World and taking great risk to his regime, and as such will be the major focus of the US arms supplies debates , which the CIA, the NSC and the State Department defended most dearly during 1966-75.

The Soviet-Communist factor as a cardinal security threat for the longevity of the Shah-US cooperation-- and putting-up with his regional shenanigans and at times independentist postures on the World affairs--but serving as central American rationale for building-up his military deterrent during 1968-79,has been the most rehearsed theme of the US-Iran relations, hinged on the need to deny the Gulf and Arabian Sea littoral to hostile powers and protect its oil-riches and long communication routes to the East Asia. However as this project argues, that the centrality of the Shah to this role in the broader US policy towards the Soviet Union and the northern Indian Ocean during 1969-75is the most misleading theme to make the case for the Shah's following the US line, without resistance, and which effectively sold Iran and the Gulf-western Asian security to the Soviets, whenever it suited Nixon and Kissinger's strategy under Detente. In this context, few dissonant Shah collaborators-come-historicists like Fereydon Hoveyda or Guive Mirfinderesky even attribute the Shah's fall to the Soviet-support to Tudeh and the Marxist-Islamic Fundamentalist Mujahedeen-e-Kholq, who became operational in the northern Iran, immediately after Nixon's visit to the Shah in 1972. There is also a considerable academic agreement on the Shah's single-minded pursuit of Iran's credible military deterrent by ignoring the economic plight of his people and rendering Iran as a retrogressive cultural colony of the Western moral decadence, commonly termed as the "Westoxication" of Iran.

As this project sets out to detail the actual nature of the "Soviet-inspired" security threats to Iran during 1968-75, and for the Shah to have manipulated the Nixon Administration into demanding a certain "hegemonic" security role in the Gulf, any empirical exercise of this controversial merit should start with the logical step of exploring the development of the Iran-US strategic relations during the initial stages of the Cold War(1946-62), with Iran acting as a

"frontline" state against the Soviet expansionism, alongside Turkey and Pakistan, who had joined the NATO,CENTO and SEATO, for both regional and the Soviet threat perceptions, but went about forging their exclusive neutralist organization, the RCD after 1964(dissolved in 1979 along with CENTO).

Nevertheless, any astute analysis of these Cold War "zero-sum" US relations with a staunch "anti-Communist" Shah should not ignore another strategic fact to have ever-moderated the Shah's anti-Soviet stances during his long rule, that despite his accession to the Western Pact to thwart Communist domination of the "Northern Tier" or in the Gulf, the Shah was still obligated by his predecessors' commitments made towards the sanctity of the Soviet southern borders' security under the 1921 Treaty, which neither his nationalist father, nor any Republican regime(Mossadiq not excepted) to-date, has ever tried to rescind unilaterally or even when offered by the Soviets to Reza Shan in 1932 through his acclaimed Russophile Minister Abdul Hussein Tymourtash Under the treaty, signed in the immediate response to the infamous Anglo-Persian Agreement(1919), making Iran an effective British "protectorate" against the Bolshevik threat--as its detractors preferred to think--the Soviet Union still reserves the right to introduce its forces to "protect" Iran, against a "third" party intervention ,should its weakness and integrity through invasion by a third party "to the contract", posed a strategic threat to the Soviet land security. In this case, two instances for Iran's over-dependence on a non-contiguous great power--which the pro-American theorist labour to prove the case of the abiding Iranian interests in relations with the West—makes for a weak argument when during 1951 the Americans feared that Mossadiq could have invoked against a potential British invasion of the Abadan . In the second instance, pointed out by R K Ramazani and Cyrus Ghani in a rare reference to this security "guarantee" ,when Reza Shah was likewise offered a similar military help from Lenin against British efforts to detach the oil-rich Khuzestan under the League of Nation's mandated Mesopotamia-Iraq during 1924, under its potential "King" Sheikh Khazaal. Mohammad Reza Shah's interests in invoking the provisions of the Articles 5 and 6 of the treaty, is similarly acknowledged by his Court minister Assadollah Alam that, at least twice during 1969 and 1973-74, the Shah had seriously considered inviting Soviet forces to thwart Nixon and the British pressures in favour of their Major oil companies .

Iran's historical claims on Bahrain and other smaller islands (Abu Musa and the Tunbs) during 1968-71 continues to animate the Iran- Gulf rivalries, even to this day, in whose resolution, the British diplomats like Sir William Luce et al, supposedly played a highly

devious role by arbitrating the Shah's control of the lesser significant islands, to the detriment of their Sheikhly "protectorates". Iran academia of even the nationalist hue concurs that it was done consciously by the British (and by the US, albeit lacking much interest in the affair, due to their broader regional interests in the Shah-Faisal cooperation) in return for his recognizing the Trucial Coast Federation (the UAE) as well as relinquishing Iran's historical claims on the strategically more threatening Bahrain, as regards the Saudi security. The time-honoured British trade interests in Iran notwithstanding, the crucial oversight in the broader Iran-US-Soviet security debate is ignoring the Soviet interest in Bahrain's "neutrality" and denying its acquisition to the US as the only threatening strategic base to host aircraft carrier and nuclear Polaris submarines before Diego Garcia. This is the same base where the US 5th Fleet is based today, as was the Carter's RDF as a security guarantee to the Saudi Kingdom during 1979, which Brezhnev demanded be withdrawn in return for withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1981.

In a regional-security context however, what therefore was the actual quid pro quo between Iran and the Saudi Kingdom during 1968-71, over Bahrain's neutrality, but more importantly over other "tenets" of a regional security behaviour vis-à-vis Iraq and other non-conformists, while Faisal itself was locked in a region-wide territorial-hegemonic struggle with the British-protected Abu Dhabi and Oman over Buraimi; with the PDRY and the YAR against Nasser and directly against the British to prevent the latter's bargaining its southern patrimonies with the Republican Sana'a , in return for keeping the Aden Base for its Imperial interests in the Gulf, East Africa and the Far East ?

This anomaly about a regional "modus-vivendi" and over the superpower presence in the region to offend the Soviet sensitivities, between these two Western-aligned "conservative" and "like-minded" monarchs--assiduously working against certain core Western geopolitical and resource-intense interests at the same time-- raises serious challenges to the accepted wisdom of the British-US interests in facilitating such Faustian deals in the Shah's favour as one of thwarting the Marxist threats through him, (or an implied direct Soviet hegemonic control of the Gulf), or in pursuit of some crude resource, trade or arms sales interests. Granted, all of the above Western interests remained wedded to the hardcore realties of the Imperial industrial age, now including energy security threatened by the Soviet predatory interest on the Gulf oil and being a net-exporter after 1972, but maintain an already anti-Western balance of power through Iran or for pure ideological rivalry between the East and the West could be seen in the major counter-balance called for by the Shah in his anti-US

stance during 1968-72 through opposing presence of the US or any "non-littoral" power presence, inside the Gulf or even around the Arabian Sea. Despite the US ability to counter-balance Iran through other means at its disposal, the foregoing makes the Soviet Union a direct beneficiary of this "independent nationalism" which will be a crucial empirical research issue in the succeeding chapters.

Such anti-Western diplomacy, with all its intrinsic implications for the Iran-US strategic relations-- as often ignored by Iran scholars of the "pro-US" tinge-- makes one intrigue, as to what other cardinal interests with the Shah were left for Nixon to have expected him to deliver upon, after his repeated failures to draw Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon's attention towards Iran's military build-up well until 1972-73 by which time the Soviet threat had been consolidated in Iraq, the PDRY and western Asia? What then was the Shah-Nixon "quid pro quo" during 1969-72 under which the latter acquiesced into the Shah's control of the tiny Islands in return for taking over Bahrain, while the US arms supplies after 1962 must be ascertained in the nature of Iran's limited capability to confront the Soviet strategic power ; the Iranian armed forces manpower limitations to absorb high-tech weapons; and above all Nixon's own interests in reducing global power tensions along the Western Europe and the US mainland, after threatening a Soviet-armed ally India during the 1971 War through deployment of the Enterprise Task Force to defend the West Pakistan's integrity.

In any case, the project should explore the ongoings between the Shah, Nixon, Kissinger, and the British diplomats on-the-scene during 1968-71 over Bahrain and other islands,, after Nixon literally tried to supplant the British "protectorate" status –without signing Friendship Treaties with the local rulers —or accession to the CENTO or the Gulf Defence Pact--to ascertain the core US strategic interest in acquiring Bahrain! As a caveat of the global strategic implications along the vulnerable Soviet borders after the closure of the Suez Canal(1967-74), and a key Soviet gain during the Cold War , one needs not take eyes of the fact, that while failing to jumpstart works on the Diego Garcia since early 1966, or other "exclusive" base facilities across the northern Indian Ocean littoral well until 1974, Nixon and Kissinger's worst failures were their inability to prevent the Shah and other conservative "oil-Sheikhs" destroying the Western industrial economies, for which *Kissinger et al* famously threatened to take over the Arab oil wells in late 1973, through American military or asking the Shah and Israel do the job.

Most importantly and for political correctness, to re-position the Shah's role in an hostile Soviet-radical Arab- dominated region, but more seriously threatened by Nixon, making Iran, the Gulf and western Asia as a testing ground for Détente to the European and US advantage, this project aims to explore the role of the oft-cited "external" support by the US and the British, in the Shah's security calculus, and to encourage, or moderate Iranian ambitions in the region.

Of an even greater academic discovery, will however be, to explore, what if any, US interests, actually deviated from the Shah's and the local conservative Arab regimes', in the narrow confines of the Persian Gulf security, in the broader Middle East; but more specifically along the softer Soviet southern underbelly.

On a macro-strategic level of the Iran-US relations to have caused an even greater rift, this project must explore the central role of the "oil politics" in mediating Iran's relations with Arab –dominated OPEC, with the US and the British governments, after Kennedy Administration's refusal to grant military "aid" to the Shah after 1962.

Making conditional, more US arms supplies, either through "grants" or "credit" purchases, due to Iran's ability to buy US arms through its oil exports (becoming the 50% basis of the 1964 and the 1966 Mutual Defence Assistance Packages), as well as Kennedy-Johnson official's pressures for Iran to spend more on the economic and social reforms than military defence, this project reinterpret such "oil politics" by repositioning the "Abu Musa" island controversy as one of "oil-for arms" diplomacy between the Shah and the Nixon Administration, hitherto treated as a central bone of contention between Iran and Sharjah or the intra-Sheikhly rivalries during 1968-70 and one of "irredentist nationalism" to this day. However, and as a niche academic discovery, this case study will delineate the Islands problem as one of a "resource-struggle" over a "cash-cow"--similar to the Arabi island controversy between Iran and the Saudi Kingdom--in the Shah's hapless pursuit to buy the needed arms on a "barter" basis through the private US defence companies and Independent oil companies during 1968-70 .

This project would also explore Nixon, Kissinger and the US ambassadors on ground, alongside certain British diplomats like Sir William Luce and the Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home in the islands controversy, and of the Nixon-Kissinger's strategy to let the Shah deal with the Independent oil companies like Occidental Petroleum and major defence contractors like Northrop and General Electric over the head of the oil "Majors", while Nixon

was unable to generate sufficient "credits" for the Shah's arms orders from the Congressional Hawks.

The above insinuation further raises another anomaly various covert Shah-Kissinger relations before and after 1972, for the project to explain as to how the Nixon policyplanners nurtured Iran's military build-up, while its professed Gulf "allies" were bent on subverting the very core strategic interest of the West, which mandated this security in the first place, against the direct Soviet threat and through Iraq and the PDRY, and a the Indo-Iraq-Afghan troika during 1972-79,acting across the Arabian Sea.

The case for Iran's meteoric rise in the region and on the world stage after the 1973 "Oil shocks" and hence a logical case of asserting hegemony in the Gulf–in trust of the Western energy security to safeguard its oil-lanes, while and thwarting the radical-Marxist threat also ignores another cardinal fact of the period, when the Shah(and the Arab conservatives) actually faced considerable resistance from the Major Western oil companies against increasing its oil production(or in latter's case oil prices) well until 1974 and even threats from their governments which the Shah challenged publically in late 1970 by threatening oil embargoes .

Whether seeking regional hegemony through a military prowess—with or without the Western patronage--or in pursuit of his "Great Civilization ",or the "Indian Ocean Community" projects, the economic logic of Iran's struggle with the Major oil companies, and, despite Nixon's extending the much-hyped "carte blanche" after 1972 similarly ignores one of the central cardinal strategic reality for Iran to have been restrained in its anti-Soviet posture and will be the core academic discovery of the Iran studies, that during 1969-75 Iran was also facing a strategic "encirclement" on its all four flanks, either through the radical Arab regimes or Marxist movements in the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula or western Asia or through direct Soviet threat.

Unable to achieve the renewal of Pakistan's arms supplies from the US, despite his vocal condemnation of the CENTO's inefficacy, and the hollowness of US guarantees, since Pakistan's near-defeat in the 1965 War over Kashmir, its actual "dismemberment" at the hands of a Soviet-armed India of its Eastern wing during the late 1971 War, coincided with another systemic shock on Iran's eastern periphery with the communist officers bringing the Pashtun nationalist Daud to power in July 1973. Virtually destroying Iran's traditionally quieter eastern "buffer"--since the 1961-63 Af-Pak conflict over "Pashtunistan"-- this project will also

explore the politics of the Soviet threat to Iran's western Asian flank during 1972-75 and the US investments with the Shah to contain the Soviet-Marxist threat from reaching Arabian Sea through the "Baluchi belt", and the Shah's efforts to protect Pakistan from the Iraqo-Indian-Afghan subversions, all armed and diplomatically supported by the Soviet Union.

With the Soviet naval preponderance in the Gulf strengthened through Iraq and the PDRY during 1967-69, and aggressively pursued after the American takeover of Bahrain in 1971, the US inability to follow-up on the Marxist-Soviet threat through a Defence Treaty with the Shah, implies that the Soviet position along Iran's north-eastern flank was virtually assured after the Soviet-Iraq Treaty(1972), which only left the Af-Pak flank exposed to further Soviet exploitation under Détente, fearing which the Shah had confronted Nixon in the CENTO during 1973-74.

Central Aims of Research

The aim of this project is to explain Iran's foreign policy objectives towards the Persian Gulf and western Asia; the nature of its relations with Saudi Arabia and Iraq, as well as with the US, Britain and Soviet Union during 1968-75. Complementing this aim will be delineating the role of certain external/non-littoral powers of the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula like Egypt, Jordan and Israel to deliver on the strategic aims of the regional and superpowers through proxy wars in Yemen, Kurdish Iraq and Afghanistan during the period.

The second objective is to detail superpowers' interests in the region during 1958-75, with Iran delivering the central diplomatic components for Soviet security interests along its southern borders by acting as a "buffer" between the British-US dominated northern Indian Ocean and western Asia during the Cold War, under some strategic quid pro quo with both superpowers over its specific regional interests.

With the abiding US interests along the northern Indian Ocean rim, supplementing the strategic framework for a global rivalry with the Soviet Union and China, we will develop a macro-strategic calculus of the 1969-75 period, within which Iran and other conservative Gulf-western Asian powers were bound to operate, lest they invited the Soviet (or Western) retaliation through their rebalancing relations with both conservative and radical revolutionary allies. Here, the role, which a host of the Gulf Islands (whether Iran, the Saudi or Iraq contested) played to foster the intra-Gulf antagonisms, triggered the arms race; punctuated rivalries over oil resources or ideological competition between Iran and the Gulf powers, will

be the focus of the debate with the Soviet Union acting as a "moderator" of the intra-regional rivalries since the Indo-Pak War of 1965.

In this pursuit of a regional competitive calculus between its preponderant local powers, to which external powers contributed during 1960-75, the exercise is intended to (re)position Iran's place in the region viz-a-viz Iraq and Saudi Arabia--having similar regional, security, territorial, resource-related or hegemonic ambitions--rather than treating Iran as a single revisionist power operating in the Gulf or as a favoured Western protégé, as proposed by the "single pillar" Doctrine theorists.

In addition to this, the project aims to (re)locate the Iran and Iraqi territorial claims and interests in their Upper Gulf region during 1950-68, and in the case of Saudi Arabia and Iran in both the Upper and Lower Gulf peripheries during 1968-75, whose security and ideological dynamics impinged on the development of a regional Security Community with the other Gulf powers and went beyond the implications of Iranian actions on the Lower Gulf islands of Bahrain, Abu Musa and the Tunbs in 1971.

Partaking from the historical debate, on how the islands, oil and access rivalries in the Gulf during the early 1950s to 1968, in the Upper Gulf ,triggered the regional competition between its three mainland powers--with Britain at the centre of this "mini" security system as a dominant naval power—to thwart their hegemonic threat to its Kuwait "protectorate"(well after 1961) .We will also explore the case for "pax-Saudica", as establishing the Saudi hegemony on the Arabian Peninsula, as well as "pax-Iranica" on the Gulf and western Asia during 1968-75. Coining these new terms, which better captures the nature of regional powers' hegemonic contests, outside the confines to the Nixon Doctrine, we aim to explore the "democratisation" of hegemony in the Gulf during 1950-68, as a separate epoch of the US-Soviet lack of restraint on the regional powers, before both "systemic" powers got aggressively involved in the northern Indian Ocean through base politics and detaching Iran and Saudi Arabia form the Western orbit during 1968-75. In this case, whether these "Paxs" were even blessed by the US and/or Imperial Britain over the weaker Gulf regimes will be the focus of this debate, with the superpower struggle in the Indian Ocean, western Asia and the Gulf-Red and Arabian Sea axes.

One of the cardinal aims of this project will be to establish the core US interests in building-up the Shah's military deterrent during 1968-75, and supporting his territorial claims but most significantly, the aims behind the US covert policies under Nixon and Kissinger

towards Saudi Arabia Iraq, and radical regimes of the Arabian Peninsula and those in the south-western Asia like Afghanistan, Pakistan and India after the Indo-Pak War in late 1971. In the context of Détente and the northern Indian Ocean during the period ,how certain US interests were supposed to be achieved, against a certain anti-Soviet presence through Iran or solely by through the US military and diplomatic means as a truly global, Indian Ocean power and how did Iran's regional actions against the Arabs after 1969 fitted with the Nixon Doctrine and after Nixon's visit to Iran in May1972, will therefore be explored along with the antecedents of the US-Soviet "base politics" since the Johnson Administration(1963-68).

Another contingent aim of the exercise is exploring the so-called Nixon-Shah's "personal" relationship, which is supposed to have left an indelible mark on the Gulf and the Iran-Iraq, Turkish and Syrian relations through the Kurdish problem and assured Israel's security during the 1973 War at the hands of Saddam Hussein.

An exercise of enduring validity, the ongoings of such relationship during 1972-75 will be tested through the record of "covert-channels" operated by Kissinger with the Shah and other Arab regimes, and evaluate its antecedents which motivated Nixon and Kissinger's manipulating the Shah's supporting the Iraqi Kurds, then receiving support from the Soviet Union at the same time. What were those key objectives of the Nixon Administration to encourage the Shah in his hostility towards Iraq if it made Iran vulnerable to both the Arabs and the Soviet threats, despite the de-escalatory objectives of the superpower Détente across the globe? As a broader debate of the events leading to the Iran-Iraq War(1980-88) and Nixon-Kissinger's role in the future of the Gulf security, the aim will be to uncover the vital debates and dissensions to this policy by exploring whether both were pre-warned by the specialized US security agencies and other policy-advisory channel about the historical legacy of the Iran-Iraq, as well as the Iran-Arab religio-sectarian antagonisms and the escalatory potential of a continued proxy war along the Soviet southern borders which would elicit a Soviet response against the Shah. From a very narrow US policy debates, with Iranian interests taking priority over the conservative Arabs, how did Nixon, Kissinger and other top US officials in the NSC, the CIA and the Defence and State Departments perceive its implications for Iran's security viz-a-viz the Soviet Union?

On a rather broader Middle Eastern tangent; for ascertaining the accuracy about the "commonality" of the Iran-US and their relations with the Soviet Union and demonstrating that the actual interests pursued by Nixon and the Ford Administrations -- and probably a

direct cause of its failure under the Carter Administration-- remained one of keeping pressure along the Soviet southern borders with were to be achieved under the cover of Détentepost-1969; to deliver on Israel's security; might have "directly" contributed to the Shah's fall and served as a cause for the Iran-Iraq War due to Soviet "non-restraint" on Saddam Hussein, and the Shah himself violating his obligation towards the Soviet security under the 1921 Treaty .

Another central aim therefore will be to develop a direct linkage between the history of Iran's endangering the Soviet security along its southern borders since accession to the Baghdad Pact in 1956; through reviving the CENTO after the 1973 War; subverting other Soviet "proxies" (the Kurdish and Afghan Communists) and through bringing–in the Communist China in the Gulf and western Asia after 1971, which deprived the Soviets of its southern defensive "buffers" during 1972-79.

As a neo-revisionist take on the US Cold War diplomacy along the Gulf-western Asia and the northern Indian Ocean, a certain "proxy" role of the Shah--deliberately or unwittingly on behalf of the US--in destroying the relative peace along the Iran-Pakistan and the Gulf borders , and to demonstrate that it invited a direct Soviet counter-action in Afghanistan and the PDRY-Yemen conflict during the 80s, may shed light on the Shah's role in this American strategy during 1972-75, as a "front-line" state against Communist threats in Afghanistan, Iraq and the lower-Gulf axis in the pre-1979 phase.

This empirical determination may have direct bearings on the subsequent inability of the Carter Administration to respond to on the Shah's request for US intervention inside Iran during 1977-78 for fear of the Soviet reaction; to break the siege of the US Embassy in Tehran through a full-scale military response; and above all failing to deter Soviet invasion of Afghanistan from the Shah-Bhutto supported Mujahedeen fighters during 1973-78.

Continuing on a rather contradictory neo-revisionist trajectory, having been never given the benefits of a NATO-like protection to the Shah and the Soviet hostility, such covert proxy diplomacy earned the Shah, this project however aims to test the case of Iran's role in the Gulf and western Asia as actually "deferent" towards Soviet sensitivity to the presence of hostile powers along its southern periphery after the British withdrawal from the region. A credible case therefore exists that not only after Nixon's refusal to accede to a NATO-like security guarantee to the broader region, after 1971, but by the US acquisition of Bahrain and supporting the Kurdish conflict along the Soviet borders becomes a case study of the US

"proxy" wars, similar to what was instigating by the Carter and Regan Administrations through the Afghan Mujahedeen during 1976--88.

Methodology, Case studies and Data analysis

Positing a radically new interpretation of the Nixon Doctrine for its more severe applications towards Iraq and the mainland western Asia after 1972, this project explores the nature of the Shah-Nixon relations under the central context of superpower Détente during the period, under Nixon's willingness to pursue "selective Détentes" along the southern Soviet borders could be explored as a case study to preserve the trans-Atlantic alliance; achieve strategic nuclear disarmament under the SALT-I, II and the MIRV Treaties and deliver on Israeli security through the Kurdish option. An analysis of the diplomatic records leading to the Iran-US rift over acquisition of Bahrain and likewise Iraqi and Saudi claims on other neighbourly territories and strategically sensitive islands for the Soviet interests will be undertaken through the case studies of Islands politics. In this pursuit what bargaining process animated the US Indian Ocean policy for the Nixon officials to facilitate the Shah's control over the lesser insignificant islands will also be undertaken as a broader case study of the Iran's search for bartering its oil for arms, as well as preventing the region falling into hostile powers, which was allowed by Nixon and Kissinger if this could also deliver on "neutralizing" Iraq from the Israel-Jordan borders through the Kurdish conflict. Bordering on bizarre, to the conspiracy theoretical, a neo-revisionist analysis should depart from the hitherto dramatically opposed interpretations of the Nixon Doctrine by Kissinger and other Cold War experts, for which this study conducts a critical-historical analysis through secondary literature. The role of regional security as deputed to the Shah under the various "manifestations" of the Nixon Doctrine during 1969-74, and its contradictions with the key American interests vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and other regional allies will be set against this historical analysis and tested through the diplomatic correspondence between the NSC, the State and the Defence Departments, the CIA and the US Embassy in Tehran.

As a matter for historical corrective, the British role in delivering the Shah's demanded islands to Iranian control is dealt with in subsequent chapters for which US records supersede British diplomatic records still classified under the Freedom of Information Act 2001 as "not

in the public interest" (See Appendix-III). This project will undertake further critical historical analysis of the Abu Musa Island controversy and explore the politics of the British role under Sir William Luce and the Conservative Government's Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas Home in facilitating Iranian control of the oil-rich Abu Musa Island and explore diplomatic records as the this British "connivance". Empirical records will also be studies to check its linkage with the Shah's role in the failure of the Gulf Defence Pact and the Iran-British relations with the nascent UAE to ascertain what support networks were available to the Arab "protectorates" in the region, and what diplomatic bargaining went in to resolve the case of the British handing-over of Bahrain and the Abu Musa Islands to Iran and the US respectively.

Empirical analysis of the declassified records, detailing the island controversies should therefore benefit from the historical analysis of the British traditional relations with the Gulf protectorates and the US interest in replacing the British role in the East of Suez region during 1967-72, and its Indian Ocean interests for which the diplomatic correspondence will provide the empirical materials.

Project Outline

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

This chapter sets out a theoretical framework for the superpowers and the sub-systemic regional powers' engagements with the international and within the regional security systems.

The questions raised in the above sections provide the parameters for this interaction and specify a number of theoretical possibility assumptions without predicating a specific paradigm purport to best explain the behavioural anomalies of Iran's relations with systemic and regional powers, some of whichdefy the traditional assumptions of the Realist paradigm. Since the study is based in the diverse fields of Iran's international politics, in the political, economic and ideological arenas of the international and regional systems, it may be argued that its behavioural patterns were animated by both systemic level interests- such as relations with the two neighbouring systemic powers: Soviet Union and Britain, overseen by the US global interests and concomitant restraints- as well as regional interests, not all of which, were countenanced by these systemic powers.

In both cases however, the determination of Iran's "ambitions" remain theoretically dependent upon testing the hypothesis about its actual place in the global "System" and ability

to transform its structure, through some "functional differentiation". In this purist, the aim of a theoretical exercise should be to extract maximum descriptive and explanatory power from each theoretical paradigm, which explains and may even predict a middle-ranking power's interests in pursuit of security, or power, through a resource and military superiority; agreeing on a regional security agenda, to act internally, and externally, as well as rise to a higher "systemic" strata under various systemic transformations, such as through the 1973 oil "shocks", military power or security "vacuums".

At the risk of pre-empting contemporary understanding about Iran's traditional aversion to the Soviet Union or towards the radical Arabs, this chapter will seek to find theoretically sound postulations which posit a new understanding about Iranian "deference" to the Soviet Union due to the American unwillingness to accede to the CENTO since 1955.

This project argues that the traditional Balance-of-Power and the Offensive Realist assumptions about the state actors, do not provide sufficient explanations about Iran's and the trans-regional powers' reactions to the foreign "over-lays" and "penetration" during 1968-79, which the Gulf sub-system, as a security-economic, if not a cohesive ideological "monolith" tried to optimize, without sufficient military power.

It does not explain regional security in its strict terms which mandates hegemonic wars, territorial expansionism on grand-scales or arms race as such, unless externally stimulated by the US or the Soviet Union, or other Great systemic powers, like those of the Imperial West, acting across the continents in their Colonial spheres. The aims of theoretical exercise will be to provide maximum testable "scenarios" to falsify the non-empirical case studies about the Iran-US and Gulf relations by posing various anomalies identified in the historical sections (Chapter 2) below.

Given the nature of the Persian Gulf's political evolution since the post-Ottoman Imperia(1919 to the Second World War) and until the Iranian revolution (1979), this chapter will seek to provide more explanatory power through a cross-paradigmatic approach for falsifying traditional Realist assumptions about Iran's regional posture , role aspirations, expansionism, resource extractive and hegemonic ambitions, as well as a certain "cooperative" security-resource diplomacy, and where it deviated from the core Western interests in the northern Indian Ocean, and were by implications deferential to the Soviet security interests after the removal of the British protective cover.

Although generally rooted in the theories of international relations under the over-arching paradigm of Classical Realism, the exercise will duly borrow from the more refined assumptions of the post-Realist variants of the Neoclassical Defensive realism, Offensive Neorealism, Balance of Power paradigms, to determine the central core of a state's three cardinal interests. In order to obtain maximum theoretical in-put from the non-Realist "programmes", the security-seeking and power-maximization core of a State's *raison d'etre* may be protected, or better explained away through the other "softer" assumptions of Constructivism and its case-based research programmes on the formation of the Regional Security Complexes and Security Communities.

The central aim of this effort therefore is to first define the prevalent "system" at both the international and regional levels, as well as its interactive "structure" that traditional theorists claim is "non-transformational", due the functional "in differentiation" of its statist actors. In order to challenge assumptions about the lack of autonomy of the regional systems from the international systems due to latter's "functional" hegemony through imposing the specific economic –military structures and preventing the rise of new contenders through the ranks, we will discuss what (dis)advantages "structural modifiers" may present for a new sub-systemic power to improve its chances of achieving interests beyond the three statist interests of survival, security and self-help. This chapter suggests that new refinements, due to the concept of functional "differentiation" at the regional(and systemic) levels make possible the rise of new contenders, which even neorealism acknowledges as theoretically possible due to sub-systemic powers' ability to take advantage of the systemic power's pre-occupation with the global balance of power management; availability of new "suitors"; and imperatives of nuclear "responsibility" towards sub-systemic allies and threats from the violators to achieve nuclear deterrents. New theoretical research on the structural transformations, also suggests the possibility of systemic changes and through this the rise of new contenders, through a systemic nuclear balance of power; super power restraints; and the prevalence of "deeper" structures under the quasi-transformational structures—coming through "minor" structural shocks—which, while facilitating change at the sub-systemic levels, holds possibilities of change in the global-international system over longer periods.

This chapter therefore posits Iran and Saudi rise through the ranks of the international system to dominate a sub-security system--albeit centred on the Soviet hegemony-- and will test their ability to change its regional-systemic structure through band-wagonning; non-

military diplomacy-- such as diversification of arms, trade patterns, or oil diplomacy, and preferring to live under the global balance of power, which they could not challenge during 1968-79, due to its "deep" structures.

Partaking from the Neorealist, Liberal-institutionalist and Constructivist paradigms, this chapter provides further explanations as to how a security community in the Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsula region was a metamorphosis for the GCC which overcame its security dilemmas against internal cooperation and even begin to act against the Western military and industrial power-defined system during 1968-75, to which the Soviet Union and China contributed to, due to the Western-US priorities shifting towards European security and SALT-I from Colonial hegemony and maintain regional balance of power along the non-Atlantic alliance frontages. At a higher systemic level, however, this very focus led to the western Asia falling under the Soviet hegemony that Carter and Regan Administrations failed to address due to similar foci on improving NATO's tactical nuclear and conventional response, SALT-II and the anti-Ballistic Missiles Defence (the Star Wars) until 1989.

Chapter 2:

The Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsula axis (1956-75): External threats, regional hegemony and the politics of security, resources and ideology

This chapter engages in a theoretically informed historical debate about the substantive anomalies raised in the introductory section, within the confines of international system, its ordering principles and its prevalent structure during 1956-76. Section 2.1 details the nature of Soviet interactions with the broader Middle East during the period by exploring the Middle Eastern Regional Security system as comprised of three sub-regional complexes: the Mediterranean, Levant and the Gulf with Egypt as interacting powers in the Arabian Peninsula-Persian Gulf sub complex with Saudi Arabia during 1956-70. At this sub-complex level, the aim is to treat Arabian Peninsula as a Saudi-dominated sub-regional-complex with its region-specific securitization objects of territory, oil and ideological predominance and regional as relatively autonomous form Iran-Iraq specific security threats until 1968 and instead engaged in an hegemonic struggle with the upper and lower Gulf and along its southern peninsular periphery during 1956-68 and more aggressively with the latter sub-complexes during 1968-79 after US refusal to assure Saudi security from the Communist-Chinese threats..

The Northern Tier areas straddling the Persian Gulf sub-complex are identified as Iran-Iraq centric with Soviet Union, the US and to an extent Britain as its "penetrated" or "over-laying" systemic powers on northern and southern peripheries respectively during 1968-75. The first Section (2.1) details the politics and diplomacy of Soviet interests in the Mediterranean, Levant and the Gulf during 1956-67 and Appendix- I, the Soviet relations with Iraq, North (YAR) and South Yemen (PDRY) and the Kurdish option as a case of security threat to the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula sub-complexes during 1958-75. Acting autonomously from the broader Soviet Middle Eastern interests such as interests in clients' military bases (discussed in Appendix-I), the intra-Gulf relations since 1950s over the rivalries over islands, oil and ideology between Iran, Saudi Kingdom, Iraq and Kuwait in the Upper Gulf and those with the Trucial Sheikhdoms during 1968-75, will be evaluated in Section 2.2 and 2.4, which purportedly motivated Iran and Saudi opposition to US presence in the region during 1968-71.

An evaluation of the intra-regional rivalries over islands, resources and access (Section 2.2.-2.3 and 2.4) and Appendix-II will be a must to predicate the pre-1968 "securitizations" of regional issues defined by its preponderant powers, whereas they happened to be non-Soviet threats, not receiving due American attention since 1960s. This evaluation is done through two regional power transitory phases during 1950-68 and during 1968-72 to ascertain how regional security dynamics independently transformed the regional system under international systemic imperatives to define regional security as they see fit. In this context, intra-regional politics during 1950-68 are discussed as setting the stage for eventual rivalry but moderate by the second phase due to US delivering the Gulf to the Soviet Union.

The centrality of Saudi security interests in the Arabian Peninsula sub-complex before and after 1962 timeline also facilitate understanding of the balance of powers in the broader region through ascertaining Saudi-external interactions and identifying Nasserite, British and Soviet interests in North-South Yemens. Sections 2.2 and 2.4 demonstrate the nature of "Pax-Saudica" and its interactions with the international-regional system after 1962 due to disappointments with the US refusal and British effort to cannibalize Saudi territory through North Yemen and southern Arabia during 1960-67,this chapter contextualizes the ground rules for Saudi security dilemma around its south-eastern periphery during 1960-79 along the Trucial Coast, with Egypt, Iran and Iraq as intervening powers in the lower Gulf during 1958-68 and 1968-79.

The historical review concludes with an analysis of Iranian interests in the Arabian Peninsula-Gulf region interests especially through claims on Bahrain and an Abu Dhabi or Saudi-dominated UAE (Section 2.3). "Independent Nationalism" as quality of an Iran-exclusive interests in the Gulf's security, resources and territorial consolidation, as well as an external action tool to prevent systemic powers' domination and thereby increase its vulnerability from the Soviet Union, will be evaluated along with Iran's three vital security commitments: to the Arabs and western Asian partners ; Soviet security along the southern borders; and variously against and in favour of the broader US interests, such as opposing its retention of Bahrain, and supporting the Iraqi Kurds during 1972-75, after Nixon's refusal to honour the Shah's demands on Bahrain and visiting Moscow(Appendix-II). Iran's actions in the Dhoffar rebellion during 1973-76, as well as supporting Gulf's integrity against the South Yemen or other radical Marxist movements, or Republican regimes, are evaluated as cases of a "consensual" security agenda against the internal behaviour, and moderating, smaller states foreign relations, posing threats to the regional security and was bound to elicit Soviet counter-action. This section also analyses, how Iran viewed regional and international security, and sought to collaborate with the Saudi hegemonic interests, over its eastern and southern peripheries, which became impediments to an institutionalized security community, embracing the entire Gulf-Arabian Peninsula region until the Shah's ouster in 1979. The historical findings will be tested in the empirical chapters (3-9) in the Deutchian sense of an (a) Security Community and a broader Gulf-Arabian Peninsular-western Asian Regional Security Complex, with the Soviet Union, and neither Iran, nor Saudi Arabi, or Iraq, as its central power.

Empirical Chapters 3-9:

American interests in the Indian Ocean (1968-75): The Iran-Saudi strategic competition under the Soviet-radical Arab threat and the politics of arms, islands and oil trade

Benefiting from the study of one of the most controversial declassified accounts about Johnson and Nixon's interests in the Gulf during 1968-75 with Aden, Bahrain and the Kurdish conflicts providing the core of covert understandings with the Shah and Faisal over Abu Musa and Arabi islands to facilitate Iran's arms sales after both administrations failed to deliver on Iran's military development, this study brings to light one of the most comprehensive archival analyses ever to explain issues pointed out in the introduction.

Chapters 3 and 4 detail the politics of Johnson Administration in the area straddling the Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula with the latter holding central promise for the US interests in the Indian Ocean. It also explores the inertia o lack of progress over the Johnson Administration's replacing Britain navy in southern Arabia through retention of Aden, as well as the pros-and cons of nurturing Iran-Saudi regional hegemony despite serious differences between the two over Bahrain, but effectively seeking to appease Nasser to avoid another Arab-Israel War. Nevertheless, Johnson's priorities towards the Arab–Israel conflict and withdrawal from Vietnam during 1968-69 implied that US would see its interests best served through the "twin-pillars" Doctrine but retained interests in the physical retention of local bases that served broader trans-regional interests outside the confines to the Gulf security. The chapters detailing the initial contours of Nixon Doctrine and explaining the immediate collapse of Iran-Saudi relations over Bahrain with latter's diplomacy of protecting its periphery from Iran-Abu Dhabi or southern Arabia domination are identified and how they were passed to the Nixon Administration during 1969-74. Highlighting further differences between Johnson Administration's NSC and Iran-Saudi regional interests are explained which defined Iran's relations with the Persian Gulf and with the United States through arms and oil policy and differences over Soviet-radical threats.

Chapters 5 and 6 detail controversies over Nixon Administration's arms policy during 1969-72 which facilitated the Shah's bargaining power with Major oil companies through Independent oil companies to finance Iran's arms orders and irredentist claims, due in part to Nixon's personal interests in circumventing Congressional control over his foreign policy. In fact, postulating an entirely different interpretation of the resource politics of the Abu Musa Island, this chapter uncovers the US role as Nixon's facilitating the Shah's ability to buy highly obsolete F-4s and tanks before 1972 through the island's oil to which Kissinger remained ambivalent until late 1970. These chapters claim that in the absence of Congressionally-sanctioned credits, the availability of excess oil in the Abu Musa and Independent oil companies effectively increased the Shah's bargaining power against the Consortium to which Nixon (and not Kissinger) was a conscious accessory, until the Shah was confronted with the bigger security threat of Nixon and Kissinger's demand to take over the Bahrain Island as a quid pro quo on Abu Musa and the Tunbs. The findings of these chapters along with Chapter 9 therefore brings to fore the politics of Islands out of the murky waters of Iran's irredentist nationalism coveting neighbourly territories or the Iran-Arab historical

conflict, attributed as the Shah's motive to retake the Islands. The central premises of this chapter and its secondary literary context therefore corroborate the central thesis of Iran's lack of interest in the Island's strategic significance; utilizing its resource values like that of the Arabi Island and effectively falling out with Nixon Administration over the US refusal to be more perceptive to Iranian security concerns, well until 1972, after Nixon reached a separate deal with Brezhnev over the future of Bahrain.

Chapter 6 and 7 however detail the actual nature of Nixon's motives to support Iran's claims on Abu Musa and Tunbs in order to wrest Bahrain's control to seek Soviet restraint in Europe through strategic presence in the northern Indian Ocean after 1970 under the top-secret study under Kissinger, known as the SNIE-34 of September 1970. This empirical analysis details various intra-mural debates and CIA's assessments about Iran's inability to act on behalf of Nixon Doctrine with Defence Department advising Nixon not to encourage Iran's military build-up to trigger an arms race through Soviet counter-reaction in Iraq and Yemen. Nixon's closest advisors' rejection of these warnings and their exclusive delineation of US interests under Détente by maintaining naval presence in the Persian Gulf against Iranian sentiments are one of the rarest insights into NSC and Tehran Embassy's modus-operandi during 1969-75 by disregarding clearest CIA/Defence Department's warning and the Shah's threat to Iraq against common myths about the Shah's blind-folded following Nixon's policy against regional or national security interests .

Chapter 8 challenges the most commonly held assumptions about the Shah's "ambitions" to act as a "Gendarme" of the region through Nixon Doctrine and instead shows his retrenchment to mainland defence; focus on developing cooperative security networks with Gulf Arabs, Pakistan and Afghanistan well before the British withdrawal under threat of Western military action against the OPEC. In fact, this chapter claims that while renouncing an Indian Ocean role through a Carrier navy and develop strong air-defence and ground-response capability after receiving Nixon's "carte blanche" in 1972, the Shah had consciously turned his attention towards Afghanistan and Pakistan, contrary to what the revisionists have posited Iran's core security threat emanating from the Iraq-Soviet "pincer" after 1972. This chapter correct one of the most serious conceptual faults of the security academia about the Shah's security perceptions by resort to the original sources of his defence planning well before he was able to even buy those through the windfall profit of the 1974 oil prices!

Chapter 9 details a broader Indian Ocean rubric for Nixon's interests in Détente during 1970-72 but Kissinger's focus on the Arab-Israel conflict and seeking the Shah's support towards Iraqi Kurdish rebellion, hence Kissinger's secret undertakings to the Shah over Bahrain and a "carte blanche " on arms sales during 1972-75. Nevertheless, the Shah's views on Iraqi threat and Pakistan's security threatened by Afghan claims on the former's Baluchi-Pashtun territory and support by India immediately after the 1971 War poses serious challenges to our historical understanding about the Shah-Nixon's closer relations, which this chapter claims were marred with serious antagonism about Nixon's real motives towards the Gulf; Nixon-Kissinger's mistrust about the Shah's pre-emptive tendencies and misusing the US arms. Nevertheless, as another central claim of this project, are its uncovering the nature of Kissinger's real motives towards the Kurdish insurgency which was at best a case of his manipulating the Shah's fear of the Iraqi-Soviet threat after the April 1972 Treaty and persuading the Shah to use Kurdish option to off-set Iran's encirclement. On the contrary, this chapter claims that the Shah never intended to use Kurdish rebellion to deliver on Kissinger's interest to eliminate Iraq from the Arab-Israel equation, but rather remained wedded to protecting Jordan from the Iraqi threat. In fact, this chapter will explain that Nixon and Kissinger's deliberate withholding the Shah's demanded highly advanced aircrafts (F-14, F-15s), Frigates and missiles since 1969 were intended to frustrate the Shah to take desperate measures with ultimate advantage to Israel and the US global interests. Until more classified accounts on Kissinger-Shah's covert diplomacy in Kurdish Iraq, even the minimum declassified accounts render Kissinger's personal explanations highly controversial as delivering on the Shah's security concerns from Bahrain or Iraq, but using his ambivalence with the Soviet-Iraqi threat to deliver on Nixon's political interests in global disarmament, and achieving an Israel-favoured solution to the Arab-Israel problem after 1973 War.

Chapter 1:

Theoretical Framework

1.1. Introduction

Hegemonic or dyadic balance of power approaches deprive IR students of a clearer understanding of Iran's multifaceted political and economic objectives, role aspirations and strategies at the regional and global strategic levels to achieve these ends during 1950-75. Even a non-theoretical analysis of Iranian regional and international " discourse" suggests that Iran's multi-dimensional interests in the international-regional milieus defy exclusive assumptions of power-seeking, hegemonic designs and self-help, posit limited cooperation, inter-dependence and pursuit of other national interests apart from "security seeking" despite ostensible threat from the Soviet Union and Arab neighbours even in the pre-revolutionary period. . In the following sections, I will develop a multi-paradigmatic theoretical and research-programmes-based framework to specify key theoretical assumptions about the state-regional and state-international interactions; how constraints of international system and prevalent structures affect multi-dimensional interests of a contender to regional and international system , and how policy-makers take advantage of international system to contrive regional balance of power through opportunities of power transitions and "structural modifiers" during the 3rd quarter of 20th century:1950-80. A subjective ideological understanding of pre-revolutionary Iran's regional policy-inspired by the historical Persian-Arab or Shi'a-Sunni dichotomies –as based in regional hegemonic assumptions should not ignore a strategic- economic concomitant of a highly integrated community action when the Shah's regime threw its weight behind a pan-Arab coalition of OPEC (1970-76) by leading charge against Western oil companies and prevented their governments from protecting them, a collaboration leading to a systemic geo-economic and political transformation between the Middle East and Western Europe afterwards. The course of Iran's pursuit of national interest through non-security diplomacy and shifting from anti-Arab geopolitical discourse against pan-Arabism therefore pose anomalies for our theoretical understanding of what national interests, security and hegemony implied for pre-revolutionary Iran after World War-II.

A single-paradigmatic approach exclusively based in Neo-realism or the FPA programmes to determine elite perceptions, assumption about decision-making units and inter-departmental rivalries is bound to miss out on various other security-communitarian and quasi-institutional expressions of the Persian Gulf community and anomalies of opposition to Western presence in the region, action against Dhofar and OPEC.

Although commonly adopted by security analysts to explain Iran's regional behaviour during 1980-90s, a non-theoretical data "inductive" approach may vindicate neorealist assumptions of a hegemonic-opportunistic regional policy by Iran, neoliberalism posits assumptions of a consciously contrived regional cooperative architecture by a state to facilitate its integration with the international community through stable balance of power and limited cooperation to pursue non-security objectives. The pre-revolutionary Iran's role as the region's key security provider and geo-economic theorist during late 60s-early 70s since need fresh theoretical assumptions to falsify cases of acting on its own against regional security; in connivance with Arab allies or as a product of Western hegemonic strategies to impose Iran on militarily weaker and politically fragmented Arab oil monarchies.

Although using certain core assumptions of Classical Realism to explain the incentives provided by international system to Iran to dominate the Persian Gulf in pursuit of certain hegemonic interests such as territorial expansion, resource denial or preventing rise of challengers , neo-realism and its Neoclassical Defensive realist assumptions to explain the international –systemic constraints operating and how they impinged on Iran's freedom of action gives more explanatory power to the quality of regional system where Iran operations during 1950-79.

In order to develop a theoretical framework to describe the international system and its components(structure, systemic powers, global balance of power, relations with its periphery and its ordering principles) immediately after the World War II to 1979; to explain Iran's response to its various constraints and opportunities, and determine the existence of a Persian Gulf-wide Security Community at the same time, the Methodology for the Scientific Research Programmes (MSRP) suggested by Imre Lakatose should be the guiding principle to test its theoretical explanatory power. Demanding rigorous test case to falsify theoretical propositions Lakatose proposed a social research methodology that allows induction of more testable hypotheses to defend its core assumptions. Neorealist and neoliberals alike seem to have adopted this methodological discipline where a single IR approach may be supported by

auxiliary assumptions from other paradigms and research programmes (Keohane, 1986:161; Kolodziej, 2005:43-44). As Robert Keohane, Verba and King insist on the validity of a research programme through a qualitatively sound data capable of replication for similar research programmes and research projects (1994; King G, 1995: 444-52), the explanatory power of a state's traditional security posture against other regional powers in the periphery as well as contiguity to systemic powers (Soviet Union and Britain) demands sound theoretical propositions from liberal and constructivist assumptions.

In this chapter, various cross-paradigmatic assumptions would be developed to gain a basic understanding of Iran's response towards the international and regional system as a stand-alone actor in an anarchic international order as well as limited cooperating ally to the West and regional powers against Soviet threat after the WW-II. These assumptions would be used to raise key behavioural questions (Chapter 1) through secondary data and falsified through research of fresh documentary material and personal accounts of key Iranian and US foreign policy planners. One key methodological convenience will be a multi-sectoral survey of the key strategic, economic, ideological and security interests of Iran and other regional powers and their freedom of action under systemic constraints at the global security and geo-economic levels.

The explanatory power gained through the multi-sectoral approaches of the Regional Security Complexes and the Security Community programmes would explain transformations occurring in the international-regional system through economic re-structuring, superpower Détente and regional balance of power as well as careful identity construction in the pre-1979 Persian Gulf.

1.2. Preliminary Hypothesis

Our analytical approach seeks to define the structure of international relations for the Persian Gulf powers with Iran, Saudi Kingdom, and Iraq acting at both regional and systemic-levels and explain the tensions of national interests with other regional powers as well as Systemic power interests.

At a preliminary a-theoretical level, the traditional strategic landscape puts Iran and the 'moderate' Arab Camp in the broader Middle East against the 'radical' Arab camp led by Nasser until 1967 and then against the Marxist South Yemen and post-1968 Ba'athist Socialist Iraq. The regional system therefore roughly conforms to the Cold War alignments with the West supporting "moderate-Conservatives" against Soviet-supported radical Arab

Republicans. Neatly as this scenario might depict regional power alignments, the 'exclusive' regional interests of Persian Gulf's major powers propose their relative autonomy from systemic pressures. As a preliminary I propose that regional objectives of systemic powers needed not be congruent with broader Middle East and Indian Ocean community which led the Non-Aligned assault against imperialism during Decolonization period.

In addition, systemic imperatives translating into Western European powers interests in the Persian Gulf and with Soviet Union and China as the post-1960 polar powers "re-produced" the prevailing structural relations between local powers under the permissive milieu of Détente and superpower restraints during 1960-70s. This case of systemic 'over-lay' on a post-Colonial region as a "neo-Imperial" balance of power and the region-exclusive security dynamics is dealt with through structuralist and constructivist paradigms..

1.3. The Melian Fallacy: Morality, alliance or self-help in International relations?

An area-studies researcher trying to grasp the nettle of structural constraints for a state's security dilemma needs only apply the following advice Greeks would have rendered to the post-1946 Iranian decision makers: "And, when you are allowed to choose between war and safety, you will not be so insensitively arrogant as to make the wrong choice. You will see that there is nothing disgraceful in giving way to the greatest city in Hellas when she is offering you such reasonable terms-alliance on a tribute-paying basis and liberty to enjoy your property".

By the foregoing dialogue, it becomes clear that despite the invocation of justice, equality and morality in international diplomacy, the Melian pleas had no place in power politics while the 'ethic of responsibility' expounded by Kissinger as a statesman 'ultimate responsibly to ensure the survival of his nation' becomes the guiding Foreign Policy doctrine for a state to take advantage of the balance of power and its transformation (Dunne and Schmidt: 152). If the above dialogue is applied to the Cold War calculations of the Iranian decision-makers, it is vividly clear the Soviet interlocutors would have tried to persuade them of the fickleness of its Western partners' pledges to come to Iran's help should it felt threatened. Although Neutrality may be preferred by a State owing to experiences with alignment, the post-1956 Iranian Foreign Policy towards a neighbourly superpower and region might have been conditioned by the dangers inhered in seeking security from unreliable allies

and deference bestowed to a stronger neighbour in its periphery. When persuading Melos in the wisdom of Great power relations and Sparta sacrificing its ally to its own broader security interests, the Athenians are also reminding the Iranians of the lessons of alliances during the last two centuries as: 'this is the safe rule: to stand up to one's equals; to behave in deference to one's superiors; and to treat one's inferior with moderation' (Dunne and Schmidt 2001:146)

In this very vein, Neorealism's narrow focus on the structural impact on individual state's action under global balance of power and impossibility of systemic "transformation" make idiosyncratic quality of decision-makers(learning potential) a theoretical possibility. In addition, Neorealism is criticised for making no room for the internal character of the state and other mitigating variables such as culture, identity and historical experience to improve its ability to overcome its security dilemma(Lamy: 196).

In addition, Dunne and Schmidt argue that traditional systemic theories 'do not raise questions about the dominant belief system in the distribution of power and how the pursuit of "self-help, survival and statism" might be connected to conditions of poverty and violence'(Dunne and Schmidt:141-45) . Hence Lamy raises the prospect of a more integrated approach to explain state behaviour in international system by including other variables such as the 'dominant belief system and the general distribution of power' (Lamy: 196-97).

As such, the primary responsibility placed on a statesman by the system itself is to 'consolidate his state, ensure his nation's survival and seek self-interests through lying, killing or cheating' what Kissinger quipped as his 'ethic of responsibility': 'It tells the statesman what he must do to preserve the health and strength of the State' (Meinecke: 1957: 1; Dunne and Schmidt: 142-44; Taliaferro 2009:194-226; Smith 1986:51). The introduction of actor-centric variables such as the belief system, learning capacity and ability to accommodate the distribution of systemic power in state's external relations makes for a rather holistic analysis of how states insure survival by adherence to this ethic which makes possible resort to other strategies besides "killing". Coming at the cost of theoretical parsimony, still its more explanatory power comes through explaining what happens at the interface of system-agent, and what a weaker state can do to accommodate its "raison d'etat" with the systemic distribution of power.

In order to explain the possibility for a state to increase freedom of action in international system, Lamy propose neo-liberal institutional assumptions where a state is likely to moderate its security dilemma through a rational use of cooperative diplomacy in an

interdependent world. Despite conscious of the "cheating" behaviour of the rival states for which states dispense with "relative gains", he argues that a rational actor might still minimally cooperate to achieve "absolute gains". Lamy insists that since 'cooperation is never without problems, states will shift loyalty and resources to institutions if they are seen as mutually beneficial and[…] provide states with increasing opportunities to secure their international interests' (Lamy, 2001: 190). Lamy however warns about the limits of cooperation in security whereas institutions are created to manage international behaviour in trade and environmental arenas. Hence, some 'neo-liberal views may have less relevance in areas in which states have no mutual interests. Thus cooperation in military or national security areas where someone's gains in perceived as someone's else's loss may be more difficult to achieve' (Lamy,ibid.: 190).

1.4. Neo-realism: Systemic influences, the structure and the paradox of the (Three) 'Statist' interests

Kenneth Waltz's theory of structural realism is a more useful deductive device in the sense of providing a conceptual framework about the ordering principles of international system, its interactive structure and actors. It is possible through its core assumptions to draw certain deductive principles about the strategic parameters of a state's international system, the nature of its periphery, power differentials with potential challengers, alignment interests, and most importantly the international permissive environment which facilitate expansion, contraction and cooperation with regional and systemic powers. Demonstrating that the international system shapes state behaviour as well as a preponderant state's actions affecting it, Waltz's theoretical contribution provides 'more explanatory power to the structural models of recurring systems and balances of power, if not providing an entirely comprehensive explanatory and predictive theory of international politics' (Keohane, 1986: 174-75).

When Waltz therefore observes that the functional aspects of a state remain "undifferentiated" in the anarchic systems (where there exist no international government), he is postulating one of the central problems of international system's inertia to voluntary transformation. He argues therefore that a new a contender to global pre-eminence is bound to negotiate with these ordering principles until there occurs a systemic shift to affect transformation of the ordering principles to suit its national interests. At the outset therefore, a state's position in a multifaceted arena defines its national interests in achieving autonomy of

action. Nevertheless, the status of international relations defined by its ordering principles, the systemic powers and a state's individual position in it needs theoretically falsifiable assumptions before we conduct an empirical research about the rise of contender states. Waltz therefore argues that 'structures are defined by the distribution of capabilities across the units. Changes in this distribution are changes of system whether the system may be an anarchic or a hierarchic one' (Waltz,1986: 96: Buzan and Waver,2000: 68). In other words Waltz does posit a theoretical possibility for the 'transformation' of the system based in the ability of states to differentiate themselves along their 'international functions' and affect the system to suit their individual interests (Little, 1993:104-05,110-11)

Waltz however argues that whereas domestic power is harnessed by offering security to its citizens from domestic or external threats through organized violence and usurping some domestic freedoms, this social contract does not hold true for relations between the states even when they coordinate certain actions in international arena. The assumption that "co-acting or cooperating" states in the international systems (bilaterally or multilaterally) never give up their freedom to act to preserve their national interests however poses problems to the ends such cooperation is likely to attain: units in an anarchic order act for their own sake and not for the sake of preserving an organization, and furthering their fortunes in it'. Waltz's position however is case dependent and leaves room for loosely defined regimes and security institutions, when he argues that even in the absence of organization, states are still capable of resolving their problems and 'aim for a minimum agreement that will permit their separate existence rather than a maximum agreement for the sake of maintaining unity' (Keohane,1986: 110).

Contrary to a non-scientific analytical or "inductive" approach to explain Iran's implied aggressive behaviour in the periphery and a more prudent strategy towards the systemic power Soviet Union during 1960s-70s, Waltz's notional distinction about the threat of use of force from its actual use as the 'ultima ratio' serves the point well for both Iran and the Soviet Union. Limiting use of force by "methods of reason", Waltz suggests that the 'constant possibility that force will be used limits manipulations, moderates demands and serves as an incentive for the settlement of disputes. One who knows that pressing too hard may lead to war has strong reason to consider the possibly whether possible gains are worth the risks entailed'. underlying his balance of power theory, Waltz's assumptions comes from the macro-economic theory where he applies the analogy of "prolonged labour strikes" that

encourages the 'labor and management to face difficult issues' to explain strong-weak power relations. He further raises possibility of both actors reaching agreements without the latter sacrificing its national security from benevolent assurances by the former. He therefore warns that the threat from strikes affecting the balance of relations carries it with the potential to transform the entire balance in favour of the proletariat that impels both 'to try to understand each other's problems, and to work hard to find accommodations. The possibility that conflicts among nations may lead to long and costly wars has similarly sobering effects' (Waltz, 1986: 112).

In fact when Waltz acknowledges the balance of power theory's inability to explain why under certain conditions, the balance of power does not occur with weaker states 'not' allying against an hegemonic adversary (such as France and Russia waiting until 1894 to counter the German-Austro-Hungary Dual Alliance in 1879), his counter-assumption needs to be falsified by introducing the difficult case of Persian Gulf balance of power between ideologically divided Arab partners against hegemonic Iran.

Waltz in fact accepts a role for agent to affect some change in the systems through balance of power. Thus 'although the states may be disposed to react to international constraints and incentives in accordance with the theory's expectation, the policies and actions of states may also be shaped by internal conditions'. In fact, Neorealsim's limit to explain the individual state's role is manifest in which' the failure of the "balances" of power to form, and the failure of some states to conform to the successful practices of other states, can too easily be explained away by pointing to effects produced by forces that lie outside of the theory's purview'. Waltz prescription to enhance the theory's validity is to look instead into the "diplomacy" and "policy" in the intervening periods of systemic shifts: 'careful judgment is needed. For this, historian's accounts serve better than the historical summary I might provide' (Keohane, 1986: 125-26).

1.4.1: Balance of Power: Counter-coalitions, band-wagonning and cooperation

Neorealism argues that coalition formation is a temporary state of IR that consolidates into "band-wagonning" after systemic leadership is assured: 'In a competition for the position of the leader, band-wagonning is sensible behaviour where gains are possible even for the losers and where a losing state does not place its security in jeopardy'. As for the

Persian Gulf context of coalition forming against non-systemic but non-status-quo powers, and Iran relations with superpowers in the bipolar context tempered by the post-1971 power vacuum ,coincided with China's emergence in the South-western Asian politics (after 1965 Indo-Pakistan War), Waltz's argument needs empirical test for both Iranian strategies of coalition formation against non-littoral powers stay in the region and Indian Ocean and weaker powers' band-wagonning with Iran for setting regional security and geo-economic agenda (through Persian Gulf Defence Pact and OPEC) and action against radical regimes in PDRY and the PFLOAG. The empirical question however must substantiate application of Structural assumptions to regional power coalitions against external threats as well as internal balancing behaviour by states threatened by subjugation to one or a group of regional Leviathans. Waltz therefore warns about the limitations of coalition for both leader and partners when 'in a competition for the position of the leader' where, 'balancing is sensible behaviour', it is 'where the victory of one coalition over another leaves weaker members of the winning coalition at the mercy of the stronger ones. Nobody wants anyone else to win, none of the great powers wants one of their numbers to emerge as the leader' (Keohane, 1986: 126-27). Further assumptions of the regional powers losing out in a competition with systemic powers provides the minor powers groupings or (coalition members) with just the incentives to shift weight in favour of a new contender(or suitor) or one working to prevent its rise to regional systemic status.

In spite of the inherent stability of the bipolar system, Waltz still leaves room for transformation of alliances at both systemic and regional levels when he declares that 'flexibility of alignment means that the country one is wooing may prefer another suitor and one's present alliance partner may defect. Flexibility of alignment narrows one's choice of policies'. Positing "diplomacy" as the transformational device, and states seeking better deals else-where: 'if the "suitor" does not alter the appearance and the behaviour to increase its eligibility', Waltz promotes 'approximately equal states' who can moderate contender's ambitions which otherwise depend on partners for coalition.

As another theoretical manifestation of coalition of band-wagonning behaviour, albeit at a global level, Waltz propounds that if states are free to choose, they will flock to the weaker side where they are "more" safer and appreciated, 'provided of course, that the coalition they join achieves enough defensive or deterrent strength to dissuade adversaries from attacking'. In the case of the Persian Gulf balance of forces, the neorealist argument

needs to falsify the threats against which weaker powers would flock under a weaker Saudi hegemony against domination by Iran or Iraq. Neorealist case or the notional Iranian hegemonic theory however can be turned on its head if thwarting Saudi domination proves to be the case for weaker Arabian Peninsula states flocking under Iran during 1968-79.

The theoretical effort by Structuralists to expound the virtues of stability of bipolar systems notwithstanding, their being asked to explain instances where "states balance power rather than maximize it", renders "stability" as an end itself. In fact instances, where 'states can seldom afford to make maximizing power their goal', should develop into counter-coalitions against global balance of power that leaves a region to de-facto "spheres of influences" in which case the trans- Gulf opposition to Détente under which the US pre-empted its military based and invited Soviet counteractions in radical regimes against the broader US Indian Ocean policy (Keohane, 1986:128). It is also clear from this perspective that international system leaves enough room for the units to manoeuvre under systemic constraints during "stable" power shifts. These assumption are paralleled with the Defensive Realism's assumptions of restrain in power maximization or disrupting the status-quo and contend that states do not necessarily engage in power maximization but must await appropriate balances of power to emerge, depending upon their short and long term interests(Taliaferro, 2000:136-42).

In the immediate context of the post-1973 oil price "systemic disruptions", Waltz warned against putting wisdom into the 'smooth and fine economic adjustments that cause little difficulty'. Instead:

'political interventions that bring sharp and sudden changes in prices and supplies cause problems that economically and politically are hard to cope with. The crisis (1973 oil prices) also revealed that, as usual, the political clout of nations correlates closely with their economic power and military might' (Waltz, Ibid: 152-53).

Waltz's following advice to Polar hegemonic powers against OPEC has more resemblance to Athenian warning to Melos and a vindication of the lessons of history to weaker powers as late as 1979: 'countries that are highly dependent on countries to get much of what they badly need from a few possibly unreliable suppliers, must do all they can to increase their chances that they will keep getting it. The weak, lacking leverage, can plead their cause or panic' (Waltz: 153).

The theoretical implications of Waltz's argument needs to be tempered with directly conditioned by Keohane's prescriptions where states are 'not always seeking world domination rather under conditions of comparative security would be content with other pursuits such as culture, economic development and influence seeking though non-military means'(Keohene,1986: 174-75)..

1.4.2. Systemic Shifts: Bipolar systemic "stability", rise of contenders and allies

When Waltz argues that 'with more than two (great powers), shifts in alignment provide additional means of adjustments, adding flexibility to the system', he is implying that Bipolar system discourages and make self-adjustments against rise of new contenders through contriving new balances, hence 'this is a crucial difference between multi and bipolar systems'. Similarly Waltz's argument that bipolar systems being more stable than multipolar ones where the 'two can easily gang up on the third, divide the spoils, and drive the system back to polarity', does not suggest that other poles of regional influence cannot be contrived by new contenders in the wake of power vacuums, pre-occupations with relatively more dangerous areas or in "cordon sanitaire". In order to ascertain effects of China's rise to the global power status and ability to influence Persian Gulf under the three basic condition, Iran and other regional powers' ability to take advantage of change through a new balance of powers in the Indian Ocean through China or forging autonomous political communities provide vital case study for structural paradigm and weaker states' manoeuvrability under multipolar orders. One can argue that these new security spheres theoretically leave regional power rivalries within certain permissive limits of systemic balance of power and even facilitate rise of new regional contenders. In addition, the "ganging-up" supposition would suggest that two systemic powers may deny entry to a leading contender into the system only if they agree on a common global agenda of maintain its structure. In the case of US-Soviet efforts to reach agreement on Security in Europe (tactical nuclear disarmament) and global Détente, empirical evidence should prove the "trust" as a determining variable to make possible Indian Ocean's demilitarization in such a way to assure Soviet land security. The case of Sino-US diplomacy before 1972 is a potential falsifier of a common agenda between US and the Soviet Union but still make possible rise of China to global pre-eminence and for Iran, Saudi Arabia to reach agreement with or against the wishes of bipolar powers.

In fact, another neorealist argument as to the systemic affection by new contenders holds that 'complications accelerate as numbers grow because of the difficulty everyone had in coping with the uncertain behaviour of many other and because of the ever large number and variety of coalitions that can be made'(Waltz: 163). Such assumptions suggest that instability is intrinsic to the multi-polar system about "uncertainty" in the behaviour of new contenders, leaving the possibility that bipolar powers may "franchise" certain regional responsibilities to their coalition partners to prevent the rise of new coalitions as such eventuated in the Iraq-Soviet (1972),the North Yemen-Soviet (1964) and the PDRY-Soviet(1979) Friendship Treaties.

In fact, Waltz's conception about the "stability" generated by a bipolar system which keep allies in check is based on the flexibility provided by "internal balancing" potential of superpowers' ability to absorb economic surplus inside their geographic borders. As suggested later Waltz was ignoring the very theoretical epistemology of the "closed Empires" or "Worlds" which other structuralists posit as existing in the "pre-Structured" world of the European Colonial powers. According to Waltz however, this capacity insulates them from systemic shocks and alliance break-ups for which reason 'the US and the Soviet Union need not alter their strategic rivalry to accommodate lesser partners' interests'. Hence, Waltz proposes how global powers are immune from blackmailing by their allies where 'military inter-dependence varies with the extent to which, and the equality with which, great powers rely on others for security' (Waltz, 1986: 168).

In fact, Waltz's theory explain just these possibilities of a new contender's ability to make place through developing new coalitions of "dissenters" where Iran, Pakistan and Turkey and even India, Saudi Arabia and Iraq may be test cases of new (re)alignments after 1971. Waltz therefore contends that the multipolar system is inherently unstable since 'with three or more powers, flexibility of alliances keep relationships of friendship and enmity fluid and makes everyone's estimate of the present and future relation of forces uncertain'. In bipolar system however, 'there are too many to enable one to see for sure what is happening, and too few to make what is happening a matter of indifference'(Waltz: 170).

The empirical test here lies with identifying the integrative trends among the Persian Gulf powers(and even in the trans-Atlantic alliance) under the systemic shift after the 1967 War for the former, and in latter's case, Nixon's desperation to reach Strategic disarmament

with Brezhnev at the cost of making the Persian Gulf and Western Europe areas of superpower restraint.

Waltz's supposition that 'both super powers can make long-range plans and carry out their policies as best as they see fit, for they need not accede to the demands of third parties', is a testable hypothesis in the Persian Gulf-Bipolar contest over the versions of regional and global security. It is similarly pertinent to tests "conditions" under which 'although concessions to allies are sometimes made, neither the US nor the Soviet Union alters its strategy or changes its military dispositions simply to accommodate associated states' (Waltz, 1986: 169-70). The empirical chapter would test these specific conditions beyond which systemic power interests acted as barriers to regional (re) alignments, but countenanced optimum hegemonic stability under credible allies(or neutralists) to prevent the region falling under one exclusive polar power hegemony.

Waltz actually agrees that alliances are not free of constraints, wherein 'alliance leaders are free to follow their own line, which may of course reflect their bad as well as their good judgment, their imaginary as well as their realistic fears, their ignoble as well as their worthy ends….. The major constraints, however, arise from the main adversary and not from one's own associates' (Waltz: 170).

1.4.3. Systemic Transformation: Structural change and rise of revisionist state

The inability to account for change in the international system (short of "international hierarchy or universal government)" and explaining unit-level roles to affect change in international politics' through some new "structure" of international system, has been the central criticism against neo-realism and a core impediment to postulate new explanation of International Relations Ruggie 1986:152; Cox 1986:243). According to Richard Little, the nature of criticism is very straightforward: 'while Neo-realism can help to explain continuity in the international system, it lacks the capacity to account for structural transformation' (Little: 88). Little tries to correct this theoretical flaw to account for change through "historical precedents" which suggest that change was always the recurring phenomenon in international politics due to transformation of "structures" themselves.

Rejecting Neorealist logic about the implausibility of systemic transformation due to functional dissimilarity of states, Little argues that the Neorealist acceptance of the dramatic shifts 'taken place in the distribution of power among political units in the international

systems', i.e., "at the surface" is not sufficient for which he posit a more flexible approach through "historical precedents"(Little: 87). Since historically there have occurred momentous changes in the international system that 'transcended modification in the distribution of power among political units' thereby affecting systemic transformation. Little contends that international system needs to look for "functionally-differentiated" units operating in an anarchic system as opposed to neorealist's' "undifferentiated" units to explain systemic transformation. In fact, 'there are substantial historical precedents for systems with these structural features', where changes have transformed the system (Little: 88).

Little's historical research on pre-modern empires' interactive capacities and a conscious construction of international system, draws conclusion that the international system of the post-Diadochian empires gave way to the contemporary international system which is being run by its new nation states actors and trading empires such as European Colonial powers of the post-industrial age. In addition, this new international system, a new "structure" also defined inter-state relations based in new distribution of capabilities and functions of actors in the system(Little,1993:97-101).

In order to explain the possibility of systemic changes, Little further posit the existence of a "deep structure" below the visible structure of international relations, to explain what "international system" is actually comprised of and immune to sudden changes. According to Little, the contribution of the theory of international system and structure is to differentiate between the "distribution of power and anarchy", with "power" accounting for the '"surface" or distributional structure of the system'. In addition, he summons Jonathan Ruggie's logic that 'deeper structural levels have causal priority' thereby suggesting that 'the structural levels close to the surface of a visible phenomena take effect only within a context that is already "pre-structured" by the deeper levels'(Ruggie, 1986:150).

Little however sees this as "inflexibility"' of the differentiated political units that 'mediate the deep structural effects of anarchy' and how this very "functional differentiation" 'dictate the character of the anarchic deep structure of the system' (Ruggie1986: 135: Little: 88). It is at this juncture that Little is trying to extrapolate Neo-realism into a Materialist-Constructivist approach which views the social construction of international relations through material conditions and ideas, a condition that saw the transformation of the Mediaeval world to the 'contemporary international system made up of functionally undifferentiated sovereign states'(Wight:1977; Wendt,1999; Little, 1993: 89).

The theoretical rejection of historical facts affecting such Systemic structural change in the neorealist paradigm rejects any notion of "transformation" whatsoever of the international system due to its epistemological supposition of "functionally" similar state actors (Taliaferro,2009:207-08; Buzan, Jones and Little,1993: 29-80; Jervis,1968:107-10; Tellis:80-84). The new (re)interpretations of anarchy therefore 'constitutes a "differentiated" phenomenon', in which states perform different functions based on systemic roles and structural arrangement, assigned by the system that 'cannot simply be characterized in terms of the absence of the central government'. In addition 'by consigning both functional differentiation and anarchy to the most generative structure of the system: "deep structure"', Little and Defensive Realists seek to explore the role for "units" through Classical realism that analyze 'different sectors of international(state activity for Defensive Realists) activity' in affecting systemic-transformation occurring in 'economic, societal or strategic sectors' as well as the 'political' sector that Waltz exclusively focuses upon'(Little,1993 : 89: Taliaferro, 2009: 203-07).

Structuralists however do agree that 'it is presupposed that the structure of the international system has an impact on a wider range of activities extending beyond international "politics"', extending into economic, environmental, resource and other international activities. It is for this reason 'a theory of international "politics"' cannot account for the structure of the international system: only a wider theory of international "relations" can do that' (Little, ibid: 89-90). In addition Little seeks to separate the transformational effects of the "absolute power" defining the distinct systemic-level whose functions are distinct from the unit-level of analysis that facilitate 'measuring the interaction capacity of the system'. The treatment of "relative" power of units differently from the "absolute power" of systemic powers is what enables us 'to differentiate between international systems characterized by system and sub-system dominance' (Little: 90). This becomes 'more apparent when more detailed attempts are made to describe and explain the evolution of world'.

This attempt at functional differentiation, 'have important implications for the IR research since it opens the "system' to more interpretations, by empowering the "sub-systemic" units in the "deeper" system to affect transformation under permissive environments such as periods of decolonization, changes in the regional power or systemic economic balances, or when the bipolar system is poised for a stable "change".

1.4.4. Regional hegemony, deterrence and power

Waltz posits another incentive for minor systemic shift under conditions of bipolar systemic hegemony. Calling this opportunity as "freedom of the irresponsible" where 'weak states have often found opportunities for manoeuvre in the intersties of a balance of power', structural theory makes possible sub-systemic powers taking advantage of periods of stable hegemony, where global status-quo is guaranteed by the global players by working towards strategic stalemates such as nuclear parity. By its implications, a systemic-domination by the nuclear Great powers therefore must "incentivize" the minor-systemic powers to challenge the regional status-quo through accumulation of more conventional power (military or economical).

The implied blessing in the dilemmas for systemic stability for expansionist/non status-quo notwithstanding Neorealism still cautions statesmen about the limits of "deterrence" as a state's external capacity which should be guided by a doctrine of "non-recourse to force" which Waltz attributes as the "doctrine of power states". Hence:

> 'the powerful states need to use force less often than their weaker neighbours because the stronger can more or less protect their interests and/or work their wills in other ways-by persuasion and by economic bargaining and bribery, by the extension of aid, and finally by posing deterrent threats'.
>
> (Rothgeb,1993:92-137).

Nevertheless, Waltz neither completely disavows the use of force nor berates its deterrent value when he insists that 'possession of power should not be confused with its usability'. At the same time he is still pointing out that states with nuclear weapons cannot be expected to discount the use of other non-conventional means(Waltz: 184-85). In fact, Waltz's conception about the mere possession of powerful strategic nuclear weapons, suggesting its non-use as the central feature of systemic security, still imply that their overwhelming power and potential for massive retaliation over weaker nuclear and non-nuclear powers cannot be discounted (Waltz, 1986: 184-85).

In fact, Waltz himself seems to moderate Hertz's security dilemma that spirals into arms races or pre-emptive wars when suggesting that the acquisition of military force all by itself insures deterrence. Hence, 'a dilemma cannot be solved; it can more or less readily be dealt with. Force cannot be eliminated' (Waltz: 186-87).

Other assumptions about the utility of military power by a status quo state, and hence its inbuilt restraint quality would suggest that 'depending on a county's situation, it may make much better sense to say that military force is most useful when it dissuades other states from attacking, that is, when it not be used in the battle at all' (Waltz: 186; Taliaferro, 2000: 136,145-46).

Waltz balance of power theory as well as his systemic assumptions is moderated by Keohane, by adding internal social, political and economic imperatives for the state to divert precious resources away from mere power-seeking or aggrandizement. Such assumptions form the core premises of Defensive Classical realism to posit non-offensive proclivities of regimes and competing constituencies for state development. Keohane observes security –seeking as the single-most objective of the state as a main flaw in the Realist preoccupation with defining the central role of '"power maximization" or universal domination hypotheses":

> 'states concerned with self-preservation do not seek to maximize their power when they are not in danger. On the contrary they recognize a trade-off between aggrandizement and self-preservation. They realize that a relentless search for universal domination may jeopardize their own autonomy'.

What is more, Keohane seeks to posit the "settling-down" nature of states after which 'they moderate their efforts when their positions are secure. Conversely, they intensify their efforts when danger arises, which assumes that they were not maximizing them under more benign conditions' (Keohene,1986: 174-75).

In the foregoing, Keohane posits a new utility of state resources under comparative security when the international system might not be conducive to aggrandizement or security-seeking invites counter-coalitions' (Waltz: 188-89). This conception of the futility of use of force apart from deterrence still allows a state to use force in pursuit of national policy such as minor-interventions in a neighbour country whose internal disorder might affect neighbourly borders, but still leaves room for cooperation on macro-economic issues.

1.4.5. Defensive Realism: State expansionism, restraint and 'structural modifiers'

According to Jeffrey Taliaferro, various applications of neo-realism or classical offensive assumptions explain international outcomes such as 'international cooperation; arms races; crisis bargaining; aggregate alignment patterns and war proneness of the international system'. Nevertheless, 'one cannot attribute these phenomena to the behaviour of any single state' (Taliaferro 2000: 133).

Neo-realism's particular focus on systemic influences affecting a state's behaviour and the structure itself delegates foreign policy to sub-systemic variables (unit-level) that Defensive Classical realism tries to explicate as a state's "external" response to the systemic constraints and opportunities. Since, the issues dealt with under the Neorealist rubric are major or hegemonic wars that affect international outcomes, 'phenomenon that results from the interaction of two or more actors in the international system', can be explained as the unit's ability to affect change in its periphery (Taliaferro 2009:196).

Defensive neoclassical realism therefore rejects Waltzian 'injunction that theories ought not to include explanatory variables at different levels of analysis' (Waltz 1979: 75). This submission therefore makes room for research in sub-systemic "dyadic" rivalries. Defensive realism explains a state's "expansionist restraint" by positing "cooperation" as an explanatory variable under the conditions of anarchy. It also addresses the security dilemma through more rational-choice assumptions of Offensive realism as to when use of force has the potential to achieve a state's objectives. Hence, Offensive realists propose the basic premise for the Defensive realist case as to 'why different states or even the same state at different times pursue particular strategies in the international arena' (Elam: 12; Zakaria: 14-18). Defensive realists weigh-in with the explanation that 'a state's relative material capabilities set the parameters of its foreign policy' where its effects are 'indirect and complex'. This is where 'systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level' (Rose: 146; Taliaferro, 2000: 134). In addition, why Waltz's theory cannot predict external outcomes with pin-point accuracy is explained by Defensive realists arguing that 'why and how states choose between different types of "internal" balancing strategies, such as emulation, innovation, or the continuation of existing strategies'. A new theory is therefore called for which 'integrates systemic-level and unit-level variables', to explain the virtues of cooperation under material and systemic considerations and where the competition becomes more

dangerous a state can afford, in pursuit of long term interests (Taliaferro, 2009: 196;Watlz 1979:168: Posen 1984:17-18)

Neoclassical realism effectively provides just this theory of Foreign Policy and seeks to 'generate probabilistic predictions about how individual states respond to systemic pressures:

> 'Phenomena such as individual states' "grand strategies, military doctrines, foreign economic policy, alliance preferences, and crisis behaviour", fall within the Neoclassical realism's purview'.
>
> (Taliaferro, 2000: 134).

Defensive realism's core objections to neo-realism are twofold. Firstly, it problematizes the "intractability" of the security dilemma and posits "relative distribution of capabilities" rather than the "gross distribution of power", as the dependent variable to differentiate "capability" from "power". Secondly, it posits a central role for "structural modifiers", which impinge on a state's ability to challenge the security balance in a dyadic rivalry. These testable propositions 'specify the links between external forces and the actual FP behaviour of individual states', where a state might behave differently from the classical suppositions of external behaviour under conditions of anarchy.

Defensive Realism argues three ways when the insecurity generated by a state's action(e.g., arms build-up) are self-defeating, such as by reducing a state's own military capability: 'to perform particular military missions'; making "expansion" as a preferred reaction (that renders deterrence less effective) and lastly, affecting the "belief system" of the adversary about the opponents' intentions as mere "security-seeking". In effect, arms build-up 'may simply be a waste of a state's finite resources, because others may be able to meet or exceed its level of armament'. In short a state that 'initiates a military build up to increase its security may inadvertently set in motion a chain of events that leaves it less secure'(Charles Glaser 1997 :171-201,op cit Taliaferro,2000:136).

Another core assumption in Defensive realism that mediates the common occurrence of war or arms races may be termed as 'structural modifiers', that explains the 'increase or decrease of the likelihood of conflict' and 'enable individual states to carry out particular diplomatic and military strategies'. These include the "offence-defence balance in military technology; geographic proximity; access to raw materials; international economic pressures;

regional or dyadic military balances; and the ease with which a state can extract resources from conquered territory" (Taliaferro, 2000: 137; Snyder: 1996, pp.168-71).

The main theoretical contribution of 'structural modifiers' to mitigating the security dilemma (or reduces incentives for expansion) is to bring forth the unit-level "capability" and differentiate it from the systemic distribution of 'material capabilities that each state controls, such as "polarity" or the number of great powers in the international system'. In this case, another constraint which moderates inter-state behaviour, but 'does not change the "gross-distribution" of power in international system', is the "offence-defence balance", which 'affects the strategies of individual states and interaction between the dyads'. In addition, Defensive realists argue that the "balance-of-threat" theory does not 'suggest that states always balance against the greatest threat in the international system. Rather they generally balance against states the pose an "immediate threat to their survival"' (Taliaferro, 2000:138, Walt,1987:21-34).

In addition, Taliaferro introduces the "intervening" variable between a state's external response to systemic pressures and a domestic interest is its ability to "mobilize" and "extract" resources, 'as determined by the institutions of the state, nationalism and ideology. The "resource-extraction" model, 'assumes that states are reasonably cohesive and the leaders attempt to pursue foreign and security policies based on their assessments and calculations of relative power and other states intentions' (Taliaferro 2009: 213-14). In this case, the offensive –realist assumptions of a state's capacity to mobilize necessary resources through 'the degree of cohesion in central institutions(civil and military); the degree of autonomy from the society; the ability to generate revenue ; and the scope of governmental responsibilities' remains instructive to delineate state's external response to regional-international conditions (Taliaferro,ibid:216; Zakaria,1998:33-39)

Taliaferro maintains that neoclassical realism and its offensive variants are wrong to insist on the impossibility of cooperation between states that either 'affect their current or future relative capabilities' or 'put their survival in jeopardy', since a state may be unable to recover if its trust is betrayed' (Waltz1979: 105; Mearsheimer, 2000: 12). Defensive realists insist that 'although cooperation may be a risky undertaking under anarchy but competition too is risky', by virtue of its own insecurity spiral. This competition generates arms races and preventive wars in which 'loosing such a competition can jeopardize a state's security'.

In this case defensive realists make further use of the assumptions of both neo-realists and the Offensive realists who argue against the likelihood of war due to nuclear weapons and improvements in the firepower as favouring the defender due to attacker's vulnerability in defensible terrain. Although Defensive realists agree that nuclear deterrence makes premeditated (or intended) wars unlikely, they still hold that this would not stop states from 'engaging in politico-military competition in third regions or limited conventional conflict short of an all-out war' (Van Evera: 1998:5-43).

Taliaferro however agrees that when 'offence dominates', the opportunistic motives of expansionist states impel them to resort to aggressive strategies against weaker neighbours. In addition he argues that should a state become confident in its ability to conquer, hold and exploits the natural resources from a territory; this 'influences the likelihood of international conflicts'. What can be termed as "dyadic-structural modifiers" or the "offence- defence balance", 'where "industrial capacity; strategic depth; or raw materials" are cumulative', expansion becomes possible for aggressive states. This implies that in a permissive international environment or strategic vacuums in the "regions", a state enjoying offensive capability and enjoying defence in depth have more incentive to undertake aggressive military policies with added advantage to pre-empt wars against a powerful adversary(Taliaferro,2000: 138-39).

Defensive realists suggest various conditions under which states discount short-term military advantages over long term economic prosperity that brings them in to conflict with Power Transition theorists who propose that declining great powers are likely to go to war to prevent the rise of new contenders despite their reduced offensive capability(Parsi, 2007:493-512). Hence, conditions where geography favours the defender from invasion or blockade or presence of weaker neighbours afford a state with 'longer term perspective and devote a greater portion of its national resources to domestic programs'.

The converse proposition may also be true where the geographic vulnerability of the target state might be manipulated by an ambitious adversary who has powerful 'incentives to build strong central institutions, maintain large standing armies and adopt offensive military doctrines'. In fact, Defensive realism would predict that 'when the offence-defence balance favours the offence, or if a state lacks defensible borders, one should expect that state to adopt a very short-term perspective when faced with a rising external threat. This may cause states to

engage in truncated or hasty diplomacy, conceal grievances, adopt offensive military force postures and seize first-move advantages' (Van Evera, 1998:45-53).

Defensive realism also posits the belief systems of its decision-makers at the centre of Foreign Policy and how that affects a state's ability to view its national interest, international environment and adversaries in far more autonomous ways than Neorealist's attachment to systemic powers would admit. Hence Defensive realists would argue that the images of adversaries and leaders, '"cognitive biases" in the process of "intelligence gathering, net assessments, military planning and foreign policy decision-making"', are differently applied to situations when the 'relative distribution of power is often uncertain and leaders face ambiguous and contradictory information', during rapid power fluctuations(Taliaferro,2000: 141; Miller,1995: 110-19).

Taliaferro further gives an overriding role for the statesman whose perceptions of the offence-defence balance and "receptivity" to 'structural modifiers [which] can play a 'critical and at times pernicious role in shaping how states develop national objectives'. In addition, other actors such as those officials who draw upon the "lessons of history" are bound to bring-in their institutional biases and organizational priorities to override legitimate security requirements. As Taliaferro argues that 'often the objective offence-defence balance is sharply at odds with civilian leader's perception of it' (Taliaferro, 2000: 142; Posen, 1984: 67-69).

Defensive realism's final assumption brings to the fore a crucial assumption of the decision-making processes in non-democratic authoritarian states where the constraints of the civil society, strength of the central institutions, organizational politics and civil-military relations 'constrain the efficiency of leader's response to systemic imperatives'. Hence the argument that, 'the state strength(i.e., the extractive capacity of a state's central political institutions) influences, both the amount of military power a state can project abroad and the scope of its grand strategy', and needs to be tested as to how a stronger Iran did not resort to an all out war against its traditional adversaries when the state needed not depend on the regime legitimacy, a strong taxation system and voluntary recruitment(Zakaria1998: 95-113; Desch, 1996: 237-68).

1.5. International System and the Regional Security Complexes: A 'sectoral' analytical approach

The anomalies generated by different theoretical assumptions to the role assigned to international 'structure', international system and the agent's subservience to these will be resolved until a 'globally structured international system emerges' that 'require both theoretical work based(on the criteria distinguishing sub-system from systemic dominance) and empirical investigation' (Little, ibid: 168). In the absence of such a-theoretical determinations, Buzan and Waever develop the agenda of "sectoral" analysis by dividing the world into neatly separate regions that enjoy relative autonomy from the global power's "regional great games". Such work builds upon Buzan, Little and Jones's "mitigating" the "anarchical" effects of international system by mediating the security dilemma and sub-systemic pressures where these sectors '"co-act" with other sectors: military, economic, environmental, financial and so on' (Little, ibid: 156-58). These sectors, based in the core security dynamics of a "geographically-bounded region": the Regional Security Complexes, generate their own patterns of "(in) security" depending on their particular "referent" objects (acting in different sectors) which the actors seek to "securitize".

From a Constructivist perspective, these regional groupings (or co-acting actors) may become self-sustaining or "autonomous" "Security Complexes" or may become even "de-securitized", when the use of force is voluntarily relinquished, a project pioneered by Karl Deutsch in his 'Political Community at the International Level' (1954).

The Regional Security Complexes (RSC henceforth) project seeks "analytical separation" of regional security, from the global power dynamics occurring at the "top of the power-league" where "durable" RSCs emerge 'against a background of great power domination'.

Buzan and Waever seek to posit the emergence of RSC only after 1500 AD before which there operated "pre-modern" security dynamics in multiple, relatively separate systems or "Worlds", they identify as "non- regional" since there was no strong enough global system to operate(Buzan and Waver 2003: 14; Little,1993:91-98). With the emergence of the European "international system" (that eventually became global during 1500-1945) and a "multi-polar" security system during the early 20th century, the 'new European Westphalian state reached out economically, politically and militarily, creating both formal and informal empires in all quarters of the globe', thereby extrapolating the European nation-state system onto the other Continents. Although these "hegemonic-empires" provided regional security (through "over-lays") of a kind that 'stifled indigenous regional security dynamics', it was

defined much more by the global rivalries among the European powers (and later between Japan and the USA) 'than by the security interdependence among local units'. Both authors believe therefore that the Imperial epoch since the 19th century was transformed into a global "bi-polarity" immediately after the Second World War, when a '"high-intensity" global system was consolidated' (Buzan and Waever, ibid:15).

The assumption that apart from the Imperial-dominated regional sectors (Colonial spheres of influence, Colonies, Protectorates) where the 'scope for independent regional security dynamics was small' and where 'areas that either never fully lost their independence to Western overlay […], indigenous states retained some capacity for independent action', comes handy for the determination of Persian Gulf comprising Arabian Peninsula, as a self-sustaining RSC. This existence of a "self- generating" RSC in the economic and political sectors, independent of the global security system, begs qualification of the post-1945 global security system (itself a function of systemic Great powers) leaving a relative freedom of action to the regional great powers who did not impinge directly on the global security until the 1973 oil price shocks (Buzan and Waever:15).

Buzan and Waever both raise the "decolonization effects" of the post-1945 era as "territorializing" the world into "regions" *par-excellence* with the "Cold War effects" that divided the world along sharply ideological lines (from multi-polar "imperial trading blocs" into the "Capitalist-Communist" and the "Non-Aligned" blocs). The configuration of the capitalist-communist systems and their structural relations with each other also created a new globalist economy that opened up new venues of strategic rivalry in the post-Imperial security complexes previously already "overlaid" by the European Imperial powers. In this new strategic (non-military) venue, the Cold War itself assisted the formation of the several RSCs in the ME, Africa and Asia, through the 'mechanism for organized and extensive intervention in the operation of these new regions'. Nevertheless, in its most obvious form, this global economy ensured that 'the formal political and racial equality was conspicuously not accompanied by any right to economic equality'.

If Buzan and Waever's suggestion that the Colonization period followed a wholesale transplant of the Westphalian sovereign-state system (bounded in boundaries) that 'bore resemblance to indigenous patterns of identity, culture or political history' then the Persian Gulf RSC provides a perfect empirical project to demonstrate the conscious division of the historical boundaries that generated their own insecurity and economic dynamics, similar to

how it had affected patterns of tribal-ethnic rivalries in Africa after 1940s (Buzan and Waever:192; McNeill 1963: 618-28; Hodgson1993: 194-95).

The RSCs are theorized to founder in the interplay 'between the anarchic structure and its balance of power consequences on the one hand', and 'the pressures exerted by geographic proximity'. Here 'simple physical adjacency tends to generate more security interaction among neighbours than among states located in different areas', a point emphasized by Walt himself (1987:276-77). Although the 'standard pattern of an RSC is a pattern of "rivalry, balance of power and alliance-patterns" among its main powers', it is not simply a venue for military rivalries, since its formation is supposed to have occurred when a "set of units whose major processes of securitization, de-securitization, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from one another" (Buzan and Waever: 44-45).

The introduction of the "amity and enmity" assumptions as a constructivist epistemology of the RSCs would therefore suggest that 'by starting the analysis from the regional level, and extending its inclusion of the global actors on the one side, and domestic factors on the other', would give relative "autonomy" from systemic or global power interests. The specific pattern of '"who-fears" or "likes-whom" is generally not imported from the systemic level, but generated internally by a mixture of history, politics and material conditions'(Buzan and Waever: 46-47:50:53-54).

In other words, the three manifestation of an RSC is similarly supposed to evolve from 'conflict formation through security regime to security community' that 'run in parallel with Wendt's Hobessian, Lockean and Kantian social structures' (Waever 1989; Buzan 1991:218)

Another important factor remains the durability of the security features in self-contained RSCs that 'not in the sense of being totally "free-standing", but possessing a security dynamic of its own, that would exist even if other actors did not impinge on it'. In other words, how "the region might reproduce or change", becomes a partial explanation of how it affects a systemic change, regardless of the systemic security dynamics retaining their tangible imprints on a geographically remote RSC.

Although Buzan and Waver's regional-security project is predicated on the 'unipolarity' thesis of the post-Cold War, when 'the ending of the Cold War created more autonomy for regional level security dynamics', the aim of this project is to conciliate the

Persian Gulf's regional powers' interests with the Great power interests during the Cold War era. Empirically, this will demonstrate whether the Cold war securitizations imposed irreconcilable security dynamics onto the regional interests of its local powers, and there existed certain independent (in)security dynamics, free from the Great power manipulations (Buzan and Waver: 18).

The assumptions behind the formation (and operation) of the RSC partaking from the "historical legacy" of interstate interactions and "power-differentials" among its main units, suggest the core "national interest" of its dominant powers. In addition, the functional "differentiation" of the RSCs from other theoretical formulations(economic groupings or global security regions) based in the existence of the "regional" great powers whose 'coherent ancestry going back several millennia', comfortably puts the Pahlavi empire onto the global map at par with Eurasian entrants into the great power 'game'. Although Buzan/Waever contend that 'there are no neat correlations among these classifications (ancestry or nationhood) to enable a clear simplification of the types of states', they still contend that the 'variety of "state-types" clearly does matter, to what sorts of security dynamics are likely to develop in an RSC':

> 'It does not seem unreasonable to think that well-established, democratic, advanced industrial states will tend to have different security concerns, from unstable and underdeveloped third world dictatorships'.
>
> (Buzan and Waever: 20-21).

It is however their agreement on the theoretical impossibility of constructing a 'security theory that hinges on classifications of states into certain types, the complexity itself generated through different methodological conveniences towards states classification', which makes Buzan and Waever postulate "historical overview, political choice and particular circumstances", for the formulation of the RSCs. The Regional Security Complexes theory's contribution to the post-Cold War era, is to problematize the state classification and its external behaviour, as well as the state "reproduction" according to the "functional in-differentiation", attributed to the Westphalian State under anarchy where 'similar states reproduced differently: Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia's dissolution as well as the non-democratic states forming the ASEAN regime formation'(Buzan and Waever: 21:66).

Another assumption in determining the RSC remains the "strong-weak" dichotomy with the former state 'being more internally cohesive', and 'tend to find most of the threats

coming from outside her border'. It is this combination of forces, acting from both external and internal dynamics in a region which provides 'some explanatory leverage when we come to consider the security history of particular regions' (Buzan and Waever: 22).

In addition, both contend that 'because of their strong "territoriality", RSCs tend to securitize very much in the "inside/outside" terms', compared to the "post-modern" ones that 'necessarily have "de-securitized" much of the traditional agenda of threats, that include new security dynamics, such as concern with "identity, migrations, stability of global economic and environmental systems"' (Waever et al 1993; Buzan and Waever: 22-23).

Although concerned with the globalization effects of exclusion from or inclusion into the post-modern core of heavily industrialized and militarily and economically stable RSCs, another interesting configuration remains of those states that 'straddle the border line between post-modern and modern statehood that face particularly intense dilemmas and might even become "torn states", a dilemma faced by Imperial Iran during 1960-70s (Aydinli 2002). According to Buzan/Waever therefore the price of inclusion through economic and political relations with the core is 'exposure to demands for openness and standards of civilization that amount not just to an assault on sovereignty, but in some cases (most notably Islamic ones) to an assault on identity'. In addition, 'recognition, aid and trade may be made conditional on legal reforms(particularly property rights), human rights performance, currency reform, adherence to norms of multiparty democracy and reduction of restrictions on the movement of goods and capital' (Buzan and Waever,2003: 25).

In sum, the RSC theory and its pre-cursors, contend that "facilitating conditions" impinge on the way, unit level factors respond to international security, where 'leaders and peoples have considerable freedom to determine what they do, and do not define as "security threats"'(Little,1993: 165-66; Taliaferro, 2009: 210-224):

> 'Since it is these definitions that underpin security policy and behaviours, they, and the processes by which they are made and unmade, are what must ultimately lie at the heart of security analysis.
>
> (Buzan and Waever,2003: 26).

An allusion to the "core-periphery" relations, from the Neorealist perspective also applies to the "polarity" in the RSC theory, i.e., which regional powers securitize the RSC outside systemic power interests? The concept again utilizes "differentiation" between global and the regional powers operating at different levels due to different "referent objects" of

security, by ignoring the neorealist assumptions that states in the international system are "un-differentiated" in terms of their functions.

The theoretical condition however remains that a Cold War era analysis of the bipolar pulls on the Middle Eastern RSC under the regional "polarity" between Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt or Iraq, must objectively find the existence of this Regional Security Complex's "polar great powers" and its exclusive security dynamics (Buzan and Waever, ibid: 30-34).In this connection, a key condition relates to the classification of the "great power" itself that ' requires a combination of "material capability; formal recognition of its status by others"; and how 'they are responded to by "others" on the basis of system level calculations'.

The question as to the transformation of the Persian Gulf RSC begs whether Iran fitted the description of a great power status that was reflected in the global balance of power; in the timings, strategic calculations and diplomacy of the existing superpowers (or contenders), and, also whether their calculations reflected the "consequences of a coalition behaviour" of the combination of regional "resource" powers, which affected the global balance of power (Buzan and Waever,2003: 32-34). Lake's definition of a great power is instructive here:

> 'Great powers possess global-military reach. They have the ability to project force around the globe, and as a result, they can intervene in any regional security complex whenever it suits their interests'….. (Lake1997: 64)

For the implications on the rise of great power contenders, "calculation" is what matters most. Not only response to new power contenders matters in the foreign policy discourse of other great powers who calculate the economic, military and economic potential of the bidder but the 'actual possession of material and legal attributes is less crucial for great power contenders than for superpowers'(Buzan and Waever: 35). These key distinctions between the systemic great-powers and regional great-powers therefore serve to place the central powers at the RSC (centred-RSCs) that can act at global levels in non-military sectors. This position (of great powers) compared with the regional ones is therefore barely 'the line between them that defines the difference between global and regional security dynamics', with former defining the 'global level of polarity' (Buzan and Waever: 34). It is therefore implied that the central powers in the geographically-bounded RSCs might act not only as regional "balancers" on behalf of their superpower patrons; for their exclusive national interest; but may even challenge the global distribution of power, if power itself becomes "diffused", and

increased their bargaining capability, such as the case of regional nuclear powers or resource cartels.

Although, the RSC Theory gives a relatively lower ranking to the regional powers as contenders to systemic hegemony who get 'caught up in global power rivalries', it still suggests that new contenders 'may get treated, as if they "mattered" to the global balance of power'. Moreover, 'higher-level powers respond to them as if their influence and capability were mainly relevant to the securitization processes of a particular region', such as the energy producing Persian Gulf or north African Arab powers, which never historically attained enough military power to challenge the systemic polar great powers. In this very connection, their power status in the global calculations renders them vulnerable as "the spoils in a wider competition"', and, as 'quite different from that received by an actor, seen as a global level power in its own right' (Buzan and Waever: 37).

RSC theory's main theoretical framework proposes finding the "independent" quality of its "region-specific" security dynamics that 'must be composed of geographically-clustered sets of units' and display "actor" qualities, outside the cluster. In its evolutionary stage, it is possible that "regions" embedded in a larger system might develop actor like capabilities', by coordinating their various policies, occurring in non-military domains, through "economic integration, resource policies or diplomatic coordination" (Buzan and Waver: 27-30). One of the core research interests will be to find these 'actor' like qualities in the oil-producing Persian Gulf in a Cold War-era configuration in which the OPEC achieved a more coordinated negotiating power in cooperative economic issues.

1.5.2. RSCs: 'Autonomous, Overlaid, Penetrated and non-Security'

Buzan and Waever's concept of the "overlaid" RSC suggests the possibility of 'transformation' of the regional "systems", a theoretical proposition which rejects the Waltzian theory of "undifferentiated" states, where 'transformation' cannot take place unless the system is dominated by a "World government". In the "over-lay", a distinction from the "penetrated regions", remains that the 'outside powers, rather than interests and interactions of the local states, must shape the main security dynamics of the region'. In its simple manifestation, overlay implies "imposition by force, by the invasion and occupation of a region by outside powers".

In more complex forms however, the "semi-voluntary acceptance of overlay" would be when the 'local states agree to subordinate themselves to a significant degree to an outside hegemon, and accept the stationing of its forces on their territory'. What nevertheless complicates an existing RSCs operation through the external or regional overlay, is its "voluntary or forced" transformation into either a "non-RSC", where no security issues(leading to wars) animate its existence (regional pacification or hegemonic peace), or one, with new security dynamics, such as those occurring in Europe after its own "overlay by the global superpowers" during the Cold War (Buzan and Waever: 63-64).

An RSC is a far more useful predicative and analytical tool which delineates how certain regional "security systems" are capable of transformation along their own security dynamics, a theoretical achievement which Neorealist's' fail to accommodate due to their functional in-differentiations of the systemic "agents". It is only thorough empirical evidence, we can verify whether in the Persian Gulf of the Imperial Iran-epoch, there existed enough interlocking issues to forge an autonomous-hegemonic RSC or a benign Security Community with "actor-like" qualities, the "non-security" RSCs, an over-laid, but still autonomous RSCs, dominated by its regional powers separated by water or mountain barriers or issues which 'created splits to make a larger RSC into sub-complexes', such as created after the British withdrawal from the Sudan, Aden and the Persian Gulf during 1956-71 with Iran and Saudi Arabia asserting separate hegemonies on the Arabian Peninsula and western Asia respectively(Buzan and Waever: 66).

Another key theoretical issue animating the structure-agent problematique in the IR scholarship is the dual problem of exclusive, overlapping memberships of RSCs by Great powers that impinge on the RSC's exclusive security dynamics. This anomaly is dealt through the idea of "penetration" from the global or "neighbourly" levels where power asymmetries exist, but are still separated by "buffer" or "insulator" states in between the RSCs to mediate their "security connectedness and indifference". It is this core assumption where 'strong instances of inter-regional dynamics may be indictors of an external transformation'- "merger" of the RSCs- which made Iran as an Gulf-western Asian power, interacting with three non-Soviet peripheries, but under the watchful eye of a neighbourly superpower (Buzan, Rizvi et al 1986; Buzan and Waever: 46-49).

The balance of power assumptions underpinning the formation of autonomous RSCs links directly with the "polarity" in an RSC which would suggest that the 'polar' regional

powers have equal incentive to 'set the terms of the minor powers and for the penetration of the RSC by global powers', in the presence of sufficient military power or availability of new systemic "suitors" (Buzan and Waever,2003: 55). In this connection, another manifestation for the durability of an RSC is the "Centred-RSC", where the power distribution, favouring a single regional power, might still be tempered by another regional power or a penetrating extra-regional power (near the regional or global power tally) and thus deny former's ascendance to the global power status, a fact clearly underlying the rise of Iraq during 1972-79, and the rise of Communist China in the western Asian-Gulf affairs after 1971(Buzan and Waever: 55).

RSC theory's other empirical contribution towards the Security Communities' study is mediating the theoretical difference between the Classical Neorealism- where the states 'never give up their power status'- and interaction with the Integration theory (discussed below) which makes "unification" a dual condition for the intra-regional "pacification" and bestowing extra-regional power status to the central Regional Security Complex power and itself as an "actor".

The RSC theory's another pertinent suggestion is that in a particular situation 'where none of the regional actors is a global power, a specific dynamic is instigated', that affect power balances at both regional and systemic levels. Here 'global and regional polarities are mutually defining: one is not given as a precondition for the other' (Buzan and Waever, 2003: 68:191-93; 203-05,210-14;Barnett 1996: 697-718; Piscatori1991:1-27; Sick 1998:6-10,22; Kemp1998-99).

The forces that give a regional power-dominated security region, its relative autonomy from the "extra-regional" security dynamics, however need not be antagonistic to the global powers' interests, where global polarity (un)consciously tempers its own "transformation" through a specific "overlay" such as 'colonization, security guarantees or through permanent stationing of troops'. Here RSC theory would suggest that a region 'located close to one of the parties to a bipolar rivalry is likely to be overlaid by one of the parties:

'a region that is poised between, can be overlaid in the form of division, and a strategically peripheral region might be left largely on its own'.(Buzan and Waever, 2003: 68).

The argument that great powers always never giving up their power statuses-even on the periphery- would similarly suggest that the structural dynamics of systemic power

competition in a Waltzian sense (reproduction rather than transformation of international system), may 'tend to reinforce this trend, making it in this way "self-reinforcing", until some major shock hits it from either inside or outside' (Buzan and Waever: 68; Waltz 1979; Ruggie 1983; Dessler 1989). The assumptions under-pinning the dual membership of systemic powers to remoter RSCs through overlay or hegemonic presence in the periphery, would suggest that despite the relative autonomy enjoyed by its constituents, the over-whelming Soviet presence around Iran's own periphery after 1969 was highly contingent upon the Soviet good-will for Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq or Pakistan to dominate the Persian Gulf and Western Asia during 1968-79, unless the US itsself coming to a certain global modus-vivendi that delegated the region to effective Soviet hegemony, vindicated in the invasion of Afghanistan after failure of the SALT-II .

1.5.3. Conclusion

What similarly gives an RSC its 'durability' and facilitate regional power-dominance on region-specific security issues(defined as securitization) is when it entails 'the network of interconnecting security worries that are no longer symmetrical' but concerns major(regional) powers more than minor powers, prone to band-wagonning or content with the 'overlay' by the regional major powers. Thus, 'what one actor sees as a threat is not necessarily a threat to an actor and thus not necessarily the subject matter of "counter-securitization"'. In its trans-Gulf-western Asian identity and aggregation effects therefore the chains interlocking its constituents 'can then be collected as a cluster of interconnected security issues' for which major actors take lead in an RSC-wide security issue' (Buzan and Waever: 72-73).

The supposition underlying Iran and Saudi Arabia taking lead in the regional affairs after the British withdrawal through action against Dhofar and Iraq, and even against the Western resource "extractors" at the same time under the OPEC, will be the core test of an Iran-Saudi centric Regional Security Complex, with the western great powers and the US acting as hegemonic over-laying or intervening powers. Even in the case of a "non-security" RSC under the OPEC-formulation or acting as a "Resource Community", the case for Soviet or Chinese guarantees may be theoretically possible which deterred the Western action, in return for which Iran or other regional powers must have been obligated to act as Soviet "security buffers" against the US nuclear threat through naval or aerial preponderance, which Chapters 3-9 will test through empirical evidence.

1.6. Security Communities: Shared interests, non-security and structure-agency transformation

Contemporary work on international security has tried to extrapolate certain hardcore assumptions of (neo) realism into Constructivism to accommodate the agent action and inter-state cooperation to predict transformations in the international system. The suggestion underlying the development of a Security Community is that, at a certain level of international interactions, cooperation between actors becomes possible that will likely defy systemic pressures, since the statesmen or trans-national actors can overcome the effects of anarchy. Another constructivist manifestation where "ideas" can be consciously "constructed" or "reconstituted", as opposed to the systemic "structure" which affects the agent's behaviour, the Security Community theory seeks to address challenges to cooperation and conflict under security dilemma through the social construction of ideas, interests and security. "Anarchy (or security) is what actors make of it". therefore is the philosophical basis for the Security Community (SC henceforth) theory, whose proponents argue that "pluralistic" political communities are likely to form, 'whenever states become integrated to the point that they have a sense of community, which, in turn, creates the assurance that they will settle their differences short of war' (Adler and Barnett 1998: 3, 7, 12; Wendt: 391-425).

The original concept of security communities expounded by Karl Deutsch suggested that 'actors share values, norms and symbol that provide a social identity, and engage in various interactions in myriad spheres that reflect long-term interests, diffuse reciprocity, and trust'. This theory provides a way forward to identify the formation of such regional groupings where values, interests and threats are consciously defined and constructed through experience, interactions and discourse, to moderate the effects of interstate conflict, itself not rejected by the constructivist thesis. Experience implies that through international transactions in 'trade, migration, tourism, cultural and educational exchanges and the use of physical communication facilities, a social fabric is built not only among elites but also the masses', and moves security agenda from a self-interested approach towards providing new meanings of security to the stakeholders. This instils in the elites (or agents), a sense of community, which becomes a 'matter of mutual sympathy and loyalties; of "we feeling"; trust and mutual consideration; of partial identification in terms of self-images…' (Deutsch: 1957; Adler and Barnett:7).

In its initial formulations, Deutsch accepted the problem of "assimilation" through common language, culture, political and economic habits and institutions, where "cultural

learning" found the basic point of departure between geographically contingent communities, often confined to the nation states in the Westphalian sense. In fact, its opposite: "political repression", for assimilation into political unions against the will of the masses can 'provoke reactions towards regional or self-assertion or secession' (Deutsch, 1957:100).

Another approach likely to facilitate regional political integration is based in the division of labour in the "un-amalgamated", communities where 'highly specialized or diversified' political units "co-act" to provide the building blocks for a regional co-action, hence a 'political unit specializing in paying for the protection of a military power to which they make little or no military contribution, and a unit which furnishes that protection'. Both agents then provide common goods to incentivize political integration, based on distribution of benefits to which its constituents sign-up for (Deutsch, ibid: 100-01).

It can be argued however, that a highly security-dependent constellation based in the "regional" polar-hegemony by one or two regional powers, cannot reasonably resolve the security dilemma of the lesser members, which according to neorealism would never sacrifice or trust their security to other states, especially hegemonic ones or to any supra-national organization. Secondly, such formulations may generate "counter-coalitions" within the system itself, to deter polar hegemony, rendering it highly unstable to work as a security institution, where power resides among its militarily stronger powers.

Another possibility where a "loosely-knit" Security Community might become operational was envisioned by Deutsch when "mutual responsiveness" to each other's vital interests , and, 'make prompt and adequate responses to each other's critical needs', might still be possible, wherein political units 'need neither be amalgamated, nor otherwise strongly dependent upon each other'. Deutsch argues that 'given sufficient resources as well as resourcefulness, sovereign states with a good deal of economic independence or immunity from each other's direct pressures, might succeed in developing stable security communities among themselves for a century or longer'.

In the Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsular security and geopolitical realities, the basic components for a security community, to have formed or unravelled in its pre-GCC formulations are too omniscient for a regional specialist to test. In the sense of a "lop-sided" or Iran-threatened community with Saudi Arabia or Iraq having provided protection to its weaker members, sufficiently resource-endowed to seek external protection from other sources, the historical review and Empirical chapters (2-9) will provide the case studies. in the case of the

Shah or other major regional Arab actors offering "specialized security" services in return for weaker neighbours paying for those services; the drivers for "counter-coalitions" to deter the regional polar hegemony of the three powers, the idea of "loosely-knit" security community provides a stop-gap measure for the weaker states, where the availability of counter-hegemons provided just such incentives for major regional powers to agree to a common definition of threats, interests and a possible response. In the case of weaker Gulf partners as well, the numerous counter-coalitions available through the Arab League, the OIC and the US-Soviet, the British or Chinese polar powers, providing protection against littoral or non-littoral power, can be matched by what geopolitical incentives existed for them to put faith in a loosely-knitted regional grouping; to acquiesce into the Saudi or Iranian hegemony; and survive under controlled anarchy, where the costs of leaving it were not higher than their meagre investments.

In fact, for the crucial test of an ideationally-contrived security community to have existed, and remained contingent upon its central powers' diplomatic ability to "define" what constituted as threats to the region, as well ability to prevent superpowers' confrontations under Détente , we will explore the nature of threats confronting the regional powers as well as what notions of systemic security existed at the systemic levels for superpowers' restraints around the northern Indian Ocean rim during 1956-75. As another crucial test, we will test the cases of mutual responsiveness, ideological adversity and security inter-dependence among the regional actors to have overcome resistance towards Iran or Saudi offers of protection against internal or external threats.

Contrary to Buzan and Waever's security-based and geographically contiguous RSCs (with or without their institutional expressions), Deutsch proposed the notion for a certain "transactional impetus" where exchanges of ideas, norms, values and non-security relations: 'cultural exchanges, trade or human migration, transcend geographical boundaries' [and] displace "geographical proximity" as its dependent variable. In fact, by his positing an agent-led community where '"individuals" can organize and define themselves- based on "markers" that are not necessarily tied to space', in an 'imagined' or 'cognitive region'- the resulting configuration renders military security as just one aspect of the intra-community interactions. According to Adler and Barnett, the latter could then be renounced during the later stages of community-building through "(de)securitization" (Adler and Barnett: 33).

Attributing a central role to "transactions" and rational choice to the leadership, the Security Community theorists similarly insist that 'institutions, processes and habits of peaceful change and adjustments are developed' to a point, to keep 'pace with the increasing volume of transactions and adjustment problems thrown upon them', which makes its impetus as one of a self-perpetuating phenomenon from "conflict formation" through "security regimes" to the security communities. For its 'work-load' implications for the communal processes to take effect, Deutsch insists that political amalgamation or integration is 'the race between the growing rates of transaction among populations in particular areas, and the growth of integrative institutions among them'.

Nevertheless, the irreversible pace of integration may have implications for the stability of a political community itself since 'expectations of peaceful change' need to be geared not only to the current load of mutual transactions and potential conflicts among its participants, but they must also be geared to any expected increase in the volume of such transactions and how possible frictions among them, as can be foreseen' (Deutsch: 102). In fact, Deutsch observes that 'there appears to be no case of a security community which was established solely by appearance of a sense of community, or by persuasion, unaccompanied by the growth of institutions and organizations, which sustained the "we-feeling" and channelled into activities of group living. Nor to him, any security community is bound to exist which had only institutions and organizations, but none of the psychological processes operating in and through people' (Deutsch: 102).

The exercise carried out in the Historical review and documentary analysis will help explore the trans-Gulf traffic underpinning different notions of the "we-feeling" and the institutional response to the regional or trans-regional threats where security and economic activity in terms of its "volume" may have ushered a sense of threat perception among its constituents. In fact, a key test for a security community in "perpetuation" to have kept pace with increased trans-regional activity and pressures to remain united in the face of the radical Arab threat before 1967 and its non-statist expression in the trans-Arab radical movements, will be crucial to determine what formulations were and are most likely possible for the Gulf to exist as a cohesive regional grouping. Therefore, whether the Gulf-Arabian Peninsular community remained one a generic case for a mere conflict formation or a self-serving security regime and where its members acted as free-wheelers, where the costs of reneging on

their membership commitments remained low and dispensed with institutionalized expressions would be core test for a pre-GCC community.

1.6.2. 'Values are what actors make of': the politics of security, identity and development of norms

Adler and Barnett posit a more tenable philosophical model for a political communal action beyond the 'transformation of security politics'. Hence when a process leading to its members 'entertaining dependable expectations of peaceful change' is facilitated through 'shared knowledge, ideational forces and a dense normative environment', a communal identity is more readily discernable, beyond the security-seeking assumptions of its actors(Deutsch: 103; Adler and Barnett:34). They concur that since states are 'embedded in different environmental contexts, where their interactions occur within a thick social environment, and, others in a world that approximates that envisioned by Neo-realism', they posit a 'central role of trans-national forces in "transforming" the behaviour- if not the very identities of the state' itself (Adler, Barnett 1998:8). By implications, although still 'transactional', but the effort becomes more of instituting peaceful practices for settlement of the inter-state differences, that need not be inimical to contested identities by peoples on either side of the fence.

The Security Community theory identifies three characteristics of a networked security constellation affected by its 'interactions'. Firstly, the existence of "shared identities, values and meanings", need not be highly objective, but based in a limited conception of what Buzan and Waever refer to as "referent-object" for security. Hence, the 'inter-subjective meaning gives diverse peoples, a common language to talk about social reality, and a common understanding of certain norms. Nevertheless, it is only with common meanings, does this common reference word contains significant common actions, celebrations and feelings' (Taylor, 1998:60). The level of interaction suggests, that the multi-dimensional interfaces in '"elite socialization", face-to-face encounter and relations in numerous settings, facilitate communications and mutual learning'. Lastly, the reciprocity inhered in the long term communal interests and 'perhaps even altruism' as 'a sense of obligation and responsibility' serves as powerful variables to test the formative processes of a security community in the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula (Adler and Barnett,1998: 31).

In line with Deutsch's original concept of a "quasi-security" community comprised of either economically independent or division of labor-based formulae, the new Security

Community 'can exist in the absence of well-developed strategic ties or a formal alliance', but in any case, there are tacit and formal normative prohibitions against states settling their disputes through military means(Adler and Barnett: 35). In this case both Adler and Barnett concur with Deutsch's conception of a "limited-scale" conflict between its members that need not be inimical to a Security Community in a 'loosely-knitted' sense: Hence ' a dyad within a community might go to war, without necessarily leading the researcher to declare the end of the community' (Deutsch 1957:5).

Two concepts- vital to our pursuit in identifying the formative processes of the Gulf-Peninsular security community- will therefore be its "normative framework" and its "crude governance structure", where both the Iran-Saudi centred Regional Security Complexes and a normative, albeit quasi-institutional Security Community could operate side-by-side. In this case, if the necessary conditions for a limited conflict, short of a hegemonic war between Iran, Saudi Kingdom and Iraq could be established, this will itself falsify the core test for an Iran-centric hegemonic theory propounded by the Nixon Doctrinal theorists.

In the first instance, communitarians would argue that a 'security community that depends heavily on enforcement mechanisms is probably not a security community' at all. On the contrary, they argue that the inter-state behaviour inside the community, depends heavily on the 'acceptance of collectively-held norms' which implies that not only such norms are "regulative": designed to overcome the collective action problems of interdependent choice', but are also "constitutive": a direct reflection of the actor's identity and self-understanding', about its place in a geographical cluster (Hollis, 1988:137-41).

Building up on this identity politics underpinning a political community, and for the governance structure inside a political community to work, a member's 'external behaviour, its domestic characteristics and practices', all serve to give him an "internal identity", of a community member. In other words a state's ability to abide by the "region's normative structure", and assuming an obligation to act "for the community" gives not only it a crucial legitimacy capital, but they also 'share their authority in certain spheres with the larger community' (Adler and Barnett: 36 fn 20 page 61). Here the Security Community theory distinguishes between "tightly-coupled" and "loosely-coupled" communities, where the states can 'express their agency in-so-far-as they meet and reproduce the epistemic and normative expectations of the community: States remain "free agents" acting on the basis of their own

preferences, as long as these preferences are cognitively framed by the shared understandings of the community'(Adler,1997:266).

In addition, theorists insist that 'while communication between peoples; learning processes and the thickening of the social environment plays a crucial role in the evolution of political communities, these are elites' interaction or charismatic individuals that serve to create 'new social identities'(Adler and Barnett:,1998 42-43,46-47).

In the ideational or ideological conundrum of which state actor was in a better position to give force to a regional "identity" against the internal or external threats; whether the Shah personifying a "benign" Persian identity among the Gulf states was willing to regulate Iran's security behaviour; as well as over-come the centrifugal pressures of the Gulf Arabs' hostility towards Iran (to convince his nationalist clique) to forge a trans-Gulf identity vis-à-vis external threats, will be a useful contribution towards a broader identity debate of the Gulf politics since 1979.

1.6.3. Power and Community: the realist contribution

The fact that Security Community is a gradual integrative process, heavily based in the traditional IR assumptions of "power", is also suggestive of the dual purposes for power in the development of the political communities. Even more, power understood as 'the authority to determine shared meanings, that constitutes the "we-feeling", and practices of states and the conditions which confer, defer or deny access to the community, and the benefits it bestows on its members', have useful applications for the Gulf community(Ruggie,1993:8-59; Gause,1998:174-75).

According to Adler and Barnett, a "structure" defined in the traditional Realist sense 'plays a major role in the development of the security community'. Yet the fact that power itself serves as a Leviathan towards building a Security Community is evident even in the Deutschian notion and its later formulations: Hence, 'power conventionally understood can be an important factor in the developmental (of a security community) by virtue of core state's ability to nudge and occasionally coerce others to maintain a collective security (Adler and Barnett, 1998: 39, 44).

At this stage the role of a core state or a coalition of powerful states becomes important in pushing forward the security agenda which can 'provide leadership, side payments and perhaps protection to other members of the group'. In fact such core state is a

'likely facilitator and stabilizer of the "nascent" Security Community, whose power is 'not simply coercive but also conveys a sense of purpose, and potentially, a vision of the future' (Adler and Barnett: 52-53).

In its "ascendant" phase, there still exists the binding interest among members who start to share a key expectation, that 'material progress and security, broadly defined, can be best guaranteed only among members of the region' (Adler and Crawford).

Although Security Community theory insists that social learning does not by itself promote change until 'it is pushed by the core powers' superior material power, international legitimacy and adoption of norms and practices conducive to peaceful change', illusion to such material conditions is self-evident of the realist assumptions of power in the international relations. The paradox that the Waltzian neorealism emphasizes an undifferentiated role for state actors in international power structure is contradicted by other realists, plus some neoliberals, who argue that major actors, with more material power and hence differentiated roles at the international systemic strata, can mediate the structure of international system to improve their own positions in the global power structures. Although the neorealist and other competing paradigms may not be able to conciliate a definite role for power and the "role" itself in the international system, the constructivist assumptions of ideas and power 'bestowing legitimacy', which in turn can 'confer increased material and moral authority to the norms and practices they diffuse', still accommodates a central role for the superior material power of states, who take lead in the construction of regional identities, norms and modalities for external action. It is this very "differentiated" power that forge particular values that 'may also induce their political adoption and institutionalization' of regional responses to external or internal security.

The assumption of the "non-hegemonic" utility of power in the political communities as in the Iran-Saudi case during 1960-70s need a strong empirical evidence where social learning under conditions of power asymmetries may have 'involved a situation where "teachers" and "students", negotiate a new regional collective identity around consensual norms and mutual understandings', according to a consensual diplomatic agenda (Adler and Barnett,1998: 45; Kupchan and Ikenberry,1990:283-315).

The ideas under girding the basis for a security community and the development of common identity beyond (internal) security threats, however need to be challenged by the social researcher as to how do non-liberal, authoritarian and economic constellations of the

like-minded actors, react to their external environment on a different system of practices(Adler and Barnett: 40;Wendt,1994:385).

1.6.4. Security Communal phases: 'Nascent, Ascendant, Mature and Disintegrating'

In its "nascent" manifestation, a security community may still exists under the conditions of mutual security, that renders it 'indistinguishable from a strategic alliance.' More importantly however for its trans-Gulf configuration is the suggestion that 'there is no expectation that people of these states will have a shared identity or knowledge of each other'. In addition, the suggestion that all the political units might, 'discover that they have joint interests that require collective action, and can mutually benefit from some modest coordination of security policies', would make the non-military dynamics of the intra-Gulf cooperation through "need-based" collective action equally applicable, such as under the OPEC during 1970-74, or against the Dhofar rebellion to prevent the PDRY-PFLOAG the Maoist-Cuban trans-regional threat(Adler and Barnett: 50-51; Barnett,1998).

At this stage however, the role of governments, security and other intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, epistemic communities, social movements and even imaginative individuals, may assume increased importance who according to its theorists when 'placed in institutional positions of power, are able to turn their personal ideas into institutional ideas'.

A "mature" security community similarly has more to offer in its durability along the security dimension, rather than the non-military issues. Hence the indictors depicting a mature but still 'loosely-coupled' community, would still be suggestive in a "multilateral conflict adjudication, unfortified borders, changes in military planning", where community members 'are not counted as potential enemies in a common definition of threat'. The fact that this stage depends so heavily on the renunciation of war as an instrument of the first resort, serves as a "threshold", after which, 'while there remains conflicting interests, disagreements, and asymmetric bargaining, there is the expectation that states will practice self-restraint'.

There are other assumptions for a promising political community which suggest a common "external" outlook among its members where '"self-identification" represents the external threat to community'. In this case the 'core personality features of those within the community' who may determine the 'worst-case scenarios outside the community', may identify external threats, and, and help establish 'a state's normative discourse and actions reflecting community standards'(Adler and Barnett,1998: 55-56).

In one of the most tangibles expressions, a 'tightly-coupled' community -as applicable to outside threats- would project an outward looking security community. Nevertheless, initial reading of the diplomatic action against Dhofar would project a tightly-knitted" security community remained wedded to the idea that 'cooperative and collective security outside the community through pooling up of military resources and integrated military planning (at the later stages) would be undertaken with the emergence of a common threat'. In the nature of various cases of community action against internal subversive threats or deterring a radical internal power like Iraq or the PDRY or even Iran, there exists substantial room for the collective security against "internal threats", a clear case for a tighter community coming into existence through the Shah's military action in support of a joint Jordanian- British military action against Dhofar, financed by the Saudi Kingdom and Abu Dhabi during 1973-76.

When a tightly-coupled community having shifting the monopoly of force from the 'units to the collectivity of sovereign states', might decide to legitimize its use 'against external threat or against community members, that defect from the core norms of the community', we are provided with more predicative power to tests the Security Community theory's application to the specific inward-outward security paradoxes during the late 1950-75 period waged between Iran, Saudi Kingdom and Iraq against both the internal and external actors(Adler and Barnet: 56-57).

Another core prediction under-girding a "disintegrating" security community is similar to the Regional Security Complex theory's "over-lay" by the external powers with the post-Suez 1956 providing more case studies than the "pax-Irani"(Eilts 1980:89). The suggestion that 'the intrusion of external forces into the local community, leaving conflict, alienation and anomie in its wake' and the transformation of core values, collective identity and social process- originally responsible for its formation- may occur within or outside the community, therefore remain the core tests for Gulf Security Community to have disintegrated or declined during 1968-79(Adler and Barnett:57-58)

Since Adler and Barnett insist that 'our understanding (of development of the security communities) can be broadly termed as social constructivist and path-dependent' while 'their paths will vary considerably'. Partaking from this notional construction of security, threats and a specific Gulf-identity as different from the pan-Arabism, the researcher is left with wider case options to situate various emerging and immediate security threats, ahead of the trust-

building dynamics in a community in a power “asymmetrical” relationship in the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula and western Asia which during the 1960s-70s was dependent on the region’s consensual norms (Adler and Barnett: 49).

1.7. Conclusion

A well-informed albeit a-theoretical survey of documentary analysis makes clear that the application of a single theoretical paradigm to explain the diverse statist interests as well as integrated security responses to the internal-external stimuli in the Gulf security system would deprive us of some crucial understanding of why states do not resort to the Wars of expansion even under systemic permissiveness as supposedly existed during 1967-75. In other words, the Classical Realist argument of security-seeking as the raison d'être of a state to ensure its survival, needs to explain Iran's security discourse as an overwhelming regional power, with all the incentives to initiate pre-emptive, hegemonic or expansionist wars during 1968-75, and instead settle for relative security with Iraq in 1975.

Posing a serious problem to the Realist paradigm, both Neorealist and Defensive Realist paradigms provide possible explanations for Iran to await more power accumulation and pursue non-security ambitions such as economic development, territorial and resource consolidation and security through low-intensity war and communal action against non-state actors.

A judgment on Iran and other regional powers' collusion over opposition to the external powers' presence in the region after 1968, at the very time when the Patron-Client relations with the US remained affected by an precarious balance under the global systemic stability imperatives between the Polar powers, needs more empirical data to falsify the existence of a Security Community, despite the possibility of Iran's annihilation from hostile neighbours.

It is expected that the primary evidence provides sufficient security/non-security variables as incentives for Iran's conscious investment in cooperative security, when it felt threatened by the superpowers reaching a certain agreement under Détente over "selective " escalations outside Europe, which should have theoretically left Iran vulnerable to the Soviet intimidations in a similar fashion, as Britain, France and Germany found themselves under Nixon and Kissinger's diplomacy to achieve the SALT-I during 1969-74. Initiating their own Détente with the Soviets, the Western European initiatives during the period makes possible our challenge to the non-cooperative security explanations about Iranian military build-up after 1968 as a threat to the Gulf Arabs.

Having acquired more theoretical explanations under the Balance of Power paradigms, empirical evidence should therefore falsify many historical assumptions about Iran's pursuit of security outside the regional and systemic normative principles, as well as (in)ability to challenge the global-economic order between the North and the South without the Saudi-Iraqi-dominated OPEC's support but overwhelmingly the Soviet restraints to take advantage of the Gulf's military weakness against the Western powers.

As an empirical test of Constructive methodology however, Neorealism finds itself wonting to explain why the sub-systemic challengers of the global economic relations through the oil price-wars during 1970 and after 1973, as well as the status-quo systemic powers struggled to the bitter-end until the global oil prices had crashed by 1976. In other words, theoretical explanations fail to answer why the Western powers did not go to war against OPEC producers while the US and the Soviet Union itself were pursuing global de-escalations with the former already engaged in Vietnam, and desperate to avoid the Arab-Israel conflict since 1967 . Could it be claimed that that the US-European pursued Détente at a time of the surplus Soviet industrial and military power affected Western economic destruction that it could not bring about unilaterally? Did Iran and the OPEC acted as Soviet "clients" to bring about a Soviet- favoured "systemic change", which the US engagements in ideological wars in East Asia and failure to bring peace to the Middle East to the Arab satisfaction had sought to maintain in its favour?

As a possible explanation to the sub-systemic challengers' ability to act under the availability of new "suitors" in the Soviet Union and China, but failing to affect a more substantial systemic change through the economic "structure" due to global economic hegemony by the Industrial powers- which happened to be militarily dominant as well- empirical evidence also needs to produce credible data as to why the Western systemic powers let the oil producers destroy their economies without much re-balancing strategies, while they and the US retained sufficient military power to deter them? It may be conjectured that whereas the Great post-Imperial European powers struggled to maintain their place in the global power tally, while enjoying the fruits of bipolar permissive environment, their freedom of action to prevent the rise of Iran and other main oil producers were highly circumscribed by the deterrence offered by the Soviet Union to subverting the status-quo along its southern borders to which Nixon had subscribed inadvertently. In the interests of Bipolar stability and preventing the outbreak of conventional or non-conventional conflict against the Soviet

mainland, we aim to find out what better alternatives did the Soviet support to the oil producer provided during 1956-75 for the challengers to carry the battle against the West, as well as providing a likewise destructive economic force which weakened the anti-Soviet coalition in Western Europe and the US until Soviet collapse in 1991.

As a way of providing theoretical explanations, the secondary data will determine the Soviet position in the global system after 1956 War, and the quality of its diplomatic success in the Maghreb and the Persian Gulf sub-Security Complexes, as well as incentives for limited regional expansionism which facilitated rise of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq to regional and systemic hegemony. Secondary data will also suggest ways through which the Western aligned Iran and Saudi Arabia resorted to limited expansions and pursued non-security policies against the US presence in the region, which theoretically was stationed as a security guarantee to the US clients. It is expected that the Soviet pursuit of security around its southern and western periphery paid a price of relative security by de-emphasizing ideological hostility towards Iran and Saudi Arabia during 1956-75, until it was on the verge of losing its heavily invested clients in Iraq, Yemen and Afghanistan.

As a matter for establishing as to how the Shah sought to affect a semi-systemic transformation through a communal economic and security action through rather more cooperative action against the radical Marxist movements and against Iraq and the PDR during 1968-75, the subsequent chapters are dedicating to explore the balance of interests and threat underpinning the Iran-Saudi efforts to deny the rise of challengers to their regional peripheral patrimonies along the Iranian and the Arabian Peninsular mainlands.

As a traditional case to be tested about Iran and Saudi Kingdom acting on the behest of the US and western powers against the weaker regional powers, the Nixon Doctrine will be the test case to ascertain American interest in such a regional hegemonic order, despite the impossibility of such systemic powers letting Iran lead diplomatic attack against their life-lines under the OPEC and try to frustrate the US direct security assurances to the Western economic viability.

A serious challenge is therefore posed to the historical understanding of the US leaving the most crucial resource and security intense region to the sole Soviet hegemony or in the hands of the already dissonant Iran and the Saudi Kingdom to the US failure to guarantee their security against the Soviet Union during 1950s. The theoretical possibility of the Nixon Administration never having agreed to an Iran-Saudi centric regional hegemony therefore

always remains an empirical test and instead rejecting the Shah's views on the superpower's maintaining their influences across the region, where it could pose an existential threat to the Soviet mainland, industrial centres and energy producing areas along the northern Iran.

Chapter 2:

The Persian Gulf and external powers, Nationalism, hegemony and security community: A neo-historical perspective (1956-75)

2.1. The Strategic context of Soviet and regional powers' interests in the Middle East:

2.1.1. Some geopolitical generalizations and region-specific Soviet interests

A nuanced debate about Egypt and Iraq's interests in the pre-1967 Middle East and the Communist- Soviet threat to Iran and Gulf security after the June War should be carried out in the global strategic context of the Soviet engagements with the Maghreb-Levantine Middle East and the northern Indian Ocean littoral comprising the Red Sea-Arab Sea and the Persian Gulf (henceforth Gulf). While the latter Indian Ocean sectors held promise for future Soviet efforts to counter Chinese influence-seeking or maintaining leverage on the Western energy and trade interests through naval preponderance and crises diplomacy (Laquer 1973:92;McConell 1971:5-6; Kelly 1974: 20), the Maghreb-Levantine sub sectors of the broader Middle East in fact constituted weaker Soviet flanks along its NATO deployments hence priority for relations with Syria and Turkey and continued need for bases in Egypt(along with Libya and Algeria). With the prospective US presence in the northern Indian Ocean through Saudi-Bahraini and other British -evacuated bases in the Indian Ocean territories(BIOT)after 1968, Soviet security along its southern borders was severely compromised which triggered new activism in the Gulf-Arabian Sea due to Iraq and Yemen's(the YAR-PDRY) separate competition with Iran and Saudi Arabia. Taking advantage of the various territorial, resources and ideological rivalries since mid-50s, all across the oil-rich but um-demarcated and other resource scarce Arabian Peninsular periphery, the diplomatic options chooses by regional competitors during 1968-71 more than facilitated Soviet entry on behalf of the radical-Republican regimes and even to variously counter Iran-Saudi threat to other conservative regimes which made distinctions between the direct Soviet threat and from the radical-conservative powers well nigh impossible

As subsequent sections (2.2,3,4) and Appendix-II will suggest that leveraging Soviet threat to the key Western interest was conveniently instrumentalized by Iran and Saudi Arabia during the period to seek US complicity with pre-empting the rise of regional challengers to the conservatives' ideological leadership or weaker powers simply acquiesce into their hegemony over resource, territorial and access privileges. As a further observation, to be empirically tested, the Western powers' strategic agreement over letting Iran and Saudi Arabia take lead over regional security during 1968-75 however was a direct case of US

interest in not giving offence to the Soviet security vulnerabilities under the guiding principles of superpower engagements in peripheral areas such as Central Europe and the mainland US and Soviet borders along West Africa and the northern Indian Ocean(Noyes 1982: 54). Nevertheless, on a local power competitive level, Iran-Saudi Arabia on the one hand and the Iraqi- unified Yemeni (1970) security discourses remained conditioned by the overbearing Soviet physical presence and in a perverse formulation highly deferent to the Soviet sensitivities along its southern borders which could only be endangered due to prolonged hegemonic wards between regional rivals, if supported blatantly or physically by the US Fleet. In fact, a series of crisis in the Gulf during 1969-75 attest to just this Soviet vulnerability that ought to have elicited direct US intervention on behalf of local clients such as the US retention of Bahrain to counter Iran-Iraq threat to regional conservatives after 1971, assuring Saudi Arabia from the PDRY threat during 1969-80; Nixon's effectively deterring Indian threat to the West Pakistan by deploying the Enterprise Task Force in the Bay of Bengal during 1971 but most importantly to call bluff to the Soviet intervention through Carrier Task Force Hancock in the Arabian Sea during the 1973 Arab-Israel War. Until however the Soviet Union could muster enough industrial and naval capability to traverse the Red Sea-Indian Ocean through the second aircraft carrier fleet and despite the availability of a effective submerged nuclear and surface naval power in the Mediterranean to confront NATO and the 6th Fleet , Soviet engagements with the broader Middle East -before the closure of the Suez Canal(1967-74) - were dependent on securing its western and southern flanks where the US navy enjoyed preponderance.

As a preliminary for understanding the post-1956 strategic milieu until the re-opening of the Suez Canal the US-Soviet interest in Oceanic denial to each other's strategic nuclear navies (western Atlantic and northern Indian Ocean respectively) were achievable through crisis bargaining in the adjacent seas of western Africa, the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, while the Western naval preponderance in the adjoining seas posed the over-arching strategic vulnerability to the Soviets during the 1956 and 1967 Wars for which the Soviet strategists despite pretensions of committing forces on behalf of the "Free World" desperately avoided direct confrontations with the US 6th Fleet. With the inauguration of a new Mediterranean squadron in 1964 and prolonged closure of the Suez Canal after 1967, the extreme dependence of the anti-Israeli Arab coalition on the Soviet military and economic largesse the Mediterranean Maghreb and the Gulf had been opened for the Soviet crisis

diplomacy through assurance to revolutionary clients. In fact, the Soviet deterrence to the Western maritime powers such as British efforts to re-instate King Idris in 1969; crises deployments in the Horn of Africa to discourage regime change in Somalia (1969) and support to the PDRY during conflicts with North Yemen and Saudi Arabia during 1972 and 1979 and last but not the least, staging operations during the Ogadan Wars (1977-78) were undertaken just when the Western maritime powers staged a grand rear-guard action all across the northern Indian Ocean to consolidate their more prized possessions in East Asia(Hong Kong and Brunei). Astute observers will agree that the underwhelming need of the British and the Americans to detach the pan-Arabism Nasser and Sadat from Soviet influence to settle the Arab-Israel conflict or prevent the outbreak of another War in the region and a face-saving withdrawal from Vietnam also remained highly contingent on the Soviet restraint in the Mediterranean and the Southeast Asia over regional clients.

The broader Middle East however until the Camp David Accords(September 1978) remained a central arena for Soviet global objectives where the Arab-Israel conflict in the Maghreb and Levant, and regional conflicts in the North-Tier and Arabian Peninsula- Gulf facilitated Soviet staying power with Egypt-Syria and Yemen effectively leading an anti-British campaign in Southern Arabia and the adjacent Trucial Coast until 1969, While "Pax-Britannica" staged a grand withdrawal from the East of Suez during 1956-71, another Soviet-contrived crisis between Nasser and Israel during the June War insured latter's closure of Suez Canal until 1974 which effectively finished-off the remaining British resistance to maintain Imperial possessions in the Soviet-dominated Saudi backyard .

As subsequent sections however show, while the Soviet strategists intentionally failed to deliver on key Arab security interests during the three Arab-Israel conflicts(1956,67 and 73), most republican Arab-Socialist regimes in Maghreb, the Levant and the Gulf also remained least perceptive to the central Soviet interests such as keeping itself a diplomatic place in the Arab-Israel talks at par with the US and seeking the US withdrawal from the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean(Becker 1973:185-201). Although UAR's fragmentation during 1961-64 and the post-1967 power struggles within the pan-Arab Camp of the Levant, the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula further fragmented the "rejectionists Camp" making difficult the Soviet task to project a cohesive anti-Western front, it can be readily argued that the key Soviet objective of protecting its NATO flanks in eastern Mediterranean and the northern Indian Ocean was more than facilitated by the onset of regional rivalries between

its clients and the quasi "de-aligned" Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia during the 60s. In this case, we see the obvious case of extreme Soviet restraint against the Iran-Saudi hegemonic diplomacy against Iraq and Yemen during 1969-75, while presenting itself as an honest power broker between Turkey and Cyprus in the Mediterranean and between Pakistan and India during the 1965 and 1971 post-War diplomacy. The results can be construed as a direct consequence of the US refusal to aid its regional allies against the Soviet-armed Non-aligned countries seen in the establishment of the RCD and the Shah's effort to forge the Gulf Defence Pact and even a broader Indian Ocean Community, partnered with India, China and to protect the region from superpower rivalry during 1972-77. In fact, after the 1967 War and due to the central regime interests in domestic consolidation after Ba'athist revolution and rivalry between Iraq, Syria and Nasser's evacuation from Yemen (and succour by the Saudi and Kuwait) ensured that previous Soviet clients remained now confined to their neighbourhoods. One can confidently conclude that the centre of gravity of Arab nationalism had now effectively shifted from the anti-Israel struggles to the internecine conflicts of these radicals with Kurds, Palestinians, Communists and various trans-Gulf Marxist movements and with Western clients, enjoying relative regional autonomy under the systemic stability.

Despite effectively leveraging Arab dependency on the Communist bloc arms and the Soviet economic subventions to seek their following the Soviet security logics the fact remains that Soviet diplomatic preponderance itself was heavily conditioned by the good-will of its clients in every sub-sector of the broader Middle East, with motives of their own in maintaining such linkages with the Soviet overlord. In addition, lacking exclusive bases in the Mediterranean (with the exception of Egypt) and the Gulf for prolonged operations implied that the inexplicable Soviet interest in the non-resolution of the Arab-Israel conflict was inhered in not completely delivering on client's interests; keep them dependent on its military and economic subventions while engage in graduated escalations during the War of Attrition through increasingly sophisticated military hardware to clients. This pattern was in fact manifest throughout the Middle East during 1956-72 until Sadat expelled 20,000 Soviet advisors in July 1972 and made a desperate attempt to regain Sinai without coordinating the pincer offensive from Syria and Iraq during the Yom-Kippur War (1973). In the Gulf case, as well, the Soviet restraint during the 1969 Shatt al-Arab conflict with Iran effectively challenging Iraqi emergences into the Gulf and subsequent Soviet efforts to manipulate arms supplies over Iraq during the Kurdish campaign(1972-75) were not only leveraged to seek

Communist participation in the Ba'athist Progressive National Front but were also to incentivize the Shah to keep opposing the US presence in Bahrain during 1978-75 which effectively compelled Saddam to sign the Algiers' Accords with the Shah on lesser favourable terms. The Soviet grand diplomatic act to deliver the Gulf region to effective Iranian hegemony during 70s and letting Egypt face another defeat during 1973 and aggravating the Red Sea-Arabian Peninsular security after 1970 also motivated Iraqi condemnation of the Soviet tactics in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea.

Sections 2.1.2,4,5 and Appendix-I evaluate Soviet objectives in the Mediterranean-northern Indian Ocean littoral during 1956-67 which affected the central component of the pan-Arab unity, i.e. the Arab-Israeli conflict apart from increasing the post-1956 republican or radical pan-Arabist regime threats to the conservative US allies like Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan or other NATO allies along the Northern Tier and North Africa. As a matter of generalization, most security analysts of the US-Iran relations agree that the US failure to join the Baghdad Pact-/CENTO and dubious security guarantees to the Northern Tier allies: Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, through Eisenhower's Executive Agreements(1959) against the Soviet(or International Communism) supported threats(regimes or movements alike) caused serious doubts in the minds of these allies and were finally realized during Turkey and Pakistan's conflicts with Greece and India over Cyprus and Kashmir respectively during 1964-65. Some analysts cite the failure of the Baghdad Pact and its fall out on the confidence of regional allies to Turkey's confrontation with Syria -and the Dulles's rebuff to Turkey on the Soviet threat-and the US /British failure to intervene in Iraq and Lebanon during 1958. The three remaining allies' forging a parallel non-security organization during 1964 the Regional Cooperation for Development(RCD) and reduction in superpower confrontation post-1962 Cuban Missiles Crisis and removal of the Jupiter Missiles' umbrella for Turkish security and the U-2 spy plane's downing over Soviet territory may also be cited as credible reason for creating the strategic inertia that motivated Iran to seek a quasi detachment from the Western alliance often claimed by Iran scholars as "de facto de-alignment" the strategic implications of which were evident only during the post-1968 phase of the Iran-Persian Gulf relations with the former leading a charge against the US presence in Bahrain after 1971. In a more Northern Indian Ocean security context, the US failure to fill the security vacuum through physical takeover of local bases (Aden and Bahrain) although a matter for more empirical observations, can still be argued as creating likewise incentives to fill the gap through physical appearance

of naval and military facilities in the PDRY(1969) and Iraq that prompted a reaction from Western clients against Western presence in the Persian Gulf during 1967-80.

In subsequent sections , I would demonstrate a relatively independent security and domestic interests-based engagements by most Soviet clients to empirically test the possibility of relative autonomy enjoyed by the clients the systemic stability imperatives of systemic powers that incentivized regional power struggles which the Soviet could have escalated into trans-regional conflicts beyond the confines of the Arab-Israel conflict. Determining of this Soviet strategy to have the cardinal Soviet security interest at its core with will make possible our research question that in order to rid superpowers' presence from the Gulf, Iran and Saudi Arabia were willing to deliver on the core Soviet interests if the Soviet restraints on their clients delivered regional security and their exclusive hegemony over the con-conformist Arabs. Consequently Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Yemen's (YAR) radical threat to the conservative Gulf labouring under the Soviet-US Detente which effectively delivered the Gulf to Soviet hegemony galvanized Iran and Saudi Arabia to cast their adversaries as Soviet proxies and as such threats to Western energy interests and egress across the Indian Ocean littoral. As Abraham Becker noted in 1973, the rapid development of the Shah's military power on the other hand, particularly 'if operates in concert with the Arab states of the Gulf, may force the Soviet Union to weigh more carefully the risks and rewards of intervention in the region'(Becker 1973:200-01).

2.2.2. The Soviet-Conservative Epoch 1962-80: The strategic Space between the two Détentes:

Until a loosely-held security community became more institutionalized through the Shah-Hussein's military action against the Dhoffar-PFLOAG supported rebellion(1973-77); arm-twisting Iraqi adherence to the regionally permissive behaviour or through Kurdish insurgency (1972-75), the Shah's own pragmatic engagements with the Soviets since 1965-66 and OPEC's confrontations with the West during 1969-74 delivered various Soviet advantages along northern Indian Ocean especially detaching Iran and various US –leaning regional clients due to Nixon's duplicities to sell western Asia down to the Soviet hegemony during 1972-74. With the onset of Détente and Nixon's strategic collaboration with China, provided another strategic prize to be had by the Western European and the Gulf powers to prevent one single super-power dominating the nascent Indian Ocean community.

Keeping a close eye on the American-Soviet ability to reach convenient deals to secure their respective main-lands immediately after the Cuban missiles crisis (October 1962) with the Soviets achieving the removal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey, it can be argued that the post-1962 Détente was the first eye-opener to the Northern allies after Dulles' refusal to Turkey in 1957 over confrontation with Syria(to match Soviet threat through the NATO) which came full circle with Turkey's future confrontations with Greece over Cyprus(1964) and Pakistan's with India over Kashmir (1965). The Soviet investments in Iran since 1956-57 through trade, industrialization and border diplomacy ensured that the Soviets were able to cash-in on the goodwill with Iran during the final phase of British withdrawal from the northern Indian Ocean whereas the US unwillingness through Kennedy's 1962 cutting aid and effectively under Johnson-McNamara (1963-68) provided enough incentives for the Shah to seek Iran's security through re-aligning his policy during 1967-72. In point of fact, major Soviet interests in retaining their pseudo-clients' military facilities after the 1967 Suez crisis and pursuit of Indian Ocean's "demilitarization" were more than facilitated by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey's disengagement from CENTO after 1965. For Iran, Pakistan's dismemberment during the 1971 War due to Nixon's priority towards West Pakistan's integrity; failure to match Soviet aid to India before the War and refusal to renew it despite Indian-Afghan threat to the Baluchi-Pashtun belt vindicated the Shah's suspicions about Nixon-Kissinger's real motives towards western Asia after both reached agreement with Brezhnev over security in Europe and reduction of strategic nuclear arms (SALT-I), through the May 1972 Summit, which Chapters 8, 9 and Appendix I and II are crucial empirical studies

On the Saudi strategic tally as well, the Saudi vulnerability after Nasser's aggression in republican Yemen and Kennedy-Johnson's reluctance to confront Nasser through direct US presence during 1962-68 gave enough motivations for Saudi opposition to the US presence in Bahrain after 1971 and Oman's providing base facilities to the 8th Fleet after 1979**.**

Ramazani insisted in 1975 that 'no matter who started what first (American building of Iran's military deterrent or Soviet provision of arms to Iraq [after 1972], Soviet treaty with Iraq clearly accentuated Soviet alignment with Iraq and further globalized Iran-Iraq power conflict'. Nevertheless our empirical assessment about systematic powers' unwillingness or leaving one global adversary to its geographical periphery is set against the power context of Soviet engagements with Egypt, Iraq, and Yemen during 1956-75 which this comparative assessment about Iran's security dilemma and Soviet interests more poignantly made in 1974:

'the Iranian government for its part had been extremely sensitive to Moscow's wishes and careful not to annoy its northern neighbour'….. 'if the desire for good relations with Iran is a constraint on an activist or interventionist Gulf policy, it clearly need not remain so (Chubin and Zabih1974:265-66).

Ramazani's own strategic assessments about Soviet presence in the PDRY; support to the PFLOAG and Iraq; and threatening Iranian Baluchistan's security to reach Indian Ocean through an "Independent Baluchi State" during 1969-75, begs empirical data as to what interests motivated Soviet engagements with "radical-conservatives" along its southern borders; how did regional powers accommodated overbearing Soviet interests in their regional security evaluation due to the US failure to replace British presence after 1971 and how did the US strategist under Johnson and Nixon Administrations viewed US interests best served by leaving the region to Iranian hegemony (Chubin and Zabih 1974:263; Ramazani 1975:434-35,350).).

Undertaking a broader Soviet-based strategic threat analyses to Iranian security immediately after the British declaration of withdrawal from the Gulf ain early 1968 , which motivated the Shah's opposition to US presence inside the region(including the Arabian Sea through exclusive bases), Ramazani tends to postulate a case for the Shah's confidence to undertake regional security in the Gulf aimed at confronting the radical-Marxist threat to the conservative regimes for which the Shah is commonly accused by his detractors to be inspired to act as a "Gendarme" of the Gulf. Undertaking a thorough empirical examination of such ambitions, subsequent sections deal with the nature of actual Soviet interests with Iran and Iraq during 1968-75, the centre of which remained Iran-Iraq's confrontations over the Shatt al-Arab (1969) and challenging Iranian claims on the Bahrain, Abu Musa and the Tunbs Islands in which the Soviet exercised extreme prudence to be party to any conflict. The section 2.4 details the politics of Iranian contrivance of a Soviet-inspired threat through regional proxies during and after British evacuation from the region, the culmination point of which became the oft-cited Iraq-Soviet Defence Treaty(1972) which many contemporary scholars(including Kissinger) argue became the cause of Nixon extending offer to the Shah to buy any number of non-conventional arms he wished and the onset of the Afghan-Pakistan rift after 1972.

The overall bias of these sub-chapters dealing with the Soviet-regional powers' across the broader Middle East and the Red Sea-Arabian Sea and Gulf axis, is to demonstrate the complexities of Soviet engagements with the regional clients; Arab power's unwillingness to

accede to a Soviet- formulated regional security architecture outside the confines of Arab-Israel conflict and the role of quasi US-aligned Iran and Saudi Arabia on their mainland peripheries during 1950-68 and 1968-75.

The quest for Chapter 2.1 therefore is to develop a calculus of Soviet interests with Arabian Peninsula/Gulf's resident and intervening powers Egypt and Iraq vis-à-vis Iran-Saudi Arabia and Imperial Britain with a special motive of latter's evacuation form the Suez Canal zone since 1956, and connect this understanding with sections on Saudi –Iran hegemony over the region's resource, territorial and balance of power variables(2.2-3). Academic arguments about the Soviet-radical and Soviet-conservative interactions during 1956-79 will make possible our evaluation of regional efforts to configure a Security Community against superpower interference in the Gulf before Iranian revolution; onset of the Iran-Iraq War(1980-88) and the Saudi support to Somali and Yemen during wars in the Red Sea-Arabian Sea axis afterwards (2.4).

2.1.2. Soviet interests in the Mediterranean and engagements with Turkey, Egypt and Syria (1956-70)

The years after the 1956 Suez War may be construed as the most crucial epoch in the Mediterranean's Cold War history which affected Soviet vulnerability from NATO's nuclear missiles bases in the Cyprus and Turkey and latter's accession to it until Khrushchev orchestrated their removal to Italy through the post-1962 Détente and the Cuban Missiles crisis. With the British presence in Cyprus and Malta, and deployment of Jupiter missiles inside Turkey posing nuclear threat to the Soviet western flank, Turkish disarmament through a bargaining on withdrawal of nuclear missiles from Cuba became the basis for the post-1962 Détente (Lenczowski, 1972:51; Golan: 244).

In terms of Northern Tier's containment of the Soviet Union through Baghdad Pact, while Turkey might have been unwilling to allow 6th Fleet's entry into the Black Sea ,it can be argued that before the removal of Jupiter missiles and disappointment with NATO's second refusal to protect Turkey against another Soviet threat on behalf of Cyprus(1964) after Dulles' refusal to provide NATO cover to deter Soviet intervention on behalf of Syria in 1957, the Soviet ability to traverse the Mediterranean-Black Sea to reach across its Arab clients in Maghreb-Gulf depended heavily on the Turkish detachment from Western alliance and good-will after expiration of the Montreaux Convention in 1956, which controlled Soviet egress

across the Bosporus Straits (Lenczowski,1972:156). Nevertheless, despite Soviet failure to achieve Turkish agreement on a joint control regime to prevent US entry through Khrushchev's widely practised industrial-economic aid diplomacy across the Middle East after 1956 (and brief flirtation during the 1967 War to let Soviet vessels pass through for supplying emergency materials to Arab partners), Soviet disadvantages along its Mediterranean and northern Indian Ocean flanks were more than off-set by the US arms embargo against Turkish action against the Greek Cyprus in 1964 that effectively prompted its disengagements with the CENTO alongside Pakistan after its near defeat at the hands of India during the 2nd Kashmir War and the resultant arms embargo. Nevertheless, despite efforts to Acquire exclusive bases in client's territories such as engagements with Iraq and North Yemen from 1958 onwards to give teeth to an active Soviet diplomacy in the northern Indian Ocean , Mediterranean bases retained their strategic priority for Soviet land security especially after the June War due to the closure of the Suez Canal, hence further engagements with Syria, Libya and Algeria as alternative to the unpredictable Egypt. According to various Cold War analysts, although the post-1964 Soviet naval build-up in the Mediterranean provided a formidable nuclear and conventional fighting capability for Soviet diplomacy to take advantage of the Arab-Israel conflict, the closure of Suez Canal in 1967 posed severe logistical problems for Soviet crises deployments in the Indian Ocean region by having to traverse from Cape route over 25 days and along 11000 miles (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:269).

In fact, only by breaking the NATO-CENTO security cordon and endangering further British presence in the Cyprus and Malta carried the promise for Soviet security along the Black Sea (Golan:244; Lenczowski:156-57).

Although Kalkowicz was to argue in 1973 that the post-Khrushchev"Pax-Sovietica" needed a purpose for its surplus industrial and military capabilities (1973:87), this was not come to pass until pressing needs for reforms of the Soviet economy and achieving nuclear parity with the US were accomplished under Brezhnev the late 60s.

This section demonstrates how the pre-1967 War engagements with the radical Iraq and Syria provided diplomatic alternatives to the difficult ally Nasser in pursuit of Soviet objectives in the broader Middle East and northern Indian Ocean, while engagements with Egypt after the June War were motivated by engaging the US on behalf of Arabs through a "no-War no Peace" diplomacy. The Soviets were able to partially achieve this objective by preventing Nasser's escalation across the Suez Canal during the War of Attrition (1967-70) by

denying him offensive weapons beyond which they necessarily over-played their hand with Nasser and Sadat by underestimating their desperation to resolve their security dilemma and reclaim their leadership of the Arab League then under challenge from Iraq, Libya, Syria or Saudi Arabia. Arguing in the debates during 1973 whether Soviet interests in the Arab-Israel conflict mandated its perpetuating Nasser's weakens during the Suez Canal Zone War (the War of Attrition) to seek naval bases there, or for the larger strategic prize of withdrawal of the 6th Fleet and permanently weakening the NATO, Binder observed that Soviet policy of providing SAM-IIIs to Nasser were heavily conditioned by the Soviet's own interest to provide air-cover for its Mediterranean fleet. In addition, the actual utility of Egyptian bases (Alexandria and Mersa-Matruh) superseded the benefits to be won by peaceful accommodation with the United States (1973: 266). After Iraq and Libya's refusal to accede to UAR's military union with Nasser in March 1964; the shattering of the Arab unity after the June War and new (re)alignments in the MENA and the Levant ensured that Nasser (and Sadat) became more inclined to resolve their own dilemmas through US-led mediations under the Rogers Plan and accepting post-July boundaries as the basis (Laquer 1973:101; Binder 1973:256; Golan, 1990:55; Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 177).

Nasser's continuing on a collision course with Israel and Western powers after the 1956 War and until 1967 however provided enough incentives to Soviet meddling in the Mediterranean politics by fostering Nasser's dependence on Soviet arms, technical support and financing the High Aswan Dam which was refused by the US and the World Bank under British pressures(Lenczowski, 1972:45; Hurewitz 1973:163; Golan 1990:47).Finally, a Soviet-blessed Czechoslovakian arms deal in 1955 contrived Nasser's wholesale orientation towards the Communist Bloc after the 1956 War, which ensured the Soviets 'leaping over the Northern Tier'(Ramazani 1972:103; Lenzcwoski 1971:79; Pinchuk 1973:66-67).

The Shah's explanation of joining the Baghdad Pact for self-defence purposes had been refined by 1967 which he explained was motivated by the British decision to forsake Iran's defence in favour of interests with the oil-rich Gulf dependencies through signing a defence treaty with Nasser during 1954:

> 'I must tell you one thing more. May be it was really the reason why we joined. It was at a time when Nasser was discussing the problem of the British [withdrawal of the garrison stationed in Suez Canal zone].Nasser had agreed that if the Russians attacked Turkey, he would permit the reactivation of the Suez Canal base, but he refused to do

this in the event of a Russian attack on Persia, that was the real motive of our joining the CENTO".

(Bayne 1968: 56)

Various analysts writing before the 1973 War argued that before Nasser closed the Suez Canal to the Western maritime traffic in 1967, most Soviet engagements were premised on Brezhnev's strategy of achieving 6th Fleet's withdrawal and British evacuation from NATO bases in Cyprus. Kolkowicz defines the new Brezhnev Doctrine as one of a realistic policy of "hold and explore", and a prudent assessment of the costs/gains involved into military, economic and political initiatives in the Third World of 'more immediate consequences and potential pay-off to current Soviet policy concerns'. Explaining the context of most Soviet engagements closer to the Soviet borders at their most vulnerable therefore, Kolkowicz argued that 'it is a policy that concentrates on areas of greater logistical accessibility: 'it is a policy that implies greater commitment to protect and defend their investments of prestige, economic and military resources against regional or Western challenges'. Accordingly, this was a departure from the Khrushchevian utopia of "optimistic assessments" of the political utility of supporting Nassers, Sukarnos, Castros and others…'(Kolkowicz ,1973:80).

One can readily argue that, acquiring base facilities in Egypt and Libya and threats to the US /Israel to provide increasingly offensive fighters and anti-aircraft munitions (SAM-IIIs and MiG-23s) to Nasser in the Suez Canal Zone (during 1967-70) became means to the Soviet ends rather than ideological attachment to Communist parties or forging Khrushchev's "Zone of Peace" in the Middle East (Golan: 1990: 47-48). However Soviet unwillingness to give Nasser a free hand in the Arab-Israel conflict after 1967 tot eh detriment of US counteraction through the 6th Fleet was a manifest case of Soviet unwillingness to match US commitments to Israeli security(and providing the offensive F-4s) as well as eye on the main objectives in the Mediterranean (Golan, 1990: 75-76). Golan even blames Nasser's pre- June action on Soviet inability (or wilfully)to provide accurate intelligence assessments about probable Israeli reactions to his removal of the UNEF from Sinai, and even mislead him on Israeli troop concentrations from 14th May right up to the War(Golan:1990:66).According to Golan, one of the key reason for the Soviets to have lost Nasser as a favoured protégé was Brezhnev's refusal to Nasser and Sadat during June 1970 to 'provide new and additional weaponry to take the battle beyond defence….It was therefore out of frustration or despair over receiving Soviet

support for offensive action (especially for a potential Egyptian crossing of the Suez Canal) that Nasser threatened to accept the American[Rogers'] plan'.

2.1.3. Power Transition in the Middle East and new sub-security systems (1967-72)

Various analysts however agree that after Nasser's defeat in 1967 War and his pressuring the Soviets for delivering offensive weapons to break the stalemate along the Suez Canal zone by threatening to accept US mediation, the Soviets had already taken insurance out of other radical Arab regimes in the Levant and the Gulf through prior engagements with Iraq and the YAR(North Yemen) after 1958 and taking advantage of Nasser-Saud's confrontation with the British over Yemen, southern Arabia and Buraimi. It was evident in various Soviet engagements with Syria and Iraq since 1958, as well as with Iran since the Shah's first official diplomacy with Khrushchev (1956) pledging Iran not availing its territory for stationing of nuclear rockets (Binder, 1973:251-71; Becker1973: 200-01).

Nasser's adventurism against the Saudi-supported Royalists in North Yemen after 1962 and falling out with King Saud over support to the latter's' support to the royalist elements under Kennedy's guarantees provided another convenient battle ground for the Soviets to facilitate the removal of the British strategic footprint from the northern Indian Ocean through influence in the Arabian Peninsula- hitherto a British-Saudi preserve-through a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with San'a in 1964. A traditionally Saud-Nasser dominated Imamite Yemen (and part of the UAR) as a key anti-Western ally through the Jeddah Military Pact (1958) now transformed overnight into a threat to Saudi southern patrimony, itself a historical consequence of Yemeni Imam's claims on Asir, Najran and Hodeida since 1919, against which the British had extended guarantees to the Saudis(Chubin,1982:). This and the spill-over effects of the civil war between the South Arabian Federation's Adenis and the quasi-Saudi supported Hinterland Sheikhs in the Eastern and Western Protectorates were punctuated by the over-bearing British presence in southern Arabia until 1967. Before Faisal and Nasser fell over Sana'a in 1962 however, both had waged another proxy struggle against the British protected Aden through Marxist-Arab factions well until1969, where after its spill-over into Sana'a itself, the Arabian Hinterland and Dhoffar – through another Saudi-nurtured Dhoffar Liberation Front(the DLF-ANM) more than anything else facilitated Soviet influence in the Arabian Peninsula through direct engagements with

NLF regime in the PDRY and through the PFLOAG during 1969-73 to offset Chinese influence there.

This section however further demonstrates that immediately after the 1956 War, the Soviet strategists had voluntarily nurtured separate regional security complexes in the Levant; the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf security systems and cashed-in on their pre-1967 diplomatic investments with Iran, Iraq, Yemen and Syria as insurance against the unpredictable Nasser.

Nevertheless, whereas the post-1956-67 broader Middle Eastern Security Complex was heavily dependent on the Soviet military and economic subventions for radical Arab regimes against the Western-supported Israel, the post-1967 sub-systems in the Maghreb, the Levant and the Gulf acted rather autonomously from core Soviet regional interest: removal of Western military and naval assets from its Western flanks (Binder, 1973: 251-53). Arab-Israel conflict experts writing during the really 70s and after Soviet collapse (1991) suggest that by fostering more dependence upon the Soviet arms, technical support and Arab-Socialists' developmental aspirations, the Soviets had hoped to pursue their global objective of sitting in the Arab peace conference at parity with the United States, hence pursuing a policy of "no War-no Peace" well until 1972 (Golan, 1990:66; Lenczowski,1972:81,152). Here Golan offers another observation that the Soviets had pressed Nasser to accept the political option, 'which at this point meant accepting a cease-fire option, even if from the Soviets point of view, this was connected with an American initiative'. The incongruity in the Soviet-Arab objectives would however suggest that after the 1962 Détente and failure of the UAR project, the Soviets found themselves less constrained in their willingness to probe for softer spots throughout the broader Middle East.

In fact, according to Kolkowicz, Soviet relations with Iraq, Syria and Egypt generated their own liabilities and were animated by their more localized "ideological "objectives beyond the restrictive US-Soviet strategic framework: 'now as with other "patron-client" relations, the Soviet-Arab relations are characterized by a divergence of primary objectives, by a dissimilarity of focus, and by a sense of profound mutual suspicions (Kolkowicz,1973:84).

Many analysts agree that during 1960s, although 'there is no denying that events in Egypt, Syria, Algeria and other countries in the 1960s seemed to bear out Soviet expectations, the countries of the Middle East have been side-tracked by their internal quarrels to such an

extent that the question whether victory over Israel would be worthwhile- if it could be achieved only a the price of independence- is brushed aside as irrelevant in Baghdad and Damascus, if not in Cairo'(Golan 1990:72-73, 76; Binder 1973:262,259,266-67;Laquer 1973:91)

In any case, the Soviet failure to convince its Arab clients for not fulfilling Khrushchev's promises to utilize Soviet forces on behalf of the Arabs during the 1967 War(as well as during 1956 War) and provide the desperately-needed offensive hardware (SAM-III and MiG-23s) afterwards, ensured that Arab regimes in the Levant/Fertile Crescent were even less receptive towards the Soviet global interests whose central achievements transcended the Arab-Israel rivalry, and even necessitated their perpetuation while the US itself needed Soviet restraints in Vietnam (Binder 1973:256; Golan, 1990: 55, 75-76; Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 177). Far from deterring US action and let the Arabs suffer a comprehensive defeat during the June War again therefore, was a function of Soviet vulnerability against the US 6th Fleet : 'there was no sign that the Soviets were willing to take that kind of risk for their Arab friends' (Golan Ibid:65).

Although Golan argues that the Soviets favoured the reunification of the UAR between Egypt and Syria well until 1970, she points out that after 1966, due to the potential Communist as well as Nasserite influence in the reformed UAR, the Syrians themselves were not willing to accede to it . While outlawing Communist parties in both countries after 1961, Nasser and Assad's hostility towards further Communist influence in the Syrian Army frustrated Soviet efforts to manipulate these Arab-Socialist clients. In fact despite Syria's wholesale dependence on Soviet arms and economic aid after the 1967 War, and Nasser's ambivalence towards Syrian participation- or more pertinently due to Ba'athist influence- as a more autonomous partner ensured that 'Soviet political gains within the country (Syria) were virtually eliminated: thus the Soviets lost its ally and suffered still greater UAR hostility (and anti-Communist purges) after the Iraqi revolution. The latter heralded a period of cooperation between Moscow and the anti-Nasserite regime in Baghdad.' (Golan, 1990: 142).

In any case, the difference between n 'Soviet preference for a political solution of the Arab-Israel problem and Syrian Ba'athist's belief in armed action, be it in the form of reprisal or all-out war', was demonstrable in Syria's action against Jordan during the September 1970 Civil war, when the US moved its 6th Fleet closer to the Syrian waters while Israel concentrated its armour on Jordanian borders to protect Hussein. Only an eleventh-hour

meeting between Atassi and the Soviet ambassador led to the Syrian withdrawal, five days later (Golan 1990:144).

On a more ideological plain as well, a Syrian resurgent hegemonism for a Greater Syria; an ideological struggle between Syrian and Iraqi Ba'athists as well as against a Nasser-dominated pan Arabist movement were joined by Kaddafi's own ambitions of supplanting Nasser as an Arab World leader causing further fissures in the "rejectionists Camp".(Hurewitz 1973165-66). In the case of Iraqi and Syrian ideological struggle after 1966 to prevent pan-Syrian Ba'athist hegemony and clamping on Palestinian guerrillas activities threatening Jordan and Lebanon added additional pressures on the unity in the Arab League.(Binder 1973:258,261; Golan 1990:144; Lenzcwoski 1971:116). After Syria failed to threaten Jordan during the September 1970 Civil war, pressing needs for political reforms at home, and containing the threat from Palestinian guerrilla cross-border raids into Israel compelled even Assad to be more pragmatic in restraining their activities (Binder 1973:253,257-58; Golan 1990:54-55). With Syria disrupting the Iraqi oil supplies along the Mediterranean routes after 1966, Baghdad's strategic shift towards the Persian Gulf –started since 1957- now became a case of energy security, just when Iran had sought to focus on the Gulf by opening more oil concessions in contested territories in the upper Gulf. In addition, Arif-IIs need for deeper ports for carrying oil off the southern Rumeilah oil- initially through British support during 1958-61- by the Soviets after 1968, made latter's involvement with three disparate ideological fronts far easier immediately after the 1967 War (Binder 1973:261-62,251-53; Lenczowski, 1972:156-63).

From the benefit of hindsight, Kolkowicz summarized Soviet strategic objectives (after the 1967 War) in 1973 as in maintaining a 'prolonged stalemate, a policy of neither war nor peace', and their divergence from the "rejectionists" interests:

> 'an outbreak of renewed hostilities with Israel is likely to create catalytic conditions which may prevent the localization of war and could bring the US in some capacity. This is a highly undesirable choice for the Soviets, since it would endanger a carefully orchestrated policy of global normalization and stabilization with the West. At the same time, a peaceful settlement of the Middle Eastern situation would erode the rationale for Soviet presence and would diminish Arab dependence on their Moscow patron'.
>
> (Kolkowicz 1973:80-81).

2.1.4. The case for Soviet "intervention" in the Persian Gulf (1968-79)

Since the 1956 Arab-Israel War, the Red and Arabian Sea region patrolled exclusively by the US 8th Fleet, with physical British presence in the Persian Gulf-Arabian Seas(until 1967),had effectively deterred Soviet interventions, with the exception of Nasser's closing the Tiran Straits in May 1967 and against southern Arabia and Yemen during 1962-67 or deterring Qasim's claims on Kuwait(1961).

Undertaking a more nuanced politico-strategic analysis about the actual Soviet objectives in the northern Indian Ocean littoral(the Persian Gulf, Red-Arabian Seas and the Horn of Africa) McConnell argues that Soviet deterrence against the British intervention in 1969 to save King Idris' regime restraint on the side of Iraq during the Iran-Iraq confrontation over Shatt al-Arab(1969) and even curbing the PDRY-supported PFLOAG's activities across the Gulf through aid and arms supplies and deference to the broader Arab World's sentiments implied that 'Soviet actions were in keeping with the dual necessity of earning the "good-will" from Arabs as well as binding the ambitions of the intervening powers to defensive ends' (McConnell: 13).

In the aftermath of British withdrawal from Aden in 1967, the Marxist PDRY became a hot-spot of ideological rivalry between the Soviets and Chinese to prevent or spread radical Marxist or Maoist influence throughout the Gulf though the PFLOAG and other revolutionary groups across the region. Keen to prevent 8th Fleet's entry into southern Arabia after 1970 if Saudi security was threatened, Soviet policy seemed to defer to Saudi security more than any ideological attachments to Marxist regimes (and movements) or even making Aden an exclusive naval base for the Soviet diplomatic manoeuvrings, it was argued that Soviet policymakers considered a politically unstable PDRY, always at war with Sana'a and vulnerable to Saudi manipulations as a liability for larger Soviet purposes in the Red Sea-Horn of Africa politics during 70s and 80s. Unwilling to antagonise Iran and Saudi Kingdom beyond reproach- both holding the necessary diplomatic clout over the Islamic-Arab world to deliver on the key Soviet vulnerability along its southern borders by opposing superpowers' presence in and around the Gulf-Arabian Sea- restraints on the PDRY and Iraq during 1969-75, did not prevent the Soviets from supporting the Greater Yemeni unification after 1972, alongside Egypt, Sudan and Libya. It can be readily concluded therefore that Soviet diplomacy

of encircling the Saudi Kingdom after 1969 could be achieved through arbitrating the Saudi-radical regimes until the US over-reaction in the Arabian Peninsula became a real possibility after the Iranian revolution and in response to the North-South Yemens' War of 70s and the Ogadan Wars in the Horn region (1979).

More pertinent to this project however is ascertaining the nature of Soviet entry into the Persian Gulf-Arabian Sea axis during 1969-75, where 'port-calls and 'good-will' visits to Aden, Iran and the Iraqi Umm' Qasr ports became routine in anticipation of the [permanent US presence in Bahrain which Iran presented to the Western world as a threat to the region and to be dealt-with through the littoral states of the Gulf and Indian Ocean(Ramazani 1975:435; Chubin and Zabih 1974:268;Noyes 1982:55-56).

In case of interdicting the Persian Gulf's oil to East Asia, McConnell argues that such action would have effectively alienated the conservative regimes whom the Soviet had engaged in the Red Sea, after Nasser's withdrawal from Yemen(1968-69) and in the run-up for another Cold War rivalry in the Horn of Africa. McConnell therefore suggests that the broader Soviet naval objectives in the Indian Ocean were basically 'peace-time' instead of 'war-time' missions.

Other Cold-war era analysts also agree that Soviet concentrations in t Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans was comparable to its lacking effective presence in the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea and in the Horn of Africa (McConnell: 3; Golan 1990:228,234-35; Chubin and Zabih 1974:268; Becker 1972:198). Nevertheless McConnell provided an equally fortuitous strategic vacuum for the Soviet to have pre-empted and by implications presented Iran and other regional powers to seek security under a "restrained" Soviet hegemony in the absence of the US protective cover. McConnell points out that, whereas Soviet vulnerability in the Mediterranean was a function of the threat posed by the Polaris submarines and 6th Fleet's Aircraft carriers , the key factor for Western inability to discourage Soviet adventurism in the Indian Ocean (well until 1975) was due to the complete absence of Polaris between the French Guam and the Indian Ocean, owing to their 60 days endurance, as opposed to their capability to patrol the northern Atlantic and the Pacific waters(McConnell, 1971: 23).

Golan in fact observes the limited value of Aden for the Soviet's broader Indian Ocean strategy and contends that despite Moscow's need for Aden's naval/air facilities for Wars in the Horn of Africa during 1978, 'Aden had no other political significance in the broader context of the region, be it in the post-Camp David Soviet competition with Untied States or

the post-Iranian revolutionary development in the Gulf' (Golan 1990:234-35). In any case, despite Aden's drawing closer to Moscow from 1973 onwards, a Saudi-backed coup in Sana'a' had brought-in a more Saudi-oriented leadership by 1972 which ended "Unity talks" with the PDRY which frustrated Moscow's objectives of 'wooing North Yemen away from the Saudis'. Golan captures the dichotomy of the continued Soviet utility of Aden more aptly, that after having discouraged Rubay Ali's overtures to improve relations with Sana'a during 1977, Moscow had offered military supplies to the latter, only to be turned down in favour of US arms financed through Saudi money: 'the Soviet response to the Saudi and western inroads into the North….was not hostility towards the regime in Sana'a but an effort to somehow win it over, at least to keep a foot in the door. For this reason, although it was wary of North-South unification, Moscow was not interested in a North-South war' anyway (Golan 1990:237-38). On a broader regional strategic board however, the PDRY's security treaty with Moscow in 1969 against the San'a-Saudi-US threat, more than complemented Soviet position vis-à-vis San'a that stalled to renew its 1964 Treaty of Friendship with Moscow, but succumbed to the pressures of Saudi hegemonic peace-making by renewing in 1979. In any case, although the Soviets might have attained their forward deployment objectives in the Indian Ocean through Aden during the 70s, Aden did into prove to be an easy case for Soviet manipulations to transform it into a full-fledged satellite state, due basically to its burgeoning Chinese-Maoist connections, as well as a central strategy not to completely frustrate Saudi efforts to prevent Yemen's unification which were stalling since 1972.

Nevertheless, Chubin and Zabih allude to the near possibility of the Red Navy acquiring a second aircraft carrier by 1975 whose deployments remained uncertain enough for the Shah and Faisal to put much faith in future restraints in the trans-Gulf and Arabian Peninsular conflict, this time without adequate US guarantees. As a general pattern of preventing moderate regimes' demanding US presence in the region at least before 1971, Soviet restraint during the Iran-Iraq conflict over Shatt al-Arab(April-1969) was also manifest in which: 'despite warning against the use of force[to Iran] but remaining neutral, the most important Soviet consideration was probably to avoid any action which might impede the announced British withdrawal from the Gulf' (Golan 1990:181,230).

Various Iran scholars point out that one of the key objectives achieved by the Shah in ending the Communist China's isolation in Asia after 1971 was his sponsoring Chinese membership of the Soviet-proposed Asiatic Pact, in return for former's terminating support to

the PFLOAG. Seeing the inevitable of Soviet withdrawing support for the group after 1971 and again in 1973, South Yemen joined the call for 'an end to outside (sic: meaning Soviet) interference in the Gulf'(Golan 1990:184; Ramazani 1975:110).

Abraham Becker was to observe in 1973 about the potential Chinese posture in the Gulf region as a counter to Soviet influence:

> 'But it may be a mistake to assume that the Chinese will play a purely radicalizing role in the Persian Gulf affairs. Admittedly, Peking has already obtained a foothold in the PDRY and the PFLOAG, but it is also on good terms with Iran. The Shah's attempts to develop an "Indian Ocean" strategy" is surely directed at containment of the Soviet Union. It is unlikely that the Chinese would be unsympathetic to with this objective'.
>
> (Becker 1973:201).

Another factor that seemed to have moderated Soviet adventurism in the Arabian Peninsula-Red Sea politics was the possibility that further escalations in the Yemen War after Nasser's withdrawal implied that the spill- over from a Soviet-supported PFLOAG into the broader Persian Gulf-Red Sea would likely involve Iran as well as the US during 1968-69(Golan 1990:230,238), Nakhleh argued that despite the Soviets losing out on the PFLOAG, with the Shah prevailing upon the Dhofaris during 1973-76 and Saudi Arabia opposing Oman's right to grant base facilities to the US immediately afterwards,, the end result may still be construed as a beneficial product of Soviet restraint during the intra- Peninsular conflicts(1993:99). With Saudi Arabia holding the security cordon and effectively preventing direct US presence in the post-1978 balance of power along the Arabian Peninsula, with the US emergency deployments through Carter's Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) patrolling between Bahrain and Diego Garcia, reality suggested that Ismail's own 'belligerent ambition regarding North Yemen [were] not entirely acceptable to Moscow which pursed a less than hostile policy towards the YAR'[2](Golan 1990:231-32).

At the height of Soviet involvements in the Ogadan war, although the Soviets needed a pliable regime in Aden to use its facilities for transferring weapons and advisors to support the

[2] Golan's retrospective judgment seems well on the mark in the background of Saudi interests in maintaining a balance of power in the region post-Iranian revolution through direct engagements both the Soviet clients in Sana'a and Aden since 1970. Golan argues that Soviet interests in forging a broader coalition of Arab states against the Washington-Cairo axis after Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and the effects of a bloody coup in Aden to replace Rub'ay Ali by Isma'il were not 'conducive to Moscow's relations with other clients in the region'(Golan 1990:231-32).

Mengistu regime, this strategic dependence on Aden as well as the otherwise doctrinaire Isma'il's efforts to arrange a visit to Riyadh in early 1979 only resulted in increased Saudi leverage on Aden and San'a through financing US arms to Sana'a. even after Saleh accepted the Soviet arms in the August of 1979 as a rebuff to the Saudi leverage over San'a security and abstained from condemning Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the UN, he was still obliged to remain receptive to the Saudi regional interests by pledging to lose ties to the Soviets, in return for a $700 million aid (Golan 1990:233-34; Litwak 1982: 92)

Even in further diplomatic initiatives in the Persian Gulf during 1967-75despite lacking exclusive base facilities in the client states and acute logistical problems of traversing an 11,000 miles Cape route-while the Suez Canal remained closed until 1974, did not prevent Soviets' to arm-twist Iraq's withdrawal from the Kuwaiti border posts in February 1973 to appease the Shah. in the foregoing McConnell argued that , 'the Soviets [had]made their support contingent upon its client state's self-restraint in regards to those littoral states who enjoyed respect of the Indian Ocean community' (McConnell1971: 12). R. J. B. Kelly argues that the Soviet emergency deployments during the 1973 conflict under Admiral Groshkov and the official news coverage of the event by the TASS suggested that 'particular effort was given to reassuring Iran: the Soviets also wanted to prevent the crisis from creating a bandwagon movement for greater cohesion between the West and Conservative Gulf States', just when another conflict along the Egypt-Israeli borders was being planned by Saddat (Kelly 1973:10). Kelly even argues that, before 1973 there existed no evidence that the Soviet Navy 'had deployed against the hypothetical possibility of third party involvement, even when during 1973, the presence of Western navies in the Indian Ocean caused concerns for both patron and the client'.

As a case for Iranian self-restraint, not to give pretext to the superpower involvement, which was omniscient in Bahrain and Salalah(Oman), Kelly undertakes a broader analysis of Iranian media and the official policy discourse, where despite the former's warning about Iranian intervention, the official Iranian policy remained cautious by 'making Kuwaiti request a pre-requisite to assistance', and :

'Reflected a reluctance to become involved unless Iraq pushed its attack to the point of threatening Kuwait's existence' (Ibid: 13-14).

Kelly's observation about the Soviet "crisis diplomacy" during 1973, wherein Iran and Saudis made no threatening moves to get involved on behalf of Kuwait, as well as Soviet

objectives in maintaining unity among the Arab ranks against Israel, sets the perimeters of Soviet engagement with Gulf powers during the 70s, whatever putative objectives animated Soviet tactical engagements with Iraq and other clients (Ibid:19-21).

2.1.5. The reality of Soviet-Iraqi collaboration[3] and the Communist-Kurdish link (1958-75)

When the post-1968 Ba'athist regime vowed to resolve bilateral disputes with Iran especially over the treatment of Iranian Shia's; sanctuary to anti-regime elements from both sides; and rift over the Khanagin- Nafte Shah , Chubin and Zabih point out that Ba'athist were more concerned with consolidating their power through settling the Kurdish issue. After getting a favourable military victory during the Winter Offensive (December 1969-March 1970) therefore, and reaching a 15 point agreement on regional autonomy with Barazani in March 1970, Iraq could spare its energies for the Gulf leadership (Chubin and Zabih 1974:181-82; Kelidar1979:10-11). After Nasser's evacuation from Yemen by 1969 with Iran posing a strategic threat to the weaker Ba'athist regime at the same time due to the conflict over Shatt al-Arab(March 1969), another fertile ground for the Soviet-Communist activity was prepared this time by the Soviets through nurturing Kurdish-Communist interdependence for the latter's political participation in Saddam's Progressive National Front (Dann, 1973: 384-385; Lenzcwoski, 1971:141; Eilts 1980:94). Golan in fact claims that , during various times the Soviets even supported the Kurds 'to put pressure on Ba'athist regime whenever the latter's policies towards Iran endangered the strategic framework of Soviet regional interests or Ba'athist repression of local Communists was leading to its complete collapse' (Golan:1990:161). Contrary to the commonly attributed Soviet interest in a rapprochement under both Ist and 2nd Arifs and the post-1968 Ba'ath, the Communist pre-eminence over the latter problem manifested the standard Khrushchevian dilemma for the official Soviet policy of support to the revolutionary Republics as of the inability of "uniformed bourgeoisie" to transform their 'progressive regimes into a Communist socio-economic template; hand over power to their civilian counter-parts; and be brought under the Soviet influence', ergo a wholesale failure of the Communist International in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Iraq and Syria during 1954-70 (Chubin,1982:85).

[3] Also refer to Appendix-I

This section argues that the Soviet involvements with Iraq during 1958-75 were far too modest to pose a strategic threat to Iran or to the wider Gulf community expect Iraq's claims on Kuwait or support to radical movements in Bahrain, Kuwait and Oman through the PFLOAG, the DLF or the ANM. The key Soviet interest in creating a favourable political space for local Communists in the republican Iraq was similarly leveraged through Soviet support to the Communist Kurds which Kurds often refused the adhere to if it came at the cost of achieving regional autonomy within the Iraqi state..

Before being able to concentrate on the Gulf's territorial, ideological and resource piece-mealing by Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia during 1956-71, however Iraq effectively acted a regional peace-broker in the Levant region by restraining Syria' from threatening Jordan during 1967-70. As an act of betray6al to Hussein, after the Iraqi forces remained confined to their barracks during the September 1970 and with the removal of Palestinian threat after the Civil War, King Hussein was able to get the Arif 2nd to withdraw Iraqi contingents (Binder 1973:257; Kissinger 1979: 356).

Republican Iraq after 1958 however held promise for an alternative investment for Soviet policy against Nasser, whom Qasim, Arifs and again the post-1968 Ba'athists (February-November 1963) remained hostile to due to ambivalence with his real objectives towards the Gulf oil riches and domination of the pan-Arab movement which contradicted the central Ba'athist tenets of secular Arab-Socialism. Chubin and Zabih even argue that Nasser's ubiquity as a threat to the Persian Gulf appears to be the chief reason for improvement in Iraq-Iran relations under both Arifs (1963-1968) which even survived the ouster of the Ba'athist faction in November 1963 (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 177).

In fact, despite an immediate replenishment of Iraqi war losses by the Soviets after the June War, future Soviet engagements with Iraq and Iran gave ample challenges to Soviet genius due to its dichotomous objectives in the Gulf with conservatives and radical regimes. Keen to control Iraq's evolution in the Levant as an alternative to the Syrian regional hegemony over Jordan, Lebanon and Israel nevertheless, its presence in the Gulf was still viewed as inimical to the correct relations Soviet relations with the Shah. In fact, after Syrian cutting-off of the Iraqi oil supplies through the Mediterranean routes in 1966, the Ba'athists' ideological security, regional and trade interests had started to impinge heavily on the post-British Gulf. In addition, while it remained resistant to the core Soviet interests in accepting superpower mediation over the Arab-Israel conflict after 1970, post-Shatt al-Arab struggles

with Iran and heavy engagements in the Kurdish conflict and domestic power struggles, made its emergence in the Gulf region well nigh impossible until 1975. In fact, its dependence upon the Soviets for economic development as well as tempering the Communist-Kurdish and southern Iraqi Shi'a hostility to the Ba'athist consolidation ensured that by 1971-72, the Soviets had already made major in-roads into its political, social and the military-economic sectors.

Owing to the Soviet preference for good relations with the Shah after the British withdrawal(November 1971) from the Gulf and temporary respite on the Kurdish front ensured that henceforth preventing further Communist infiltration inside Iraqi political and social spheres; direct engagement with the Soviets and ending the Kurdish conflict remained Iraq's key objectives:

> 'the Soviets did achieve some of their objectives in Iraq [in 1972]. There was nationalization of Western oil interests. Iraq entered into a Treaty with Moscow and it assisted in the Anti-Camp David campaign. But the Soviets were never able to achieve Iraqi support for the overall position on the Arab-Israeli conflict, nor a resolution of Kurdish demands, nor lasting rights for the Communists–much less Communist influence.'
>
> (Golan, 1990: 175)

Golan explains that the irony of Kurdish conflict with Baghdad however was that their interests diverged considerably from the key Soviet interests in seeking regional autonomy which the latter never supported (Golan, 1990: 165-66). No credible evidence of Kurdish aspirations for separatism or Iran's own interest in having to contend with a Soviet-dominated Kurdish republic-nestled between Turkey and Syria- has been produced even by the likes of Kissinger, whom personally supported the Shah's Kurdish policy during 1971-1975 (Kissinger, 1999: 583, 588; Roosevelt, 1988:286-89,261).

Various arguments about a potential Soviet dependence upon the cheaper per-unit Gulf oil have been forwarded to make a case for Soviet stakes in keeping the Gulf energy routes open to Europe and East Asia. Its utility during the late 60s to 70s ranged from providing the Gulf oil to its Eastern European satellites to keeping the trans-Siberian supplies for its Western European consumers for hard currency (Golan, 1990: 166-7; Becker, 1972: 184-85). In fact Eilts was to observe ominously of what become the treacherous Realism of the US-European governments jumping on the arms trade bandwagon during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88).

Pointing out unconfirmed reports about Soviet efforts to approach certain Gulf states for new contracts of oil (presumably Kuwait or Iraq) 'presumably to meet the expected short-fall in the mid-80s of the Soviet domestic production', he argued in 1980 that although the Soviets may not be able to find sufficient hard-currency to buy the Gulf oil; may dispose off some of their gold reserves- either unilaterally or as a member of a European consortium-….more worrisomely, they might barter military equipment, spare parts and training, in exchange for oil, in the pattern of the Iranian and Iraqi arrangements'(Eilts, 1980:83)

In fact, the Soviet manipulation of Iraq's desperation after its July 1972 confiscation of the British IPC at a time when it faced an Iran-US –Israel-supported Kurdish insurgency during 1972-75 was effectively a case of the Soviet encouragement , Soviet opportunism to take advantage of Iraqi isolation after Saddam's actions against Kuwait in 1973 was evident in bartering the Iraqi oil lost to the Western markets for desperately-needed arms and selling the confiscated oil to the West for hard-currency . After 1974 however and faced with the Soviet diplomacy of withholding arms supplies whenever Saddam's persecution of the Communists exceeded Soviet forbearance or Iraq was on the verge of overcoming the Kurds, Iraq too started demanding hard currency exchanges and started buying weapons from France and China (Golan, 1990: 166-167).

Iraq itself however could not be manipulated as too easy a tool for Soviet strategy in the Gulf, so claimed by various Iran scholars to create a rival to Iran and Saudi Arabia during 1960-70s, especially due to Iraq's single most interest in engaging Soviets to contain the security threat from Kurdish autonomy (Golan, 1990:168-169). In point of fact, a secular Qasimite (1958-1963) and a brief Ba'athist regime(February-November, 1963) was opposed to Nasser's demanding Arab League members to break diplomatic relations with Iran due to its post-facto recognition of Israel and violating the Arab oil embargo ; colluding on various Middle Eastern affairs and against the Communist threat after 1958, with the latter not overtly taking issue with Iran's joining the British-sponsored Pact, Iran-Saudi Kingdom's further accession to the pan Islamic OIC in 1964 not only effectively circumvented Nasser's hegemony over the pan-Arab affairs, but lack of Arab consensus over the Arab-Israeli problem through Communist connections effectively reduced Nasser's threat to conservatives regimes in the Gulf and after 1964 weakened his ideological leadership of the UAR (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:151, 157-159; Ramazani, 1972:37; Binder, 1973: 253; Ramazani, 1975: 398-400; 1972: 33-34, 46-47). With the more populous and Western-oriented Pakistan, Turkey and

Afghanistan, in cahoots with Iran, the traditional Iraqi hostility towards Nasser's brand of pan-Arabism effectively made him an outsider to the Gulf affairs. Here Nadelmann observes that 'although the Saudis were partly to blame for the continuing conflict and primarily responsible for America's involvement' [in Yemen], Nasser's refusal to abide by the Peace agreements, and reports that the Egyptian army was using lethal gas, marked him as the principle aggressor' (Nadelmann, 1982:444).

2.2. The political economy of islands, ideology and security: Intra- Gulf pre-emptions and collaborations

2.2.1. Introduction

The years 1951-54 provide the nearest timeline of Iraqi claims on the Kuwaiti strategic Islands of Werbah and Bubiyan- and a strategic shift of the two Ottoman-era adversaries (Iran and Iraq) towards the Gulf after discovery of the continental shelf oil closer to the Iran-Iraq and Kuwait borders. After a competitive diplomacy towards the Soviet Union during 1956-62 among the two due to either quest for security or trade-developmental interests, the Gulf had become ripe for the regional powers' competition beyond the confines of Communist-Soviet threats which facilitated direct Soviet entry into Iraq through Communist infiltration under Qasim and both Arifs' regimes (1958-68).

Iran scholarship stops short of explaining the centrality of the region's resource and island politics at the root cause of most subsequent rivalries waged between the pre-revolutionary Iraq (1958) a pre-independence Kuwait(1961) and Iran. In fact, this sub-chapter seeks to demonstrate that the Iran-Saudi and the Saudi-Kuwait rivalry over other islands in the upper Gulf due to their resource and strategic values outweighed the symbolic value of Bahrain, Abu Musa and the Tunbs in the lower Gulf until the Americans wrested Bahrain from Iran and Saudi Arabia for hosting the MIDEASTFOR after 1971.

After the first escalation with Iraq over Shatt al-Arab in 1959, and Kurdish uprising in 1961as a direct consequence of Nasser and SAVAK General Bakhtyar since 1958, Iran also started shifting its main petroleum infrastructure from Abadan-Shatt al-Arab to the mainland along the Bander Mahshur inlet- capable of birthing upto 60,000 tons of super tankers)as well as linking the key sources at Ahwaz-Khanagin-Nafte-Shah with the Kharg Island in the Gulf. While explaining the energy security as a core reason for Iran to demand control of the

Hormuz Straits and military insignificant islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs, contemporary academia fails to explain the objectives in Iran's new focus towards the eastern Gulf since 1959; interests in developing strategic naval bases at Bander Abbas and Chahbahar despite upper Gulf being the central arena for military rivalry with Iraq during 1959-75(Ramazani 1975:367; Chubin and Zabih, 1974:201)..

In addition having failed to achieve much economic advantage out of the upper Gulf's seabed along the Iraq-Kuwait boundary and along the Qom-Sarajeh's discoveries (due to CENTO's refusal to finance the Turkey-Iran pipeline or failure to open the northern oil pipelines with the Soviet Union)during 1956-61;over-lapping concessions granted by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia combined by refusal by Independent non-British oil companies to undertake further explorations compelled Iran to break out of its isolation from the Gulf through collaboration with like-minded neighbours. At the same time Iran was faced by the US refusal to give due attention to the Gulf security due to new priorities of the post-Cuban missiles Détente. With the cutting-off of Iran's military "aid" by Kennedy during the Shah's 1962 visit and after Khrushchev's cautioning Kennedy in 1962 about Iran's revolutionary potential to affect superpower relations, the thermidore of the post- June 1963 uprising under Khomeini insured that Iran now faced complete isolation in the region and even sidelined in the superpower relations, and logically seeking to come to terms with the Soviet Union afterwards.. While, by 1963-64 therefore Iran had re-opened 1950's off-shore areas to the American Independent oil companies in anticipation of finding sufficient revenues to improve its defence capability and at the same time setting on course to the Shah-led White Revolution of socio-economic reforms, these concessions to the American Independent IPAC led to renewed resource and boundary conflicts with Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Until 1968 Iran was able to put off resolution of these disputes through signing various agreements without ratifying them citing nationalistic opposition to lose its richest oil possession that promised its upto 75% profits on the "supplier-agent" basis. During late 1960s ,this very IPAC played a central role in facilitating Iran's bargaining power against the Major oil companies-comprising the 1954 Consortium-by promising to sell the excess oil put form the Consortium and other Islands to non-European consumers and make available the Shah's most needed funds for military purchases and the 4th Development Plan.. For example, until late 1968, Iran kept refusing to ratify the 1965 Agreement it had reached with Saudi Arabia over the Arabi-Farsi Islands, where the IPAC had found the Gulf's largest off-shore source under Arabi

Islands containing 1 billion barrels of oil. Iran was able to get Saudi acquiescence on the "half-sharing" the "recoverable" oil only after renouncing claims on Bahrain during October 1968 which by an economic logic makes |Bahrain as a lost cause of nationalist aspirations and only serving as a strategic bargaining tool that various observers and people close to the Shah agree the Shah had never intended to gain by force since 1955.

In an effort to propose new understanding about the control of Islands in the Gulf politics during 1968-71 as one of resource rivalry under scarce economic surpluses by 1960s standards and develop sufficient military capabilities , this chapter explains the nature of these rivalries in the Gulf over oil, water and access to the deep ports which started post-haste well before Iraq became a revolutionary republic in 1958 to threaten moderate Western allies including Iran through a Qasim-Nasser dominated Arab axis henceforth . In this regard and even central to these vulnerabilities can be argued that Iran's immediate rapprochement with the Soviet Union after 1956 with the Shah making pledges of not making available Iranian territory for nuclear rockets to the US or the Baghdad Pact was also designed to concentrate on the Gulf immediately after the post-1958 power transitions and Iraq's emergence in the Gulf during 1958-61. Conceptualizing the Gulf politics as a direct function of Iran-Soviet diplomacy post-1956 for reducing ideological and cross-border tensions, at the same time when both superpowers remained convinced about reducing superpower confrontations, contradicts Ramazani's argument that Iran's accepting Soviet Non-aggression Treaty after 1958 was conditioned by the Iraqi revolution as a centre of its national security interests (Ramazani, 1972:106; 1975:400). On a regional strategic level therefore , a British-supported Iraq and Kuwait before 1958 was already confronting Iran with various resource and access issues in the upper Gulf, while the 1958 revolution and its domestic power struggle as a blessing for both the Shah and Nasser to pin-down Iraq in the Kurdish conflict during 1961-70. This section however puts the politics of islands and resource rivalries during 1956-68 in the Gulf at the centre of Iran's rivalries with major powers which set the stage for further regional rivalries in the lower Gulf during 1968-75. The succeeding pages take the view that the onset of these rivalries should temper our traditional understandings about the region's political development; economics of conservative leadership vis-a-vis radical regimes and its resultant ideological discourse during 1968-75 along the conservative-radical and the Arab-Iranian dichotomies.

2.2.2. The Upper Persian Gulf islands: politics of resources, nationalism and the legacy of modern Irano-Arab rivalry (1950-75)

The year 1950 onwards provides a rather practical threshold point when Iran, Kuwait and the Saudi Kingdom sought to pre-empt the upper Gulf's key oil resources by excluding Iraq, despite the pre-1968 Ba'athist' various diplomatic efforts to resolve the multilateral Iran-Iraq disputes through comprehensive settlements on all issues including political rivals and anti-regime elements. in 1950 the Iranian nationalist Majlis under Mossadiq made Constitutional claims on Bahraini oil resources, long before the Shah was able put relations with the Soviets on an even keel after his first visit to Moscow (1956) and henceforth dealt with a republican Iraq through a more heavy-handed policy through Kurdish and southern Shi'a' opposition groups during 1961-70.

With Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan signing the Pact of Mutual Cooperation in February 1955, the establishment of the Baghdad Pact was followed by Pakistan and Britain joining in April 1955 , while Iran insisted on joining it against the British and US advice),with Hussein failing to join under domestic pressure. A regional-initiative originally conceived between Iraq and Turkey to 'resist outside aggression' with Pakistan and Turkey already singing their mutual commitments in 1954, Iran and Iraq were latter entrants to the NATO-Turkey and SEATO Pakistan, whose region-specific conflicts remained impediments to seek American accession to the Pact and instead becoming only the member of military coordination and planning committees until 1979. According to the US Office of the Historian, 'the Baghdad Pact was a defensive organization for promoting shared political, military and economic goals founded in 1955 by Turkey, Iraq, Great Britain, Pakistan and Iran' ,thereby implying official US policy of not providing similar security guarantees to its allies in the Northern Tier ,as extending to the NATO. According to this official policy line, with the revolutionary turmoil in Lebanon and the British action against Nasser during the 1956 War, all members, except Iraq had approved the US intervention in Lebanon during 1958, by invoking the Eisenhower Doctrine, which led to Iraq's secession from the Pact in August 1959. although , the Office does not give a single major reason for the US not joining the pact ,but its preference to provide military aid on a "bilateral " basis to its members, effectively meant that the CENTO had 'never created a permanent military command structure or armed forces, […]. By the close of the Eisenhower Administration, it had become clear to CENTO members that that the organization was a better conduit for economic and technical cooperation than it was a

military alliance. In addition, the official US explanation about the failure and ultimate dissolution of the CENTO dates farther to 1979 citing the 1979 Iranian revolution as its root cause while 'Pakistan also withdrew that year after determining the organization no longer had a role to play in bolstering its security' (the US Government Milestones: 1953-1960: the Baghdad Pact (1955) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). Although beyond the scope of this section, the regional members' interests in joining a Western security guarantee continued to be the cause of friction between the regional allies and the Western "patrons" right until 1979 between the Shah and Carter Administration, which in simpler terms struggled to determine the nature security threats which had impeccable Soviet credentials, hence serious rift between Iran and the US during 1959 with the Shah on the verge of accepting the Soviet offers of a non-Aggression Pact for 50 years, in return for withdrawing from the CENTO ,but settled for a minimal security guarantees under the Executive Agreement of 1959, extending direct US security guarantees against the direct Soviet or Communist threats. Contemporary Iran scholars struggle to rationalise the Shah's ultimate motive for agreeing to this dubious guarantees by Eisenhower, he similarly signed with Pakistan and Turkey at the same time, by arguing the Shah's interest in the US guarantee against non-Soviet threats, to which was added the latter provision of US obligation to protect Iran(or the Shah) if she was attacked by a third power, "controlled by International Communism", hence desperate Iranian(and even Saudi) efforts to cast their regional adversaries working glove -in-hand with the Soviets.

The debate whether Iraq and Iran had preconceived interests to leverage their accession to the US-guaranteed Pacts to achieve their regional aims was however already evident with the former making sovereign claims on Kuwait's two main islands: Werbah and Bubiyan, and its mainland as a logical inheritor of the post-Ottoman geographical divisions since 1919. Before therefore Iraq's anti- monarchical revolution(14th July 1958)by the "Free Officers" comprising the Republican Qasimites, Nasserites, Communists, the Ba'ath and the Arifs, and made claims on the British-protected Kuwaiti mainland in 1961, the British policy to prevent the clash between its post-League of Nation's mandated oil-rich territories remained one of supporting a *quid pro quo* for both, in which case Kuwait was to lease the Werbah island to Iraq in return for its full access to the waters of the Shatt al-Arab River. Despite the oft-cited case of the post-1932 Hashemite Iraq's subservience to the British under King Faisal-II and Prime minister Nouri al-Said, to the detriment of its national interests and working against

pan-Arabism, a tentative quality of Iraqi nationalism was already manifest in 1955 when Nouri al-Said tired to engage Kuwait to join the Baghdad Pact , which effectively implied Kuwait's subservience to Iraq in the imminent independence(Noyes, 1982: 10; Chubin, 1982: 28-29).

With Kuwait and a pre-revolutionary Iraq becoming the two largest oil producer in the Gulf by taking advantage of Mossadiq's nationalization, to the British-Arab colossus working Iran's economic and nationalist aspiration remained the cause of much Iranian grievances against the Arab opportunism during the Shah's subsequent rule(1941-79). Having to suffer a colossal short-fall in developmental and defence funds again the Soviet threat during 1946-62, when the Western oil companies circumventing Iran's oil cuts during 1951-54 through the Arab "perfidy", Iran effectively divorced the political use of oil from its diplomacy in league with the anti-Israeli or Western Arab regimes and refused to honour future Arab embargoes during the 1956, 1967 and the 1973 Wars earning its Nasser and other Arabs hostility and isolation, even when it sought to provide succour to the Saudi, Kuwaiti, Jordanian, Lebanese or Tunisian monarchies beleaguered under Nasserist pressures . Oil however retained its political usages for most cases of Iranian diplomacy such as when, in 1972 the Shah decided not to support Iraq's nationalization of the British- IPC as not in Iran's national interest. The foregoing occurred just when the Shah had achieved the OPEC's backing for revoking the 1954 Consortium Agreement, 2 years later when he decided to throw his lot behind the Arabs' demanding higher oil prices against his preference for increased production (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 289,294).

Although the Persian Gulf's continental shelf oil, straddling along the Iran-Iraq-Kuwait and Saudi territorial waters could not be demarcated according to the 600 fathoms principle under the UN Convention on the Continental Shelf(1958), but still amounted upto 70% of the region's off-shore reserves combined. To Iran's benefit, then struggling under the 1954 Consortium Agreement to achieve a balance of payments and domestic under-growth and CENTO's refusal to finance the Qom-Iskenderun pipeline on grounds of the US Exim Bank's economic arguments, Iran experts writing during 70s observed that in fact, nine out of the twenty two known concessions along the Shatt al-Arab-Hormuz, were located closer to the Iranian side (qualifying for maritime boundaries) 'where by 1969 it had registered the highest percentage of resource growth than any other regional producer'. This to a great extent was by virtue of the 75% profits accruing to Iran through its revolutionary agreements it arranged with

the various Independent oil companies and joint-ventures with the IPAC, the French CFP, Italian Agip-Minerara and the Canadian Sapphire (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 283).

As early as 1957, however, the battle lines over the islands and oil in the upper Gulf had already been drawn with Iran granting concessions in the north-western Gulf along the contested boundaries with Iraq and Kuwait, which also overlapped its boundaries along the Shatt al-Arab-Gulf estuary. Kuwait too, joined the affray in 1961 by further granting off-shore concessions to the Arabian-Japanese oil company in areas already contested by Saudi Arabia due to Iran's previously granting concessions there to the Agip-Minerara in 1957 under its 1957 Petroleum Law. Given the fact that the Kuwaiti mainland, its adjacent Territorial Sea and the intervening islands (outside the Saudi-Kuwait Neutral Zone 1965) as reference points for delineating its continental shelf, was effectively situated opposite the Iranian coastlines and astride the Saudi and Iraqi coastal boundaries, the controversy implied that Iran's own territorial sea and its appertained continental shelf itself now became part of the conceded areas by all the three (or four) contenders. Kuwait's inability however to use its "sovereign" islands as reference points for delineating its continental shelf and the territorial sea and Saudi refusal to give Kuwait the benefit of "equidistance" principle to demarcate its boundaries as reference points under the United Nation Convention on the Continental Shelf (1958) ensured that the resolution of off-shore disputes between Iran-Iraq and Kuwait were effectively a function of the exclusive Iran-Saudi agreements during 1968 which were resolve din favour of Iran acquiring the fair share in the oil riches of the Arabi Island (Amin, 1981: 117).

In 1963-64 however, Iran protested against Kuwait's 1961 concession to the Shell Kuwait Company as interfering with its SIRIP) and the IPAC concessions of 1957 and 1958 respectively (Ramazani 1975:398). The Kuwaiti-Shell therefore refused to undertake further operations in the conceded areas after determining that the best prospects for gas laid in the south-eastern part of the concession which effectively overlapped with Iran's IPAC-Cyrus joint-venture (Amin: 118; Chubin and Zabih, 1974:176,283).

Chubin and Zabih's research however shows that Iran's SIRIP(1957) concession in the north-eastern Persian Gulf (spanning 23,000 sq.km); the IPAC(1958 16000 sq.km); and Sapphire-IRCAN (1,000 sq km) in south-western Iran included these off shore concession areas as the same ones which Iraq contested with Iran in July 1963(Chubin and Zabih, 1974:282-85,176).

Discussion between Iran and Kuwait over their continental shelf disputes in 1964 agreed on setting the precedent of "equitable distribution of resources" as opposed to the British practice of settling these disputes for its imperial Gulf protectorates to use "equidistance" as a method for delimitation of maritime boundaries which she discretely failed to uphold in case of Bahrain, and Sharjah-Iran's dispute over Abu Musa that affected the life-lines of the other oil-less sheikhdoms of Ajman and Fujairah (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:291-92,280; Ramazani1975:419-20).

Subsequent negotiations between Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia during the Copenhagen Conferences (1965) again excluded Iraq, which gave rise to further conflicts between Iran and Iraq (Kurdish and Shatt al-Arab) to each other's emergence in the Persian Gulf (Amin, 1981:119; Chubin and Zabih, 1974:289; Ramazani1975:412-13,418).

Partaking from the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf and the Territorial Seas(Iran signed it but never ratified), Iran and Kuwait still agreed in 1966 on the "special circumstances" nature of the intervening islands (Kharg and Failakha) to give them "effect" delineating maritime boundaries and their appertained shelves. Nevertheless, it was the Saudi refusal to accept Kuwaiti right of using Failakha as a base point for demarcation of the Iran-Kuwait maritime boundaries which prevented final agreement until October 1968. Reaching agreement over the joint-exploitation of the Arab Island's one billion barrel oil,-only after reaching a deal over Bahrain- that Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed on giving the Kharg Island its special "half-status" for demarcation of their own median line and offshore boundaries (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:290; Saud 2003:87; Amin:119; Ramazani 1972:48).).

In fact, under the terms of the Saudi-Kuwait PZ delimitation agreement(July 1965) however, the status of Failakha became even more controversial in 1968 with Saudi refusal to honour Kuwait's right to use Islands' territorial sea (extended to 12 miles since 1967) for reaching beyond the Neutral Zone. The agreement excluded Failakha from the 12 mile territorial sea limit claimed by the Saudis (since 1958) and hence discounted as reference point for the joint exploitation of continental shelf beyond 6 miles(Amin:126-27). Many analysts incorrectly attribute this failure due to Iraqi opposition to let Kuwait use its mainland/ islands as reference point for demarcating Iran-Kuwaiti maritime boundaries since these agreements overlapped with its own territorial sea and the continental shelf astride the three states' coastal line (Amin: 120-24; Chubin and Zabih, 1974:290,295).

After further Saudi denial of the Kuwaiti sovereignty over the Qaru and Umm'al Maradim Islands, both parties agreed to the joint sharing of oil revenues around their appertained territorial seas (Amin: 128; Litwak 1982:40). In 1966, while Kuwait not only asserted its sovereignty over all its islands, it even granted a new concession to American Oil Company of California (AminOil) around Qaru's 3 miles territorial sea. Despite Kuwaiti offers of sharing its profit, further exploration was stopped under Saudi protests (Amin:128).

The Saudi insistence over the co-sovereignty over Qaru and Umm'al Maradim Islands under the Neutral Zone Agreement (1965) was later relaxed by its recognizing Kuwaiti sovereignty over the Kubr Islands located outside the Neutral Zone (Litwak 1982:40).

In the Iran-Kuwaiti boundary disputes as well, despite Iraqi claims on the Werbah and Bubiyan Islands, Iran and Kuwait made use of these islands as base points for delimitation of the territorial sea and the adjoining continental shelf. In 1969, the Kuwaiti government reasserted its sovereignty over Werbah and Bubiyan Islands in order to discourage further Iraqi demands of ceding the bigger island for deeper strategic depth while any tentative agreement on Werbah through the 1956 British proposed *quid-pro-quo* remained elusive, even when Bubiyan remained the mainstay of Kuwait's own security (Litwak 1982: 28-29).

Such pre-emptions in the off-shore areas therefore coincided with the Iran-Iraqi central dispute over Iran's exploiting from the joint subterranean source of Khanagin-Naft-e-Shah oil in the Kurdish Kermanshah, beyond its agreed share (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 176, 284-5; Ramazani, 1972: 74-76, 1973:403-04; Kelidar, 1979: 12). Although Chubin, Zabih and other Iran-Gulf specialists like Ramazani prefer to simplify bilateral rivalries between Iraq and Iran over the Kurdish affairs and access to the Shatt al-Arab as "exclusive" issues divorced from serious resource rivalries, their spill-over into other ideological and security issues beg empirical explanations as to what preceded Iraqi counter-actions on the Shatt al-Arab during 1959 and after the 1968 Ba'athist coup, as well as Kuwait indulging in a dual diplomacy of appeasing Iraq to circumvent the Saudi pressures (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:182: Op Cit Dana Adams Schmidt,1969).

Chubin and Zabih's suggestion therefore that 'in the intervening period between 1961-68 no serious issues animated bilateral relations, except Iranian support of the Barazani's Pesh Marga' intriguingly ignores the centrality of this very issue souring bilateral relations during 1961-75 which involved the US and the Soviet Union on behalf of Iran and Iraq the effects fo which still haunt the Irano-Arab relations without settling the blame on its actual perpetrators

to date(Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 176-77; Ramazani, 1975: 417-18). These eminent scholars also claim that 'between 1961-68 no issue involving the Shatt al-Arab occurred,' whereas other "'secondary" issues persisted : but the onset of the Iran-Iraq rivalry over the oil issues still animated bilateral relations and by their implications surrounded the entire spectrum of Persian Gulf relations' (Ramazani 1975:402-03,396; Chubin and Zabih ,1974:176)

Without much critical input on mutual antagonism, Chubin and Zabih observe that despite the February 1968 bilateral discussions in Baghdad on 'all issues concerning the two' the 'abrupt breakdown' of these talks were due to both sides 'inability to progress on these "unrelated phenomenon"' (Chubin and Zabih 1974:184)

As previously pointed out Iraq under Qasim (1958-63) and the two Arifs (1964-68) remained pinned down along the Eastern front (the Kurdish Iraq-Iran borders) and away from the Gulf under a highly pro-active Iran and Israeli policy of nurturing Kurdish conflict since 1961. Ramazani's research however suggests that it was SAVAK's chief General Taimour Bakhtyar and a later critic of the Shah's regime, who in 1958 had encouraged Iraqi Kurds joining Iran in a union under the Shah. In addition, Nasser's condemnation of the Shah's pro-Israeli policy during 1960 also led to his calling upon Kurdish and Khuzestani Arabs to rebel against the Shah in 1958 which was, jumped upon by the Syrian Ba'aths and certain Arab League jurists (Ramazani, 1975: 400, 404; Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 143, 179: Eilts 1980:93).

One cannot however disregard the plight of the Shah's own regime during the June 1963 and efforts to divert attention towards the Iraqi threat after Amini failed to get Mossadiq's National Front's participation in his government after Premier Eghbal's election rigging despite the Shah's well-intentioned democratic trials during 1961, while the Khomeini-National Front-inspired riots confronted the Shah with the prospects of his second fall after 1953and international legitimacy. At this epoch some analysts of the US-Iran relations point out that the fall out form the June riots and Khrushchev's warning to Kennedy during the Moscow Summit compelled Kennedy officials to recalibrate US investments in the Shah's regime (Summitt, 2004: 560-75; Parsa 1994:134-59; Cottam, 1979:81). To the Shah's good fortune and a case often ignored by the Gulf specialists is the Iran-Ba'aths actual collaboration over regional issues such as reaching a tentative agreement to cooperate against the the Kurds. Nevertheless, despite the brief interlude actually becoming a nine month honeymoon period between the two rivals and the implied domestic instability for Ba'ath's successive battles with the two Arifs during November 1963-July 1968 only gave Iran the

energies to focus on the Gulf (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 180). This core aspect of the oft-ignored Ba'athist cooperation with the Shah during the period has never received due academic scrutiny to explain as to why from a position of close affinity with the Ba'aths and to voluntarily arrange Khomeini's exile to Iraq after1963, and according to some accounts, Saddam's 1977 offer to have Khomeini executed, the Shah felt obliged to support Kurdish rebellion during 1966-75; militarized the Shatt al-Arab problem and effectively mortgaged Saddam's goodwill.

Pending the resolution of the Khanaqin-Naft-e-Shah and Shatt al-Arab regime (1937), by seeking Iraqi restraint under Qasim and Ba'aths, Iran's renewed IPAC concessions in the off-shore District 1 during April 1963 which again included an additional 380 sq.miles into the Iraqi territorial waters at the Shatt-al Arab estuary, whereas the Area 2 now extended IPAC's concession into the Kuwaiti Shell concession (1961). When therefore Qasim took up this issue with the Shah in 1963 for Iran's opening the 40,000 sq.km of the contested areas for international bidding,' which infringed on Iraqi territorial waters', Iraq had missed a strategic opportunity to consolidate its oil interests in the upper Gulf and became a late comer to the Gulf politics until 1975.

In the other resource-related conflicts until 1975, the Khanagin-Naft-e-Shah dispute (1963) also eluded resolution despite the Shah and Qasim reaching a tentative agreement over a "comprehensive" resolution of all bilateral disputes (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:177-78).

Despite the Abdul Salam Arif-Yahya regime(November 1963-April 1966) extending assurances of bilateral improvements to the Shah, re-start of the Kurdish rebellion (with Iranian complicity fairly obvious after the Iran-Israel agreement of 1965-66) and the Shah reaching tentative agreements with Kuwait (June 1965) and the Saudi Kingdom (December 1965) over respective continental shelves, the Shah was able to discard his July 1963 agreement with the Ba'athist Petroleum minister Abdul Wattari for the joint exploitation of the Khanagin-Naft-e-Shah and Shatt al-Arab waters (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:176, 285).

Despite another tentative agreement with Abdul Salam Arif in February 1964 to restart mediation over oil and continental shelf disputes, it was either Iraq's prospectively acceding to the military union with the UAR (March 1964) or the SAVAK-inspired Shi'a-Kurdish condemnation of this , which aroused Salam's suspicion about Iran's deliberately encouraging the Sunni-Shi'a and the Arab-Kurdish schisms inside Iraq. In response, Iraq revived its (or the Arabist) claims on the Arab-dominated oil-rich Khuzestan which led to the

first rupture of relation between the two in 1964 (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:286-87; Ramazani 1975:404-05).

Iran's interests in preventing the rise of Iraq as a challenger to its own predominance in the Gulf by leading an Arab-axis or threatening Iran's vital access to the Gulf along with the strategic artery along the upper Gulf, implied that the Shah finally agreed to support Kurdish rebellion under a much-reported Barazani-Hoveyda agreement (1966) 'which set the stage of Israeli arms aid to the region'(Chubin and Zabih, 1974:180).

Yet despite the younger Arif's desperation during January 1965-Decemebr 1966 to reach some agreement over resolving these intractable issues, and his brother-successor Abdul Rahman Arif(April 1966-July 1968) concluding certain cultural/transit agreements in March 1967 with Abbas Aram, failed to break impasse on the Shatt al-Arab regime. Subsequent deterioration of the post- 2nd Arif relations followed a revival of the Shatt al-Arab dispute in 1969, despite Ba'athist pledge of honouring commitments made by their predecessors. In addition, both countries failed to resolve either the Khanagin-Naft-e-Shah dispute or delineating territorial sea/continental shelf boundaries (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:288).

It was this very Ba'athist regime (1963 and the post-1968-2003) which despite being a hodgepodge of anti-Qasimite Arifs, Yahya, Bakr, and Saddam, as well as various Shi'a-Alawi Tikritis (until 1973 Kazaar *putsch*), which effectively renounced further claims on Kuwait, previously made by the Shi'a-dominated Qasim regime (1958-63). James Noyes even impugns the real motivations behind Qasim's actions on Kuwait (1961) as motivated by desire to annex Kuwaiti mainland or merely as pressure tactic to acquire the strategically dominant Werbah and Bubiyan islands 'due to need to diversify her dependence on the marshy waters of the Shatt al-Arab after the 1959 escalation and due to her burgeoning trade activities in the Persian Gulf region' (Noyes, 1982: 11-12; Chubin, 1982: 86).

Chronological study of events however suggests that deterioration of Iran-Iraq relations during 1969 had direct bearings upon Iraq's invigorated claims on Werbah and Bubiyan Islands as a function of Iraqi need to increase its strategic depth (Chubin 1982:86). Keeping in with a oscillatory diplomacy of pan-Arabism whenever the pan-Arab pressures became too tempting for Kuwait to violate, and despite Iran guaranteeing its sovereignty during 1961 and violating Iraqi embargo to despatch food items under the nose of Iraqi navy along the Fao Peninsula, Kuwait agreed to the Werbah's exchange only after the 1975 Algiers Accords which ended the Shatt al-Arab controversy. nevertheless, for the things to come in

early 1973 with Iran again coming to Kuwait help, Chubin observed in 1982 that Iraqi had only obliged Kuwait when she ‘ found it increasingly difficult to keep its troops on the Kuwait coastal strip south of Umm’ Qasr which Kuwait had [meanwhile] granted since the 1969 Iran-Iraq crisis(Chubin 1982:3,88;Litwak1982:29)

Taking a rather neo-revisionist view of the Gulf history of “precedents-setting” however , one can argue that Iraqi demands on Kuwait ceding its two larger islands on “permanent” basis may be partly attributable to the Iranian (re)occupation of other islands(Abu Musa and the Tunbs) along the lower Gulf during 1971, and Saudi claims on the lesser significant Kuwait islands of Qaru, Umm’al Muradim and Kubr Islands. In the former’s case however, Iraq again demanded occupying these to protect its Umm Qasr naval port during the First Gulf War (1980-88). A combination of Iraqi failure to acquire these strategic islands which dominated its smaller coastal line; pressures on the Kurdish front with additional Iranian naval power controlling its access to the Gulf along the Fao-Shatt al-Arab after 1969, led to Iraqi occupation of Kuwait border posts in early 1973. Only a timely intervention by the Soviets to prevent Saudi-Iranian counter-action and Kuwaiti payments of huge sums led to its evacuation (Cordesman in Chubin and Zabih, 1974:405-07; Ahmedi, 2008:110). Failing to coerce any territorial riposte viz-a-viz Iran, to protect its own economic line along the Gulf, the case for Soviet instigation of the regional conflicts- under the 1969 and the 1972 Treaties with the PDRY and Iraq respectively, the credibility of this line of argument to legitimize Iran’s role under Nixon Doctrine becomes tenuous. Chubin argues that the revival of Iraqi claims on Kuwait and Soviet naval visits [during 1973] ‘may have been intended as Soviet support for the claim’: Although the case can be equally made that it’s timing with the reassertion [of claims] was fortuitous and even counter-productive politically in that it further isolated Iraq’ (Chubin 1982:87).

Ahmedi however draws a direct linkage between Iraqi pressures on Kuwait ceding its islands during 1969, and Iran’s claims on the three strategically important islands to control the access of hostile ships to the Gulf. Making a case for Britain conniving with the Shah with the former being hostile to Iraqi egress along the longer Gulf route through the Iran-British-US gauntlet, he cites Cordesman explaining ‘Iraqi fear of being docked in the vital artery at the Hormuz Straits between Iran and a British- supported Trucial Sheikhdoms, a case of British handing over these islands to Iran’ (Cordesman in Ahmedi 2008:110).

The geopolitical and strategic implications of Iraq's reduced maritime boundary and access to the Gulf therefore set the perimeters of Iraq's ability to become a full-fledged Persian Gulf maritime power without a drastic reconfiguration of Iraqi geography or through preponderant military power, both available in abundance during the hey days of oil prices and lack of morality of the arms control regime (Chubin 1982: 28-31; Amin: 121-24). By 1974, the Shah had further institutionalized Persian Gulf's maritime security through collaboration with Iran's maritime rival since the 16th century Muscat/Oman (over control of the various Hormuz straits islands(Qishm, Kish, Larak, Henjam and Hormuz) under a joint maritime patrolling agreement which was to be effectively undertaken by the Iranian navy (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:152). In the direct context of the Shah-Qaboos collaboration against a quasi-Baghdad supported PFLOAG in Dhoffar through his 3000 strong Imperial Iranian Task Force(IITF) during March 1973-1976, the Sultan was quick to dispel any notion whatsoever of the Western-leaning Gulf states controlling Iraqi access across the Hormuz Straits in 1975 'since Oman was committed to the policy of the free passage of international traffic through which about 20 million barrel oil was carried by tankers' each day (Ahmedi 2008:160).

During 1968-72, while the Shah encountered pressures from the Saudis, Iraq and Kuwait over claims on Bahrain; laboured under Western oil companies' refusal to feed his 4th Development Plan (by increasing production), and remained cash-strapped to purchase his arms- so wrongly attributed by Saud as a case for direct US-British support to Iran's hegemonic military role to intimidate Saudi Arabi and other weaker regimes, especially Bahrain and the UAE- Iran's manoeuvrability in the Gulf actually remained heavily contingent upon a quid pro quo with Faisal. As previously argued in the introduction and as a way of re-interpreting the Iran-US interests in the Gulf during 1968-75, the following sections would detail how the Nixon Administration remained interested in retaining Bahrain for its own Indian Ocean policy which by default posed a direct threat to Soviet security, and intriguingly never been explored before (Ramazani 1972:48; Saud, 2003:87). At this stage, it would not be overly intriguing to speculate on the complex combination of Soviet interest in supporting Iranian claims over the Abu Musa Islands, and US acquiescence into Iranian action over dispute with the Saudi Kingdom over Arabi Island (the removal of ARAMCO rig in early 1968 by Iranian navy which according to Eilts, King Faisal called "international piracy"(Eilts 1980:90). Only in return for modest possessions- compared to Saudi-Iraqi claims on far larger mainland and off-shore territories of neighbours' along the lower and upper Gulf- the Shah

was able to receive support from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and even from Iraq over defining Persian Gulf's regional security agenda for evacuation of superpowers[4].

Nevertheless, the argument that Iran was able to achieve control over these islands these by voluntarily giving up its 175 years old claim on Bahrain, overlooks the central security objective that voluntarily neutralized Iran's threat to the Saudi mainland. Besides the Shah's voluntary or perforce renunciations of Iran's most sensitive claim after failure to take Herat in 1956-57 from the British- supported Dost Mohammad, this act of magnanimity begs answer whether Bahrain served the Soviet security vulnerability in case the US retained Bahrain for any other reason?

Iran's interests in the Arabi, Bahrain and Abu Musa Islands as a matter of its Gulf-wide conflicts with the conservative Arabs during 1968-71 but still receiving a vocal support from the Ba'athist Iraq alongside (other major conservative Gulf powers) against the US presence in and around the Arabian Sea-Gulf needs more empirical data to put the resource, access and ideological rivalries in the proper context of Iran-superpower relations and not as Iran's regional hegemonic ambitions. In addition, serious questions need explanation here about the main conservative Arab powers played to let Iran take the blame for wrecking the Gulf security pact, while indulged in their exclusive regional harmonistic objectives against similar Gulf States on whom Iran did not have territorial or ideological claims.

2.2.3. Territorial rivalries in the lower Gulf (1968-74): politics of resources or pretentious Nationalism?

According to Chubin, Zabih and Amin's research, most of the British mediations among the UAE members, preferred to avoid the use of islands as base points for boundary demarcation but agreed to the "equal sharing" of the underlying oils under the principle of the "equitable distribution" of natural resources (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:293).

Apart from the Iranian nationalist sentiments and the so-called pan-Arab opposition at the basis for Iranian claims over Abu Musa and Tunbs Islands as trumped by various Iran and Arab scholars therefore, oil again served as a *'raison de peace'*, when the Sheikh of Sharjah Khalid bin Mohammed Al Qasimi himself represented his case at the Shah's court against

[4] Chubin and Zabih however point out that Iran's legal explanations over Abu Musa were in fact facilitated by Soviets providing historical maps during debates in the UNSC showing these as being part of historical Persian territories to refute complaints by Iraq, PDRY, Libya and even by Kuwaiti (Chubin and Zabih 1973:263)

Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman's concessionaire Occidental Petroleum which had made a discovery 9 miles off Abu Musa's traditional 3 miles waters in December 1969. Oxy's court case against the British and Sharjah governments pending in the US courts until 1988 for these government's handing-over its concession to the American Buttes Oil and Gas through a forcible removal by the British navy is a classical demonstration of the 'Gun-boat diplomacy', albeit this time to appease the Shah compared to harassing Mossadiq during 1950-53.

Despite another case of the exclusive intra-Arab rivalry, where the British were meted a due share of criticism by Iraq and Libya through nationalizing their oil companies in 1972, and their threat to send forces to liberate the Sheikhly islands; contemporary research vindicates Iran's guilt as one of territorial hegemonic power against the weaker oil-less sheikhdoms contrary to Saud's revisionist indictment of the Shah(Saud 2003:98-99). In fact, as a radical departure from the British policy of deposing the Sharjah Sheikh's cousin Sheikh Saqr III bin Sultan Al Qasimi (1951-1965) who defied the British rejection and accepting Nasser-Arab Leagues' £5 million aid in 1965, the new Sheikh's pre-dated decree was never contested by the British, which could have divided the £3 million yearly revenue between the three contestants, which only Sharjah received from Iran as a compensation. Going by the new balance of forces this time and against a traditional imperial practice of not allowing the sheikhdoms' to proclaim more than 3 miles limit for their islands for demarcating respective continental shelves for oil and fishing rights, Sharjah's unilaterally proclaimed a 12 miles territorial sea for Abu Musa in December 1969 which was allegedly back-dated to September 1969. Sharjah's rivalry with the neighbouring sheikhdoms over resources- and by no means as central conflict between Iran and other Sheikhdoms—implied that Iran was able to reach a last minute agreement with Sharjah, whose terms were passed verbatim by the British to the Shah.

In fact, Sharjah's reaching a separate agreement with the Shah in return for receiving Abu Musa's half share of the oil; a yearly subsidy by Iran until its revenues reached £3 million/year and a cash payment of £587,550 needs only referral to the British-arranged November 1971 Agreement for which the said amount was paid into the ruler's personal account by the Bank-e-Markazi(Iran) into the Midland Bank, London post code E-3 (Saud 2003:116-17).

In the case of Iran-Sharjah maritime Agreement (November 1971), the Abu Musa or Iran's Sirri Islands were disregarded as "base points" for maritime boundaries where the

'median-line' was demarcated from the respective mainland coasts (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:292-93).

More documentary data as to what eventuated this peaceful agreement through US-Iran and covert British undertakings is therefore needed to set the historical record straight, and posit the struggle for oil and not Sheikhly or Iranian attachment to the land as the reason for its resolution, as many Iran scholars construe this to be the case (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:213,221,228-34; 1982:66-67; Saud 2003: 85-88,98-100; Ahmedi 2008:89-98).

This understanding and the agreement itself as further reinforced by Sharjah's current ruler Sheikh Dr. Sultan III bin Muhammad Al Qasimi in an early 1972 interview, pledging that 'he would keep to his brother's agreement with Iran on partial occupation of Abu Musa, but would try to achieve a new understanding with the Shah on the issue' (Amini:165; Ahmedi 2008:108).

Ramazani in fact makes an entirely different assertion against the supposed peaceful resolution of the Abu Musa dispute in his 1972 book. Contrary to the Iranian insistence-during the UNSC debates immediately after its takeover (31st November 1971) - about the issue being settled 'with the agreement and prior consent of Sharjah', Ramazani quotes directly from the late ruler Sheikh Khalid Ibn' Muhammad's interview to *Al-Ahram* (7th December 1971):

'the Sheikh stated that the agreement was temporary and was an instrument for overcoming the crisis and preventing bloodshed'(Ramazani1972:66-67).

Sheikh Khalid however was killed not by the "usurper" Shah of Iran, as he was alleged to be, but by his own British-deposed ruler cousin on 24th January 1972 which despite failing to bring about regime change, portended that 'challenges to the Iran-Sharjah Agreement over the state of Abu Musa may be more likely to come from deep-seated inter-Arab differences than from Irano-Arab conflict' (Ramazani 1972:68).

Chubin and Zabih also point out Iran's foreign minister Abbas Khalatbary making a strikingly similar statement in November 1971 that 'Iran's entire undertaking to retrieve the islands through prolonged negotiations was designed to avoid bloodshed' (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 425).

Ahmedi however point out the similar case of Sharjah's ex-ruler's dissonance with the British when the break-away Ra'as al-Khaimah was granted a de-facto independence (after secessionism from Sharjah in 1869)in 1921, which during 1900-1921 acted as a Sharjah

governorate (Sheikh Sultan bin Salim al Qasimi : 1921 - 1948), while another break-away Island was being ruled by his other Qwasimi cousin Sheikh Sai'd Bin Hamad since December 1936. Ahmedi observes that 'deeply embittered by the loss of Kolkba (Khor Kalba) to his cousin, the ruler of Sharjah felt betrayed by Britain, which had only recently guaranteed his independence and sovereignty, also in return for another air agreement[for the Imperial Airways](Ahmedi:65). Nevertheless, Ahmedi errs in his historiography by accusing the British for such transgressions, since although the Khor was recognized by the British after its de facto independence from Sharjah in 1903, by 1952 it was re-incorporated into Sharjah under Sheikh Saqr ibn Sultan al-Qasimi in 1952.

In case of Iran-Abu Dhabi maritime boundary agreement as well (under the July 1966 London Conference), the negotiators tried to agree on using Qishm and Bani-Ya'as Islands as part of the coast line to draw the boundaries. Nevertheless, despite disagreements over using the Kharg-Sir Bani Yaas Islands as base-points for the 'median-line', Iran did not object to Abu Dhabi's rights to development of the Al-Bakoosh oilfield for mutual sharing (Amin:134,170; Litwak 1982:39,71).

In case of the Abu Dhabi-Saudi dispute over Buraimi however and despite British mediation since 1963-71(under the Stand Still Agreement 1955) the issue was only resolved in the 1974 agreement with Abu Dhabi yielding the Zararrah oil district to the Saudi control, as well as providing a strategic corridor to the Saudis through its mainland to reach Khaur al-Udaid and Qatar, in return for Buraimi (Amin:135; Chubin 1982:54;Ahmedi 2008:65). By 1965 however, the British had stood by Abu Dhabi's rights over Khaur al-Udaid inlet while Saudi Arabia and Qatar demarcated the area among themselves, which was ejected by the British (Litwak: 1982:51).

Litwak quotes J B. Kelly that the 1974 Abu Dhabi-Saudi Agreement over Khaur al-Udaid effectively detached Qatar from the rest of the Arabian Peninsula and the Trucial Coast through the 32 mile corridor, which despite lacking military value could be used by the Saudis to 'out-rightly absorb Qatar should her internal situation posed a threat to Saudi eastern provinces along with Bahrain(Kelly in Litwak 1982:52). Although arguing against Saudi intentions to annex Qatar due to common Wahabi and familial linkages, Litwak still agrees that Qatar's 'dependence over [its] larger neighbour during regional turmoil could effectively curtail her capability for independent political manoeuvrability' (Litwak 1982:52).

Being a joint contestant of Buraimi with Oman, a Saudi bilateral border agreement with Oman was also rewarded by the Abu Dhabi providing upto $200 million of military aid during 1975-77 against Dhofar rebellion (Litwak, 1982:54-55). Abu Dhabi's following the Saudi line during the 1976 OPEC Conference(Doha round) for not demanding further high prices was therefore again a direct reflection of the Saudi ability to set the regional economic agenda against Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatari resistance to set higher prices (Litwak 1982:49).

In the 131 nautical miles maritime boundary between Iran and Qatar, whereas the principle of 'equidistance' was adopted, and the continental shelf could not be determined due to unresolved borders between Bahrain and Qatar over Zubarrah strip and the Hawar Islands, the September 1969 agreement between Iran and Qatar voluntarily disregarded Iran's Levan, Hendorabi and Qeys Islands as base points for the inter-state boundary delineation. The agreement therefore did not affect vast Qatari gas reserves along the North Dome-South Pars in return for which Iran recognized Qatar's independence outside the framework of the UAE (Litwak 1982:68-69; Amin: 130,132). This gas field covers an area of 9,700 square km (3,700 sq mi), of which 3,700 square km (1,400 sq mi) (South Pars) is in Iranian territorial waters and 6,000 square km (2,300 sq mi) (North Dome) is in Qatari territorial waters. According to the Wikipedia's quoting statistics from the International Energy Agency (IEA), it is the world's largest gas field, and holds an estimated 51 trillion cubic metres of "in-situ" natural gas and some 50 billion barrels (7.9 billion cu.m) of natural gas "condensates"(http://www.payvand.com/news/10/jun/1138.html). in addition, the estimates for the Qatari section are 900 trillion cubic feet (25×10^{12} m^3) of "recoverable" gas which stands for almost 99% of Qatar's total proven gas reserves and 14% of the worlds proven gas reserves(Qatar Petroleum Annual Report 2005:25).In the case of Saudi-Qatari continental shelf boundary to the west of Qatari peninsula (al-Salwa) both parties had reached agreement in December 1965 agreement, which was never ratified (Litwak 1982:69). In the case of Abu Dhabi-Qatar boundary as well, the division of intervening continental shelf was again to follow the power logic of the British imperial control, when the agreement over Halul Islands, was arbitrated by the British in Qatar's favour on 20th March 1969. In fact, the major Islands group of Halul, Dayyinah, al-Asht and Shara'iwah, were ceded to Qatar under the 'special circumstance' precedent first established between Iran and Saudi Arabia over Arabi Island(Saud 2003:44). Losing a large chunk of its continental shelf this way, Abu Dhabi's consolation was its joint sharing of Al-Bunduq oilfields with Qatar to be exploited by the Abu Dhabi Marine Areas-

ADMA (Litwak 1982:67). The prospects of Abu Dhabi doling out the revenues to other oil-less sheikhdoms from the joint continental shelf with Dubai was also evident of the political necessities, when Abu Dhabi proclaimed exclusive rights to all the off-shore oil in the UAE waters, not contested by the British. in fact, a previous agreement abrogated by Dubai since 1965 under British pressures was finally reached in the spirit of the British withdrawal, when in February 1968, Abu Dhabi acknowledged Dubai's sovereignty over the Fateh oilfields where major oil reserves had been discovered by the Continental Oil (Litwak, 1982:70).

Going by the post-facto resolution of the Saudi-Qatari boundary effectively delivered by Abu Dhabi after a prolonged bargaining with the Faisal-Zyed antagonism dating since 1954, the case of Saudi role in affecting Qatari membership of the UAE is not difficult to attribute to the Saudi hegemonic ambitions , compared to whatever threat Iran was likely to pose to the Saudi security after acquiring Bahrain. As a matter for more empirical investigation however, the observation should remain at the centre of the Iran-Saudi controversies during 1968-71 where Iran is commonly blamed for Bahrain's(or Qatar) non-accession to the UAE as a linkage deal over Abu Musa/Tunbs and the Shah's recognition of the UAE.

2.2.4. Bahrain: Resources, Hegemony and the "pride complex"? [5]

Kuwait and Bahrain's cases serve as ironic reminders of oil serving the basis of intra-Arab politics of extending protection to each other against aggressive states with the British imperial role in line with the intra-Gulf power politics. One can only hazard a guess that had Bahrain been blessed with oil as much as Kuwait or even smaller Trucial Protectorates like |Abu Dhabi or Sharjah during 1968-71, the British would have defended its rights to the off-shore oil with the seemly zeal as they protected Kuwait against Iraq during 1961 or in case of Bahrain-Qatar rivalry over the Zakhnuniyeh island from the Turks in 1909 (Ahmedi 2008:64-65). The same could be said about the Saudi Kingdom's exercising its peninsular patrimony over Kuwait and Bahrain during the British evacuation from the East of Suez.

The Iran-Saudi agreement of October 1968 under the so-called renouncement of Iran's claims on Bahrain during January 1969(in India) therefore needs some firsthand documentary evidence, to explain the theoretical argument about the actual Iran-Saudi interest in restraining Bahrain's independent foreign policy, which was deferent to the Soviet security interests, as

[5] Ramazani (1972:64)

well as the basis for Saudi opposition to Aden or Oman granting base facilities to the Soviet or the US during 1967-77.

As previously observed that Iran's conflict with Saudi Arabia over the Bahrain Island coincided with its naval action on the Arabi Island in January 1968 when the ARAMCO was removed from its as-yet un-ratified boundary (under the 1965 agreement) under Iranian interest in passing its subterranean deposits to the US Independent oil company IPAC (Ramazani1975:413). The deterioration in bilateral relations therefore can be attributed to the explicit Saudi assurance to Sheikh I'sa when he travelled to Feisal in the same month (Saud 2003:32-34). Most observers agree that King Feisal's extending every security assurance to the Khalifas as 'any attack on Bahrain would be treated as one on Saudi Arabia and met with all his country's resources', compelled the Shah to cancel his scheduled visit to Riyadh in February 1968(Saud 2003:32; Chubin and Zabih 1974:290-91; Ramazani 1972:48-49; Noyes 1982: 17-18). Although neo-revisionist studies conducted by Saud through conducting interviews of the key US diplomatic personalities including Kissinger, Harold Saunders and the Sheikh of Ra'as al Khaimah, and Ahmedi's research of the Iranian diplomatic records, this study aims to deal the issues of Bahrain and other islands (Abu Musa/Tunbs) with the development of the Iran-Saudi relations during 1968-75 as through the US diplomatic records, which Saud has consulted on cherry-picking basis. In addition, the next two sections, along with the Appendix-II would argue why Iran's interests in acquiring Bahrain superseded the nationalistic objectives of its physical control and instead acting in connivance with Saudi Kingdom, Iraq and even India to evict the US MIDEASTFOR from Bahrain and other Arabian Sea bases, and instead make Bahrain as the hub of a regional defence organization, albeit unable to gauge Saudi interest in preventing the presence of any anti-Saudi power on its Peninsular patrimony, which included Iran, Abu Dhabi and the Greater Yemen. The following section however is another tentative case of Bahrain acting as a buffer for the Saudi security interests whom the Saudi Kingdom tried to manipulate and letting Iran take the brunt of the Arab opprobrium during 1968-71.

The ideological tangibles of Saudi Arabia leading the Arab charge against Iranian claims on behalf of the smaller states however would be just as ephemeral as a tentative pan-Arab opposition to Iran's takeover of Abu Musa-Tunbs Islands during 1971 in the UN Security Council debates with Iraq, Libya, the PDRY and even Kuwait joining the condemnation, but Sadat's restraint not to offend the Shah. Not longer than May 1968

therefore, despite Iran's action on the Arabi Island and cancellation of the visit, King Feisal was to extend his public assurances to the Shah through an interview to a Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Siyasah: 'the Arabs of the Gulf would not take any action against Iran's interests in the region'. Despite the King's inviting the Shah to Saudi Arabia again and the latter's acceptance and visit by November 1968, normalization of the Iran-Bahrain relations had to await these major peer-competitors to regional supremacy, reaching agreement over Arabi Island to assure their regional supremacy over each other as well as on the Yemens, Iraq and Abu Dhabi (Saud 2003:41).

Oil again provided the solution for the ran-Saudi deadlock as much as it was part of the problem since 1965 where IPAC's discovery only a month after December 1965 agreement over the Arabi-Farsi Island had resulted in Iran's refusal to ratify the agreement on grounds of 'nationalist sentiments to losing out on such a vast quantity of oil'.

Despite initial Saudi resistance to accepting Iran's demands for the division of the Arabi Island's oil as 'recoverable' and not 'in place', subsequent Saudi acceptance was also conditioned by the potential American pressures on Faisal (through Armin Meyer) purporting the Shah's threat of forcibly taking the oil(Saud 2003:37; Litwak1982:39; Amin :128). After the resolution of Bahrain's controversy however and for some covert understanding, most Iranian claims on the militarily lesser significant islands were subsequently honoured by the Saudis before British withdrawal in December 1971 (Saud: 44-45: 55; Chubin and Zabih, 1974:290-92; Ramazani, 1975:420; Noyes,1982:17). In fact the controversy still shrouded in the still-classified British diplomatic records has been partially explained by Saud as a vindication of the oft-levelled charge against the Shah as bent on usurping Arab lands through the US-supplied arms but in fact a clear-cut case of Iran-Saudi collusion over Bahrain.

In addition, despite the much trumped accolade attributed to the UN Security Council acting as an honest broker of weaker states' rights, to which Iran herself never put much faith into, the resolution of Bahrain's case is another scar on the consciousness of the international organizations. Much as argued whether the liberal-Shiite Bahraini's sought security as an economically non-viable; virtually secluded island-state and having to live under future Saudi largesse, the fact remained that Bahrainis were effectively deprived of a voice to join the UAE through a popular vote by the UN Special Representative Vittori Winespear. Keen to honouring the Shah's demand not to conduct a 'referendum' to ascertain popular views on their joining the UAE during April 1969, contemporary academia fails in its duty to apportion

the blame on the Saudi and Western politics by converting Bahrain into a Saudi vassal state, despite the fact that Bahrain was the prime mover of the UAE formula since early 1968 and alongside Abu Dhabi and Dubai offered to take up the bill for maintenance of the British forces after 1968. To add insult to the injury, the already oil-scarce country which Faisal sought to link with a 12 miles causeway --to facilitate the Saudi holiday-making pursuits-- along with beefing-up Saudi security- its economic life-line was further strangulated through denying its rights to the international precedent of the "equitable distribution of natural resources" as was the case of Iran-Saudi (1968); the Iran-Abu Dhabi; or the Iran-Sharjah(November 1971) agreements (Saud 2003:50,53-54).

Despite the right of archipelagic states under this international law- to use their islands for demarcating their territorial sea(and by extension its continental shelf) boundaries, in the Persian Gulf context, the British inability to delineate contested areas for Bahrain with Iran or Saudi Arabia, either due to its specific geological structure(depths not exceeding 600 fathoms to qualify as a sea amenable to the Continental Shelf Law), and by implication a reflection on the British role in protecting Bahrain's access to its rightful natural resources, the post-1832 Bahraini Protectorate lost its independent capability to exploit its own oil along the Iran-Saudi and the Abu Dhabi-Qatari sides (Litwak Opcit:67-69).

Bahrain therefore did not receive any right to the continental shelf oil from Iran when delimiting its tiny 28 miles maritime boundary, where its Makhilu and Muharraq Islands were disregarded as base points in the Iran-Bahrain agreement(June 1971), after which Iran recognized Bahrain's sovereignty as a state independent from the UAE or Saudi Arabia (Amin 110-11; Litwak 1982:66-69)

Iran and Bahrain also signed a maritime boundary agreement on the 14th March 1972 which was expected to enshrine a demarcation of its continental shelf with Iran. Based in the principle of "equidistance" however, this bilateral boundary touched the Saudi-Qatar maritime limits in both eastern and western endpoints, which left Bahrain heavily dependent upon Saudi arbitrations over subsequent disputes over Islands and sea-bed oil with Qatar(Litwak 1982:68).

Although, the Saudi declaratory policy in favour of Bahrain's claims was a post-1972 phenomenon, it can be argued that the previous British acquiescence in 1937 into Qatari occupation of the Hawar Island further cannibalized Bahraini territory whereas its prospects for the continental shelf oil had already been doomed after Bahrain was compelled to relinquish further territory to Qatar (the Zubarrah strip) in 1870 under strong British pressures.

According to Litwak, Bahrain could not peruse its case with the Ottomans then, who lacked effective control over the Persian Gulf due to the British presence, but I would argue, due to the conscious Gulf Arab's choice to seek security under the British Protectorates against the Ottomans through the 1872 Exclusive Agreements, binding themselves to the Imperial tutelage(Litwak 1982:48-49).

It is quite possible that a tentative bargaining over the Zubarrah strip in 1971 could have granted Bahrain control over the Hawar Island and by extension control over large reserves of oil had the British resisted the Saudi-Qatari efforts which they did uphold very loyally in the case of Abu Dhabi-Qatar-Saudi boundary disputes since 1954. Once again, the Qatar-Saudi collusion had sought to pre-empt Bahraini rights, when in December 1965 both concluded an agreement delimiting their land and off-shore boundaries, which was originally contested between the Saudis, Abu Dhabi and Qatar along the south-eastern bases off the Qatari peninsula and its adjacent coastal areas (the general area around the Khaur al-Udaid and Halul Islands: refer page: 121-22). In this case, although the British refused to recognize Saudi-Qatari agreement as prejudicial to Abu Dhabi's rights, a matter eluding resolution until 1974, but failed to deliver on the Hawar Island(Litwak 1982: 50-51) .

In Saudi case of protecting Bahraini rights, as long as she acted respectfully within the Saudi strategic orbit, its claim on the Hawar Island were disregarded by the former until the Saudi-Qatar relations plunged to a low in 1974- due to Qatari defiance over Saudi insistence on keeping OPEC's oil prices stable, against Iran and Iraq's demands- after which Saudi Arabia recognized Bahraini right to the Hawar Island. According to Litwak, Qatar was still willing to grant Hawar's territorial sea and its adjoining continental shelf in return of the main island, but the issue eluded resolution despite Saudi mediation until 1980(Litwak 1982:69).

Saudi generosity to Bahrain was however manifest in providing its half the share from former's exclusive exploitation of the Fasht Bu Safa oilfields under the 1958 agreement, which again was a function of Bahrain not taking steps to annoy its larger neighbour having a substantive Shi'a population in the Eastern Qatif provinces(Litwak 1982:66; Balfour-Paul 1993:131; Ramazani1975:419-20).

2.2.5. Conclusion

Chubin and Zabih aptly observe that by 1969, the Shah was far too confident in Iran's ability to deny Iraqi bid to emerge as the protector of Arab interests in the Persian Gulf. It can

be argued that with the failure of Gulf Defence pact by mid-1970, and President Bakr's July 1970 proposal for a joint Arab Defence Organization- - the perimeters of a regional security "regime" were effectively defined by Iran and Saudi Arabia, partaking from the general sentiment of demanding the British-US evacuation from the Gulf and Arabian-Red Sea bases (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:184-85, 187,191).

Although ignoring the immediate context of Iran's support to the Kurdish rebellion and Iraqi support to the Maoist-Soviet PFLOAG (including the Bahrain Liberation Front) against Iranian hegemonic control of the Gulf immediately after 1972, Chubin and Zabih actually attribute a positive twist to the Iran-Iraqi rivalry which in case of the latter was also the liberation of the region from foreign powers and 'at its minimum to deny Iran the opportunity to cooperate with the Gulf Arab states'. Arguments as to the 'asymmetric and differing aims of Iran and Iraq', or Iran-Iraq offering their exclusive security covers to the Sheikhdoms-- 'equally doomed to failure due to smaller states reluctance to be entangled in the Iran-Iraqi disputes'-- notwithstanding, both belligerent's political discourse arguably converged on the Gulf security agenda of denying British or American presence in the region. Nonetheless, any exclusion of the Western great power cover as highly favourable to subsequent Soviet security posture in the on-going Saudi Yemeni-PDRY or the Afghan-Pakistan conflicts during 1970s beg explanations as to why Iran effectively led the charge against Western presence in the Gulf and what US presence or restraints were anticipated by regional powers to have chosen to survive under Soviet hegemony?

Hence Chubin and Zabih's observing that Iran's 'aspiration to play the role of protector should be understood as protection from Iraq in the first instance, and secondarily from revolutionary movements in the Gulf, whether these were sponsored by a Gulf or non-Gulf states', remains one of agreement on the security agenda and not on the specifics as to who led the charge against Western or Soviet Imperialism (Chubin and Zabih 1974:187-89).

As subsequent sections will demonstrate (including Appendix II) that Iran and Iraq's foreign policy outlooks did not diverge drastically on Bahrain under the specific issue of the British-American presence in the region before and well after 1971. In fact, one of the core reasons for Edward Heath's inability to translate his election agenda to reverse his predecessors' decision is commonly acknowledged by Gulf academia and even by various British policymakers as a product of Iran, Iraq and Saudi rejection, while Iraq went even further by severing diplomatic relations with the British and nationalizing the British oil

installations in June 1972. After 1975, Iraq also stopped supporting PFLOAG and the BLF by closing their offices in Baghdad when it reached a comprehensive understanding with Iran under Algiers Accords (Chubin 1982:87-88).

2.3. 'Independent Nationalism' in the post-1956 phase: Cooperative Security, the British- Egyptian threat to Gulf and security discourses

2.3.1. Introduction

The oft-suggested case of Iran's "Independent Nationalist" foreign policy towards the Persian Gulf as supposed to have becoming operational; during 1968-71 and effectively later than Iran's rapprochement with the Soviet Union during 1962-68 would be a case of historical reductionism and ignoring the crucial diplomatic power this accrued to the Shah to concentrate on the Gulf. Even the explanations as forwarded by most Iran scholars that after the Cuban Missiles crisis (October 1962); the U-2 incident and after the US acquiring a submerged nuclear deterrent capability to have rendered ballistic missile deterrence obsolete and immediately for Khrushchev to have accepted the Shah's pledges during 1956, cannot account for the Shah's pro-active and voluntary diplomacy during 1956-59 to extend his personal assurances to Khrushchev for Iran not making its territory available for "base" activities which he himself confessed in his first memoir Mission to My Country(1960:120) as well in a rare interview to the US News of the World in June 1959. Likewise reciprocated by Khrushchev in 1956 by not making Iran's accession to the Baghdad Pact, a pre-condition for normalizing various trade, boundary, industrial and water-sharing agreements during 1956-62 and even offering a 50 Year non-Aggression Treaty (in 1958) in return for Iran's withdrawal from CENTO or not accepting direct US security guarantees, cannot ignore a post-facto thaw in the Iran-Soviet Cold War. The explanations as this to have occurred in response to the post-1962 Détente after which Khrushchev 'suddenly' accepted the Shah's pledges and accepting at face-value the Shah's rendition of Iran's resistance to the Soviet demands and 'after seeing our violent reaction' remains a myth created by various Iran scholars during 1970s to make the case for Iran's continuous adherence to its alliance with the US as a "distant and disinterested' third power. The case therefore that 1962 should be treated as a cut-off period in the Iran-Soviet relations for the Shah to direct his energies towards the Gulf where major territorial, resource and diplomatic opportunities surged after 1968 would be a gross oversight to accept that Iran's core security threat and diplomatic isolation in the international or Gulf affairs occurred due to its focus on the existential threats from the Soviet Union, while it effectively ignored the Gulf affairs until 1968.

R K. Ramazani who wrote two voluminous studies about Iran's political history and post-Nader Shah relations with the Western great powers, i.e. Great Britain and Czarist Russia for Iran to have entered the 19th Century as a weakened Imperial power of Trans-Caucasia under the three humiliating Treaties of 1802, 1823 and 1857 reflect this very tendency. Ramazani's two studies about Iran's relations with the Soviet Union and the US and the Gulf after 1941 and without ever conducting interviews with prominent Iranian personalities and minimal reference to the Shah's memoirs effectively ignores his own candid admissions as to why the Shah made these pledges in the first place to Khrushchev as early as 1956 if he so loyally committed to the US as Iran's ultimate security provider to which he again turned to after the British withdrawal from the Gulf in 1971. Ramazani and few others marketing the case for Iran a committed US ally even after Nixon's reaching convenient agreement with Brezhnev in 1972 which prompted the Shah's demanding explanations from the US officials and for CENTO's revival under a purported Soviet threat after the Iraq-Soviet Treaty(1972) and after Pakistan and Afghanistan's virtual encirclement by the Soviets after 1972 to have effectively reached the Arabian Sea through Baluchistan is a careful academic narrative by such scholars who chose to ignore the Shah and his coterie's rendition of the conditions under which the US refused to extend serious guarantees to Iran during 1946-60. The implied understanding gained from such studies during the Shah's hay days is an academic fiat to project the Shah as a die-hard Russophobe and committed to relations with US as Iran's only security guarantees against eh Soviet Union since 1941, a fateful narrative for the anti-Iran academia and the Shah's critics to have picked as a case for the US interests in keeping the Shah in power. Such explanations which ignore the actual Iranian interests underpinning the thaw in the Iran-Soviet relations immediately after 1956 for the Shah to pre-empt the Gulf is a serious weakens to explain the Shah's "positive " or Independent Nationalist" foreign policy which this section tries to explicate.

Without indulging into the value-bounded explanations provided by Iran's best known scholars to the West to date and having won accolades for his work from the American Political Science Association in 1965, we turn towards a critical analysis of Iran's making use of its minimal association with the Western security pacts without having to expose itself to the pressures impinged on Turkey and Pakistan during 1956-65 due to their regional conflicts that the US refused to support for fear of the Soviet reaction on behalf of Syria, Cyprus and India.

Retaining an air of objectivity in 1973 and projecting the Shah as Iran's sole theorist of core national interests without impinging societal or Elite pressures on his foreign policy decisions, Ramazani did make a case for Iran making virtue out of the reduction in superpowers' global security competition after 1962, which he posited as occurring with the arrival of the submerged nuclear capability to be had by the US through Polaris submarines. He interpreted a technological breakthrough having 'reinforced Iran's own predilections' of not making available its territory for foreign bases. Ramazani suggests the 'Iranian pledge reveals that it did not contradict the requirements of Iran's alliance with the US but actually enhanced Iranian position in the alliance' (Ramazani, 1975:339-40). Here Ramazani seems to suggest that whereas the Shah would have preferred to take minimal responsibilities for the regional defence- such as adhered-to by NATO members, under the Article 5 of "collective Security" mandating an organized military responsibility against the Soviet threat- as Turkey or Western Europe would be expected to, his allusion to Iran's " enhanced position in the alliance" is effectively an Iranian ability to delink itself from just such responsibilities which exposed Iran to direct Soviet threats as Khrushchev made to Turkey during its confrontation with Syria in 1957 and Dulles' refusal to commit NATO forces to deter Soviet threats. Ramazani further over-emphasizes the cordiality of the Shah-US relations since 1956 or even since 1946 by US Secretary of State Earnest Bevin's refusal to commit US forces to assure Soviet eviction from Azerbaijan. Ramazani and many others' commit the same oversight by pointing out the ephemeral nature of the US-Iran relations after US further refusals to accede to the Baghdad Pact but even more substantially to the CENTO when fearing his own toppling after the revolutionary turmoil in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon during 1958, the Shah had effectively vowed to accept the Soviet pledges for a 50 year non-Aggression Treaty. Pending a final word, as to what inspired the US policymakers to extend the US Presidential guarantees to Iran, Turkey and Pakistan under the 1959 Executive Agreements, and not acceding to the CENTO, another alternative explanation is for Iran to have made virtue out of its post-1956 modus-vivendi with the Soviets and due to an intrinsic prudence underpinning the Western security pacts as not to interfere with Iran's regional discourse against anti-Western actors, short of having to confront a Soviet threat. As the subsequent pages show, Iran's "positive" or "independent nationalist' policies towards the Gulf need not be exclusively or conditioned by an artificial separation of the post-1962 and post-1968 epochs as windows of opportunity for Iran to undertake certain hegemonic-cooperative diplomacies with like-minded regional

partners, irrespective to their pro or anti-Western orientations as long as they did not contravene a regional behavioural credo of its central powers, to which the Soviet policy remained one of deference and deliberately ignoring of their hegemonic impositions upon the Soviet's uneasy allies like Iraq, North Yemen and the PDRY until 1979.

A critical reading of contemporary literature about the Iran-US relations after 1959 would suggest that , the entire controversy of President Eisenhower having to sign separate Executive Agreement with the Northern Tier Iran and Turkey and SEATO Pakistan, without having to accede to the CENTO as full-fledged member, occurred in the careful contrivance of a post-1958 CENTO as a mere non-military alliance, based instead on programmes of Socio-cultural and economic exchanges to which the US Exim Bank remained America's prime contribution. In any case, the Eisenhower Doctrine's pledges to Iran and other members in western Asia were effectively an endorsement of the pre-Détente proclivities of the US policy, and institutionally shied from extending pledges to its members by avoiding the regional flash points mandating US pledges such as refusal to extend to Turkey against Syria during 1957, Soviet threat contingent or not! Contemporary academia agrees to this ephemeral guarantee inhered in the Executive Agreements where in the US still pledged to commit its forces if Iran or other members were directly attacked by the Soviet Union, but with Eisenhower having to append his rather indirect pledge should Iran be attacked by a country whom the US identified as controlled by "international Communism", which implied Iran having to convince the US lawmakers of its being threatened by Iraq or other regional powers, acting as proxies to the Soviets or Communist China. Although the project does not envisage discussing the politics of this very US guarantee for Carter to have refused committing US forces during the 1978 Marxist threat from the Mujahideen-e-Khalq, or a direct Soviet hand behind the Shah's toppling- as argued by one of the very few who subscribe to this theory-many academics agree to this contention that under the Shah's threat to accept Khrushchev's non-Aggression Treaty in 1958, Eisenhower had to perforce append this pledge which Iranian policymakers liberally used against Egypt and Iraq during the 60s and 70s to pain these anti-Western regimes acting as Soviet proxies. Most Iran scholars therefore concur that the Shah's personal fear of being toppled by revolutionary forces taking sustenance form Nasser or the post-1958 Iraq remained at eh heart of the Shah's brinkmanship during 1959-60, which henceforth saw Iran taking on Qasim's Iraq more confidently. Little however is explained as to how the Soviet-US restraint paved way for the Shah to concentrate on the Gulf challenges, where the British posed as

serious challengers to the Shah's claims on Bahrain and Abu Musa well before 1968 and Nasser emerged as the Shah's most vocal critique and continued to harangue the Khuzestani-Kurdish elements to rise against the Shah (and Qasim) to isolate Iran from the Gulf Arab's affairs. In a more emancipational context for the Shah to engage with the Gulf after 1956, the prospect of the US-Soviet guarantees to their respective clients after 1972 effectively endorses Iran's security perceptions to have been conditioned by the regional competition against Iraq, the PDRY and Communist Afghanistan.

In1960, the Shah therefore explained his relations with the Soviet Union as the best-ever; based in mutual respect and not posing danger to each other's security'. In addition , his views on Iran's "Positive Nationalism" during 1960 as taking advantage of superpower relations while contradicting most assumptions about Iran's continued faith in security dependence on the West after experiences of the "Bevin Plan" during 1946 was never to phase-out of the Shah's catalogue of grievances until his ouster in 1979. "At the time our case before the UN was not making the headway we expected, and the American ambassador in Tehran(George Allen) frankly told me that this country would not fight to save Iran"(the Shah: 120-21,124). The notion of Iran's "position" in the Western alliance, despite being a signatory to it, making possible Iran's re-orientation towards the Gulf after 1962 - after Nader Shah's collaboration with the British against the Portuguese and capture of Bahrain in 1730s- or after British declaration of withdrawal from East of Suez in 1968 is at best an academic fiat by self-censored academia. In 1960, the Shah therefore emphatically insisted that his 'Positive Nationalism' did not imply 'non-alignment, neutralism, or sitting on the fence, but making any agreement that was in Iran's own interests, regardless of the wishes of others'(The Shah Ibid: 130-31, 296-96). As a clear manifestation of this policy and as background of his decision to assure Khrushchev during the controversy of US guarantees in 1958, he emphatically acknowledged that 'the US security guarantees under the "draft treaty" as well as the military support were falling short of our requirements, and militarily ridiculously weak, and without guarantees, similar to NATO countries, we allowed ourselves to enter into negotiations with the Russians on the subject of a "non-aggression treaty"'. The Shah however cleverly justified that the Russian mistake of delaying the mission for two weeks led to Iran's acceptance of the US offer even after the Russians had dropped demands to withdraw from the Baghdad Pact(the Shah:1960 122,291-92).

By August 1959 as well, the Shah was therefore not only hinting at another show-down with the Consortium by arguing for renewal of 1954 royalties agreement, but also demanding the Consortium to make-up for Iran's losses in view of the 1957 price-cuts, unilaterally imposed by the Major oil companies on Middle Eastern producers. In the run-up for increased production since 1958 as a clear exploitation by Western companies, under depressed prices, Iran in fact lagged behind Iraq, Kuwait and even Bahrain in terms of output, similar to what she suffered during 1951-53. By the same year , Iran had actually used up almost all of her $35 million line of credit entitled from the US Exim Bank entitled under the 1955 Mutual Security Assistance Act (MEED: 14 Aug.1959). It might be out of this very desperate economic situation that the Soviet Union offered Iran the very beneficial 85-15% profit sharing deal of oil exploration in Northern Iran during the Shah's November 1959 meeting with the Soviet ambassador Nicolai Pegov, and also renewed offers to build dams, roads, railways and power stations as well as settling border issues under the 1955 Zahedi government agreement (Pazargadi, 1965: 123-24). In June 1960 therefore, Iran started inviting tenders for oil exploration 'on-land' in the entire south-central Iran (Isfahan, Yazd, Shiraz, Samnan and Kazerun) on the 75-25% profit sharing granted previously to the Pan-American, AGIP/Minerara and Sapphire (MEED: 10 June 1960). In the same month, NIOC Director Fathollah Nafici outlined the establishment of a Petrochemical industry at Shiraz to produce chemical fertilizer which was projected to consume upto 120-140 million cubic meters gas per day from the Gach-Saran fields, that Iran eventually linked with the Soviet terminals at Qazvin-Rasht during late 1968 to barter gas for industrial machinery and as cost for installation of the Esfahan Steel Mill.

By early 1960, Iran had already incurred a heavy debt of $194 million from the IBRD compared with Iraq's $6 millions, Pakistan's $151 million, Turkey $61 and Egypt's $56 millions (MEED: 31 May 1960). Keeping in view, Iran and Iraqi governments' commitments to domestic development, both however did just the opposite by pressuring their respective concessionaires for increased production (MEED: 31.05.1960). This imbalance between the companies' practices and the Gulf's two largest populated and enlightened polities was arguably highly unfavourable to the local producers who remained dependent upon the West for essential imports under their reduced buying power. In fact, during 1958-60, Britain continued to import more oil from the Gulf with Iran, Iraq and Kuwait remained as top producers, due mainly to the reduced oil prices. The London-based MEED was to observe

ominously 'that logically [this] meant good supplies of oil on reduced international rates thereby fuelling nationalist frustrations of the Western economies benefiting from the cheaper ME oil'(MEED:13 May 1960).

In 1960**,** the Shah bitterly complained about strong oil interests (of oil Majors) as well as the US State Department's efforts to discourage him from initiating the radical 75-25% profit sharing agreements with the Italian, American and Canadian Independent companies during August 1957 and again in April 1958, when he warned Americans 'against committing the same blunder committed by the British government' (the Shah, 1960: 280). Nevertheless, and notwithstanding Premier Eghbal's own insistence in favour of 'yet more economic aid other than the attention given to defence, that gave the appearance in delays in improving living standards', a serious observer of Iran-Soviet relations need to collate these noble intentions with the Shah's philosophy on defensive expenditures that he alluded as 'one of the most basic human needs is a peaceful, secure environment so that men can develop themselves and their country (The Shah 1960:296 ; MEED: 04 Sept 1959).

Very few Iran scholars point out the fact, that immediately after the Cuban Missiles crisis and removal of Turkey's nuclear umbrella as a result , Khrushchev himself had warned Kennedy about the prospects of the Shah's ouster without sufficient domestic political and social reforms, fearing which the Kennedy Administration's Iran Task Force recommended the US government taking insurance out of the Shah through other political elements out of which Ali Amini rose to prominence(Cottam, 1979:82 Summitt 1982: 561). Aside the domestic impact of Amini's well-intentioned reforms but failure of seek National Front's integration into his government after Premier Eghbal's election rigging in the 19th Majlis, itself cited by Cottam as the Shah's most conscious-ever effort to liberalize domestic politics, commentators also point out that in the aftermath of the June 1963 Khomeini-inspired riots, the Kennedy Administration had sought to cut Iran's military "aid", to pressure him to institute wide-ranging political reforms. Summit's research on the Shah-Kennedy relations during 1962 however suggests that despite clear warnings by the Iran Task Force personnel like Richard Komer and Philip Talbot, Kennedy obliged himself to gave into eth Shah's demands of a further military aid package for naval destroyers, F-4s and two infantry divisions, for fear of the Shah turning to the Soviets (Summit 1982: 569) . Nonetheless, the fact that the post-1962 US policy of keeping the Shah in the Western camp ensured that despite Amini after having served as the Shah's Ambassador to Washington and tipped by the

US officials as the only person capable of bringing sweeping reform to Iran's political system, Amini's government actually fell as a direct result of Kennedy's refusal to shore-up Iran's budget defect of 1961, which led to the famous teachers' strike in Tehran and the rise of Khomeini due to Assadollah Alam's crackdown through brute military force(Parsa 1990:131). The Shah's oft-cited jealousy to Amini or other US-touted political personages under Kennedy notwithstanding, it remains a matter for Kennedy's political judgment as to the extent of US commitments to the Shah. As a retrospective judgment however, the Shah's obvious disappointment on his 1962 visit to Washington seen in Kennedy's decision to cut Iran's military aid, henceforth expecting Iran to pay for its defence outlays suggested that Iran was likewise obliged to mend fences with the Soviet Union. With the initial thaw in the superpowers' Cold War already on the horizon, the Gulf held prospects for Iran's economic prosperity due to availability of vast quantities of oil in its continental shelf.

Iran's re-orientation towards the Gulf after 1962-63 however notwithstanding, the case for the Shah seemed content with a minimal US assurance to Iran is a case missed form crucial scrutiny by most Iran scholars. In a rare June 1959 interview to the US News and World Report, the Shah is seen not to take issues with the US non-accession to the CENTO and alluding to its adherence as sufficient as in the Baghdad Pact. In fact, the Shah can be seen to be more satisfied with the bilateral security treaty when he agreed that 'it gave us the same effect we normally expect with the framework of the Baghdad Pact'. Having effectively deemed security guarantees under Baghdad Pact as 'automatic', he was further satisfied with the condition that the 'US would come to help Iran from any kind of "direct" or "indirect" aggression that might take place from the outside'. In addition, he clearly rejected suggestions that his regime was under threat from "internal subversion" either from Tudeh or other "Communist cells"(US News and World: June 1959) . In 1960, the Shah provided his assessment about the Iran-Soviet bilateral relations as: 'since 1917 Revolution, relations between the two countries had perhaps never been so cordial', and, the 'same principle applied on our relations with other Communist countries' (the Shah: 120-21).

2.3.2. From Western Alliance to the Gulf post-1956:

The Shah's explanation of joining the Baghdad Pact for self-defence purposes had been refined by 1967 which he explained was motivated by the British decision to forsake

Iran's defence in favour of interests with the oil-rich Gulf dependencies through signing a defence treaty with Nasser during 1954:

> 'I must tell you one thing more. May be it was really the reason why we joined. It was at a time when Nasser was discussing the problem of the British [withdrawal of the garrison stationed in Suez Canal zone].Nasser had agreed that if the Russians attacked Turkey, he would permit the reactivation of the Suez Canal base, but he refused to do this in the event of a Russian attack on Persia, that was the real motive of our joining the CENTO".
>
> (Bayne 1968: 56)

Iran's political, security and resource discourse towards the Persian Gulf immediately after the Shah's reached a tentative understanding with the Soviet policymakers after 1956. as pointed out in above section was more hands-on, peremptory and even aggressive than Iran academics tends to acknowledge to have made Iran as effective hegemonic actor in the Gulf while Nasser and post-1958 Iraq remained tied down in their intractable conflicts with Israel or domestic opponents during 1956-70.

Iran's new modus- vivendi with the Soviet Union after 1956 to focus its energies on the Gulf's resources and taking itself out of a traditional isolation through the conservative bloc of like-minded Western leaning state was therefore instrumental in the inauguration of the two constitutional laws of 1957 which institutionalized its territorial nationalism and resource *irridenta* in the Gulf well before 1968. The National Bill for Oil in November 1957 hereby proclaimed Iran's sovereign rights to all off-shore resources within Iran's territorial waters itself contested well until 1968 with Saudi Arabia and with Iraq and Kuwait until 1975. The second Bill, itself a procreation of the Mossadiq-tendered oil Bill of November 1950, henceforth declared Bahrain as Iran's 14th province, historically considered part of the Fars Province since Nader Shah's capture of the Island in 1730s(Ramazani 1975: 396). The two Bills were forthwith put to the Council of Ministers by the Shah for ratification which Ramazani attributed 'was a sign of change in Iran's widening perceptions of her geopolitical parameters' (Ramazani, 1972:46-47).

The extension of this Bill to a British protectorate in the Gulf since 1861 and prompting British efforts to include Bahrain into the Trucial Coast Federation during 1968 itself at the centre of the Iran-US rift over latter's retaining Bahrain for stationing its MIDEASTFOR suggested that the contests for foreign bases in the Gulf waters could be pre-

empted by no one except Iran. Not only therefore the Shah must have a tacit understanding with Khrushchev during his 1956 visit but the reader should be well advised to read this as diplomatic tact for the Shah to assure Soviet security interests along its southern soft underbelly long before the Shah was to lead a Gulf-wide opposition to US stay in an Iranian proclaimed island which the Shah had never anticipated re-taking as early as 1955. Saud's research proves this contention when citing British ambassador Sir Denis Wright, who claims that 'the Shah considered Bahrain more a case of Iran's "historical claims" than lure for Pearls or oil. [But] he could not go down in history as the King who had abandoned his heritage without good cause: in other words, some face-saving formula' (Saud, 2003:39).

Bahrain's geographic location affecting the geo-strategic interests of the Soviet Union is also reinforced through an indirect allusion to the Iranian pre-emption- just like it sought to in regards to its other possession in the Gulf at the same time- when seen through the nationalist government under Mossadiq's National Front (17th Majlis) which was spearheaded by the pan-Iranist Party then. Not only this party was effectively mobilized amidst controversy over British refusal to hand-over Bahrain through publicly demanding Iranian action and when the UN declared Bahraini secession from Iran during March 1970, the fact remained that on the support of this very party Mossadiq would have assuaged the most serious Soviet security concern by extending the Nationalization of Iran's oil assets to Bahrain (Saud: 45-46; Ahmedi 2008:85). As much as therefore the Shah is blamed for acting on behalf of Western powers and having toppled Mossadiq through their CIA-MI-6 engineered coup during 1953, by 1951, the Shah remained equally perceptive to the Soviet interests by signing the decree passed through a unanimous Majlis-Senate vote. Owing however to a conscious strategy by Mossadiq and the Shah not to antagonize their American interlocutors under the cardinal Iranian interests to evict the hated-British out of Iran and as a recompense to Stalin's grievances of rejecting the Qavam-Sadjhcikov agreement of Northern Iranian oil concessions(April 1947), the Nationalists like Mossadiq, Jamal Imami, Dariush Farouhir and Fatemi to name a few had exclusively challenged 1934 British concessions inside Iran and did not extended to Bahrain or the Caspian Sea concessions until 1968. much as various Iran scholars make Mossadiq's nationalist struggle against all foreign powers during 1950-53 make out to be, by citing his even handedness of cancelling the Caspian Fisheries concessions (1916) to the Soviets during February 1952, his consciously overlooking untapped Soviet concession rights in the Caspian Sea may only be argued as using the Soviet interests in Iran as a guarantee against any British

or American intimidation. This understanding is reinforced by the US Defence Secretary Robert Lovett warning the British air marshal Sir William Elliot against an armed action , as well as Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Averill Harriman, (including Paul Nitze, Doc Mathews, George McGhee) who reminded the British ambassador Sir Oliver Franks that an 'armed intervention by Britain at Abadan would, in all probability, lead to armed intervention by the Soviet Union in Azerbaijan in support of their rejected concession (Ram: 208; Bill, 1988:75: 80; Goode, 1997:34, 61; Abrahamiam,1982: 268)

Although contemporary scholarship concurs on the hegemonic supposition about Iran making conditional its acceptance of the Trucial Federation of Arab Emirates upon satisfaction on Bahrain's independent status outside the UAE, the tentative Iranian interest in formulating a tacit intra-Gulf security behaviour by its internal powers further ignores another step the Shah consciously took by supporting Kuwaiti independence after 1961 against Qasim besides his other claims on Shatt al-Arab after 1959. Not only this Iranian act was duly supported by the Arab League, but Iran's rejection of Qasim's embargo on Kuwait by providing Kuwaitis with much-needed consumer goods and guaranteeing its physical integrity were the initial Iranian efforts to act as a security partner for gulf neighbours where the military presence of the British could elicit Soviet likewise demands on behalf of its new regional clients. Not only such actions were to prove the Shah's ability to anticipate the Soviet threat to the Gulf well in advance, where Iran itself could be encircled, but the Soviets reaching out to the Republican Yemen in 1964 reinforced the Shah's belief of the Western failure to project the region from further Soviet adventures, steps that he took pre-emptorily to reduce Soviet hostility towards Iran immediately after the Cuban Missiles crisis[6].

As a matter of retrospection therefore, much before the British proposed a Gulf Defence Pact in 1968 tot eh exclusion of Iraq, the Shah had already made such ostensible moves to curtail Bahrain's independentist proclivities and discourage any future British intentions to cede it to the US. As a crucial judgment on Iran's inability to prevent Western influences from aggravating Iran's security dilemma, the 1968 again saw another British effort

[6] The Shah was to regret his sacrifice of politically correct relations with the Qasimite Iraq during 1961 on behalf of Kuwait when according to the British Ambassador to Tehran during 1971, Peter Ramsbotham, he felt grieved at the Kuwait hostility towards his claims on the Abu Musa and the Tunbs. According to Richard Mobley, when the ambassador made representations to the Shah during 30th June 1971 to prevent further Iran-Sheikhly rivalry through Iranian press campaign threatening military action , the Shah is known to have agreed to 'squelch the campaign provided those "little fools"(Sheikh Khalid and the Kuwaitis) made no "offensive statements" on the islands(Mobley 2003:637).

to meld Bahrain and other sheikhdoms under William Luce's favoured Peninsular Solidarity Project under Saudi hegemony. Although , Mobley claims that amidst controversy over the Shah making his recognition of the Sheikhly Federation conditional upon control of the Abu Musa/Tunbs Islands, even as late as mid-1970, 'the Shah had agreed to a formula in which local sentiments would account for a future, independent Bahrain'. He further observes that 'in his search for stability following the British withdrawal, the Shah also had originally endorsed the creation of a united Arab federation to replace the Trucial States (and perhaps incorporate Bahrain and Qatar). He would later threaten to block the creation or a federation, pending a resolution of the island dispute', (Mobley 2003: 630). In line with the original quest of this project, the political narrative underpinning this notional linkage of the "Islands-Bahrain-UAE recognition" since 1971 needs to be matched against the Shah's actual interests in preventing Bahrain's accession to a US defence Treaty under the secret Jufair Agreement(August 1971), hence his threat to subvert future Bahraini efforts to accede to the Trucial Federation; threatening military actions against the British forces on the Abu Musa/Tunbs Islands and against Saudi oil installations on the Arabi Island during early 1968(Ramazani 1972:46-48; Saud: 45-46,Ahmedi 2008:85; Mobley: 329-31).

The existential or economic importance Iran attached at the same time to the security of the Hormuz Straits during 1958-60, due to her burgeoning oil trade and efforts to shift her dependence upon the northern Soviet routes(after CENTO's refusal to finance the Qom-Iskenderun railroad link) however implied that Iran's new security perimeters demanded commensurate military capabilities to protect her maritime access, but also diplomatic support by the Gulf Arabs against maritime interdiction(Chubin and Zabih 1974:195-96,243-44; Ramazani 1975: 427-28). While during 1954-57, Iran was able to destroy Tudeh's military and intelligence network and made domestic capital through the two Bills, her accession to the Baghdad Pact and bid to shift its military planning centre to Tehran against subversive activities carried the potential to assuaging conservative Arab and Soviet concerns about regional instability, which the Shah openly admitted in 1960(Ramazani, 1975:326; Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 92). Ramazani however propose the following explanation:

> 'at least momentarily, the Shah's regime viewed this new "threat" from the south with such alarm that it entered the negotiations with the Soviet Union for a 50-year Non-Aggression Pact….On March 1959, the United States signed a bilateral agreement with Iran, apparently satisfying its fear…it promised the use of American armed forces in

case of aggression, but resort to military or other "appropriate action" was to be the basis of mutual agreement rather than automatic on the part of the United States.'

(Ramazani 1972:106-07; 1975:282)

In 1960, the CENTO's utility to the Shah was even more effective than NATO, especially in terms of detailed planning to cater for 'round-the-clock subversion attempts', which according to him, 'the Communist minds considers to be "a part of peaceful co-existence"'. (The Shah, 1960: 309-10)

With an emerging threat to her Arab-dominated oil-rich Khuzestan and Kurdish regions after Nasser and Syrian jurists' instigation during 1958-60 and start of rebellion in the Iraqi Kurdistan in 1961after Barazani's return from the Soviet Azerbaijan in 1961, Iran's diplomatic posture towards the Gulf- in league with Saudi Arabia(as well as with Soviet Union)- has crucially missed out of its antecedents set by Iran and the Conservative Gulf Arabs to prevent Iraqi-Nasserite emergence in their weaker flanks. As a pre-emptory to Iran putting her faith with the Gulf Arabs and equally deferent to the Soviet security concerns after her accession to the Western Alliance, the Shah is seen to collaborate with Arab countries under the auspices of the UN Conferences on the Laws of Seas (UNCLOS) during 1958 and 1960, where the major purpose of Arab powers, without distinction between the conservative or radical Arabs was to deny Israel's entry through Red Sea, despite the dogged American and British diplomatic efforts to determine international maritime boundaries not beyond 3 miles along the littoral coasts, and through defining the 'Open Seas' and 'Straits'.

In fact, the stated Iranian reasons during the 1960 Conference for opposing the 3 miles limit proposed by the US and Britain 'as serving only the hegemonic designs of the maritime powers in the High Seas and as reason for under-development of new states in the international system' may be seen as Iran going by the general Arab consensus at restricting the Gulf to hostile naval powers, much before the Shah vocally opposed US presence in Bahrain during 1968-72. Chubin and Zabih's argument that the 'most unifying issue for the Arab suspicions of Iran's roles in the entire Middle East has been her relations with Israel more than another issue', therefore becomes self-contradiction of ideological reductionism animated by the historical Arab-Persian rivalry, in the light of Iran's actual diplomatic support to the Arab cause, if not inclusive to the Soviet security along the Suez Canal and Red Sea (McDonald: 180; Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 157). Until the inauguration of a Soviet Mediterranean squadron in 1964 and need for Turkey and Nasser's goodwill to traverse the

Black Sea and Suez Canal, Iran's diplomatic positions on Western interests in access to the Gulf remained one of deference to the Arab sentiments, contrary to common perceptions about his refusal to honour the Arab oil embargo, which even Faisal adhered to nominally during the 1967 War. According to Herman Eilts, the Arab refusal to accept Carter Doctrinal security assurances to deter Soviet threat after invasion of Afghanistan in 1980 reflected similar Arab concern due to its "non-automaticity" and depending upon Presidential judgment and constitutional procedures: 'it was curiously reminiscent of the abortive effort by Dulles in 1957 to purvey to Middle Eastern leaders the already mentioned Eisenhower Doctrine of defence cooperation against the Soviet. At this time, too, there were few takers, yet all privately hoped its articulation would deter the Soviets' (Eilts, 1980:108-09).

Although during the UNCLOS (1958), Iranian delegate initially insisted on relaxing the principle of 'equidistance' and demanded a 'special circumstances' proviso to demarcate inter-state boundaries across the water bodies, and received support from the US under the Article 72 Amendment, Iran subsequently chose to vote in favour of the Saudi-Soviet demands for increasing riparian state's maritime limits upto 12 miles. According to McDonald, 'Iran's insistence in this regard was principally due to the fact that waters on the Arab shores(of Shatt al-Arab) were shallower on Iranian side and could reduce her share of Territorial Sea and the Continental Shelf'[7](McDonald: 62,179). Iran's other economic and security orientations as affected by the convention were starkly evident in her threatening to reject the contested clause on the 'right of innocent passage' of warships, if littoral states' "authorization" was not enacted in the Article 24 of the Convention (McDonald: 175-77).

According to McDonald, major Saudi diplomatic effort to extend her Territorial Sea limits by 12 miles through the international law; restricting passage of ships through the narrow straits; insistence on a well-defined term for "straits" as a water body which connects mainlands closer to the 'High Seas'; and be granted the rights of the coastal state to restrict "innocent passage" to the warships or the passage of any ship - deemed prejudicial to the security of the coastal state- received support not only from other Arab participants, but also by Iran who then voted against its incorporation into the Articles 17 and 24 of the Conventions.

McDonald explains this diplomatic collusion as in keeping with the Saudi and other Arab states' vulnerability from the illegal Israeli presence in the Gulf of Aqaba, a threat driven

[7] Iran did extend its Territorial Sea limit by 12 miles in 1959,which it had enacted in the 1949 Territorial Sea Bill, but was in fact a post-facto reaction to Saudi extension of 12 miles in 1949

home in stark manifestations when Israel managed to capture her two strategic islands (Tiran and Sinafir) in the Straits of Tiran during the 1967 War (Noyes, 1982: 38;McDonald: 170-76). A long-serving US ambassador Saudi Arabia(1965-70) and well versed with Arab sentiments against the US support to Israel was to reflect on the Arab vulnerability from Western presence contrary to the Soviet threat a during 1970s. Eilts who articulated the Johnson Administrations'' policy towards the Gulf after the 1967 War, articulating US needs for acquiring Aden for the deployment of the MIDEASTFOR, explained the genesis of the "confidence debt" between the Gulf Arab regimes after threats by key US political and military leaders in response to the 1973 oil embargoes, 'long before the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, hinting at a possible US military takeover of the Gulf oilfields': 'What Gulf leader, especially when he does not see the Soviet threat in as stark terms as Washington does, can be expected to provide military "facilities" which might abet an ulterior American design?'(Eilts, 1980: 109).

A similar strategic argument about Iran's vulnerability may also be made in the light of Iran's hitherto covert relations with Israel to counter Egyptian oil embargoes-if Iran was to be benefited from the US/British efforts, but chose to put her faith in Arab diplomacy, without affronting Soviet sensitivities. It would not be a gross generalization to observe that the Convention gave Iran the right to apply the United Nation's Laws of the Seas against the Egyptian or Iraqi hostile passage through the Hormuz/Tiran Straits or at the convergence of Shatt al-Arab, allowing for her capability to impose such restriction in the Gulf. The reader's attention should be readily drawn to how the Shah himself articulated new threats in the Gulf in 1960. The Shah's security narrative is a skilful display of his initial efforts to extricate Iran out of the Great power conflicts and focusing on the Gulf where both Britain and the US maintained effective naval deterrents against the Soviet Union:

> '…and if we should against our will become involved in any small war, our navy could cooperate effectively with those of our allies. But since we are the dominant power in the Persian Gulf, we must rapidly strengthen our navy'.
>
> (The Shah 1960: 311)

Given the power factors underpinning the superpowers' interest in stability along the northern Indian Ocean at the moment, major Gulf powers could effectively leverage international conventions through declaring any power hostile to the region's economic and maritime security; third parties receiving support as Communist proxies; directly from the

Soviet Union or to frustrate traditional British economic and security relations with Iraq which continued unabated even after Qasim's threat to Kuwait in 1961 (Ramazani 1975:400). The subsequent militarization of Iran-Iraq relations only confirmed Iran's restricted choices in the upper Gulf and pending a regional modus-vivendi with the Soviet, immediately after Qasimite Iraq interfered with the passage of Iranian ships in the Shatt al-Arab during 1959; Iranian navy trying to break Iraqi blockade around the Fao Peninsula and supplying Kuwait during 1961(Chubin and Zabih 1974: 181; Ramazani 1975:402-03).

Iran's contribution towards galvanizing Gulf Arab partners of all hues, including Iraq against a putative Soviet, but accurately against the Nasserist threat to the Gulf, therefore pre-dated 1967, despite Saudi Arabia and Kuwait backing Nasser's decision to blockade Aqaba to Israeli navigation and other ships carrying strategic material to Israel in May 1967 (Chubin and Zabih 1974: 161).

In addition, starting with Iran's efforts to put her security at risk by blindfold collaboration with the Western security doctrine which not designed to protect her against the radical-pan Arabist powers of the post-Suez War era, Iran and Saudi Arabia started to foster security of the Arabian Peninsula much before Nasser posed serious challenges to the Iran-Saudi ideological standing as Western-supported "reactionary" regimes working against Arab interests, when the Shah and King Saud exchanged visits during 1955-57 (Chubin and Zabih 1974:147). It was however, 'the Shah's visit in March 1957 [which] was viewed as an opportunity for him to press for the formation of a bloc of moderate, pro-Western states: Although it was not likely that the Shah would press the King to join Iran in the Baghdad pact', Ramazani insists that King Saud was 'favourably impressed by Eisenhower's policy in the Middle East' (Ramazani, 1975:399).

In a crucial way, therefore, by acting in the name of protection to the Trucial Sheikhdoms through their Exclusive Agreements of 1870s, Imperial British efforts to stop the Arab League's efforts to reach out to the oil-less Sheikhdoms after 1964 were also responsible for galvanizing Gulf Arab's opposition to such imperialistic policies to dictate the terms of their relationships with the Arab World. While Nasser's engagement with other conservative regimes in the Persian Gulf since 1964 were paralleled by the Kuwait-Saudi developmental diplomacy and made part of a Gulf-wide narrative of Nasser's predatory instincts of its oil riches to wage his anti-Imperialist struggle, Chubin and Zabih reflect on 'Iran's contribution to the Persian Gulf until 1968 remained non-existent, as its relations with moderate Saudi

Kingdom, Kuwait and Lebanon remained essentially poor.(Chubin and Zabih, 1974:203; Ramazani 1975:404-05; Noyes, 1982:37).

At this stage, Iran scholarship is found wonting in its determination of the Iran-Arab hostility by its ostensible focus on Iran's failure to participate in the economic and social development of the Gulf Sheikhdoms before 1968 vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Kuwait. Construing Iran's various territorial claims or pro-Israeli connections as underlining the Gulf Arab's hostility towards Iran, and Soviet threat which supposedly had earned her a regional, albeit self-afflicted isolation, a serious counter-poise however exists about Iran lack of manoeuvrability against the British presence in the Gulf before 1968; serious Saudi claims on the neighbours including Abu Dhabi, Oman, Kuwait and threat from the Greater Yemeni nationalism well before the 1962 Imamate ouster. Iran's deliberate prudence not to give effect to its own claims on Bahrain and other Islands (well until 1964) remained one of letting Nasser and the British completely discredit themselves in the eyes of the Arab World, delivered as early as June 1965 by the Gulf's Political Resident (1956-66) William Luce who deposed the Sheikh of Sharjah on charges of violating his treaty commitments with the British. Keeping in with a previous arbitrary policy of deposing the Sultan of Lahej in Southern Arabia during 1958 for the communicating with Nasser, the Sharjah Sheikh was likewise deposed through a familiar practice of engineered "family requests" to the Political Resident for his opposing British efforts to compel the Arab League to channel its £5 million assistance through the British-sponsored Development Fund for the Trucial Coast.(Ramazani 1972:8-39). Glen Balfour-Paul who witnessed the rearguard action of the British Imperialism from her three dependencies during 1956-71 : 'the Sudan, Sothern Arabia and the Persian Gulf and remained pragmatic enough to rationalise such practices readily acknowledges the nature of British interference in preventing the smaller Gulf Sheikhs' foreign relations as:

> 'the technique adopted (placing British advisors in the employ of individual rulers) over the years had simply been to accept from new rulers- as a condition of recognizing them on their accession- a vague undertaking to accept the Political Resident's advice; and only in one case- that of the ill-fated Saqr bin Sultan of Sharjah in 1951- was the condition fully explicit'….
>
> (Balfour-Paul 1993: 109).

Unabashedly concerned with the core British interests in maintaining the lucrative oil business from the Trucial Coast to the serious prejudice of economic development of Imperial

protectorates and imposing a likewise priority of the British global interests, Balfour-Paul mused:

> 'in such circumstances, and quite apart from the virtues of stability as an end itself, it was clearly imperative, that Britain should, by one means or another, ensure the continuance of stable conditions for the production and export of oil'.

Underlining his Imperialistic edict to dictate the terms of the Arab League's relations with the "oil-less' dependencies, Balfour-Paul himself acknowledges that the British government insisted on channelling this £5 million aid to the Fund in late 1964: 'its aim being less to encourage their attachment to each other, than their detachment from Imperialist Britain'. Belfour-Paul's rendition clearly suggests that William Luce had blatantly threatened the ruler of Ra's al-Khaimah in 1964 who tried to revoke his 1872 Treaty with the British unless his Qawasimi cousin Sheikh Saqr of Sharjah was re-instated. Prevailing upon these "penniless" sheikhdoms to request Arab League channelling its development funding to the Trucial States Council and hence seeking its refusal, Balfour-Paul admits that the British government herself was unable to raise more than £1 million for Sheikhly development but still refused entry to a "plane-load" of Arab League technicians.

Balfour-Paul was to dismiss the 1964 case as one of a "family affair" of deposing the Sharjah sheikh, which he attributed to as a traditional Imperial practice of controlling the independentist proclivities of the Sheikhs which Luce was to repeat in the case of oil-rich Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Shakbut's in 1966- as his last act as a Political Resident- who was opposed to the Trucial Coast's amalgamation under Faisal's hegemony (Balfour-Paul:119-20).

2.3.3. Pan-Arabism vs. the "pan-Gulfism" : the pre-1968 politics of the Arab Um'mah and entrenched "Khiligiin"

Most Iran scholars argue that the Shah of Iran was the first conservative monarch throughout the Middle East to be exposed to Nasser's hostility after his refusal to honour the Arab oil embargoes in 1956 and extending "de-jure" recognition to Israel in 1960. In addition, starting as early as 1958, Nasser had started encouraging Kurdish rebellion against both Iraq and Iran' due to their joining the Baghdad Pact (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 143,147-48,155; Becker 1973:196). Taking courage with Nasser's exclusively overt hostility towards Iran and with Arab League's Secretary General Abdal-Khaliq Hassounah's claiming Khuzestan as an "Arab land" and likening its Iranian control to the Zionist occupation of Palestine "under

Colonial rule", Syria too joined the affray during 1964-65 (Chubin and Zabih 1974:148; Ramazani, 1975:05). Having instantly recognized her after breaking from the UAR in 1961, the Shah too reacted by severing diplomatic relations with Syria (and Lebanon) in late 1965. Nevertheless, when in 1959 the Shah vowed that 'we must particularly strengthen our air force, anti-aircraft weapons and the Imperial navy in the Persian Gulf', one can surmise that Iran's strategic orientation had decisively shifted towards the non-Soviet threats, under which the Arab claims on the oil-rich Khuzestan- to which Iraq only made claims in 1969- were to be deterred through a more pragmatic policy towards the Soviets and Gulf Arabs, in which both post-Yemeni revolution(1962) Saudi Arabia and anti-Nasserite Qasim proved themselves to be Iran's benign competitors than Iran scholars generally admit (Ramazani 1972:40-41; Chubin and Zabih 1974:145). This fact of the Gulf's treacherous life was pointedly acknowledged by Eilts in 1980 by observing Saddam's predatory interests towards Kuwait as well as the "Arabic" Iran. In 1980 however, both the Eilts and Saddam were to spare Kuwait of the pan-Arab *irridenta* by focusing on the Khominite threat through a more pro-active diplomacy, which Eilts readily endorsed in the name of the bigger interests at stake i.e., the Soviet threat: 'Iraq's objective is an old one: the severance of Khuzestan from Iran or at least broad autonomy for Iran's Arab populace. Though less militant on the subject, other Arab states share the conviction that Iran's Arab minority is mistreated'(Eilts 1980:90-91)

Chubin and Zabih in fact, point out initial manifestations of Iraqi moderation towards Iran under Qasim when despite his confrontation with Iran over the Shatt al-Arab(1959), 'he nevertheless, deemed his competition with Nasser more important and urged moderation in the Arab League, when Nasser called upon the organization to sever relations with Iran over Israel'. Although Chubin and Zabih interpret these cases as of the pan-Arab unity against Iran and other pr-Western conservatives all across the Middle East under Nasser, another clear expression of a Security Community in the moderate Arab world had started to fashion along the conservative-radical divide over what constituted as threats to the Arab world and the Persian Gulf (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:156-57)

With Bourguiba's Tunisia to Hussein's Jordan now facing Nasser's hostility since 1960 for blaming the failure of Arab nationalism onto their western connections, Iran and Saudi took the lead to establish the first blocks of a pan-Islamic movement-the OIC- in 1965, by, making virtue out of Nasser's action in Yemen and Pakistan and Turkey's ambivalence with their pro-Western alliance after the disappointments with the US guarantees.

In fact, absent a unified front in the Arab League during 1956-68 and owing to a non-Soviet threat based rivalries between Saudi Arabia and Iraq on the one side, and Kuwait and other Arabian Peninsular sheikhdoms(to include southern Arabia) on the other side, served to facilitate Iran's freedom of action in connivance with Saudi Arabia or like-minded regimes. Chubin and Zabih allude this commonality to the Saudi interests in undermining Nasser's domination of the Arab League and his threat to the Arabian Peninsula after 1962. In fact, Nasser targeted Saudi Arabia only after 1962, when he fell-out with King Saud over supporting the republican Colonel Sallal over his "Greater Yemen" pretension, and lumped Saudi Arabia and Iran as 'Western-allied reactionary and corrupt regimes' with Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia (Chubin and Zabih 1974: 144-45). Chubin and Zabih however observe the irony of intra-Arab but probably pan-Gulf politics as to have subverted the Shah's attempts to forge a political community of moderate Gulf regimes without his pretensions to pan-Arabism but rights for the exiled Palestinians and in Iran's case with no tilt towards an anti-Soviet alliance: 'nevertheless, the Arab World has been no more united on the question of Iran's relations with Israel than it has on any other major issue' (Chubin and Zabih 1974: 157).

Many analysts therefore agree that with Iran and Saudi Arabia calling for the Conference of Islamic States(OIC) in December 1965 was 'intended to bypass Nasserite domination of the Arab League and strengthening Faisal's position as the keeper of the Holy shrines of Islam'(Chubin and Zabih Ibid : 147-51; Ramazani1975:404-05; Litwak 1982:87; Noyes 1982: 13,37; Nadlemann1982:448).

Ahmedi's observation remains equally valid, albeit for another epoch of the Gulf's anti-radical security imperatives due to the constant Iraqi threat to Kuwaiti sovereignty. Pointing out a catalogue of security threats to the conservative-radical balance of power in the Arabian Peninsula-Gulf littoral during 1969-73, Ahmedi observes that Iraq's 'some initial political support given to the PFLOAG culminated in her all-time low standing in the Persian Gulf, [nevertheless] especially due to aggression against Kuwait in 1973, that ruled out Iraq as a serious challenger to Iran's status in the region' (Ahmedi 2008: 112).

Chubin and Zabih however cite Miles Copeland pointing out another broader ideological commonality between these apparently logger-head radical-moderate adversaries over their determination of the threats to a notional security community spanning the border Middle East. They both identify the Shah and Nasser as equally "anti-Imperialists": 'what separated them was the choice of means':

> ‘Paradoxically, both of these regional leaders seemed to pursue similar long-run goals. The struggle against the captivity of small nations for the Shah was akin to Nasser’s efforts to secure the right to decide individual questions of international politics on their merits, and not in accordance with whether or not, they fitted into one or another Great power’s scheme of the things’.
>
> (Chubin and Zabih 1974 :143).

With the Qasimite Iraq refusing to join the UAR after 1961 and its military command under Abdul Salam Arif (November 1963-66), Nasser’s actions in the North Yemen’s Civil War, made him a common enemy to Faisal, the Shah, Qasim and all subsequent Iraqi regimes (Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 145-46). Nevertheless, according to Malcolm Kerr, Nasser’s pressure until 1967 was so overwhelming that it ‘propelled not only the Saudi and Jordanian monarchs, to habitually grasp at Egyptian overtures, as a kind of security blanket, but, this applied to the Ba’ath’s as well, who sought to boost their own legitimacy and self-confidence’ (Kerr in Chubin and Zabih 1974: 150; Ramazani, 1975: 398-99; Balfour-Paul:124-25). Eilts too observed its Gulf Arab tendency while considering Kuwaiti policy of leading the pro-Palestinian diplomatic struggle at international for a. alluding to Kuwait as ‘“holier than the Pope”, partly as a self-defence mechanism’, Eilts pointed out her vulnerability from the Iraqi threat for which she was obliged to manipulate the Shah even, hence: ‘it professes not to be concerned about its security, although the disappearance of Pahlavi Iran, previously the principal restraining force on Iraq, leaves Kuwait vulnerable to Iraqi pressures’(Eilts 1980:100)

The initial contours of an Arab or Persian-centred security community in the Gulf against Nasser- or even against the British seeking to define its own security interests and ideological destinies were therefore evident long before Nasser’s evacuation from Yemen by 1968; with the British declaring their pullout from southern Arabia in 1967; or in spite of Iran and Iraq differing over accession to the CENTO (and US Executive Agreements) after 1958. in this contention of the British posing a far serious threat to the Gulf security due to their intransigencies in the Marxist southern Arabia which conditioned actual Saudi sense of encirclement since 1950s, Ramazani cites a hitherto under-emphasized security argument by Iran scholars, to which Iran had a first-hand experience since the 2nd World War and during her three years of agony during 1951-53. Encompassing a trans-regional threat at a time when Iran enjoyed politically correct relations with the Gulf Arabs and with Iraq under the Ist Arif-,

was the argument forwarded by a certain Iraqi policymaker Mahmud Ali al-Daud in 1964, took issues with the British presence in the Gulf, and interpreted Bahrain's retention under British rule as a matter of security threat to the "Arabian Gulf". Theorizing it well-before Nasser implicated both the US and Britain in the Israeli pre-emptive strikes against Egyptian positions in the Sinai during the 1967 War, the following was a de facto security blueprint against the presence of Western powers, led by nobody else but by the Shah and Iraq after 1968:

> 'British and American bases, no doubt present a threat to Arab nationalism and to the security of the Arab world in case of war with Israel….The same source also specifically mentions the importance of the Strait of Hormuz for the "defence of Iraq"….and singled out Bahrain as "one of the most important airports in the World because it provides a link between Asia, Europe and Africa'.
>
> (Ramazani 1972:36)

In fact both authors argue that a direct link existed between the post-1968 diplomatic discourse among the Gulf's moderates and the pre-1965 radical-conservative ideological struggle, which despite differing over forging an exclusive Gulf Security Pact had its initial precursors in the OIC during late 1965, which 'Syria, Egypt and the USSR were critical of, and labelled as an "Islamic Alliance"' (Chubin and Zabih 1974: 236).

With Faisal's joining forces with the Shah and Iraq playing an anti-Nasserite role in the Arab League as a "rejectionist", the Saudi ideological leadership of the OIC ensured that the future security and diplomatic management of the Gulf- Arabian Peninsular community as fashioned through the GCC after 1980, was to be undertaken through Saudi influence- and Iran and Iraq providing the coercive arm- much before the Nixon Doctrine became a fashionable term for regional security lexicon (Noyes 1982: 13-14; Nakhleh 1993:97).

In any case, Nasser's pressing needs after the 1967 War, such as pressures for political consolidation under the Arab Socialist Union; dependence upon the Saudi-Kuwait financial aid as a precondition for evacuation from Yemen; concentrating on the War of Attrition(1967-70); technical and military support from the Soviets notwithstanding, his making similar overtures towards the US to regain his lost territories and eventually accepting American mediation under Rogers' plan, 'effectively made him an outsider in the Gulf affairs' (Lenzcowski, 1971:88-89; Shamir 1973:279, Vatikiotis, 1973: 294-303; Chubin and Zabih,1974: 165; Chubin, 1982: 89; Golan: 161; Hewritz:166-67;Chubin 1982:88-89).

Although most Iran-Gulf scholars argue about Nasser's hold over the pan-Arab politics as having remained uncontested for the Gulf monarchies to follow unconditionally, until his death in June 1970, finally seen in his decision during May 1967 to blockade the Gulf of Aqaba to Iranian oil supplies to the West and Israel and receiving full diplomatic support from the Gulf Arabs. This observation however has never been rationalized as affecting a core strategic transformation in the West-Gulf relations since the "Pax-Britannica" and prompted British decision to evacuate from Aden and the Gulf after the Sterling crisis of January 1968 (Balfour-Paul:124-25) . As an crucial observation for Saudi Arabia or the minor oil-rich Gulf Sheikhdoms(a British –favoured Sheikh Zyed and Kuwait) rejecting the British or American advice against such a policy to have created a riposte for the Soviet influence seeking after 1968, the case for a putative security interests on the part of the Gulf Arabs makes for the same effects as it did for "Pax-Iranica" during 1968-79(The Shah, 31st August 1971 Speech to the Iranian Parliament;22/3/ Government Pronouncements Article 33)

Tacit Egyptian support to Iranian claims on Bahrain despite resultant friction over the Saudi-Iraqi support for the Trucial Federation to have frustrated the Shah's proposed Gulf defence pact over the next 3 years, however owed considerably to Sadat's advocating Iran-Iraq restraint in the run-up for another Arab-Israel conflict. Commonly considered as perceptive to the Shah's advice to reaching a modus-vivendi with Begin aft the 1973 War, is Sadat is known to have openly chastised Iraq in 1970 to excuse herself of the obligations to the Arab-Israel conflict by indulging in the Kurdish conflict (Chubin and Zabih,1974: 164; Ramazani 1975:425).

2.3.4. Iranian options in the Gulf (1968-75): National interest, Communal Arab sentiments and "Franchised" security

Contemporary research on the strategic interests animating British decisions to withdraw from the Gulf and leaving a politically viable Arab Federation compelled to reach some agreement on their vital territorial conflicts with Iran and Saudi Arabia demonstrates that the pre-1969 Labour Government was more concerned with joining the European Economic Community (EEC), which was variously rebuffed by De Gaulle first in 1964 and then to the Heath government in 1970. in addition, starting with Harold Wilson's government and continued under Heath, the central British interest on holding the Conference on the Security

of Europe; US threat to remove its nuclear umbrella as a pressure tactic to compel the NATO partners improving NATO's conventional capability to prevent German nuclear re-armament(initially through the Multilateral Nuclear Force comprising the British-American Polaris fitted with the French-British warheads) seemed to have already motivated Labour government's cost-cutting drive for overseas military commitments(Healy: 304-05).. In this interest however, the Persian Gulf took the brunt of Imperial commitments to the oil-less sheikhdoms, albeit Abu Dhabi remained the only strategic prize which the British defended to their last moment. In fact Denis Healy's decision of maintaining sufficient military capability in Hong Kong against the Red Guards' incursions and refusing to cede Brunei to Malaysia after the "confrontation" through British tax-payers' money remained a matter for the British priorities. In fact Denis Healy's contention on grounds of maintaining long logistical lines after cancellation of new aircraft carriers despite the Bahraini, Abu Dhabi and Dubai's offering to pay a minute sum of £12 millions/year to retain British forces in the Gulf after 1968 was an insufficient excuse(Saud: 22-23; Onley:22; Healy:299,293). Healy's personal ambivalence with the reliability of the Arab Protectorates under Arab nationalists' onslaught, despite acknowledging the fallacy of the Conservative policy during the Suez War; the Sudan and in the Aden, notwithstanding, the fact remained that Healy did not even visit the Persian Gulf states in April 1967, but instead went to the Far East to inform Tunku and Lee Kwan Yew about his British decision to evacuate from the Far East during mid-1970s. This was in keeping with his previous August 1966 visits to Australia to seek audience with the latter for British interests in moving into Western Australia, where he failed to find a sympathetic response due to Australian's ambivalence : 'in realty they did into want us to leave Singapore at all. Moreover they would have found it difficult to explain to their electorates why they were building base for Britain in Australia, while their own troops were fighting in Vietnam without British troops at their side'(Healy: 292).

This section identifies the different issues of regional security defined Iran's sense of the international system, balance of power and its transformation ,starting during 1956-58. an effort to define the new security dilemma if the oist-1968 security system and the onset of Détente with the inauguration of Nixon Doctrine, the subsequent pages would also offer explanations towards various 'impediments' of establishing a Security Community in the region, during 1968-75 and Iran's contribution or subversion to it forma Neorealist perspective. partaking from the Deutchian philosophy underpinning the evolution of a security

community from a state of conflict its state of being by 1979, we test Barnett and Adler's postulations to define a Gulf-wide "diffused reciprocity" among its main actors on various security issues to identify its security agenda and limits to interactions with the West, under the conditions of Détente which supposedly led to the failure of the Gulf Defence Pact.. In the last instance of a Security Community, we shall identify instances where while Iran deterred the emergence of challengers to a specific Gulf-centric security agenda; made efforts to determine its common values; and seek communal action against external or internal threats to a region he defined as a 'closed-sea"(Eilts 1980:90; Barnett and Adler 1998:4, 16,32). although Security Community theorists writing in the post-Cold War and post-Pahlavi Gulf tended to identify such values underpinning the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council)the GCC), we aim to identify its pre-GCC dynamics to posit that far more tangible and functionalist form of a tightly-knitted "hegemonic" security community had come to operate during the 60s-70s. Barring the Shah's removal from the scene in early 1979, it can be argued that Barnett and Adler's observation underlining the formation of the GCC remains valid for the Gulf Defence Pact or the Arab National Charter proposed by the Shah and Saddam respectively: 'Arab nationalism held that Arab states should deepen their security and political ties not only because of an external threat but also to nurture and develop a political community', (Adler and Barnett, 1998:50). The current effort will be to identify those precedents for communal action which were endorsed by the same Arab states but effectively laboured by the Shah, Saddam Hussein and Faisal. In fact, such Arab-centric assumptions continue to ignore Iran's making common cause with the conservative Saudi Kingdom (with an oscillating pro-Arab/pro-Western Kuwait) against the rise of Iraq, Egypt or other trans-Middle Eastern contenders like the PFLOAG or the Greater Yemeni aspirants in Sana'a and the PDRY against which there existed more complicity(Iraq not excepting after 1975) than divergence of perspective, hence a joint Irano-Arab military and diplomatic action against Dhofar during 1973-76. In fact, deterring further threat to Kuwait by Iran and Saudi Arabia ,supplemented by active Soviet diplomacy during early 1973 suggests that the presence of the US MIDEASTFOR in Bahrain during the period should have been a mere sideshow to let regional powers decided about the disposal of non-conformists without the US having to interfere. Apart from explaining the Shah's ties with non-Arab partners during the period which formed the central corpus of Arab suspicions about the Shah's real intentions towards the Gulf, academic determination of certain drivers and impediments to a Gulf security

community must also make theoretical space for various cooperative actions undertaken by Iran on behalf of regional security as well as communal resource-related actions against Western oil companies through the OPEC during 1970- and then 1973-74

Although various analysts have attributed the Shahs famous waning to Iran's certain and un-named adversary, in the immediate context of claims on Bahrain (and long before the confrontation with Iraq over Shatt al-Arab), it would be a highly reductionism to ignore the strategic context underlining Iran's vulnerability from the Soviet intimidation, if the Shah was seen to prefer actual US presence in the region. By its very implications, this presence posed a strategic threat to the Soviet southern borders that the Shah addressed received Kosygin in March 1968. When the Shah warned of 'meeting a similar treatment to Iran's friends who did not honour Iran's rightful interests' during his reception to Kosygin, it was clear that this was to discourage attempts by the Western non-littoral powers to stake further claims on Bahrain. The central importance of Bahrain to the US-Soviet strategic interests in the Indian Ocean was therefore inhered in the fact that British government had the Jufair agreement covertly signed by Bahrain during August 1971, and passed the naval base to the US without making public its actual contents (Balfour-Paul: 131; Ramazani 1975:411).

Far from acknowledging Nixon Doctrine's faith by its American theorists and executioners' belief system to have franchised the Western security system to the Shah, James Noyes attributed a certain "surprise" to the Saudi sense of vulnerability at the British declaration of withdrawal from the Persian Gulf 'who in the past could easily dispense with the British presence on the southern Arabian peninsula'. He instead forwards another explanation for a common security value, the regional powers could agree upon which necessarily a function of the various intra-regional problems were affecting the Gulf during 1968-79. He relates Saudi vulnerability in her Shi'a- dominated Eastern provinces(numbered to 250,000 in the Qatif region) to Iranian claims on the Shi'a Bahrain, conjoined with an Abu Dhabi ,then labouring under Saudi pressures to cede back a vast tract of her tribal patrimony where Sheikh Zyed had grown up. Noyes point out far serious internal security problems on the Arabian Peninsula where the British- Soviets ' further meddling had come to play a more nefarious role than the presence of over-bearing navies along her three flanks n the Red Sea-Arabian Sea and the Gulf:

> 'The absence of adequate Saudi forces created a situation which could [not] dictate policy for the smaller Gulf States and where Iran could alone have the capability of

intervention there in the event of extremist political/military meddling…With smaller states acquiring weapons to deter Iran or Iraq, this would have created a different kind of destabilization for Saudi Arabia in which an essentially undefended eastern province became vulnerable not only to larger powers but to possible pressures created by a combination of small Gulf states or an outbreak of hostilities'.

(Noyes 1982:39).

Although Ramazani views the disintegration or near stasis of the CENTO as a result of its local partners' dissonance with the US role in affecting their regional security objectives during 1960s, he explains Iran, Turkey and Pakistan's reasons of forging another quasi-security organization over the head of CENTO: the RCD, 'as a case of Soviet propaganda to wean Iran away from its alliance with the US' (Ramazani, 1975:342). His general take on Iran's disappointment with the US refusal to prevent Pakistan's near defeat in 1965- and actual dismemberment during the December 1971 War- and a similar refusal to Turkey during its confrontations with Syria (1957) and Greece(1964) over Cyprus draws upon the Shah's view about the inefficacy of regional pacts for securing regional powers' exclusive interests during 1969-70, hence a "go-it-alone" posture as preferable to the Gulf Defence Pact(Chubin and Zabih 1974:246; Ramazani,1975:354-55,434). Although Ramazani still argues in the direct context of Iran arranging a cease-fire between Pakistan and India during 1965 with Turkey's support and providing "whatever non-military assistance it could" under US arms embargo, his following observation still implies Iran's ability to set the regional security agenda without formal treaty with the South-western Asia's powers, in thpost-1972 phase:

'The American explanation might have been that it could take no other position in view of the general East-West rapprochement, but to Iran this would only confirm the declining military utility of the organization. The 1971 War was an even more drastic indication of CENTO's limited capability in the face of a regional conflict'.

Ramazani who never conducted any interview whatsoever with the Shah- or any prominent Iranian nationalist politician for his 1963, 1972 and 1975 works- however quotes Premier Abbas Hoveyda's interview to the New York Times on 9th February 1972 in the aftermath of Pakistan's dismemberment and before the Iraq-Soviet Defence Treaty(9th April 1972):

'he dismissed CENTO as merely a nice "club", useful in developing economic projects and communications, and practical forum to discuss ideas, but not "an effective alliance"'.

(Ramazani, 1975:354-55).

While agreeing with Ramazani's assessment about Iran's frustration with CENTO during 1964-65 and again in 1971 for Iran to have been genuinely concerned about the Soviet threat then emerging on Iran's doorsteps through Détente, Chubin and Zabih propose another explanation which clarifies the background of Iran's immediate rejection to the American stay in Bahrain after British withdrawal from Aden after November 1967:

'The Shah was similarly upset by Washington's rapid recognition of the Republic of Yemen and refusal to consider Nasser a serious menace to the Persian Gulf. Finally the Shah was annoyed by British failure either to provide a defence treaty with, or defend, the South Arabian Federation, and by its readiness to relinquish Aden under what Tehran believed was Nasserite pressure'.

(Chubin and Zabih,1974:244).

Although both scholars argue that despite these disappointments and determination by the Shah 'that the West is an unreliable ally in regional disputes', and instead welcomed 'the opportunity for Iran to play a more active regional role'; the Shah's interview to The Times London (June 1969) and NBC (February 1970) effectively occurred in the direct context of Iran renouncing her claims on Bahrain under Arab pressures, albeit in pursuit of far more serious objectives ,never contextualised as a background of the Shah-Nixon rift over security of the Gulf under the latter's relaxed view of the Soviet-Communist threat. The Shah is seen to be highly critical to the previous US policy towards Pakistan during the 1965 War and CENTO and likened this to Iran being attacked by Iraq for which he insisted upon developing Iran's self-reliant military defences. Nevertheless, the Shah can be similarly seen to be motivated by setting up a regional security agenda which assured smaller powers' security against regional or trans-regional powers, hence offering 'as much protection compared to the British forces in the area today, which would probably not fight anyway if the situation became serious'.

Elsewhere Chubin and Zabih explain the Shah's opposition to for foreign powers' presence in a different light, which makes amply clear why the Shah's diplomatic discourse in one considered war was deferential towards Soviet security interests during 1969-72:

> ‘Iran’s opposition to a foreign presence in the Gulf should be viewed in the light of its lack of faith in the benefits of a Western presence and a definite apprehension as to the consequences of a non-Western power’s presence….’
>
> (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:248).

In fact, when the Shah repeated his philosophy having its antecedents in the Iran-Iraq conflict on the Shatt al-Arab(March-1969), while pointing out the CENTO’s reduced utility for global conflicts “which seems to be remote”, this can also be attributed to his foresight of superpowers’ collusion , as later institutionalized by Nixon and Kissinger after Moscow Summit, i.e. : ‘encouragement for the principles enunciated in the Moscow Summit for avoiding confrontations’(Noyes1982: 54).

> ‘But we are counting on ourselves and our military might, for anything that might be local. Because I think it would be very embarrassing for the world if the big powers had to intervene in local conflicts’.

In the direct context of recent visits by the Soviet and Eastern German defence ministers to Iraq during July 1971 and the Soviet crisis diplomacy during Iran-Iraq conflict in early 1969, the Shah’s January 1972 interview to the Keyhan International , ‘Ettela’at and The New York Times rehearsed similar arguments which implied his sense of autonomy of the Gulf Security Community which was divorced from Western powers’ interests in setting the local agenda, unless they came out clean on their own understanding with the Soviet Union:

> ‘I believe that America has realized it can no longer play the role of an international gendarme and that the world’s security should, in any case, be guarded by countries that can assume that duty in each region…How many times can one repeat the experience of Vietnam?....here we are talking about the “superpowers” and one can say that the role of these powers will gradually become smaller’.

As much as the critics of the Shah’s make out of his “ambitions” of seeking hegemony on the region on behalf Western powers, in fact Nixon’s Annual address to the Joint Session of the Congress in 1971 is self-explanatory about the context of East-West Détente which without agreeing to an automatic regional security agenda, despite the possibility of non-conventional Soviet attack was based in the ability of individual states’ to defend for themselves:

> ‘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 defence, except for the threat of a major power involving nuclear weapons, that the United States is going to encourage and had a right to expect that this problem will be increasingly handled by , and the responsibility for it taken by the Asian nations themselves'.
>
> (Kissinger, 1979:224; Chubin and Zabih, 1974: 246-47)

It was through an extra stretch of imagination that most Iran scholars during 1970s have tried to extrapolate on the Gulf security doctrine to legitimize a natural Iranian role, originally anticipated for East Asian sedulity. A very few but authoritative rebuttals in the public domain exist to explain the Nixon Doctrine foremost of which is Herman Eilts' suggestion that the 'Shah's objectives fitted neatly into the concept of post-Vietnam Nixon Doctrine, arrogant and opinionated, the Shah might have been, but he was strong,well disposed toward the US, and ready and able to assume area security responsibilities against a putative communist threat'(Eilts 1980:93). Nevertheless, pending Iran and Saudi Arabia coming to an agreement over such an Iranian role, due in large measure to the Shah's claims on Bahrain and action against the ARAMCO rig in early 1968, Eilts, observes, without reference to an isolationist American policy after the fiasco of Vietnam, which casts doubts on the Shah's enthusiasm for such onerous responsibilities in the first place.

> 'responding to the new requirement, the Nixon Administration gradually fused several disparate ,but related elements into a kind of Gulf policy. Its key stone was encouraging the Shah to assume primacy security role for the Gulf by providing Iran, through extensive sales, with the military hardware and training to do so… A major functional component of the newly devised Gulf policy involved seeking Saudi support –and , through Saudi Arabia, hopefully that of the smaller Gulf oil producing states- in OPEC counsels in order to limit oil price rise and to keep production levels high'.
>
> (Eilts 1980:103)

Chubin and Zabih however argue a case for the Shah's opposition to superpower presence in Bahrain- not as a deterrent to the regionally aggressive powers- but for the superpower rivalries, whenever such threat became real, short of which Iran and regional powers were self-sufficient to impose order on the region, hence:

'….the putative benefits of a large scale US presence, in this view, were rendered dubious in any case by the belief that this presence would not be used(in Iran's view would not be necessary anyway) in disputes arising between the Gulf states, and yet might provoke a Soviet intrusion […]with serious consequences for the region's stability.'

(Chubin and Zabih,1974:248).

According to Noyes however, being in the knowledge of Bahraini reluctance to join his country, and 'dangerous for Gulf stability as Iran's claim was, there is little evidence that the Shah ever intended to cloud the entire spectrum of Iran's relationships with the Arab world by forcing the issue' [8](Noyes1982: 17-18). In fact, according to Noyes, it was Oman's political evolution on the Arabian Peninsula that opened the way for an informal Gulf Security system in which both Iran and the Saudis could not 'tolerate the existence of a radical or otherwise hostile regime in Oman given the strategic significance of the Strait of Hormuz'. In addition, the Saudis 'through their acceptance of the Iranian military action (after 1973) and through various pressures and financial inducements to the PDRY demonstrated their readiness to cooperate with Iran in matters of common concern' (Noyes1982: 41-42).

Chubin and Zabih's focus on Iran's interests in preventing the rise of Iraq or 'any combination of Arab powers' in the Gulf however is more pertinent as an impediment to a "tightly-knit" security community when they point out Shah's "underestimating" Arab opposition to its claims on Bahrain and lack of enthusiasm for an Iran/Iraq-dominated regional security pact (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:240-41).

Again Eilts' authoritative version of the Carter Doctrine as a security blanket for the post-Shah Gulf suggests that 'cultural differences and Iranian hegemonial aspirations were bound to preclude any real solidarity between the two sides of the Gulf'. In addition, he argues that even after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to have projected a direct Soviet presence closer to the Gulf and facing an hostile Khomeini Republican Iran, 'if American forces are to be deployed in the general region of the Gulf in order to meet a putative Soviet threat, or others that may arise from indigenous forces, the clear preference of most regional states,

[8] Noyes maintains that due to the irresolution of the Arabi-Farsi and Bahrain Islands, 'the alternative might have well meant the engagement of passions in the larger Arab world through which the Soviets could have exerted political leverage'.

including Saudi Arabia, I sot have them "over-the-horizon" until actually needed'(Eilts 1980:103, 110).

The case for Iran being a top US candidate to the exclusion of other powers and able to confront the Communist threat, without Soviet backing therefore demands fresh evidence as to the actual US interests and the nature of regional threats underpinning such deputizing to Iran. Linking this above academic lack of perspective about the Shah's sense of vulnerability due to superpowers "rapprochement" during the late 60s and his focus on non-Soviet subversive threat is the assumption which underlined this research project due to another tangible effort made by the Shah to exclude the US from the region well until 1970. This aspect of the Gulf defence during 1968-79, coinciding with the Shah's claims on Bahrain and military takeover of Abu Musa and the Tunbs has never received its due academic scrutiny as to what specific objectives the Shah had in mind by acquiring Bahrain for a Iran-Arab dominated Gulf defence force, a similar proposal he made to Iraq before 1969 confrontation over Shatt al-Arab.

In the manner of Iran's conflict with Iraq (April 1969) and Soviet warning to both belligerents against the use of force, the Gulf powers' interests in regional security (and its institutionalized expressions) should be read in the rejection with Iraqi proposal which had more serious claims on Kuwait and in the upper Gulf with Iran on the oil resources, which remained unresolved until 1975. Chubin and Zabih have pointed out the failure of the Iraqi-sponsored "Arab defence force" during the same period, the rationality being the Gulf Arabs having to 'take sides in the Iran-Iraq disputes… this even handedness, extended equally to a refusal to take part in an Arab Pact directed against Iran' (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:240-41)

Contemporary analysts of the time explain the Shah's sense of vulnerability from the Soviet encirclement for the Shah to have sought re-alignment with the US immediately after the British declaration of withdrawal from the Gulf. Nevertheless, such Soviet-centric assumptions for the Shah to have aligned Iran with a Western-sponsored security formulation-, either through a Defence Pact or a similar configuration of the Nixon Doctrine- stands contradicted in the nature of the threats the Shah himself envisaged. In fact, as early as May 1970, the Shah gave his assessment about the threats most of which remained valid well after his removal from the scene. The Shah had proposed to deter the Marxist subversive threat to the Gulf monarchies through serious internal reforms which did not necessarily emanate

directly from Soviet Union, nor had he pointed out Iraq, Iran or even the PDRY needing such reforms:

> 'it must be confessed that there are signs of Maoist activities in the Persian Gulf. But there is no opportunity for these activities to penetrate and bear fruit except in those states which still live under medieval living conditions. The danger can be recognized and easily ….'
>
> (Chubin and Zabih Ibid: 242-43).

During May 1969 therefore, effectively rejecting suppositions about his desire to play the role of "grandfather" in the Gulf, the Shah is seen to offer another security pact which was exclusive to the Gulf littoral states, nevertheless, with all the hallmarks of Arab apprehensions about Iran's physical emergence on Arab shores through Bahrain. After giving-up Iran's claims on the Island during January 1969(or even during October 1968 Shah-Saqqaf meeting in Tehran), the following can be also construed as another way of assuaging Soviet vulnerabilities as well as to his weaker Gulf partners with all the open-ended assurances asked of Iran in a "security regime":

> 'we would be willing, in conjunction with Saudi Arabia, to provide protection for the Gulf states……..we would propose that the Persian Gulf become a "closed sea", and the port of Bahrain be used as a joint base'.

In fact, when Chubin and Zabih explain- and as most uncritically rationalized by Ramazani- the failure of the Gulf security pact due to Saudi-Kuwait refusal to join an Iran-sponsored security pact in April 1970 (after which Iran is claimed by Ramazani to have decided to "go-it-alone"), most uncritically overlooked is the Shah's own acknowledgment about the values underpinning his Gulf security community as a "loose" security collaboration ,free from the institutionalized responsibilities which its members could dispense with, if they were not compatible to exclusive national interests:

> 'we are prepared to enter into some kind of regional cooperation treaty or pact involving anything from the "closest" political cooperation to the "loosest". It is up to them to tell us what kind of relations they want'[9].
>
> (Ramazani , 1975: 427;Chubin and Zabih,1974:239)

[9] Hence Chubin and Zabih argue that Iran 'having in its view magnanimously discarded its claim to Bahrain, it was clearly disappointed by the absence of Saudi and Kuwaiti enthusiasm for the Gulf defence project'(Chubin and Zabih,1973:239)

While explaining the causes of failure of the security pact which underlines the perimeters for a regional Security Community- bound by common causes, the following is a more nuanced rationalization of the Gulf regime's security interests which were validated during the Iran-Iraq War(1980-88) with institutionalized security institutions working against it efficacy and restricting its central powers' manoeuvrability:

> 'To be sure, a formal defence pact had the additional advantage to Iran for formalizing its primacy in the area and extending and legitimizing its influence on the Arabian littoral. It may have been this possibility, inherent in the military imbalance among pact's members, which threatened to weaken Saudi Arabia and Kuwait's jealous influence on the sheikhdoms that served as an additional incentive for them to rebuff it. Certainly from the vantage point of the smaller Gulf states[…] a defence pact between three large Gulf states might have posed new security problems for them, problems which remained balanced or dormant in the present setting of triangular(or quadrilateral)competition between Iran, Saudi Arabian, Kuwait and [Iraq]'.
>
> (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:242).

What is again a commonly overlooked aspect of the Iran-Saudi entente during the period and as contrary to what key British policymakers and on-ground observers is a relatively under-emphasized fact which the Gulf academia has itself missed out. As a clear security imperative for Iran and Saudi Kingdom to perceive external threats warranting common diplomatic action, the following was effectively a position against Western presence and likewise understood as security threat by its central powers. Irrespective of its institutionalized expression through a constituted organization, the following was agreed upon between the Shah and the Saudi deputy foreign minister Omar Saqqaf during the April 1970 visit:

> '…although agreement was reached on the need for Britain's withdrawal on schedule, and for cooperation among the littoral states to ensure the Gulf security…'
>
> (Chubin and Zabih1974:239).

Ramazani therefore propounds Iran's actual interest in a regional security pact which amounted to nothing less than a "Security Regime" as theorized by Constructivists as a step away from the "Conflict Formation" and towards a "Security Community":

> 'the pre-1968 [Iranian] friendship with Saudi Arabia could become the basis for an Islamic entente, or previous friendly relations with Kuwait could provide the basis for

even a tripartite coalition, or even Iraq could be finally won over in view of the fact that at the same time of the British announcement Iran's relations with Baghdad were exceptionally clam'.

(Ramazani, 1975:4-10).

2.3.5. From Gulf to Indian Ocean post-1972: Nixon Doctrine and the anomaly of the Shah's security Discourse

Academic explanations about Iran's interest in reaching agreement with Saudi Arabia over the 'joint guardianship of the Persian Gulf", or on behalf of Western powers under the Nixon Doctrine , similarly ignores the central security tenet underpinning Iranian resistance to the Western presence during the British withdrawal. This diplomatic interest was pursued more vigorously by the Shah than any of his contemporaries, without due credit, but condemnation of claiming Bahrain and other militarily insignificant islands. Most academic effort by rationalizing Bahrain and the Islands as a "pride complex' or bland nationalist *irridenta* also ignore the Shah seeking a consensus on non-regional presence with other major Asian powers like Indian, Pakistan and Turkey during December 1968- January 1969 against the extension of British stay or US taking-over as a new protector to Gulf powers after December 1971 (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:249-50). The US undersecretary of State Eugene Rostow's idea was similarly rejected by most Gulf powers including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait after seeing wider Arab opposition to Iranian inclusion and as a claimant to Bahrain and smaller Islands which observed that: 'the United States relied on security groupings involving Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to fill the vacuum left by the British' (Chubin and Zabih,1974:237). Ignoring this central factor for the Shah to have earned the Western ire, Saud's research remains verily short-sighted for its broader implications and to the Shah's great credit.

Although Saud suggests that the Shah had actually reached a tentative agreement with King Feisal during October 1968 over the resolution of Bahrain in return for the joint exploration rights of the Arabi Island, he ignores the Shah's grand diplomatic act to have earned the Shah future Soviet restraints in his conflicts with Iraq. Saud does not see that fact that the Shah instead chose not Tehran or Riyadh, to renounce Iran's 130 year old claims on Bahrain, but a non-aligned, albeit Soviet-armed India who was to face the Shah with the most serious security threat along the Iran-Afghan-Pakistan Baluchi-Pashtun belt during 1972. After

publicly renouncing Iran's claims in New Delhi on January 1969, the Shah is known to have confided in the Indian Prime minister Indira Gandhi- and received her concurrence - 'that Iran would not brook outsiders in the Persian Gulf after British withdrawal'.

Much before Nixon threatened India during the December 1971 War through the Carrier Task Force Enterprise deployments in the Bay of Bengal to deter further Indian advance into West Pakistan to have forsaken Indian goodwill for a broader Indian Ocean diplomacy, interpreting the Shah's objectives in the Gulf as hegemonic or rooted in a megalomania often ignores the key fact that he had instantly rejected the Gulf defence pact on the sole objection of non-littoral powers' presence in the Gulf as proposed by Eugene Rostow in early 1968 :

> 'The two leaders affirmed that the preservation of peace and stability in the Persian Gulf is the exclusive responsibility of the "*littoral states"* and there should be no interference by outside powers'.
>
> (Ramazani,1975:416).

The 13th January 1969 New Delhi Communiqué was therefore an effective endorsement from the broader Indian Ocean Community and of the Shah's security perceptions which aimed to reduce superpowers' influences along the southern Soviet borders. This perception was vindicated in more concrete terms only after the US failure to save the Shah under the threat of the Soviet counteraction as alluded to by Eilts[10](84-85,89). Peering into the future, and considering the US acquisition of Bahrain, Berbera, Masirah or other Indian Ocean bases during the 1970-80 was further acknowledged by Eilts that it could 'cause the Soviets to request and obtain more extensive military facilities in Aden, a far better locale for naval and air purposes'. Nevertheless, Eilts still observed that 'even in the Khormaksar airfield in Aden and the Socotra anchorage, Soviet naval and air support capabilities in the Indian Ocean are likely to be inferior to those which the US can must. This will not be lost on Soviet planners' (Eilts 1980:111).

[10] Rejecting the American ability to save the Shah, Eilts accepts that 'while there was no Arab love for the Shah, he was viewed as the bastion of the American power position in the Southwest Asian area. Inevitably, therefore, the Shah's demise and the failure of the US to try to save him (and no Gulf leader is convinced of the US inability to do so) hurt American credibility in the Gulf region'. Nevertheless, Eilts' sole pre-occupation even during 1980 remained one to protect the core American interest in the Gulf, when he rejected the Soviet threat as real: 'a unilateral American military action to protect the oil fields, unless on invitation of the Gulf leaders, would have almost equally negative area and Third World repercussions…only in a demonstrably *in extremis situation, where the very survival of this nation is at stake, does it deserve consideration'(Eilts:89)*

It is therefore still problematic to lend credence to the idea of the Shah having accepted the same role, he was presented by the Nixon policy planners, especially after Pakistan and Turkey could not be considered to be part of a Gulf defence pact being part of the still operative CENTO. It will be the academic effort to explore what if any incentives led the Shah to accept this role, which theoretically was opposed to the Arabs and would have aggravated Iran's security dilemma if it was seen to act against Soviet presence according to Ramazani and Eilts(above cited).

Ramazani even explains the extent of the Gulf community interests despite Iran-Arab antagonisms of the 1968-69 which were further complicated by Iran's new conflict with an Arab Iraq after the flare-up on Shatt al-Arab(March 1969). Nevertheless, academic explanations of Iran and Iraq pursuing radically opposite trajectories through their US-Soviet linkages still ignore that cardinal fact that even the Republican Iraq viewed external presence in the Gulf as anathema to a good regional order.

In fact, Ramazani observes that starting with the July 1968 Ba'athist come-back, while Iran was supported in her strong stance against Iraqi claims on the Shatt-al Arab and had been instigating Kurdish conflict since 1965, the Shah continued to take initiatives in offering ways of settling Iran's difference with Iraq: 'the principle reason for this was Iran's fear that the conflict might push Iraq further and more rapidly towards the Soviet Union'. It was in the very context of a near war situation, that the Shah offered President Bakr (in June 1969) a 'defensive alliance with all the states of the region to insure its stability after the British military withdrawal in 1971' (Ramazani, ibid :418-19).

Various scholars also point out a common opposition by Gulf members to a British sponsored Defence pact as well immediately after her British declaration of complete withdrawal from the East of Suez in January 1968. Nevertheless, the British proposal was based in key difference in terms of its reception by the wider Middle East and the Soviet Union. The proposal received a wider opprobrium than the American ones by Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo, alongside Soviet Union, for its "Imperialistic" or "anachronistic" nature, despite that it had actually encouraged Iraqi participation along with other non-littoral powers: Turkey, India and Pakistan (Noyes, 1982:54-55; Ramazani, ibid: 409-10; Saud: 32:66).

Eilts analysis of the need for the US extending direct security guarantees to the similar Gulf monarchies under the Carter Doctrine- even in the post-Shah power vacuum, which pending the Iran-Iraq War, he had hoped to be filled by Iraq and Saudi Arabia, underlined a

similar threat perception with more internal dynamics, than the Soviet threat. Grated by the US role in arranging an Israeli-Egyptian agreement as highly favourable to the former under the Camp David, and the US role in propping up the Shah who purportedly used against Saudi Kingdom, Iraq and the weaker sheikhdoms afterwards, Eilts pointed out the internal threats to these regimes from the Shi'a-Palestinian Diaspora. In addition he surmised that even with the two Carrier Task Force in the Indian Ocean, complementing a four ship MIDEASTFOR was 'at best able to assist host governments, upon request, to handle small bushfire conflicts. it is too small to cope with nay major Soviet military thrust into the Gulf littoral even, if it could get there're in time'. What is more Eilts argued that 'true, the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan has raised the spectre of a military dimension to the Gulf security picture, this cannot be ignored, but should not be given underserved pre-eminence'. Perhaps Eilts most pertinent observation of the intra-Gulf conflicts to have continued relevance to the pre-1980 phases can be read only retrospectively when he surmises:

> '…the major challenges confronting the US in the Gulf are regional and political in nature, not external and military. Indeed, the danger exists that, unless carefully restrained, our own reaction to the perceived Soviet military threat could unhelpfully heighten regional tensions'.

Even prospecting a possible rapprochement between a Saddamite Iraq and the US post-1979, Eilts was to warn that 'any such improvement should be rooted in mutual respect for and recognition of each others' national interests, not in taking sides in Gulf inter-state quarrels'(Eilts 1980:104-05, 109).

Noyes' study about the US arms diplomacy as a leverage to achieve core US strategic interests in the Gulf vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and improving the Gulf's central powers staying power against other Marxist-Communist proxies after 1979 is benefited from the hindsight of his being closely associated with the Nixon Administration's defence policy planning which we will elaborate in the Chapters 4-9. undertaken a rather critical political analysis about the very intra-Gulf-Red Sea and western Asian politics and laying crucial blame on the local powers instigating external interference, he elaborates on the nature of common security perceptions among the US security establishment that viewed these subversive threats from Iraq, Nasser and both Yemens before 1979. underlining a similar thesis of a relatively self-help security cooperation after Kennedy's failure to assuage Faisal's security after Nasser's emergence in Yemen after 1962 through 50,000 troops, his argues the

circumstances of the US inability to directly assure its regional allies under Nixon-Brezhnev diplomacy which drew Iran, Saudi Kingdom, Kuwait and the Trucial Sheikhdoms together after 1971 to prevent Oman's absorption into the Marxist PDRY by effectively preventing American interference which invited direct Soviet intervention under US naval weakness.

Despite certain scholarly arguments about Iran confronted by an Iraq-Soviet -Afghan "pincer" around Iran's eastern and western peripheries after the Iraq-Soviet Treaty(1972); Pakistan's further dismemberment in Baluchistan to make way for direct Soviet access to the Arabian Sea and the toppling of a US-leaning Afghan monarchy after July 1973, to have given the Shah the luxury of cross-Gulf incursions, against the Arab will, casts serious doubts on the Soviet-centric or the Iran-Arab hostility thesis, where the Shah faced an indirect Soviet threat, emphatically rejected by Eilts himself[11](1980:83). Partaking from Eilts further observations about the Saudi policy interests where the 'Saudi leadership remains intently concerned about South Yemen and Ethiopia ,viewing them as Soviet surrogates, bent upon fostering instability in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf region' after 1979, Eilts was effectively arguing a case which the British Imperial officers during the late 60s had the Kuwaiti-Trucial Sheikhdoms to accept under the Saudi hegemony, hence: 'the durability of their princely houses in the years ahead depends in large measure , especially after the fall of the Shah , upon a strong Saudi Arabia under its present form of government'(Eilts: 100). With the three Peninsula- Gulf powers finding a rather opportune moment immediately after the British withdrawal from the region and latter's pre-occupation towards Oman during 1972-77, Noyes argues that Iran, Saudi and Abu Dhabi's cooperation- with both Arabian Peninsula powers making financial contributions to the post-1970 Oman- the Shah's intervention in Dhofar rebellion was most instructive of a limited cooperative security relationship across on a traditional Saudi patrimony:

> 'this example of Iran-Arab cooperation has profound significance, while Saudi Arabia clearly would have preferred to have been the intervening power, and undoubtedly viewed Iranian actions with mixed envy and concern, the fact remains that, instead of the Iranian –Arab tension and hostility that was to have so seriously jeopardized Gulf

[11] Eilts argues that the Soviet incursion in to Afghanistan 'indeed a challenge to the international order' notwithstanding, 'there is little hard evidence to date to suggest that it is the first step in an overall Soviet military plan to move into the Gulf….an armed Soviet invasion of Pakistan other than the possibility of limited hot pursuit, strikes this writer as too risky to venture. Nor, again apart from seeking to exploit internal vulnerabilities in Pakistan, does the sometimes mooted threat of a Soviet military thrust through Baluchistan(presumably both Pakistani and Iranian Baluchistan) seem persuasive'(Eilts 1980:83)

stability, a successful joint military campaign was mounted against what was a clearly recognized common threat'.

(Noyes, 1982:22).

Although Noyes argues that after 1975-76, the 'evolution in Oman seemed to open the way for an informally operative Gulf security system, without pacts or treaties, neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia could tolerate the existence of a radical or otherwise hostile regime in Oman given the strategic significance of the strategic Hormuz', hence an equally powerful Saudi opposition to the continued Iranian presence in the Peninsula.

According to Litwak, the insistence by Sultan Qaboos to retain the entire IITF Brigade by December 1977, with hectic efforts by Saudi Arabia to replace Iranian forces through the Arab League contingents, its withdrawal was effectively demanded by the PRDRY for normalizing relations with Oman, in return to curtailing the PFLO's activities, after the latter changed her ambit to the liberation of Oman in August 1974 (Litwak, 1982: 76-78)[12]. Noyes further observes that after the collapse of the rebellion and withdrawal of Iranian forces off Arabian Peninsula in 1977, 'the evolution deprived those doubters who had initially feared that Iran's interests in the Dhofar campaign represented the beginning of a permanent Iranian military foothold on the Arab side of the Gulf'(Noyes Ibid: 22).

Eilts further observed that 'equally troublesome to the Saudi has been the tendency of the leadership of the YAR to flirt with the Soviets, including acceptance of Soviet arms and perhaps advisors. They have put strong pressure on the YAR to desist from doing so and may recently have had success on that score. A slight thaw may also be developing between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY, following governmental changes in the latter' (Eilts 1980:97)

Nevertheless, before the 1979 revolution, Oman's own isolation in the intra-Arab politics may be attributed to her siding with Egypt's acceptance of the Camp David mediation in February 1978 and efforts to grant her Masirah Island for American bases. Litwak further argues that after April 1980, base controversy became another impediment to Oman's normalization of relations with Yemen and other Conservative radical regimes due to Saudi-Kuwait interests in 'seeking to minimize the dangers of political polarization with the region' (Golan: 241; Litwak, ibid:78) .Observing that the Saudis 'though maintaining a discreet

[12] Litwak still point out that although the Shah was brought under increased pressures by the Saudis to withdraw his Task Force from Oman after the March 1976 Agreement, he still agreed with Sultan Qaboos' assessment of the continued threat posed by South Yemen's support to Dhofari rebels and to Soviet presence in the Horn of Africa, and continued to maintain smaller contingents in Oman (Litwak: 77).

silence on Saddam's counter-effort against the Carter Doctrine through is Arab National Charter, rejecting all "foreign " military forces or bases in the area 'which 'threatens to ostracize and to boycott any Arab regime which fails to adhere totes principle, 'could not but resent this Iraqi one-upmanship'. Nevertheless, rationalizing a military base-centric US security guarantees to the post-Shah Gulf monarchies, Eilts observes that 'eschewing Arab involvement in international conflicts(except that against Zionism), it calls for total neutrality and non-alignment towards any foreign party in the event of war, so long as Arab territorial integrity is not violated'. As a retrospection of the balance of forces in the Gulf during early 1970s, with Iran calling for a similar regional isolationist posture against the US-Soviet competition, the following seem s more relevant to the Saudi ability to maintain her own legitimacy in the Arab World, hence:

> [while Qaboos earning himself the Iraqi opprobrium as well as neighbouring Gulf rulers]in proceeding with negotiations for such [limited military facilities as opposed to exclusive bases], they count upon Saudi understanding of the rationale for their decision. Since the termination of the Dhahran airfield agreement, Saudi Arabi has opposed American military facilities in the Arabian Peninsula. In the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Saudi leadership appears willing to take a more tolerant, if still un-enthusiastic, view of possible American military facilities on Masirah Island and also in Somalia'.
>
> (Eitls, 1980:102-03).

Although contemporary academia focuses too much on the Shah's opposition to the US presence in Bahrain which is generally considered as motivated by freeing the Persian Gulf from superpower rivalry, no academic study to date has tried to link the broader Gulf Arab opposition to Oman becoming a hub of US military activities adjacent to the PDRY where the Soviets had maintained a substantial presence since the British withdrawal in late 1967..

Noyes further insists that 'earlier examples of a Saudi and Iranian confluence of military interests should not be overlooked. Both countries cooperated in supporting Yemeni royalists during the 1962-68 Civil war, and Iran loaned military equipment to Saudi Arabia in 1969 when the PDRY was violating the Saudi border' (Noyes1982 22). these regional integrative mechanisms which impelled Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq acting as one closely-knit Security Community after the Algiers Accords (1975) were further rooted in the Shah's

deliberate restraint in further supporting the Kurdish separatism after the 1973 War, whose repression was not possible due to continued Soviet interests with Communist Kurds to maintain pressure upon Baghdad for Communist participation, as well as Barazani's own dependence upon Iran or Soviet subventions(Eilts 1980:94-95)[13]

Noyes therefore observes the rather ephemeral nature of the common Iran-Saudi interests, albeit still rooted in the traditional hardcore balance of power imperatives:

> 'The Gulf [of post-1972],in one paradoxical sense passed into a more urgently interpreted security framework […]. Saudi interests could not tolerate a significant military encroachment in the Gulf by Iran. Should Iran so err, however, much of the Arab world, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and undoubtedly Iraq- it was thought- would mobilize for economic as well as nationalistic reasons to a degree Iran[which] would be incapable of withstanding, financially or militarily. As if this were not sufficient deterrence, Iran would also confront the Saudi-US special relationship and its own relationship with the US.'
>
> (Noyes1982:28)

With the Shah- alive to the possibility of Kurdish conflict affecting Iran- if it acted to serve Kremlin's interests along Iran's own Azeri-Kurdish dominated north-western borders-, Becker does not discount the Soviet threat through taking advantage of her burgeoning relations with Iraq during early 70s. Nevertheless, his observation also remains highly instructive for Soviet interests in keeping the Gulf as a stable political community by preventing a full-blown hegemonic war between Iran and her neighbours:

> 'If and when Soviet involvement in the Gulf affairs increases, there may be greater temptation to take a harder line toward Iran. On the other hand, the rapid development of the Shah's military power- particularly if it operates in concert with the Arab states of the Gulf- may force the Soviet Union to weigh more carefully the risk and rewards of intervention in the region'.
>
> (Becker 1973: 200).

[13] Eilts observes that alongside the Shah's certain aggressive actions against the Saudi ARAMCO which he attributed to King Faisal as "international piracy" in 1968 and humiliating the Arabs up and down the Gulf by a military "seizure" of the Abu Musa and the Tunbs, 'Iraq has not forgotten that it was virtually compelled in 1975 , admittedly through Algerian mediation, to agree to a revision of the Shatt al-Arab boundary in favour' ,with along with other provision also 'called for stoppage of Iranian support to Iraqi dissident Kurdish minority(Eilts:90).

Conclusion

The core weakness of some Iran scholarly work is preference for applying Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) as a quasi-theoretical paradigm to explain the interactions of "developing nations" with the international system, based in the drivers of "political modernization". Long before the FPA itself became a post-structuralist research programme to make room for sub-state actors' role in the state-centric Realist theoretical domains, Iran scholars were making a conscious effort to define Iran's place in the international system as one of careful contrivance in the single person of the Shah without essentially defining the state itself, her place in eth international system and the nature of international "structure" which made possible Iran's ability to overcome her security dilemma. This a-theoretical approach henceforth present Iran to the researcher as confined to a Soviet-dominated bipolar system until 1962 and suddenly opened up the Gulf for Iran's sole jurisdiction as if Iran was an idle observer of the Gulf system ad eased into it by the US under Nixon Doctrine. The preference for not applying mainstream theoretical paradigms are best historically reductionist programme to explain the multiplicity of Iranian interactions with the international and regional system at the same time; resort to self-help strategies as well as putting faith in quasi-institutional arrangements to purse national interest. Another serious weakness in such a-theoretical applications of FPA is the simplification of decision-making mechanisms in the monarchical Iran as a personalized foreign policy without consensus-building, accountability or conditioned by presence of powerful interests groups as in Western industrial economies. One of the serious drawbacks of their works is proving the non-existence of a Security Community after British declaration of withdrawal in 1968 due to local lack of enthusiasm to become part of an Iran-led security architectures owing to its Israeli connections ; conflicts with Iraq or other major Arab players like Egypt or Saudi Arabia despite the tangible evidence of conservative convergence around radical Arab or non-state threat from Marxist movements hence the Shah's consensual action against Iraq during Kurdish insurgency (1961-75) as well as against Dhofar rebellion (1973-77) on regional behalf. Failure of conservative and moderate Arabs alike during 1968-71 to rally around Iran's offer of a "loose" security pact therefore is proposed by Ramazani, Chubin and Zabih as an explanation of driving Iran to a "go-it-alone" policy (Ramazani, 1975:3-22; Chubin and Zabih 1974:1-23). Their works cannot determine the existence of a rather "mature" Security Community due to failure to explain the cardinal anomaly as to why the Shah under the overwhelming Soviet threat as an new Indian Ocean

power and after its emergence in Iraq, Afghanistan and India during 1968-71 still opposed American stay in the Persian Gulf. The core anomaly emerging from the contemporary literature begs explanation of the central security threat for which the Shah had called upon CENTO's "reappraisal" during 1972.

As a general conclusion about the existence of a loosely or tightly-held Security Community in the Gulf- Peninsula region or even encompassing South Asia during 1968-77, the prevalence of Iran-Saudi regional interests--with or without their legality-- remained powerful drivers to overcome the functional impediments of regional cooperation, with Arab regimes having to follow the Saudi line, an diplomatic necessity at least for the Trucial-Upper Gulf sheikhdoms, or the pan-Arabist Saddat and the rejectionists Iraq, Libya or Syria[14](Eilts 1980:92,97,100). In Iran's case, objectives towards ridding the region off the foreign presence were heavily affected by her efforts to make Bahrain the hub of regional defence activities and prevent its passing into the US hands which effectively made possible the YAR or Southern Arabia (if not Iraq) becoming the new hub of Soviet activities during 70s and 80s. Due to the exceptional proximity of Iran to the Saudi mainland as well, Saudi interests remained congruent with preventing eastern and southern Arabian problems giving pretext to Soviet intervention. The foregoing on the regional cooperation and the whiff of Iran-US collusion over cooperation against other Soviet allies demands a more inclusive strategic analysis of the actual interests in not preventing Iran taking on Iraq through the Kurdish rebellion during 1972-75 to which Appendix II and Chapters 8 and 9 are dedicated.

(For a more detailed insight into contemporary debates about Iran's objectives in preventing US stay in Bahrain after 1972 and the issue of Iraq-Soviet Treaty(1972) animating Iran-US relations under the rubric of post-May 1972 Nixon-Brezhnev Summitry, please consult Appendix-II).

[14] Eilts rationalization for the US interests in the Gulf better served through the Saudi leadership and preventing the Camp David spill-over into the Gulf politics that the post-Shah Iraq under Saddam Hussein appeared to master by his "rejectionists" stance and putting the House of Saud into a legitimacy struggle vis-à-vis was one of the US to renegotiate its strategic relations with Saudi Arabia, hence:' in terms of future Gulf security, the special relationship that has long existed between the two needs refurbishing. Saudi Arabia has in the past played a constructive riel in the Middle East and Gulf affairs, and can, if properly supported, continue to do so. Disagreement on some issues should not obscure the two countries' mutuality of interests on broader global issues'. In a typical fashion, he managed to under-emphasizing the anti-Zionist sentiments impinging upon the Gulf rulers legitimacy and presence of a huge Palestinian Diaspora(20% in Kuwait, 20-25% in the UAE, 10% in Qatar and Bahrain out of a total population of 1.4 million circa 1980) for King Faisal to have taken lightly without the US delivering on the key Palestinian problem under the Egypt-Israel accord, despite citing his remarks to a certain American ambassador: 'you Americans do not make things easier for your friends. You disregard their concerns and thereby weaken their political influence in the area."

2.4. Arabian Peninsula: A Saudi-centric sub-security complex Vs. Gulf security community

2.4.1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to draw a comparative case for Saudi regional security objectives and a concomitant vulnerability against the presence of non-littoral powers along her south-eastern periphery *vis-à-vis* Iranian security interests in the Persian Gulf during 1956-80.

The aim of this effort is to develop an historical strategic matrix of Iran-Saudi engagements in the region under Kings Saud and Faisal; the Saudi nationalist divergence along her pan-Arab and the pan-Islamic identities; as well as ability to set a regional geo-economic and security agenda as a deterrent to radical Marxists, the Republicans and external powers which its policymakers defined as "non-littoral" to the Arabian Peninsula. Whether this was contrived by both powers to prevent the Gulf's internal radical-conservative powers from disrupting the regional *status-quo;* discourage the presence of non-littoral powers in and around the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula security systems; or imposing their exclusive sub-regional hegemonic systems –separated by the Gulf and Red Sea waters will be explored in the analyses of primary data on the Saudi- Gulf relations during 1968-1975.

The initial Saudi reaction to Iran's territorial claims (Bahrain, Abu Musa and the Tunbs) during 1968-1971, and efforts to prevent the Shah's appearance on her Eastern shores notwithstanding, but her willingness- to encourage the Shah taking lead in the Arabian Peninsula and take care of Iraqi threat immediately after the British declaration of final withdrawal will be the test case for a trans- Gulf-Arabian Peninsular security community and its institutional capacity. This capacity will be judged by the exploration of regional threats as defined by its central powers to compel its members' agreement to common threat perceptions in the region or deterring their engagements with external powers or optimum security behaviour inside the region which facilitated external interference.

Testing the Constructivist manifestation of "securitization" of objects of national/regional interests, as espoused by its central hegemonic powers or lack of integrative incentives- without "constitutionally" institutionalized security mechanisms, we will explore the national security policy pursued by Saudi Arabia during the similar period, as undertaken by Iran vis-à-vis other regional actors. At a macro strategic level, we can identify the US and

the Soviet Union as its systemic intervening powers. But in the nature of the security affairs of the Gulf where the British held a preponderant presence through strategic bases and acted with relative impunity on behalf of the Western alliance throughout the northern Indian Ocean and East Asia well until 1971, the run-up of British evacuation from the region and a weaker "over-the-horizon" US presence through Bahrain(or other British Indian Ocean bases) might have rendered Soviet Union as the central power of Gulf-western Asia's regional security system. As will be demonstrated that this pre-1968 power vacuum was filled by the Soviet strategists and coincided with the post-1962 US "rapprochement" with the Soviet Union to seek Détente in Europe and likewise analogous to the Iran-Turkey's sense of vulnerability from the superpowers collusion. In fact, Kennedy's need for Nasser and Soviet restraint in the Arab-Israel conflict and his failure to match Soviet engagements with the local allies after 1962 was also a case for Nasser- Feisal power struggle in Yemen(Nadelmann,1982), which despite its adverse consequences for the Peninsular security after 1970s,was in one crucial way an obverse strategic collusion against the British presence in southern Arabia to aggravate further British mismanagement against the Adeni- Hinterland Protectorates , devoid of any Soviet or Marxist threat whatsoever, was directed against Nasser-Saudi interests and even tried to absorb Saudi territories into southern Arabia .

The Soviet consolidation in the Arabian Peninsula ,after her appearance in Iraq after the 1958 Qasimite revolution, was however achieved through a rather aggressive diplomacy in the North Yemen, alongside naval diplomacy through regular "port-calls" and "flag-showing" visits to the region- after the inauguration of her Mediterranean Squadron in 1964- and finally followed by direct engagements with the post-1969 PDRY. Conscious of making a reductionist judgment about Saudi Arabi pursuing her security as contradictory to Iran, Iraq, North Yemen, the PDRY , the Trucial Coast and Omani objectives, we argue as to why the securitization of Arabian Peninsula was pursued in the traditional Realist balance of power interests; was a precursor to a border security community straddling along the Red Sea-Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf; but was effectively a sub-regional security system separated from the Iran-Iraq dominated Gulf or an Iran- dominated Pakistan-Afghan mini-complex along western Asia. In this regard we will show how it was the Soviet Union, not the US or Imperial Britain as its central power on both Saudi-Iranian flanks, which gave Saudi policymakers to perforce remain perceptive to the Soviet security vulnerabilities along her

southern borders during 1968-71 in the same vain as Iran has shown to be in the previous section..

Although we have already identified the strategic importance which Bahrain enjoyed as a forward "buffer" or "insulator" between Saudi Arabia and Iran along her eastern periphery (much like Afghanistan between the British India and Tsarist Russia during the 19th century) we shall argue that because of its inherent weakness as a virtue for Saudi security, Saudi strategists were obliged to treat Iran, the British or any non-littoral power such as the Nasserite Egypt, northern Tier Iraq or the Soviet Union, being traditionally non-maritime powers Frustrated by the US efforts to prevent North Yemen's drift towards the Soviet Union after Kennedy's sponsoring the Cairo Agreement (1962) between Nasser and Saud to arm twist latter's restraint(Nadlemann:443-44[15]), Sana's decision to forge new strategic relations with Moscow under the 1964 Treaty of Friendship, ensured that the Saudi Kingdom was left to fend for itself in an hostile pan-Arab environment well after the Shah's removal in 1979. Although succeeding sections would demonstrate the while Saudi Arabia prevented the "unified" Yemen's, Bahrain and Omani drift towards the Soviet Union and the US during 1969-1977, despite her own territorial conflicts with almost every neighbour, this section will also show that she consciously let the Shah to act across the Gulf in Dhofar and southern Arabia. In a similar vein, the contention is proven in the argument that the Shah having acted as a collaborative security actor to shore-up Saudi security against the radical-subversive powers and movements has been undeservedly blamed for aggressive-expansionist tendencies by claiming militarily insignificant islands along the Gulf, compared to the substantially serious Saudi claims on Abu Dhabi-Oman, Qatar, southern Arabia and Kuwaiti territories

The overall basis of this exercise however is to identify those facets of common approach between Iran, Saudi Arabia and even Iraq which garnered trans-regional cooperation during the British withdrawal such as opposing American presence in the Gulf or against a

[15] Nadelmann argues that while Nasser's response to various American peace initiatives were 'dictated primarily by his perception of Egypt's immediate interests in the Yemen conflict' and responded to Kennedy's late November proposed peace formula due to his desire 'for American recognition of al-Sallal's "republican" government', the US interests were also better served by having been 'assured by Nasser that he would not use his position in Yemen to attack Saudi Arabia or harass the British position in southern Arabia'. Nevertheless, his following observation is a de facto recognition by Kennedy of the superpower restraints in the region which by its regional implications left the Saudi Kingdom encircled by Nasser, the British and the Soviets after 1964 through the Greater Yemen project, which Nasser and the Soviet pursued with vigor immediately after 1967: 'The American decision was also influenced by an assessment that al-Sallal seemed in control of much of the country and by a desire to avoid the polarization of the Middle East into a Soviet-backed "progressive" forces and American-backed "traditional" forces(Nadelmann 1980:443-44)

Soviet-Maoist PFLOAG in Oman without the non-littoral support well until the 1979 revolution.

On another strategic calculi however, this section sets the framework of a Regional Security Complex in its pre-GCC security imperatives where the resolution of various resource and territorial issues during 1956-68 were affected by its core powers' rigid pursuit of exclusive national interests and engendered more region-exclusive reaction to locally preponderant powers, to which the external powers reacted.

The period delineating this hegemonic or depending upon an observers value-system, a regional cooperative epoch starts with Nasser's emergence in the Arabian Peninsula after 1956 to support King Saud's efforts in evicting the British forces out of southern Arabia to prevent the Greater Yemeni unification, under British tutelage, until his own and British withdrawal from Yemen and Aden after 1967. in this Nasserite-Saud *Entente-Cordial* however, an observer is better advised to contextualize the previous onset of a resource-territorial rivalry between the Saudi Kings and Abu Dhabi's Bani Yaas Sheikhs over Buraimi since 1954, on which the Greater Yemeni nationalists and Oman also held claims well until 1974. in this vein, although the 1954 confrontation between the Crown Prince Feisal and the Oman Trucial Scouts led to the former's eviction, the British still failed to resolve the matter between the two (even after Qaboos' relinquishing his claims on Buraimi in 1970, ostensibly under British pressures) during 1956-63 and finally left its resolution to the hegemonic power games of the Nixon Doctrine. In its Arabian Peninsular manifestations, the US policy therefore favoured Saudi hegemony over the peninsular affairs well until 1974, where the Soviet-Maoists threat remained the core Saudi vulnerability, until the Shah's military action and his receiving Chinese restraint in the Peninsula by sponsoring her membership of the Soviet-proposed Asiatic Pact.

This chapter also seeks to demonstrate how the Arabian Peninsula sub-complex evolved under the Saudi-British hegemonic struggle over southern Arabia, the Trucial Coast and Oman after 1954- with the former receiving support against the latter from the Hinterland Sheikhs of Lahej, Hashed and Baikal to create another buffer between the Hinterland and her Hadramaut region.

This section also demonstrates how an even broader Saudi security agenda of preventing an anti-Saudi axis along her southern-eastern periphery was conditioned by the key vulnerability from the Greater Yemeni unification, which included her Hadrawmi Highlands

or even Oman under Nasser or British control. In this pursuit, we will show how Saudi counter-actions affected resolution of the intra-Arab disputes along her eastern and southern peripheries, which the British had sought to temper before 1967 in pursuit of their imperial interests in seeking permanent bases in Aden, Sharjah and Masirah. The fear of her strategic encirclement - in the same vein as Iran felt after 1972- by non-Peninsular powers (Egypt, Britain or Iran) by a conscious British effort to empower regional sheikhdoms and the behind-the-scenes dealings with the Hinterland sheikhs over accession to southern Arabia under promises of protection, henceforth set the stage of separate Saudi engagements with Sana'a and the Marxist PDRY after 1967, and with the Trucial Coast, by first letting Iran stake claims on Bahrain and other islands to legitimize her own claims on the neighbouring sheikhdoms.

2.4.2. Some Generalizations about the "non-littoral" powers of the Arabian Peninsula

The case of the Arabian Peninsula politics as a product of various intra-Arab rivalries and hegemonic struggles which affected its specific security dynamics during the post-Ottoman period to the post-Pax-Britannica, and evaluating its notional separation from an Iran-specific Saudi foreign policy is possible when visualized against numerous Saudi counter-actions against her peninsular neighbours. Without superimposing(and by implication predicating) the internal security dynamics over the external factors to explain which level aggravated the Arabian Peninsula's political evolution more dangerously than the Shah's actions on the Trucial Coast during 1968-71, we need an optimum understanding of the "non-littoral" external powers as defined by the Saudi strategists for conceptual clarity about the Arabian affairs. As a serious historical corrective to prevent further conflict between Iran and the post-2003 Gulf, we will explore how relatively Saudi-specific actions in the region to seek her security on more self-help than American "over-lay" basis has outlived the ouster of the Shah after 1979 and independently from the Islamic Republic Iranian threat.

In fact, having been caught in a multi-fronted power struggle with the republican Yemen and the Marxist NLF in the PDRY, with the British, Nasser and Soviet Union vying for trans-regional control since 1956, Saud and Nasser did nurture rival factions in southern Arabia and Sana'a well until 1970. The British on the other hand also executed an equally deleterious "*divide et impera*" policy of cutting deals with the same Marxist NLF, with Hinterland Sheikhs and Imamite Sana'a whom she had variously rebuffed during the militarily preponderant days of Imperial hegemony through the Crown Aden Colony.

During 1964-66 therefore, the British pre-occupation with counter-insurgency operations in Radfan Mountains against the Saudi-supported NLF of Qahtan al-Shabi (after his break with Nasser's SAL in 1964) had now coincided with Nasser's threat to the Republican Yemen and British position in Aden. Litwak's research suggests that the Saud-Nasser break over north Yemen occurred after Faisal refused to stop supporting the Yemeni royalists under the 1964 Haradh agreement which was achieved under the auspices of Arab League in Alexandria, and despite Kennedy's efforts to get assurances from Nasser not to support the republican elements (Litwak: 87; Nadlemann, 1982:443-44.) With the US support to King Saud during 1962 partly assured through Kennedy's despatch of two squadrons of F-4, Nasser was hereafter confronted by the Jordanian military contingents on behalf of the Royalists, trained, armed and financed by the British, Saudis, Americans and the Shah of Iran (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:153; Noyes:22,43,37;). Nadlemann too observes that 'although the Saudis were partly to blame for the continuing conflict and primarily responsible for America's involvement, Nasser's refusal to abide by the peace agreements, and reports that the Egyptian army was using lethal gas, marked him as the principle aggressor' (Nadlemann:444). The subsequent militarization in southern Arabia however continued after Nasser's withdrawal in 1967 that 'left Saudi Arabia as the ultimate arbiter of regional peace, alongside Iran' (Litwak 1982:86-87; Golan 1990:236; Balfour-Paul 1993:118-22 Chubin and Zabih 1974:147; Nakhleh 1993:66)

After his defeat by the joint British- French- Israeli attack during 1956 War and the losing American economic support or military aid, Nasser was more confident in endorsing Algerian nationalism during late 1950s and impugn Iran-Iraqi linkages with Western security pacts (Nadlemann, 1982: 438; Chubin and Zabih 1974:144-45;Ram 1975:397). On his own, Kennedy's endorsement of Algerian nationalism during the late 1950s, despite 'his courtship of the Jewish vote during the 1960 election campaign' implied that 'circumstances in 1961-62 [however], were amenable to the execution of such a policy' for the US to 'purse closer relations with each of the Middle Eastern state, until the contradictions inherent in any attempt to befriend governments not only at odds with one another but also at odds with a basic American objective(the preservation of Israel's existence) could no longer be suppressed(Nadlemann:438)

In response to Kennedy's positive view of Middle Easters nationalism under his official Chester Bowles and Economics Professor Edward Mason's advocacy of closer

American ties with ‘greater American assistance as the best means to defuse tensions in the Middle East’, Nasser too obliged by ‘tempering his public criticism of American policy towards Cuba and the Congo, opposing Qassem’s claim to Kuwait, and generally respecting the four primary concerns of the US’ (Nadlemann: 439). Nadlemann’s foremost observation to have the Saudi policy planner’s seek security through other means without much faith in the US guarantees however remains highly suggestive of the inherent divergence between the US and Conservative alliance in the Gulf region and the ‘to-and fro’ nature of the US commitments to the conservative partners whenever the global environment for reductions in the superpower tension looked fortuitous. Arguments as to have tempered a nuanced American policy not taking sides in the Arab-Israel conflict as formulated under the overwhelming Jewish influence in the post-1960 US Administrations notwithstanding, it is where the Jewish influence to temper the US policy actually becomes one of the Israel-Conservative Arab “commonality” in restraining Nasser’s threat to the monarchical-radical balance of power in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula. Nadlemann convincingly argues that careful not to subvert US assistance and in the ‘re-assuring spectacle of sharp and open conflicts between Nasser and both Khrushchev and Qasim, American fears were further alleviated by a rapprochements between Nasser and the conservative monarchs of Jordan and Saudi Arabia [until] 1959’. In fact well Nasser himself remained responsive to the core US concerns under Eisenhower’s ‘defence of Egyptian sovereignty during the 1956 crisis’ despite the 1955 Czechoslovakian arms deal and well until 1967, during which he tried to extract maximum US assistance in his “calculated assessments” that Kennedy’s aid policy, despite Congressional ambivalence, was readily ‘opposed to a severance of aid’ and that ‘his actions, short of something drastic , were irrelevant to the extension of American aid’.

While Nadlemann ignores the effects of Kennedy’s post-1962 policy towards Nasser posing more threat to the conservative Saudi Arabia then to Israel, henceforth, his suggestion drives the point of the central US interests in maintaining the regional balances of power to prevent Soviet entry, which at best remained one of appeasement of a pan-Arab leader, while the Soviets continued to make major inroads in Yemen after 1964: ‘A failure of the US to respond to this challenge would have created grave doubts as to the substance of the “special relationship” with both international and domestic consequences’(Nadlemann: 439).

In Needleman’s contention however, the core factor complicating the Nasser-US relations, but effectively as a positive central determining factor for global stability along the

Middle East was inhered ‘as an effective counter-balance to the Soviet and Communist penetration in the Middle East; as a deterrent to the recurrence of another Israeli, British and French aggression; and as a useful device to encourage American neutrality towards his conflicts with other Arab leader’ (Nadlemann: 442). Hence he observes that despite the moderate Arabs, Jewish Americans and Israeli protestations over Kennedy’s renewal of a three-year aid package of supplying upto $200 million wheat in early 1962 that ‘large-scale American aid merely subsidized Egyptian purchases of Soviet military equipment; rejecting Turkish-Lebanese pressure to withhold food aid[under the PL-480] until their holdings were denationalized’…it likewise did not respond strongly to Nasser's decision in October 1961 to forsake his “unity of ranks” alignment with the conservative Arab regimes for a new “unity of purpose” in spreading Arab Socialism throughout the Arab World’(Nadlemann:439). Finally, he argues that in order to counter significant Soviet arms supplies to Nasser after July 1962 through Hawk Missiles deliveries [to Israel] though ‘represented a great reversal in American policy’, an ‘ amalgam of considerations doubtlessly influenced the President’s decision, the primary one being the Soviet-inspired deterioration in the regional arms balance’[16](439).

Other observers would argue that in the immediate aftermath of wholesale desertions of the Saudi air force after 1962, American support might have been tangible enough to deter the Soviet or Nasser’s influence-seeking in Sana'a. Nevertheless, Kennedy’s immediate despatch of a squadron of F-4 fighters and Hawk Missile batteries were meant to match the Soviet provision of upto 24 MiG-21s to the YAR during late 1962, which served to strengthen Saudi ability to take care of her own vulnerable backyard,. Taking an equal advantage of the post-Cuban crisis thaw in superpower relations, this US support only confronted the British with serious dilemmas, without any careful US policy to deter Nasser well until 1967, and due to the Saudi trans-Arabian interests straddling the southern Arabia- and the Hinterland (Western and Eastern Protectorates) and even Buraimi Oman(Chubin 1982:38; Nakhleh,1993:98; Noyes 1982:37).

On the American tally of maintaining the intra-Arab balance the failure of which would have mandated the US interference however, Nadlemann would argue that ‘if the

[16] In the fallout of Nasser-Johnson relations on the Yemen-Saudi conflict, Nadlemann posits Nasser’s pragmatism in the continuance of the economic aid from the US well until 1967 and focusing his energies on the Yemen after the September 1962 revolution against the Saud-Hussein support of Royalist Imam Badr. Quoting from Nadlemann again, Nasser ‘subjected to attacks by his radical Arab opponents that American aid had made him go “soft” on Israel, looked southward and saw the rapidly evolving situation in Yemen as vastly more advantageous means of demonstrating the purity of his Arabism than futile attacks on the Hawk sales’.

Jordanian and, especially the Saudi monarchs had not involved themselves with the civil war, American interests would have been limited to ensuring free passage through the Bab el-Mand'ab straits and maintaining the adjacent British position in Aden and the South Arabian Federation'. Nevertheless, this is where the American-Saudi interests are supposed to have diverged from each other despite the "special relationship" status accorded to the Saudi sovereignty in the US foreign policy: 'however a decision of the monarchs to come to al-Badr's assistance created the danger of instability in both fragile monarchies, with the concomitant threat to the oil flow and Arab-Israeli "peace"'(Nadlemann: 443).

Underlining this very divergence was Eilts' quoting from King Faisal who despite struggling to retain Saudi legitimacy of leadership of the pan-Arab movement against the Arab-Israel conflict, once complained 'bitterly to an American ambassador: "you Americans do not make things easier for your friends. You disregard their concerns and thereby weaken their influence in the area". (Eilts 1980:96)

2.4.3. Dhofar-Buraimi: "buffers" for Saudi security?

Although the Dhofari rebellion assumed its full force against the British –protected Oman only after NLF's accession (under Rubay Ali and Ismail) to power in 1969, a prior Saudi support to the Arab National Movement (a faction of the DLF) remains crucial to understanding of how Dhofar's security was inextricably linked to Saudi efforts to discourage Sana's links with Nasser after 1962 under the Greater Yemeni aspirations- which Nasser endorsed -and its later entente with Rubay Ali (Golan: 231-32;Dawisha:1975:51).

This section demonstrate that well before 1962 and Nasser's threat to southern Arabia and the YAR, the Saudis made serious efforts to insulate southern borders from the British presence in the region after the British-Ottoman modus-vivendi on Arabian Peninsula, despite partially responsive to concerns from Imamite Yemen's claims on her own tribal Hadhramawt and western coastal region since early 20th century.

Despite British cedence of the strategic port of Hodeida to Sana'a under the 1934 Treaty, further claims by Sana'a on the British protectorates in the Hadhramaut region and Oman were thenceforth directly supported by both Saud and Nasser during 1958-62 through the Marxist NLF with the aim of weakening the British control over Aden (Litwak 1982:73,82,86; Noyes 1982:19) Generally shying of putting a direct blame on Kings Saud and Faisal on the British withdrawal during the last phase of imperial presence in southern Arabia until 1967, however, Balfour-Paul still observes that 'partly owing to his own irritation with

Britain over the Buraimi dispute (post-1955 Stand Still Agreement),[he] was happy at this stage to contribute to the removal of British influence from Arabia'(Balfour-Paul 1993:65-66,71).

Before 1958, ideological issues did not prevent Saud-Nasser collaborations with the Royalist San'a while the latter also forged relations with the Soviet Union in 1956 and joined a Nasser-dominated UAR in 1958 to 'bolster her pan-Arab credentials'. In this regard, Yemen's post-1948 claims under Imam Yahiya on the British Protectorates along the southern Arabian frontiers were similarly contested by the British claiming them as part of their Western Protectorates since 1914, under the agreement reached with the Ottoman Turkey. Yet according to Litwak, when in 1948 Imam Yahiya asserted control over the Hinterlands' Western Protectorates, it was in pursuit of his ambition to 'forge a unified independent state of Greater Yemen'(Litwak 1982: 79). Balfour-Paul's analysis of the British attempts to maintain her military or political presence in Southern Arabia suggests that well before Imam Badr's toppling in 1962, the British deposal of the Sultan of Lahej in July 1958 upon his communication with Nasser and Yemen (as breaching his Treaty relations with the British) actually set the stage for British withdrawal from Aden.

In fact another factor inhibiting British Imperial policy to hold southern Arabia together was the Sultan of Lahej's conscious collaboration with Nasser and Saud - who had nurtured the South Arabian League (SAL) since March 1956- to federate Aden Colony with the Protectorates under his [Sultan's] leadership, and already pre-empted by Imam Ahmed before his death. In a move that belied an ill-grasp of timings, the Aden's Governor General Hickinbotham had discouraged his efforts as "suspect and self-seeking".

According to Balfour-Paul's historical analysis of the Greater Yemeni aspirations nurtured by the Lahej-based Southern Arabian League (SAL) and the Aden-based United National Front(UNF) since 1954 suggests, that during the mid-60s, both organizations (now comprising a large number of "Free Yemeni exiles" from the North) 'were for the unity of Aden, the Protectorates, a "reformed" Yemen and even Oman, as a single independent state'[17](Balfour-Paul 1993:68; Noyes 1982:12,38).

Nevertheless, he points out a similar prior ideological ambivalence among the pre-1962 Adeni "Federalis" to entrust the southern Arabian sovereignty under Imam Ahmed and

[17] Balfour-Paul also point out that alongside these nationalists groups, outsiders such as the Arab Nationalist Movement(ANM) and Syrian Ba'athist 'were quietly at work under outside guidance' upon 'none of these were the implications of Suez lost…'(Balfour-Paul 1993:68; Noyes 1982:12,38).

by extension to a Nasser-dominated Union of Arab States (UAR), while they feared that the socialist ATUC-PSP demands for the British withdrawal were motivated by the merger of Aden and the Western Protectorates with a "reformed" Yemen into a single republican state [18](Balfour-Paul, 1993: 74).

In the context of Saudi vulnerability of being encircled by a Republican-Marxist or Arab nationalist Yemen (supported by Nasser and the Arab League), it can be argued that whereas Colonel Sallal -being an ardent theorist of a Great Yemeni Republic- was supported by Nasser, after 1962, the Adeni Federalists themselves were not averse to collaboration with the Yemeni Royalists 'whom they –in contrast to the activists in Aden-obviously favoured as the lesser of two evils, [who] were in fact fighting back [with the British] with Saudi backing'(Balfour-Paul,1993:79; Noyes 1982: 12).

As a case for the British having belatedly coming to terms after making crucial mistakes under Aden's Governor Hickenbotham, his own subordinates viewed his 'heavy-handed approach towards the Sultan of Laehj as "distinctly insensitive"[19]:

> 'Ali was the only ruler of sufficient standing and intelligence which might, if better handled, and given the opportunity, might have established Federation much earlier under his control……without alienation from Britain'.
>
> (Balfour-Paul,1993:211)

Nevertheless, Balfour-Paul's "confessions" renders Healey's account one of self-vindication of how arbitrarily he decided on recommending to Harold Wilson about the Sheikh's lacking interests in accession to southern Arabian Federation, since as per Balfour-Paul's views, the British strategic interests were already being well served through keeping the Aden Colony constitutionally insulated from domination by the tribalist Protectorates and by supporting Aden's freedom to opt-out of the Federation after 6 years. The Labour Defence

[18] Balfour-Paul however further acknowledges another fact that despite being averse to Aden's merger with Yemen under Imam Ahmed, 'the Protectorates and the politically more conscious Adenis, were ready in their different ways, as a means to extracting concessions from Britain, to exploit Imam's claims to over lordship […].Nevertheless 'much more dangerous in London eyes were the wider objectives behind Nasser's patronage of the Imam and the readiness of the Saudi policy-makers of the time to support them'.

[19] Balfour-Paul however still point out that Luce was not in favour of the Arabian Hinterland's integration with the Aden Colony, which would have led to demands for independence, 'and an independent Hinterland could not be squared with a dependent Aden'. Observing that 'bound as he was, on his first arrival-after relinquishing the Sudan- by his Government's instance that there could be no fundamental relaxation in British sovereign control of Aden for the foreseeable future', Balfour-Paul argues that 'had his more radical recommendations been accepted in London, it is just possible that the writing on the wall might have been erased, and a more orderly rubric substantiated'.

Secretary, charged with the British forces withdrawal from Aden, too acknowledges his own intentions to explore the idea of Hadrawmi annexation into the Federation, when he met with the Sherif of Beihan and the Sultan of Saiyun(in Shibam) in June 1965, to which he forthwith appended his following decision: 'I was not surprised to hear that they did not want to join the Federation, so we dropped the idea. Like many of the peoples near the coast of Indian Ocean, they tended to look, not inland to the Arab world, but across the sea to India and India' (Balfour-Paul, 1993:68; Healy1989:282).

As a clear manifestation of British preference for the Greater Yemeni unification with its inherent threat to the Saudi territorial integrity, Balfour-Paul insists that despite British imperial commitments to her Sheikhly Protectorates 'that had loyally defended British strategic interests in the Aden Colony by providing the *"cordon sanitaire*" against Zaidi Imam's pretensions to southern Arabia, an [early] deal with Yemeni Imams, to save Aden Colony for British could still be struck before 1962 over the whole "historical" Yemen'(Balfour-Paul,1993: 92).

In the nine years that followed, the British unsuccessfully attempted to "federate" the southern Arabian hinterland with the Aden Colony under a constitutional formula which could effectively reduce Sheikhly powers and gave the Aden Colony the right to secede from the Federation. According to Balfour-Paul, the core British interest in this sort of disparate federation remained one to keep Aden as a "special" protectorate. But behind these desperate attempts remained the lurking British interest to keep Aden, which could be detached from the Hinterland within 6 years through the pliable "Federalis".

In fact, Balfour-Paul attributes this key interest directly to Luce and the Force Commander Aden in which the former had argued that 'the continuing use of Aden base would be better secured by negotiating treaty rights with an independent entity, than by insisting on the indefinite retention of sovereignty', Balfour-Paul's account of Luce changing his opposition to Federation within a year to accepting it, suggests that the Federation project was undertaken without necessary constitutional reforms or development initiatives, as requested by Luce on his arrival from Sudan[20]. Nevertheless, the account does make clear that Luce's idea of a 'gradual disengagement within the next 10 years' were also in pursuit of

[20] Balfour-Paul acknowledges that right from the start and through experience in the Sudan, Luce had recognized two vital reforms to be made if the British were to keep the Colony: 'firstly, evidence that the treaty promises of protection meant what they said, and, secondly a wholly new dimension of development funding, neglected since the last 20 years', as well as 'increasing interference in the freedom of traditional life-styles with few fundamental advantages to offset that loss'.

detaching the Aden Colony as a separate "Protectorate" within the proposed Southern Arabian Federation despite 'its simultaneous encouragement of its merger with the protected Federation' comprising the Eastern and Western Protectorates. In addition a, host of broader regional security interests after the British withdrawal from Sudan (1956) and Kenya (1961) had already made the British ever-more dependent upon the Aden as a base for operations in the Middle East, Persian Gulf and Far East.

After Nasser's failure by November 1966 to meld the NLF with the PSP-ATUC (under al-Asnaj) with his favoured FLOSY (a procreation of the ex-SAL and the OLOS), the NLF's grip on southern Arabian politics was more than insured by Saudi support, despite British refusals to negotiate with Qahtan al-Shibi(NLF) even after he had broken from the FLOSY and its military wing, the Popular Organization for Revolutionary Forces(Balfour-Paul:81). According to Trevaski's account, after lifting ban on the NLF in June 1966, Aden's last Governor General Sir Humphrey Trevelyan had 'preferred to negotiate with the NLF over FLOSY [during 1967] to discuss the Federation plan, under the UN resolution (December 1963), which was previously rejected by Turnbull[21](Balfour-Paul:84-90).

Despite repeated British efforts to deny popular franchise to the non-Adeni workers forming the bulk of the ATUC-PSP membership; outlawing the NLF and Governor Richard Turnbull's deposing al-Asnaj's ATUC-supporting Meccawi's government in mid-1965, upon his refusal to cooperate with the British- unless coming on the issue of independence under the UN resolution-, British efforts to integrate the Aden Colony with the Hinterland remained decidedly prejudicial to the core British interests in the Yemeni unification(Balfour-Paul,1993:80-81,84-85; Noyes 1982:38).

Nevertheless, here Balfour-Paul misses on King Faisal's deliberate diplomacy in preventing Nasser's takeover of Aden through is proxy: the FLOSY, after British withdrawal, when immediately after Humphrey Trevelyan's assignment to Aden, he is known to have appealed to Harold Wilson requesting maintaining British 'defence responsibilities in Aden in the face of Nasser's revolutionary threat to Arabia generally'. Within two days, Faisal was obliged to honour Nasser's *dictact* of embargoing the oil which trumped 'any chances for the British Foreign Secretary George Thomson's bid to retain Aden' (Balfour-Paul, 1993: 86, 88).

[21] Balfour-Paul also cites Hickinbotham's Political secretary Sir William Horace 'who argues that the only sensible course would have been to bring the less extreme nationalists on-board, and work out the details with them, instead of leaving them in the wilderness, to be added by Nasser, to his growing inventory of adherents'(Balfour-Paul:211,Footnote:56)

The post-July 1967 Sterling crisis and after the Labour Government's recognition of Qahtan's NLF as the sole representative of southern Arabia, the British first refused to assure their once-favoured "Federalis" of the continued protection after independence even before the SAF Government could reach some accommodation with the NLF. With the departure of the UN mission in April 1967 after its refusal talk to the 'Federalists', the British military withdrawal in November 1967, effectively left the pro-Federation nationalists vulnerable to the NLF, who were accorded political legitimacy by the South Arabian Army, who forthwith refused to support the Adeni Federalists, leading to a brief civil war until 1969..

The sheer arrogance with which the British left the Aden Colony to deal with her multifaceted problems was also evident in their cedence on their own controlled Kuria-Muria Islands (off the Dhofari Coast) to Oman through a bilateral agreement. Although the explanation for such act was that the strategically important islands were originally ceded by the Sultan of Muscat in 1854 to Queen Victoria, the case for imperial arbitrariness giving further pretext for territorial rivalries was again upstaged when the Omani control on the islands was immediately contested by Qahtan during the first week of PDRY's independence. Located far from the south Yemeni coast, Litwak still argues that until 1979, the Islands received 'scant attention in Aden's declaratory policy', which otherwise coincided with Ismail signing the Defence Treaty with the Soviet Union (El-Hakim in Litwak1982:73).

The Saudi diplomacy, well before Nasser's evacuation from Yemen, therefore had already given way to a British-Saudi competition in the former, where both initially supported the anti-NLF and the South Arabian Federation Government (SAFG) elements (well before1967) and Hinterland Sheikhs to carefully contrive the PDRY's dependence which led to Qahtan's fall and radicalized the post-1969 NLF under Rubay Ali and Ismail.

in fact one can confidently argue that Nasser's final grand-act of pan-Arabist "unity" against Colonialism by his closing the Suez Canal in 1967 , while leading to a full-scale British withdrawal from southern Arabia, it was still in keeping with a broader pan-Arabist entente between the republican-conservative Arabs against the British Imperial presence, and by its consequences affected Saudi hegemony on the Arabian Peninsular, in return for Nasser to receive substantial help from her and Kuwait against Israel during 1967-70. Noyes captures the dilemmas of British imperial priorities in the broader Yemen aptly as to have dissipated ideological divides between the Arab states. He notes that after 1964 the 'British military presence, initially serving British security interests in Aden and the Western Protectorate had

completely lost its original purpose'. In fact, he goes furthers to drive the point of local powers viewing the British as a threat to their own security, despite the rationalizations provided by many Imperial official of the day:

> "the British military presence at Aden became a weakening factor as conservative states like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait increasingly shared the radical Arab states' objections to British activities in Aden Colony and the Protectorates.
>
> (Noyes Ibid:12-13).

As a further generalization, the British imperial policies were the central factor of galvanizing the Gulf Arabs(Abu Dhabi and Kuwait not excepted) against an Israeli-supporting Western "Protector" in their historical patrimony and an arbitrary imperial power.

2.4.4. The Soviet-Marxist encirclement and Saudi countermeasures (1967-80)

According to Galia Golan, amidst the Sino-Soviet rivalry in Aden during the 1969-78 period, Soviet interests in creating a bloc of radical states of Aden, Somalia, the post-Selassi Ethiopia and even Eritrea were confronted with Saudi efforts to create another Security Pact including a unified Yemen, Egypt, Sudan and Somalia in the strategic interests of 'turning the Red Sea into an "Arab lake" (Golan 1990:237). Despite common misunderstanding about the PDRY's radical foreign policy during 1969-80 as one inhered in its Marxist orientations and support to other radical movements across the region through the PFLOAG until1974, its political evolution was highly conditioned by the core Saudi vulnerability to protect her Asir and Hadrawmi Highlands' amalgamation into the Greater Yemen, at the same time when Omani territory was simultaneously coveted by Yemeni nationalists.(Becker 1972: 98). During 1969, while King Faisal faced two mutinies by nationalists in the military, a direct Soviet extension of diplomatic and material aid to the YAR and the PDRY during 1964-79 had aggravated Saudi national security through a hostile external power-sustained encirclement. In addition, during the late 70s, a broader Saudi vulnerability from the radical Marxist encirclement in the Red Sea-Horn of Africa was evident after new Soviet pressures for using the PDRY 'as a launching point for its aid to Ethiopia during the Ogadan War in 1977, and initial facilitation to Soviet interests by the NLF to thwart Riyadh-Sana'a pressures'. In a classical oversight of the existential threats facing the Saudi Kingdom under clear US

reluctance to confront Soviet presence, Eilts disposed a relaxed attitude towards the 1969 coup by the Saudi military:

> 'since the arrests of some officers in 1969, for Nasserite connections, there have been no significant signs of military restiveness on the part of the Saudi officer corps. Nasser, as a symbol of Arab unity, is gone; Nasserism, as a military force, was discredited by the 1967 defeat'.
>
> (Eilts:98).

The political evolution of the NLF on the other hand, predating November 1967 represents a self- defeatist but self-serving US diplomacy of leaving a politically diffused and economically non-viable PDRY -under the Saudi-favoured NLF under Qahtan al-Shibi , which eventually gave sufficient pretexts for the Soviet, Chinese, Nasserite or Iraqi predations well until 1969, after it opted to support Dhofari insurgency and accepted Soviet arms.

Until the Saudi control over Sana'a could be consolidated, after Nasser and British withdrawal, Saudi acceptance of Republican pre-eminence in Sana'a (and Ta'iz) after recognizing the YAR in 1970; the prospects of a pan-Yemeni unification after the Soviet-Egypt-sponsored Tripoli Agreement (1972) and Soviet offer to extend the 1964 Treaty implied that Sana'a became more intransigent to Riyadh's foreign policy dictates. During 1969-79, the Saudis tired to restrain Sana's overtures towards the South and decidedly against the Soviets through direct economic subventions and pressures from the Hashe'd and Bai'kal tribes that according to Litwak were so overwhelming 'that it was necessary for Sana'a to conduct negotiations with them through the good offices of Riyadh'. In the case of pro-Saudi Ghasimi therefore, argues Litwak, that the Saudi hold was 'such that he had found it necessary to vet his cabinet selections with the Saudi leadership' (Litwak 1982: 89; Becker 1973:198).

Balfour-Paul's observations suggest that of late, Saudi efforts in drawing a wedge between the North and South Yemen and protect herself from Aden's radical Marxists' domination of a potentially expanded Yemen was contrived through the Yemeni Hinterland tribes, living along their Saudi kinsmen along the Hadramawt region(Balfour-Paul, 1993:57).

With the coming to power of the NLF and having to labour under the initial Faisal-Sallal struggles during 1967-70, a combination of domestic pressures and support to favoured groups by the Saudis and the YAR eventuated the rise of another radical Marxist regime under Rubay Ali and Ismail Fattah in 1969(Chubin 1982:80; Noyes 1982: 12; Golan 1990:231; Balfour-Paul, 1993: 94-95). With Qahtan's replacement, the Saudi objectives in instigating

tribal insurrections through the Hadrawmi tribes now centred on creating a "buffer" between southern Arabia and her own southern borders, as well as destabilizing the regime through directly nurturing Colonel Sallal(Litwak 1982:80,88).

According to Litwak and others, with the regime change in the PDRY post-1969; her abetment to the Dhofari conflict; and accepting a large military aid from Moscow, it was precisely the fear of Yemen's domination by the more secularist Adenis, which had motivated Sana's subversion of the NLF through FLOSY's political refugees, which eventually drew the Saudis and the YAR towards a "rapprochement"(Litwak 1982:74-75,80-81; Golan 1990:231-32,236,239; Noyes 1982:113). However, Golan argues that the escalation of violence in southern Arabia after 1969, itself was a factor of the NLF supporting the northern political refugees against Sana'a 'at the precise moment when the North was trying to strengthen her relations with Saudis over Soviet support to the South' (Golan,1990:237; Litwak,1982:81).

Despite region-wide isolation imposed on the PDRY after 1969, with most regional powers preventing her complete drift towards the Soviets (with Iraq joining the effort after 1975) new-found Soviet interests in the Horn of Africa had made NLF an indispensable ally to be allowed to be dominated by Saudis or the YAR, hence direct support during the North-South War during 1972. In this contest however Rubay Ali still tried to break his cordon by seeking help from Peking and Baghdad, while bargaining with the Soviets over their use of Aden's naval base to sustain long logistical lines during the Ogadan Wars (Hurewitz 1973:164-65; Lenzcowski 1971:157; Noyes 1982:53; Chubin 1982:93-94).

In this vein, Saudi regional policy of controlled escalations and restraint on both Yemens was facilitated by the schism between Ruba'y and the doctrinaire Ismail Fattah after 1978 over PDRY's connections with the Soviets and China, and due to Sana's conscious efforts to forge closer relations with the US and Saudis for financial aid (Litwak 1982:81; Golan Ibid:237). In any case, Saudi policy of fostering independent relations with the PDRY eventfully paid off when 'Ruba'y Ali opposed Soviet objectives at a time when he was pursuing a thaw in relations with Saudi Arabia (which alongside Iraq backed Somalia) and with the West to the point of considering renewal of diplomatic relations with the US' (Golan Ibid:231-32; Eilts 1980:111).

Herman Eilts' perceptive, albeit rather belated rationalization of the Arabian Peninsular politics of 1980 however captures Saudi vulnerability against Soviet predations under the US restraint:

> 'the Saudi leadership remains intensely concerned about South Yemen and Ethiopia, viewing them as Soviet surrogates, bent upon fostering instability in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf. Equally troublesome to the Saudi has been the tendency of the leadership of the YAR to flirt with the Soviets, including acceptance of Soviet arms and perhaps advisors. They have put strong pressure on the YAR to desist from doing so and may recently have had success on that score. A slight thaw may also be developing between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY, following governmental changes in the latter'.
>
> (Eilts 1980:97)

On his own, Rubay Ali turned out to be more pragmatic than his collaborator Ismail and opposed Soviet interference in the Horn of Africa in 1977 by using PDRY: 'Decidedly less interested in supporting the Dhofaris and more interested in seeking economic assistance from the wealthy Gulf states particularly', Rubay Ali lost his life to his NLF critics in June 1978, accusing of his role in the murder of the pro-unity Ghasimi, albeit Ismail had also accused the Saudis of complicity(Litwak 1982:80-82; Golan 1990:231-32,234-35; Noyes 1982:38). After the death of the pro-Saudi Ghasami(24th June 1978), Litwak argues that although the Saudis did use their diplomatic leverage in the Arab League by sponsoring sanctions against Aden at this provocation 'the recognition ,however, that the political and economic isolation of South Yemen would only increase its dependence on the Soviet Union, prompted the Saudi leadership to accept Iraqi mediation during the Baghdad Summit in November 1978'.

In contrast to Rubay's overtures towards the Saudis, Ismail forthwith entered into a Treaty of Cooperation with Moscow in 1979 in response to the Carter Administration's immediate despatch of $100 million military aid to Saleh, financed by the Saudis during the North-South War (February-March 1979).

Although after 1979, Ismail remained responsive towards Soviet strategic interests in seeking over-flights to Ethiopia and even supported his patron's invasion of Afghanistan, he 'still refrained from according the Soviets more than the use of South Yemeni ports, as distinct from actual Soviet bases'[22]. With the Soviet aid now tripling in volume after the 1979 Treaty-

[22] At this stage Eilts observes that the Gulf states 'some friendly, others not-and preferring non-alignment and anxious to keep the superpower conflict out of their area', too made "moral" condemnations to the Soviet invasion through the Islamic Foreign Ministers conferences in Islamabad (January –May 1980) which however did not 'imply any concomitant willingness to rush into the American embrace'(Eilts:80)),

to circumvent the Riyadh-Sana'a-Washington axis- which saw increased Soviet-Cuban advisors arriving in Aden(upto 2100), Golan argues that whereas Moscow had 'found greater potential for the pursuit of her interests in the South …. there was little the Soviets could offer the North, except the continuation of the Civil War, which Sana'a no longer wanted' (Golan 1990:235-36).

In fact, the primary Soviet objective of keeping the US out of the region, and Sana's own efforts to reduce dependence upon the Saudi and American aid, was henceforth delivered through the Soviet self-restraint 'with regard to both the continued leftist insurgency(NDF) in North Yemen and PDRY's aggressive ambition against the North'(Golan Ibid: 239-40)

The removal of Ismail within a few months and his replacement by Ali Nasser Mohammad seemed to have delivered on both Saudi and Soviet interests in his lack of support to the tribalist NDF for incursions into North and even suppressed it in 1982. The new regimes after Ismail's ouster sought to discourage PFLOAG's incursions into Oman during 1981-82 and even clamped down on the previously Saudi and belatedly Libyan-Syrian supported NDF which had fought alongside the PDRY forces against Sana'a during 1979. According to Golan, Mohammad was more interested in 'improved relations with Saudi Arabia and the conservative Gulf states, including Oman'.

The continued Saudi ability to set the security agenda against the regional non-conformists was also evident in her seeking pressure on the PDRY through the Arab League by withdrawing her 1200 men contingent from the Arab Defence Force (ADF) from Lebanon, which according to Litwak, was aimed to 'prompt Damascus to pressure the PDRY, by threatening to take away the pan-Arab legitimacy of the Syrian presence in Lebanon'. After a spate of US impotent diplomacy to respond to the regional crisis; prompted by the Shah's ouster in February 1979, the start of another war between the North and the South during May 1979 finally compelled the Carter Administration to expedite urgent deliveries of the $100 million worth of arms, and possibility of the Saudis financing another tranche of upto $390 million. Nevertheless, with the cessation of hostilities by March, Saudi position towards the north-south conflict now underwent a marked shift:

> 'once the South Yemeni threat to the Sana'a regime had subsided ,Saudi Arabia was clearly hesitant to further augment North Yemen's military capability that could be turned against their source'.
>
> (Litwak 1982:90-91).

Although during June-December 1979, while Sana'a post haste tried to go back to her patron by jump-starting new arms supplies by renewing the 1964 Treaty of Friendship and abstained from voting against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (in 14th January 1980), after two serious border clashes on the Saudi-YAR border during March 1980 and the prospects losing upto $700 million in annual economic aid, Saleh tried to heal the political rift by sending his envoy to Riyadh(Litwak,1982:91-92).

In terms of just this new regional self-help doctrine in the post-Shah epoch (and just before the Iran-Iraq War), Chubin cites Saddam's central role in the North-South's war:

> 'Here the Gulf states took advantage of the existence of the Arab League, a main forum which can be used as a complement to any institution set up in the Gulf, where, agreement on the proposition that superpower involvement in the region is likely to contribute to instability, was ideally shared'.
>
> (Chubin 1982:157-58)

The Soviet interests in preventing a repetition of future US deployments in the Arabian Sea(through the Bahrain-based RDF, supported by two Carriers Task Force from Diego Garcia) occasioned by the North-South War, and in response to the seizure of the Grand Mecca Mosque, were now actually delivered by the Saudi ability to prevail upon the YAR and the PDRY. It was in response to just these contingencies that the US deployments were forthcoming, hence:

> 'But this augmentation of American military capability is at best able to assist host government, upon request, to handle small brushfire conflicts. It is too small to cope with any major Soviet military thrust into the Gulf littoral, even if it could be there in time'.
>
> (Eilts 1980: 109).

Upon their first visit to Sana'a on 13th May 1980 by the Saudi Defence and Foreign Ministers, Princes Sultan bin-Abdul Aziz and Saud al-Faisal, President Saleh obliged himself to promise 'not to hire Soviet military advisors. [On their own] While both Saudis and Sana'a criticized American action, Riyadh even praised Soviet restraint on behalf of Aden.' (Golan 1990:238; Litwak Ibid:92) .

Whether through financial assistance or contriving a precarious military balance on the Arabian Peninsula, the Saudi domination of the regional security agenda was henceforth assured while the Saddamite Iraq's pre-eminence over the head of post-revolutionary Iran and

leading the "rejectionists camp" along with Syria had already started to cause legitimacy problems for the Saudi establishment(Chubin 1982:157-58; Eilts 1980:91,94-95[23]).

2.4.5. Dhofar-Oman: the last Frontier of Saudi security

After the assassination of pro-unification Ibrahim al-Hamdi in October 1977, with the Saudi Kingdom reaching a complex working relationship with pro-Saudi Ghasami (1977) and Ali Saleh from Hashed (1978-2011), Dhofar now provided a strategic "wedge" between the PDRY and Oman. Taking advantage of the new power transition after the British withdrawal, a previous Saudi policy of supporting the Dhofaris to arm-twist Oman's relinquishing claims on Buraimi in 1970, Dhofar presented itself as an opportunity for all regional powers, including the Republican YAR and Yemen to isolate the PDRY. Having been caught in a new gauntlet of the regional security community now led by the Shah during 1973-77, Dhofari case presents itself as a master stroke of Saudi consolidation, the Shah's leadership to act as a power broker on a world scale and above all a conscious balance now existing between the Soviet Union and China without much input from the US.

In this vein, Litwak argues that the Saudi assistance to the ANM(a later partner to the Dhofar Liberation Front) in the initial years of Dhofari rebellion owed to 'the traditional rivalry for influence (e.g. over the Buraimi dispute) waged between themselves [Saudi] and the Sultan of Muscat and Oman'.

Litwak however still point out the dichotomy between area-specific groups (such as the Bahrain or the Khuzestan Liberation Fronts), and the trans-regional ambits of other revolutionary movements in the Arabian Peninsular politics. He insists that before 1967, the DLF was 'politically divided between the tribesmen- who regarded the rebellion less as a secessionist movement than a drive for autonomy against the repressive rule of Sultan Taimur'-, whereas the ANM ' viewed the Dhofar campaign as but one component of a broad ideological struggle in the Arab world'(Litwak,1982: 73-74). According to Noyes however, the Dhofaris long possessing a different sense of identity from the 'ruling elites of Muscat and Oman' had already rebelled since late 19th century and were crushed likewise by

[23] Eilts noted that the Gulf leaders' "impatience" resulted from the Palestinian problem, with the "Palestinians on their backs" after the US mediation under the Camp David as highly favorable to the Israeli by fudging the repatriation issue. In this regard, : 'the Arab states of the Gulf--even Saudi Arabia, a long time close friend of the US—have since Camp David…drifted towards the rejectionists orbit of Iraq and Syria. Considerable political discomfort attends such a drift, but they have concluded that for the time being at least, they have no alternative'(Eilts 1980:87)

the British navy and military support to the Sultan of Muscat: 'Dhofari motivations were lodged sufficiently deep in history to have sustained the rebellion even without the overlay of Marxist and Maoist indoctrination provided by the PDRY' (Noyes: 21-22). In fact, actual Saudi interactions with Oman-Muscat dated as early as 1913-20 in which the British had to intervene to save the Sultan of Muscat against the Saudi-supported tribes of inner Oman until the 1959 civil war. Litwak however points out that although the increased radicalism of the DLF-PFLOAG had prompted the Saudis to cut-off their aid 'even prior to the establishment of the PDRY', they had still refused to assist Sultan's forces in counter-insurgency operations owing to Oman's refusal to relinquish claims over Buraimi Oases (Litwak, 1982: 74-75). Nevertheless, it was NLF's political support after 1967 and external influences which made possible the rise of ANM-faction in the Dhofar rebellion after September 1968 As an instructive saga of yesterday's proxies coming to haunt their one-time patrons, one can only note the irony of Arabian politics which outlasted the removal of the Shah that it were these very Saud-Nasser and Sana'a-based political grouping of the mid-60s which on their own had supported the NLF who for assurance sake while supporting the DLF also ensured ANM's pre-eminence in the Dhofari movement which then adopted the same Marxist-Leninist programme during the DLF Congress in the Dhofari interior in September 1968,and henceforth came to be known as the PFLOAG (Litwak1982:74; Noyes,1982: 21).

Although, active Saudi support to the Dhofari rebels (through the DLF) came by after 1964, its pressures on Oman effectively coloured the entire spectrum of Saudi relations with its southern and eastern peripheries where the British had been acting as Oman and Abu Dhabi's protectors since 1949. 'The issue had not only divided key Gulf countries but had embittered Saudi relations with the British ,who sided with the Sultanate of Oman and Muscat, by virtue of treaty obligations, apart from any other motive' (Noyes 1982: 19).

Under the pro-Soviet Ismail and moderate Rubay Ali however the Saudi dilemmas on her southern periphery were further aggravated after the Soviets extended military support to Dhofaris, at least indirectly through the PFLOAG, to circumvent Chinese pre-eminence in the region (Golan, ibid: 231-32; Litwak,ibid:74).

With a post-1971 power transition in the region, the central fact of international life now featured a ready availability of patrons in the local and superpower industry, both for the states and the radical groups. The fact that non-state actor had asserted itself on the world stage could not have chosen a better place, which henceforth generated global terrorism was

evident in the case of a new systemic power shift in the Indian Ocean. For the Saudi Kingdom, Iran and Iraq to prevent Soviet hegemony along her southern borders- which formed the backbone of Eisenhower and Carter Doctrines during the Cold War- and provide no pretext whatsoever to further US stay (in Bahrain, Oman or Berbera), China now became the "new suitor" as postulated by Waltz in 1980(above page 46: ; Eilts 1980:108-09). Although, while Aden extended support to the DLF against Oman and to the PFLOAG only as a conduit for the Soviets during 1969-71, China, Cuba, Yugoslavia and East Germany after 1971, and again in 1975 provided bases, arms and training and offices to the PFLOAG in pursuit of their regional and ideological rivalries. In fact, various analysts argue that during 1971-75 the Soviets were considering withdrawing their support the PFLOAG due to its Chinese connections (Litwak, 1982:74, 87-88:80-81, Golan 1990:230-32[24]; Balfour-Paul 1993: 148-49; Becker 1973:197,201; Cottrell 1975:1978:409Noyes, 1982: 21,38; Nakhleh,1993:13).

Golan points out that after the 1969 regime change in Aden and start of close Soviet-PDRY relations, 'the Soviets were not only suspicious of the overly radical pro-Chinese nature of the PFLOAG, but they were also wary of their Gulf-wide ambitions which, among other things, threatened to complicate Soviet relations with Iran' (Golan, 1990: 232-38; Becker, 1973:201).

It was however not until another "family" inspired coup by Sultan Taimur's son (assisted by the British) in July 1970 after which the Saudis agreed to deflect their pressure on Oman against the PFLOAG, in return for his support to Saudi policy towards southern Arabia (Litwak: 75; Becker:197). Buraimi thereafter became an exclusive Abu Dhabi-Saudi-Yemeni rivalry after Qaboos relinquished his part to Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia for help in the Dhofari rebellion. His subsequent 'cementing relations with Saudi Arabia was rewarded by the Saudi economic assistance' as well as pledge 'to interdict those PFLOAG supply routes which passed along its frontier with the Dhofar region' (Mordechai, 1974:13-15).

For all practical purposes, after the Iran-Iraq 1975 Algiers Accords, Iraq too renounced support for the PFLOAG by closing its offices inside Iraq. On his part, the Shah's despatching a 3000 strong military/air contingent in November 1973 on Sultan Qaboos's personal request (after PFLOAG's defections to Sultan's army) resulted in the insurgency's downgrading her

[24] In fact, Golan further observes that in 1971 and again in 1974, when the organization changed its name and policies 'to concentrate more on revolution in Oman(PFLO) as distinct from its broader ambitions regarding the Gulf as a whole, Soviet military and economic aid was forthcoming for Aden'[24](Golan: 230-32,37-38).

political ambition to the liberation of Oman only(Litwak1982: 76; Golan: 230; Chubin :59; Noyes 1982:22).

Whereas, the NLF used PFLOAG during 1969-75 to destabilize Oman through Dhofar insurgency, the British and the Americans made their last stand in the Indian Ocean to secure Oman's naval facilities in the Masirah and Bahrain islands or secure Sharjah, before Diego Garcia became operational in 1974(:Chubin and Zabih, 1974:261;Litwak,1982: 88; Noyes,1982:27,57-59,126-27). Eilts however to observe the rise of Qaboos as the only reliable US ally after 1979, whom earned Gulf-wide opprobrium for his offering his Masirah Island for Carter's RDF and 'endorsed the Camp David Accords'. Pointing out this policy 'prompting sharp Iraqi charges that Oman's motives are suspect and not in accord with the newly proposed Arab National Charter', Eilts again reminded that the although Omanis 'counted upon Saudi understanding of the rationale, since the termination of the 1960 of the Dhahran airfield agreement, Saudi Arabia has opposed American military facilities in the Arabian Peninsula' (Eilts 1980:102).

2.4.6. Saudi encirclement of southern Arabia and the Trucial Coast:

Noyes argues that Saudi manipulation of smaller neighbours especially Bahrain, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Yemens and Oman was closely tied to an activist foreign policy even before Nasser withdrew from Arabian peninsula in 1967 or before South Yemen-Soviet connections in Dhofar posed a threat to Oman's security (Noyes: 37-38).

During 1952-63, the British had unsuccessfully tried to mediate resolution of the Buraimi dispute on behalf of Abu Dhabi and Oman with Saudi Arabia under the aegis of the Standstill Agreement (1955) after a physical confrontation between the Trucial Oman Scouts and Faisal's troops (Noyes 1982: 19). After the breakdown of arbitration and Saudi Kingdom rupturing relations with the British in 1963, Saudi claims on Buraimi (as well as on 1/3rd of Abu Dhabi territory) proved too belligerent for both contestants, and for the British to bring about a settlement without a considerable *quid pro quo* from Oman and Abu Dhabi during 1970-74 (Litwak:51-52).

Balfour-Paul agrees that British desperation to leave the Gulf was manifest in their inability to bring about a settlement on the oil-rich border between Abu Dhabi-Saudi Kingdom and Oman, but tended to rationalize further British resort to arms for which 'they saw no

merit-nor any ultimate advantage to Zayed- in seeking to impose a settlement now, one which would be overturned in any case as they had gone'. Most ironically, Balfour-Paul acknowledges that 'in these circumstances all they found it appropriate to do was to urge the hard-pressed Zayed to avoid provoking the King and to advise the Abu Dhabi oil concessionaries (not all of them by this time British) to steer clear for the present of the disputed area'(Belfour-Paul: 128).

Although after 1958 the British had managed to establish de facto control over parts of Buraimi, the UAE's eventual recognition by Saudi Arabia (1974) under Sheikh Zayed remained contingent upon the latter's making major concessions on the Saudi-Qatar-Abu Dhabi frontiers, for which Sheikh Zayed was constantly rebuffed by Saudis during 1966-71 (Balfour-Paul, 1993:122). According to Noyes, apart from Buraimi being a substantive issue over oil resources as 'well as the importance of the oases to Abu Dhabi as a primary fresh water source', it was 'less on the basis of territory than as an outgrowth of a clash between the strong personalities of two men, Sheikh Zayed and King Feisal'(Noyes: 19).

According to Balfour-Paul however, despite British preference for a Saudi hegemonic control over the Gulf since mid-60s, after 1968, the British saw their withdrawal from Trucial Coast as a function of the availability of vast quantities of oil ' awaiting exploiting in Abu Dhabi and Qatar', for which they tried to convince the Americans for 'a closer understanding over the maintenance of stability (under the British auspices) in the Gulf and the abandonment by the Saudis(under American auspices) of their bid for aggrandizement and enrichment at the expense of states under British protection'(Balfour-Paul:120).

According to Balfour- Paul during his 6 year tenure as the Political Resident in the Gulf, William Luce (1961-66) remained a staunch believer of the Persian Gulf's political solidarity –which was then threatened by Nasser through the Arab League- by promoting Saudi-Sheikhly "intimacy" under the "Peninsular Solidarity Project" which offered 'the best prospect of preserving stability when the time came for Britain to terminate her treaties'. (Balfour-Paul: 120). Balfour-Paul's analysis before 1968 British declaration however attributes subsequent failure of the British-sponsored Gulf Security Pact squarely on the Saudi intransigence over Buraimi(if not completely on the Shah) but falls short of acknowledging Luce's own imperialist tendencies who was trying to post-haste settle the Saudi claims on Buraimi under his pet project which was opposed by Sheikh Shakbut.

Before 1966, therefore Luce not only orchestrated Shakbut's removal through a traditional British policy of eliciting "family requests" for the Sheikhly removals, as in the case of Sharjah's ruler in 1964 and threatened the same to the Sheikh of Ra'as al-Khaimah, but even tried to prevent Abu Dhabi's membership to the UAE:

> 'Luce privately turned to the idea of federating the six under the leadership of Dubai with financial subsidies from the oil states further up the Gulf. But the idea when mooted, was greeted with such dismay by the oil-less rulers that it had to be abandoned'….
>
> (Balfour-Paul:122).

Balfour-Paul's account of British deference to the Saudi hegemonic interests is summed-up well when he explains the political events of the Gulf after Luce was brought back from retirement by the Conservative Foreign Secretary Sir Alec-Douglas Home during 1969, to act as a go-in-between the Shah, the Saudis and the Trucial Sheikhdoms. Belfour-Paul points out that Luce was personally convinced of the irreversibility of British decision of withdrawal from the Gulf along-with the Gulf's Bahrain-based Political Resident (Donald Hawley) in opposition to Home. Balfour-Paul's professions about the British responsibility towards the Trucial sheikhdoms as perceived by Luce, was to deter external threats, in which case he conjectures that:

> 'potential external aggressors, in the military sense, could only be Iran, or in the context of Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia; and no British Government--least of all a Conservative one-- would welcome a clash of arms with either'.

In fact, the way the British political residents and Civil service officers tended to rationalize their colleagues' arbitrariness against their historically weak protectorates during 1968-71-soemtiems by way of definitional differences-makes for their own emancipatory rationalization of the threats confronting the Trucial Coast. Balfour-Paul therefore defends the British notion of "protection" against the dangers to regional stability, which begs empirical evidence to vindicate this threat perception:

> 'might of course come from Soviet Communism or Nasserite Arab nationalism. But the danger could scarcely be envisaged as taking the form of armed invasion; nor would a British military presence be any protection against other forms of penetration'.

Ironically Balfour-Paul was making these assumptions which were based in the local Political residents' observations about the political differentiation of southern Arabia from the

Trucial Coast through the same notional separation that I find perplexing. The British therefore tried to hard-sell this idea to the Americans and to the later generations of revisionist historians of the anti-Iran genre by rationalizing their reasons to leave the Sheikhs under the Iran-Saudi hegemony as a better guarantee against the Soviet threat where the Gulf was projected 'as having no comparison with the former due to lack of radical-Marxist threat' (Balfour-Paul: 135,173-74). With Luce doing the running-about for Home during this period, the latter seemed to make political virtue out of Conservatives government's decision to withdraw which had the effect of giving further incentives for the sheikhs to come to terms with the Shah and the Saudis on whom- as the saying goes- depended the chances of the UAE's survival, the following condition of the British largesse was emphatic. In March 1971, Home delivered his speech to House of Commons, as quoted by Balfour-Paul:

> 'Bringing about a Union-of-Nine states- to which the British Government was prepared to extend some semblance of physical security- on the assumption that such a Union emerged from the discussions proceeding amongst the leaders'.

Balfour-Paul's observation is a clear indictment for effective failure of the British-sponsored regional security community project due to Saudi territorial claims instead of Iran's, when he argues that even by October 1971, Saudi Arabia continued to make conditional its acceptance of the Federation and Abu Dhabi's inclusion to it upon satisfaction of claims on Buraimi[25].

In addition, Balfour-Paul makes another startling claim about Saudi interests in making Bahrain's participation in the Federation to check Abu Dhabi's independent foreign policy: 'the ruler of Bahrain consequently dared not make public his desire to opt-out…'

(Balfour-Paul:19-31)

A careful analysis of the British policy, as explained by its on-the-ground executioners, suggests that after the Shah's relinquishing claims on Bahrain after a tacit understanding with Faisal in October 1968, the Saudi control on the nascent Federation was facilitated by the British policy with possible effects of encouraging Saudi claims on Abu Dhabi's territory, but not confronting the Shah for his claims on the three smaller islands. The proximity of these islands as far off the Saudi coast-compared to a Shi'a Bahrain very close to a 250,000 Shi'a

[25] In footnote 92, however Balfour-Paul claims that Luce had been informed by King Faisal of his demands on Buraimi reduced to the western and southern areas of Abu Dhabi territory: 'Sheikh Zayed, under British pressure, had offered concessions there without effect'.

Qatif region on the Saudi mainland- to have posed any threat to the Saudi Kingdom therefore makes sense of the Shah-Faisal collusion during 1968-71. According to Noyes therefore, the key Saudi objective of ensuring its hegemonic hold over the self-assertive Southern Arabian-Trucial Coast (Bahrain, Qatar, North-South Yemen and Oman) mandated a mutually advantageous security-economic collaboration with Iran (Noyes; 22-23).

2.4.7. The Gulf Security, Saudi interests and the Iranian "threat":

In the immediate context of the North and South Yemen's conflict during 1967-70, and Saudi problems with Abu Dhabi and Oman over the Buraimi Oases, the Shah proposed a security guarantee to the smaller sheikhdoms after renouncing claims on Bahrain, which a general historical knowledge of Saudi conflict with smaller neighbours would suggest was in one clear way directed at the Saudis despite uncritical attributions of the Shah-Faisal entente to piece-meal Sheikhly territories as argued by Saud. Ramazani's observations seem directly emanated from this pedigree of Iran-Saudi hegemonic theorists when he states that two 'like-minded monarchs perceived security into the light of their own ancient claims such as Buraimi and Bahrain, and the "threats" of subversion to their respective regimes'. In addition when the Shah and King Faisal met finally in November 1968 - after the irritation of Bahrain was over- the 'two leaders agreed not to do anything in the Gulf area that would be detrimental to each other and to work together to exclude revolutionary forces' (Ramazani, 1975:414; Saud: 2003:41).

Ramazani further ignores the centrality of Buraimi for Saudi security as it thwarted Oman and Abu Dhabi making common security axis against further Saudi leverages on the Peninsula, while an equally integrative anti-Saudi collaborator presented itself in Sana'a, which could be taken on board by the financial subsidies coming from the oil rich Buraimi directly. In effect, after settling Buraimi in 1974, Abu Dhabi became the YAR's chief financier alongside the Saudi Kingdom during its conflict with the PDRY during 1977-79.

Balfour-Paul's reasons for Saudi agreement at Abu Dhabi's participation in the UAE and British interests in dealing with the Shah are aptly summed up in the following dilemma:

> 'the problem of providing for Gulf stability thus narrowed to the contriving of an equally viable future for remain seven sheikhdoms […] *Of the seven states…five were penniless* and none was viable on its own'.

Although rejecting the notion of Conservative Cabinet 'secretly conniving with the Shah' to reach some arrangement over Iran's claims over three islands, Balfour-Paul seems to throw the burden of guilt for a British-mandated Gulf Defence project on Iran, without recourse to Saudi role and interests in British evacuation, which she demanded alongside Iran, Kuwait and Iraq despite Conservative Government's effort to revoke (Chubin and Zabih 1974: 251,270):

> 'if on rulers' behalf she resolutely opposed the Shah's pretensions, the damage he could, and promised to inflict on the British and CENTO interests, quite apart from the interests of the rulers was formidable….Yet on its solution, for all the demographic insignificance by world standards of the area concerned, much wider interests than the mere upholding of Britain's honour visibly depended'.

Finally Balfour-Paul admits on behalf of Luce having failed to convince the two Qawasimi rulers until late about reaching agreement with the Shah over the control of three Gulf Islands, when he writes an epitaph of British realism based in nothing but hardcore economic interests:

> ' …the only honourable course for Britain was to tell the rulers frankly that She was not in a position to stop the Shah by force of arms, and to warn him [that] the international condemnation which his actions would arouse, would have Britain's public support'.

Having laid down the case for British haplessness in front of the Shah, the Saudis and other major trans-regional players- with Bahrain at the centre of regional controversy- Balfour-Paul underlines the tentative limits of a Western-mandated Security pact as of late 1971. Under the central British objective of assuring the Trucial Union about the continued British commitments on a minimum "consultative" basis, this analysis is a self- serving case for imperial morality with more beneficial terms accrued to the Imperial Patron under new Friendship Treaties having granted over-flying and staging rights for the RAF, training facilities for British troops and naval facilities.

Balfour-Paul was to observe equally uncritically about the politics of recognition of the Federation by the Gulf's main players:

> 'the Union of Arab Emirates was admitted to the Arab League on 6th December. As in the case of Bahrain and Qatar, the only dissenting voice was that of South Yemen, though Iraqi recognition of the new states was declared to be conditional on the

annulment of the Abu Musa agreement and the Saudi delegate expressed reservations in deference to the King's unresolved frontier claims'.

(Balfour-Paul: 134)

2.5. Conclusion

The secondary literature has successfully identified the complexities of Soviet objectives towards the Middle East after 1956 War due to its initial military weakness to confront the US naval power in the Mediterranean, which coincided with the strengthening of the Northern Tier alliance as added threat to its southern borders. Wilfully weakening the pan-Arab unity by failing to support the anti-Western Nasserite-led pan Arabi bloc in a decisive victory against Israel, the initial sections showed why Arab victory could not bring about the central Soviet objective of weakening the NATO for which the Soviets further nurtured Arab dependence through a "No-War No-Peace" strategy. The sections and the Appendix-I demonstrated that the key Soviet interests in acquiring exclusive base facilities to confront the US naval power after 1964 prevented its from delivering on the Arab expectations until Egypt and Syria's complete dependence upon the Soviet military and economic support were insured after 1967 War. We however also showed that the pan-Arab bloc acted without unity towards the Arab-Israel conflict and relations with the Soviet Union due to diverse domestic interests and difference over engagement with the West especially after 1967 War, while the Soviets carefully nurtured separate sub-Security Complexes in the broader Middle East to engage with the Arabs according to its security interests.

In the case of the Persian Gulf therefore the Soviets showed extreme restraint against Iran and Saudi territorial, resource and access pre-emption and prevent the rise of Iraq as a difficult Soviet ally until 1968 when the British declaration of evacuation from the East of Suez region opened the way for Soviet entry into the region previously closed to its crisis diplomacy. The case for the Persian Gulf powers' shifting their traditional allegiance to the Western patrons to consolidate their remaining security and economic interests around their immediate peripheries therefore becomes ready for testing through empirical evidence in the next chapter. The following sections test the case for Iran-Saudi regional hegemony by establishing the nature of regional threats, as well as the strategic interests animating US policy planners in the retention of the British evacuated bases in Aden and Bahrain during Johnson Administration.

Directly linked with sections 2.2 and 2.3, Chapter 4 will test the basic cases of the independent nature of Iran-Saudi regional interests and establish the perimeters of their actions under the supposed Soviet threat identified above. The initial contours of the US strategic interests and how the US planners perceived regional threats remains the crucial determinants

for the US policy towards Iran's military modernization and its oil interests until Nixon's inauguration.

Contemporary debates also identified the complexities of the Persian Gulf's security communal drivers in the nature of Iranian claims on Bahrain and other Islands as well Saudi objectives to prevent Iran or Abu Dhabi's domination of the Arabian Peninsula and further collaboration with southern Arabia, hence a hyper-active diplomatic activity in the run-up for British evacuation from the region and nurturing Bahrain's neutralism. Empirical chapters would further test the problematic cases of why despite the ostensible security threat to the Saudi southern and eastern peripheries due to British efforts to retain Aden and leaving minimal security apparatus in the Trucial Coast Federation, it still opposed to the US presence in Bahrain and later in Oman. We aim to test the nature of Soviet threat to the Arabian Peninsula as well as to Iran's periphery to determine the Iran-Saudi collusion with the radical Republicans to specifically oppose US supplanting the role of British imperial presence after 1971 when the former was willing to assure its regional allies of protection from the Soviet or radical Arab powers. Determination of the true nature of threats to the region is likely to shed light on the objectives of both regional powers as well as of the US.

In addition, the nature of Iran-Saudi relations with Iraq with Kurdish insurgency as the only military-intense conflict until 1979 and the nature of US- Soviet support to respective clients remains a core test for the balance of power and Defensive Realists assumptions and a validation of super-powers objectives during Détente.

Chapter 3:

The "*Pax-Saudica*": Iran, radical nationalism and the Marxist-Soviet threat in the Arabian Peninsular politics (1967-68)

3.1. Introduction

A critical analysis of the diplomatic documents dealing with the southern Arabian problems during the last two years of Johnson administration suggests USG's complete deference to Saudi regional preponderance over Arabian Peninsula in the run-up for general British evacuation from the region.

The case for Saudi interests in the historical section and how they were countenanced under Johnson administration can now be proven through diplomacy records between Arabian Peninsula countries' team, Rogers' State Department and McNamara's JCS.

As a matter of empirical record, this research should be seen in the broader US interests in preventing Soviet entry into the Indian Ocean bases, or Nasser's interference in southern Arabia to invoke direct US guarantees to Saudi security while not confronting Saudi interests in the Persian Gulf-Arabian Sea axis. While US forces were engaged in Vietnam, and Johnson needed Soviet support to reach a face-saving deal with the Soviet ally in North Vietnam, the US interests in northern Indian Ocean remained one of not letting a broader Arab, and particularly Saudi-Adeni and Trucial coast's drift towards Egypt after 1967 War.

Until therefore the British handed over Bahrain to the US MIDEASTFOR in late 1971, the Johnson administration could conveniently use other bases in Oman, Dhahran, Sharjah and Salalah, before local opposition made it untenable to retain bases in non-allied countries including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq

Overall, the US policy towards southern Arabia was still heavily hinged to a broader Indian Ocean diplomacy, which according to Kissinger's rendition of Nixon-Brezhnev Summitry was to prevent the entire Middle East might succumb to Soviet strategic influence' after 1967:

> 'Whatever the status of Détente, reducing Soviet influence was a central objective of our strategy. Indeed, we viewed Detente as a means for hedging the risks of that strategy'.
>
> (Kissinger 1999:580).

As a general assumption, this chapter seeks to address, why US restraint against Saudi interference in southern Arabia, despite its potential escalation, was countenanced by Johnson policy planners during 1966-68, while McNamara was trying to reach a deal with the British over use of British naval facilities in the Indian Ocean region, before Diego Garcia became the favoured US redoubt for a longer-term Indian Ocean diplomatic posture after 1969.

Nevertheless, contrary to common academic understanding that Johnson administration gave qualified support to Saudi regional policies towards their territorial interests in Bahrain in Shah's favour, the facts do not prove the contention. In fact Johnson administration gave un-qualified support to Saudi interests in Aden and Sana'a after 1967 War, which was based in lack of Defence Department's interests in retention of Aden as a naval base for staging operations in East Asia, and availability of other bases in the region. Southern Arabia, according to this research was allowed to drift into Saudi hegemonic ambit under the key threat of its subversion by Nasser. The following sections demonstrate that the Soviet-Chinese threat to southern Arabia was acknowledged as real to stop Aden's drift towards Communist powers(including Communist China, East Germany, and Cuba),but arrogantly rejected by Rogers' State Department, despite call for US help by NLF regime and Aden consulate.

This section tries to put the record straight as to the effects of Saudi hegemonic domination of the Arabian Peninsular which directly spilled into Persian Gulf affairs until 1974. This research proves that Arabian Peninsula politics cannot be neatly divided into its southern Arabian and Trucial-Coast peripheral politics as a case of exclusive Iran or Saudi hegemony. In addition, the declassified records prove that it was Johnson Administration that configured a policy of Saudi regional domination that Nixon advisors ignored while imparting a more aggressive diplomatic support to Iran over its claims on Bahrain and Abu-Tunbs Islands. Building up on the issues identified earlier, this chapter identify the controversies leading to the start of Iran-Saudi rivalry over Bahrain during Johnson Administration, whose effects indirectly spilled into Saudi inertest in preventing Iranian interference in southern Arabia before Oman.

As the successive section demonstrates clearly that the US policymakers at the State Department as well as the field staff were clearly in due knowledge of the Saudi regional interests towards the two Yemens as well as affecting the British-protected Trucial States.

3.2. Saudi hegemony on southern Arabia and the case for US deference

Saunders readily acknowledged the centrality of the Persian Gulf not only as a key energy provider for West and the US, but to the overall 'balance of interests' of the US. He therefore termed Afro-Asian Middle East as the only 'black area' where our 'our economists estimate that the balance in our favour runs $400-500 million a year, against a worldwide deficit of $1.4 billion'.

Recognizing that despite previous years of a balanced and friendly policy towards all the Middle East countries (radical and moderates), Saunders argued that the years 1967-68 demanded rethinking of these polices:

'It is no longer certain that it is feasible or can serve the President's interests'.

Informing Saunders of Feisal thinking of Nasser as an '"agent of Communism" in the Middle East, who was out to topple moderate regimes throughout the area', Saunders surmised:

> 'Our failure to oppose a Nasserist takeover in Aden would be in Feisal's eyes our failure to oppose the advance of Communism in the Middle East and would cast doubt on the reliability of our commitment to preserve Saudi integrity'.

Considering Nasser as 'has been the most restrained of the Arab leaders against them', Saunders identified the inherent contradictions of US policy due to need for maintaining balances:

> 'we cannot afford to give up on UAR', but, 'the US will lose its stature in the area if we refuse and fail to stop him, the USSR and the liberation armies' in southern Arabia'.
>
> (NS File, Saunders' Memo).

The argument whether State Department remained ambivalent with the USG assuming the role of protector in southern Arabia was in the advice given to the British government against its 'hasty' withdrawal. In fact, the extreme secrecy of the British decision between the State Department and the FCO was another case of reducing pressures on the USG from regional powers. On 18th March 1967, the British government threatened to vacate the naval base in Aden and leave a virtually defenceless South Arabian Federation Government (SAFG) should it not accepted proposals for granting independence by 1st November 1967.

The SAFG's acceptance on the other hand was conditional upon British maintaining a small military contingent in support of the Federal Army, and an off-shore Carrier presence for a limited period against external aggression.

The USG's unwillingness to provide other alternatives for PDRY's vitality were also manifest in State Department's voluntary decision not to inform the Saudis of British plans. Such policy was explained as obliging a direct US intervention in southern Arabia under the security guarantee to Saudi Arabia, while the SAFG or a FLOSY government 'in-exile 'could initiate similar requests with Nasser or oblige NLF's to Soviet intervention against American action.

(National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 19 ADEN).

The State Department however did try to play a minimal diplomatic role in bringing together rival factions before leaving regional security to the exclusive Saudi control. During April 1967, Assistant Secretary Lucius Battle acted as a go-in-between the FLOSY and the British government to facilitate some power-sharing formula with the SAFG, in order to prevent the Federation's from fragmentation. Such efforts however were exceptional in the wake of FLOSY maintaining an overtly anti-American posture amidst news of considering proclaiming a government-in-exile and threatening to close Ba'ab al-Manda'ab Straits to Israel.

(NARA, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 19 ADEN).

In May 1967, Battle similarly tried unsuccessfully to persuade British government to delay their intended withdrawal from southern Arabia by January 1968, to which London Embassy agreed, but refused to extend a defence treaty or sponsoring PDRY's membership of the UN.

(NARA, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 19 ADEN).

As suggested earlier, any analytical separation of the southern Arabian Peninsula's politics from the neighbouring Persian Gulf is artificial due to the ubiquitous Saudi interests on both southern and eastern littorals. A 16th March 1967 Aden Embassy telegram exhibited just such policy contradictions which had animated US policy-planning without the dual aim of preventing Nasser's take-over of Aden through the revolutionary FLOSY or Marxist NLF and assuring conservative allies in the same vein.

Such recommendations clearly deviated from Ambassador Holmes' report incorporated into the Senior Intergovernmental Group during March-July 1967), which

recommended USG to restrain Saudi ambitions in southern Arabia; engage with whatever regime taking over in southern Arabia, but take no initiatives with respect to North Yemen.

Reporting the USG's ability to deter threats from Nasser as extremely limited with South Yemen's break-up into Aden and a Saudi-supported tribal Hinterland a real possibility (after British withdrawal), the Aden Charge de Affairs William Eagleton predicted that the British-created SAFG would be unable to maintain order or remain a viable regime after British withdrawal.

What became a self-fulfilling prophecy was therefore predicted very early by the Aden field staff who informed the State Department of British unwillingness to sacrifice SAFG or a quasi UAR-aligned FLOSY to the Saudi supported-NLF which eventually took over in November 1967.

The Aden Embassy however continued to argue for the natural course of events by letting chaos and the civil war prevail in southern Arabia, due to British refusal to leave a viable political structure or under the impossibility of an UN-mandated military/political arrangement. Another intriguing aspect of Embassy's orientation was its advocating a policy of tolerating a Nasser-dominated southern Arabia, which was argued as equally agreeable as his 'control of Suez Canal and Red Sea during the last decade'.

It can be argued that the American decision to tag along with the British policy of withdrawing commitments towards the fragile southern Arabian regime was in keeping with the Realpolitik of the broader ME power struggles.

Although warning that 'present trends if continued will probably lead to far more active Soviet involvement on the side of revolutionary progressive forces that would result in a Vietnam type situation', the following was again an observation of far reaching consequences for American unwillingness to challenge Soviet interference and defer regional balancing through Saudi preponderance:

> 'we must not forget that South Arabia is essentially an Arab problem', where 'conflicts in both areas result largely from Arab quarrels'.

The Embassy therefore effectively underwrote a future Saudi hegemonic role in the region's political development as the best alternative to direct US involvement:

> 'Except for our security guarantee and military support for Saudi Arabia and Britain's colonial role, foreign influences have thus far been minimal'.

(NARA, RG 59, Central Files, 1967-69, POL 19 ADEN).

A memorandum from Saunders to Walt Rostow on 7th November 1967 highlighted a positive understanding about the outcome of the June War when it argued that with Nasser's evacuation from North Yemen upon Saudi insistence, the threat of FLOSY's takeover was further reduced by NLF's military victories. With the Federal Army declaring support for NLF, the latter's take-over now confronted USG with a clear choice of preventing its drift into Soviet sphere or let Saudis manage the new regional balance of power on the southern periphery. Saunders however informed Rostow of the State Department's willingness to deal with any government whatsoever that did not take directions from Nasser nor had an 'unexpected amount of Communist activity'.

It is clear from the memo's warning of possible reaction from 'regionals' like Saudi Arabia, Iran and North Yemen due their sensitivity to whether a takeover of radicals in the NLF (instead of the Saudi-favoured "moderates") would not give a pretext for Nasser to delay his withdrawal from North Yemen, for which the USG was recommended to suspend its recognition of the new regime.

The US policy towards a Saudi sphere of influence however still remained an exercise in burden-sharing when the State Department prospected that Saudi government be forthcoming on pledges of economic assistance made in 1967. It was similarly suggested that the USG should consider aiding PDRY through the Mutual Assistance Programme (MAP) or through the USAID.

(Johnson Library National Security File, Country File, South Arabia, Vol. I, 7/67-11/67).

The fact that, Saudis posed a clear danger to the fragile political consensus in Aden was for the first time frankly addressed in the NSC in late 1967. It was anticipated in the form of Saudi interests in a tribally-influenced regime in Aden to curb the spread of radical threats in the region, even after Nasser losing initiative in south Yemen's civil war.

The policy deliberations animating NSC paper however made clear that Brewer(State Department) was content with the status of 'outgoings' in the southern peninsular region due basically to the 'Egyptian and British withdrawal at the same time'. He instead claimed the possibility of new regime as 'less concerned with the ideological entanglements of Arab nationalism, as the immediate problem of the creation of a unified nation'.

Compared to a fairly backward YAR, it was recognized that an Aden-based regime, dominated by an efficient British nurtured bureaucracy, police and army, could stand on her own through British and American recognition and financial assistance.

Nevertheless, the paper was de-facto recognition of Saudi interests in case an NLF-FLOSY-centred political arrangement did not work to Saudi satisfaction. The NSC recognized that Saudis themselves considered its inevitable collapse a real possibility, but even preferred Federal Army's takeover as the 'most acceptable, realistic alternative… :

> 'Without mention SAG may seek to undermine a government of "progressive" Adenese by assisting south Arabian tribal leaders'.

Predicting a potential Saudi posture after 1967 however, the following was another candid observing on-ground realty:

> 'Whether or not the Saudis offer encouragement to unruly tribes, there is likely to be trouble upcountry for a government in Aden made up largely of non-tribal, or detribalized young men'.

Nevertheless, by late 1967, the NCS advisors still dabbled in the ambiguities of NLF's willingness to accept Soviet or Chinese assistance, while burden-sharing in regional security was similarly attributed to NATO partners' unwillingness to share British burdens towards the southern Arabian regime (suspended since November 1967).

While the State Department forcefully argued for an instant recognition of the regime as a way of taking initiative away from Soviets, East Europeans as well as the Chinese communists, it warned that 'a Saudi intrusion to establish a government solely made up of these provincials opposed by the Aden city-based organizations', was a serious possibility.

(NSC Files, Saunders Files, Aden & South Arabia, 4/1/66-1/20/69).

The clarity with which the NSC viewed regional relations and deferred to Saudi sensitivities(in south Yemen) was further evident when Rostow advised Johnson against recognition of the NLF regime until Saudi views were "clarified" or NLF's ability to 'act like a government' ascertained.

In his December 1967 advice, Secretary of State Rusk, on the other hand, apprised Johnson about the 'radical Arab nationalist and non-aligned nature of the NLF' as well as accepting its international obligations under the UN Charter.

Rusk recognized that NLF Government's fate depended on foreign aid and political control over tribal conservatives, most of whom were the remnants of South Arabian Federation, While warning that 'the Saudis may exploit tribal opposition' to their ends, he urged Johnson to 'await until the British clarify their position to financially bail-out the same government whose elements had killed "their boys"'.

Rusk however warned that such delay 'will be crucial in determining whether the new government has to look to Cairo or Moscow'…or… 'to close the minimal US representation in the region, after rupture of relations with North Yemen':

> ' we would thus lose our single remaining listening post in the southern half of Arabia'.

(NS, Country File, South Arabia, Vol. I, 7/67-11/67).

In the final event of South Yemen's independence, an 'undated' late November 1967 air-gram from London Embassy informed Rusk of the utter lack of political support in the British government for extending the $26 million financial aid to the faltering regime, promised earlier. It was informed that the British had a natural attachment for the deposed '"Federalis" on whom they had 'expended so much money and diplomatic support', and personal disposition against the 'terrorists [possibly NLF] who killed our boys'.

In the final rejection of British support therefore, it was predicted that if another 'outside benefactor was not found until mid-1968, Southern Yemen will be subjected to serious internal stresses'. It was also predicted that despite a desire for reaching some accommodation with the regime, the Saudis would impose unacceptable conditions, while Kuwait would only follow the Saudi/UAR line.

On balance however, the field staff was explicitly in favour of the USG taking-over financial obligations for a shorter haul, until other regional powers come to some arrangement with the South Yemeni regime'.

(NARA, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 15 S YEMEN).

3.3. Southern Arabia: the Saudi encirclement (post-1967)

The fact that the US policy did not suffer from dearth of credible information about the power politics in the region cannot account for the indecisions toward developments in Southern Yemen well. The irony in the loss of initiative or policy paralysis in southern Arabia was evident in policy planners' perceptions about US interests being best served through delegating regional responsibilities to the Saudis to thwart Soviet entry even after Soviet entry in North Yemen since 1964. The failure to take control of events after British withdrawal was demonstrable in NSC's ignoring State assessments about Riyadh and Sana'a ganging-up on PDRY.

Such orientation was palpable in NSC's resistance to Embassy's advice to engage the NLF regime despite her positive view of American neutralism in the YAR-South Yemen conflict, as comprehensively reported by Eagleton as early as 15th December 1967.

Eagleton reported President Qahatan-al Shibi's all-out friendly perspective towards the US by encouraging private American concerns' entry into its public sector projects, offered oil concessions and even requesting support towards normalizing relations with the Saudi government. Under State Department's orders though, not only US representatives were prohibited from assuring Qahtan of a tangible support through financial or military assistance (citing budgetary difficulties) but subsequent reports until late 1968 show a deliberate policy failure to restrain Saudi-Sana's interference in southern Arabia. When Eagleton therefore was informing Qahtan that the US government 'considered development aid primarily responsibility of former colonial power and oil producing states in area', he had been effectively ordered to deliver the Greater Yemen to Saudi financial and political patrimony in order to keep the US out of Peninsular politics.

(NARA, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL S YEMEN-US).

The indecisive but effectively 'hands-off' approach towards southern Arabia found another official expression in the NSC by late March 1968 when Johnson's advisor Walt Rostow was informed by John Foster (NSC) of the evolving internal situation inside South Yemen with "Moderates" (supported by the British-trained Federation Army), taking over the regime after the later en-mass arrested various NLF radicals.

Considering such development as collusion between "moderates and radicals" to adopt radical policies in international affairs, Foster termed the former as 'radical Arab nationalists, Socialists and anti-Western in international affairs'. Although warning about 'tremendous financial problems facing the moderates, and South Yemen 'in for more trouble', Foster warned Rostow about the possibility of:

> 'South Yemen, swinging away from its current efforts to develop close relations with the Communist nations'.

Nevertheless, US policy towards South Yemen remained tragically short-sighted and defeatist, when Foster admitted:

> 'It would be hard to argue that any American initiative would be worth the effort, and even if we wanted to influence events there is little we could do'.

Eagleton was therefore informed in Aden:

‘State [Department] isn't planning to do much more than to watch the situation and hope for the best’.

(NSF, Country File, Yemen, Cables & Memos, Vol. 11, 7/64-12/68) [1].

Paradoxically, even an implied American sensitivity to Saudi interests against direct interference in Yemen and giving pretext to Nasser or Soviets, failed to rationalize actual Saudi interests in brokering relations between two ideologically disparate Yemeni regimes. This was evident in Saudi efforts to foster bilateral dependence upon Saudi support to prevent unification under Sana’s republican President Sallal.

(NARA, RG 59, POL 16 South YEMEN).

Any nuanced analysis of US policy towards Arabian Peninsula countries needs to put in context US policyplanners’ intimate knowledge of South Yemen’s policy of not accepting military assistance from British government and Saudi ambitions.

British refusal in May 1968 to grant $144 million requests by the NLF regime over the next 5 years, and instead offering a measly $3 million aid over the next 9 months, now combined with Saudi refusal to step-in, after Nasser’s evacuation from Yemen. The US government in turn also decided not to chip-in due to lack of ‘money or the will to buy in’.

It is clear that Foster’s 21st May 1968 advice to Walt Rostow was a deliberate ignoring of field staff’s advice and acquiescence into a policy of letting the Soviets, Chinese or Cubans carry initiative in the PDRY:

‘The [NLF] government thinks the Russians are its best bet (for getting financial help after the British-Saudi-US refusal), and rumour has it that President Qahtan plans to leave for Moscow shortly’.

Foster who had previously persuaded Rostow about the futility of USG bailing out NLF “moderates” (despite the threat of Soviet manipulation in Aden), now argued in the wake of changed situation after the threat of military coup subsided in favour of radical NLF elements:

‘this shift to the right will make the South Yemenis less eager to rush into the arms of the Soviets’.

Foster’s observation and assurance about NLF’s future trajectory was at best manifestly insuring Saudi hegemony, when he argued that:

‘such a development ought to make the regime somewhat more acceptable to the Saudis--at least, FAISAL isn't likely to intervene, and he might even bring himself to recognize the government’.

Nevertheless, Foster's warning was to be more prophetic than he would have foreseen:

'Enough personal, ideological, tribal and regional rivalries' and the inability of the regime to resolving the money problems, may force the regime into political affiliations it would rather avoid'.

Foster also brought Saudi problems in North Yemen's civil war into a sharper relief than his most NSC colleagues had acknowledged before, when he informed Rostow about Saudi efforts to bring moderate Republicans and tribal Royalists together after their split. Sana's political orientations adding to Saudi vulnerability in southern Arabia were crucially evident in Saudi failure to bring rival factions together (after early 1967) which '[made] the Royalist regime of Amri more unified and effective'. Foster informed Rostow that Amris' regime was penetrated by the radicals from the army 'as well as by their connections with the NLF regime in Aden.

The paradox of misdirected American procrastination towards advantage offered by Soviet failures in Aden was demonstrable as late as 13th September 1968, when Brewer noted 'with concern the agreement on military and technical assistance with the Soviets, and South Yemeni Foreign Minister on a mission to Peking'. He now foresaw 'the possibility of the Soviets and the Chinese Communists competing for influence in PRSY as they had in Yemen a decade before'.

Brewer however continued to underestimate Sana'a -Saudi interests in the toppling of Qahtan's "Moderate NLF" as a threat to the region, while he similarly rejected the possibility of North Yemen's split. Nevertheless, Brewer's lack of understanding (or wilfully ignoring) Saudi interests in keeping both Yemens split along tribal and ideological rivalries was evident only as a matter of retrospection when observed:

' it is possible that the southern half of YAR would join forces with PRSY'

(NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF).

Although Saudis were not directly accused of 'initiating' efforts in the overthrow of Qahtan regime, a common Saudi-Sana'a interest in the 'collapse' of NLF regime was still anticipated by State Department by May 1968, as based in President Amri's own interest in encouraging dissident refugees in Ta'iz'. In a 5th August 1968 memorandum to Rusk, although Battle refuted direct Saudi role in the July 1968 tribal uprising, but projected this as a serious threat to the regime. Nevertheless, he still considered the case as 'privately Saudi encouragement to dissident exile groups'.

In fact, Battle drew a direct linkage between Saudi-supported "moderates" holding power over "radicals" after their March arrests by the Federation Army and Sana's encouragement for NLF's overthrow. He therefore observed, that after failure of Saudi efforts during last spring to hold together the royalist regime (in Sana'a) and latter's direct interest in reaching a 'meaningful compromise with the Saudis over ending civil war in Yemen', the regime in Aden and its political tendencies became a common interest for Riyadh and San'a.

By early July 1968, however when tribal dissidents risked toppling the NLF, it was clearly blamed upon the 'organized' Saudi effort giving impetus to the Nasserite FLOSY, its own-supported South Arabian League and the Federal army (Aluqi officers sympathizing with the FLOSY), to compel Qahtan regime to agree to a more all-inclusive political set up:

> 'It was however clear that 'new tribal uprising along Saudi border (Lahej, Radfan and Hushabi region) was a common move by the Saudis and North Yemen which instead accredited Americans with accusations by South Yemen for supporting it'.
>
> (NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 15 S YEMEN).

3.4. The 'twin-Pillars' of security and territorial hegemony: southern Arabia meets the Persian Gulf

The fact that Johnson administration considered even an in-direct advice to the SAG against its interference inside South Yemen as an anathema to good relations was clear from a 2nd November 1968 cable to ambassador Herman Eilts, that the State Department did not consider this a right approach by the USG to 'tell the Saudi government what to do', but left upon the ambassador to diplomatically advice SAG as :

> 'to express serious reservations regarding the efficacy of any military effort against PRSY'.

Foreign minister Omar Saqqaf however conveyed a 'displeasure' from King Faisal on 4th November 1968 over US ambassador's advice (31st October 1968), and interpreted this as 'US support for the Communist regimes in the Arabian peninsula'.

Eilts went further to express that Saudi policy to curb cross-border military activity as well as direct financial assistance to the moderates in the NLF regime to 'encourage more reliance on the Saudi governing was considered as the best policy towards regional stability':

> '[it] limits opportunities for development [of] major Communist positions of influence in fledgling South Arabian state'.
>
> (NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 23-9 S YEMEN).

It also remains another tragic aspect of US policy towards the PDRY regime when in response to subsequent accusations by the regime of US support during 18th November 1968 to the Saudi-backed FLOSY and tribal incursions through American weapons, Rusk and Katzenbach effectively retaliated by discouraging south Yemeni overtures for closer relations with the US.

This was done through discouraging PDRY's foreign minister's visits to Washington, seeking financial aid, under pretexts of government change(in Washington) but making even small US aid conditional upon good diplomatic behaviour'.

(NARA, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL S YEMEN-US).

Even humanitarian aid was made conditional upon PDRY 'should general atmosphere in our relations make this feasible'. In fact, even NGO-level activities by private US concerns such as medical aid were made contingent, 'as long as strident PRSY anti-American campaign continues'. Adding to this hostility was State Department's perception of South Yemen sponsoring Chinese membership of the UN and relations with North Korea'.

(NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL S YEMEN-US).

During the indecisions over which government best suited American interests in southern Arabia during 1967-68, even after NLF achieving a tentative monopoly through South Arabian Army , it became clear that the Shah of Iran was visibly concerned over the effects of political violence upon the rest of Arabian Peninsula.

An October 1967 telegram from Tehran Ambassador Armin Meyer pointed out Shah's considerable unease with British withdrawal from Arabian Peninsula, which he considered taking-up with the British Minister of State Goronwey Roberts on his November visit. Meyer reported that the Shah wanted to speak in 'very strong terms' about the "incomprehensible" British policy of recognizing Sallal's regime in the YAR in an effort to 'woo Nasser'.

US diplomatic record clearly suggests that Shah did not agree with Meyer on the Saudi capability to secure itself from Nasser's pan-Arab radicalism, even if Faisal reached some modus-vivendi with Nasser over North Yemen. In fact, the Shah (according to Meyer) not only frowned upon Saudi-Nasser moves to merge Aden with Yemen providing a 'springboard' to Nasserite or Soviet activity at the mouth of Red Sea, but was also exasperated at the British for 'so cavalierly letting down so many friends, i.e. Arabian Peninsula sheikhs, who had placed their faith in British'.

The report also makes clear that the Shah emphatically denounced any intentions whatsoever of territorial control, through tribal Principalities (potentially Zeidi Shi'a tribes) in Arabian Peninsula.

Meyer's report is the first documentary evidence which contradicts Shah's hegemonic ambitions and instead reported his discussing an RCD-type economic consortium for all riparian states on the Persian Gulf with Richard Cottam (US Ambassador to Kuwait).

In addition, Meyer's report suggests that despite [the Shah] viewing that the Saudis were having 'enough trouble controlling their own patriarchal society', it was Meyer who proposed controlling Arabian littoral states under 'Saudi hegemony' to the Shah, 'who was not averse to raising this with Roberts in November'.

(NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF).

The regional leaders' reactions to British unwillingness to underwrite the security of smaller sheikhdoms, (after British declaration of withdrawal from southern Arabia) were further reported when British ambassador Man met King Faisal in October 1967. Fearing British withdrawal well before 1970 from the Persian Gulf, Faisal however criticized British handing-over southern Arabia to nationalists, which would likely give 'similar reasons for the other Sheikhly rulers' to succumb to radical nationalist elements.

This document makes emphatically clear that the British ambassador confided in Herman Eilts that although he had reservations that his government would stay until 1970, he was not authorized to tell the King that the British actually intended to stay beyond 1970. This report triggered State Department's inquiries with the British Foreign Office (FCO) about the veracity of such speculations and expressed belief that the British government 'ought to have intended to stay in the Persian Gulf "well beyond 1970"'.

As a matter of historical correctness, the FCO did confirm in mid-November 1967, and as complete contradiction to what Denis Healey makes his reader believe, 'HMG's willingness to stay in the Persian Gulf until "at least 1975", or 'as long as it was needed, until adequate local security arrangements are devised.'

(NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF) .

A May 1967 Intelligence Estimate by the CIA however more accurately predicted British stay in the Persian Gulf as "up to 3-4 years", when it warned State Department against various impending crises where Bahrain was considered as the 'more volatile and unstable':

‘Occasional violence through “terrorism” is likely to mark at least the final stages of a British withdrawal, and some form of radical regime will probably emerge in Bahrain after the British depart’.

The CIA’s estimate however was the first on-record contradiction of the commonly-held view about a direct Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf to substantiate Iran’s role to act as a regional power on behalf of the West as imminently touted by Johnson officials:

‘while supporting Nasser and generally encouraging movements directed against Western interests, [the Soviets]would be wary of direct or open involvement in Gulf manoeuvring.’

Analyzing various political and developmental problems confronting smaller states on the Trucial Coast, the Estimate made informed predictions of ‘ambitions and capabilities of other regional powers Iran, Saudi Kingdom and Iraq to control and influence other bordering states’. Instead of advocating Iran as a favourite US ally to mandate a regional role, the CIA speculated that despite being most ‘influential of the regional forces, UAR would be least likely to affect any drastic change in the Persian Gulf (compared to south Arabia) due to lack of support from radical Arab states’. The report argued that ‘Nasser would be strongly opposed by Faisal, by Shah and to a lesser extent by Kuwaitis in the Persian Gulf’:

‘who fear that UAR influence in the Gulf would be a threat not only to their interests but also to the stability of their own governments’.

Written just before the June War, the Estimate was prophetic when pointed out that ‘the oil rich Qatar and Trucial states would follow the Kuwaiti example of ‘handing out financial support to the “predatory Arab states”’.

The CIA therefore ruled out any ‘dramatic Soviet move’ in the Persian Gulf and concluded that although British withdrawal would provide opportunities for the Soviets, their move would be complicated and ‘requiring a careful balancing of regional forces’.

One of the most interesting findings about the nature of intra-Arab rivalries during Johnson-era, and Shah’s inability to estimate Arab sensitivity to Iranian influence was evident in CIA’s prediction that ‘after British evacuation (3-4 year later), some non-oil states would seek protection of the Saudis’.

‘the Shah will be urged to take over some of the British responsibilities in the Gulf. While becoming a “principal target of the Arab revolutionary propaganda and

subversion", she would become involved in a variety of dynastic rivalries and troublesome political disputes'.

(CIA: Job 79-R01012A, ODDI Registry NIE-SNIE Files).

It is however still doubtful whether as early as October 2, 1967, Assistant Secretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach clearly perceived radical Arab threat to the conservative Sheikhdoms.

In fact, while concurring with the Shah and Faisal's criticism of British policy of abandoning South Yemen, he agreed with British "assurances" that the political situation in the Persian Gulf bore no comparisons with South Arabian due to the 'smaller base on which Arab radical organizations could build organized revolutionary activity in Gulf States (as previously in such cities as Aden, Ta'iz, Hodeida)'. Katzenbach was therefore an early convert to the idea that 'rapidly rising oil income in some states acted to reduce dissident pressures', and hence did not warrant direct US influence to moderate Iran or Saudi pressures upon the Trucial states.

Long a sceptic of CIA's covert activities under Johnson Administration and unable to comprehend the complexities of regional politics, Katzenbach ignored CIA's warnings about radical threats to Bahrain. Ordering US embassies throughout the region to serve caution upon their British counterparts and the USG's 'belief that the UK can play major stabilizing role in Gulf area for "*indefinite period"* without encountering irresistible pressures from radical groups', he still failed to propose direct US involvement on behalf of South Yemen.

(NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 19 ADEN)'[26].

A comparative analysis of Intelligence reports and advice given to Rusk by the State Department however showed the difference in strategic orientations underpinning analyses about threats confronting Arabian Peninsula. Hence a 20th November 1967 memorandum to Rusk from Battle manifested a "rejection" of Saudi ambitions over Qatar and Abu Dhabi, while concentrating on the political integration of Trucial States to ward-off 'domestic oppositional elements'. He considered their containment as possible through 'domestic political reforms'.

[26] According to Miller Centre of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia, and holders of Johnson Papers, Johnson had charged Katzenbach with reviewing CIA's activities, including the agency's questionable use of funds. Following commission's report, President Johnson prohibited the use of covert government aid for private educational, philanthropic, and cultural organizations. Following a spate of row with Hoover over Martin Luther King's wire-tapping, Katzenbach resigned as undersecretary in November 1968 (1965-68) but agreed to stay-on during the transfer of power following Nixon's election.

With the smaller Gulf sheikhdoms assured of British presence well until 1975 and as incentive to cooperate over political integration, Battle pointed out that such convergence emanated from the 'fear of losing control' and doing whatever it takes to 'preserve their position'. Nevertheless, he warned that:

> 'Their moves might well obstruct modernization and initiate restrictive practices which would stimulate growth of the very opposition they fear'.

As viewed in subsequent British efforts to meld disparate sheikhdoms into a federation under Abu Dhabi, Battle's observation was conditioned by the knowledge of Saudi interests in dominating the sheikhdoms through smaller "Federations" which the British though not preferring until 1968 had still sought to put under Saudis through the Peninsular Solidarity Project. Battle was therefore a professed advocate of Saudi Arabia acting as a regional hegemon and had no preference for Iran:

> 'Saudis as the logical successors in the role of the major stabilizing factor in the area, after the British evacuation (still 4 years in the future)…'.

Battles' suggestions were therefore strikingly similar to what was earlier proposed by Rostow and Saunders for a US policy which gave more weight to Saudi regional preponderance in southern Arabia:

> 'the Saudis do not want to deal with the multitude of petty sheikhdoms which now exist. They are already thinking in terms of one or more federations of peninsula states with which they could more easily deal'.

A policy recommendation resembling a conspiracy theory was at best a case of instigating hegemonic conflicts in the region by encouraging Saudi maritime preponderance in the Gulf. In the run-up of a conflict over Bahrain and Arabi islands, the US official can be seen to under-write a policy with serious implications for sheikhdoms, if not for Iran. A policy for Saudi hegemony therefore envisaged a $100 million naval build-up 'with the British, primarily in the Gulf, directed to improving the Saudi bargaining position vis-à-vis Iran'.

It is not clear whether Battle had come to perceive the inevitability of British withdrawal sooner than 1974-75 when he tried to conciliate Iran-Saudi competition with cooperation. While encouraging Saudi-Iranian hegemonic bargaining over regional security, resources and political order, the following did not envisage smaller states' completely subsumed under either "pillar":

'since no power on the horizon is likely to replace the security and stability the British now provide, we should also take advantage of opportunities as they arise quietly to encourage: (a) greater Saudi/Iranian understanding on Gulf problems, and (b) more cooperation among Gulf mini-states to improve changes for regional stability after the British go'.

(NARA,RG 59, CF1967-69, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF)

3.5. Saudi hegemony on southern Arabian-Trucial Coast: the collapse of 'Twin-Pillars'

In the event of British declaration of full-scale withdrawal from the Persian Gulf two months after evacuation from southern Arabia, it became evident that Saudi predominance in the regional geopolitical and resource rivalry was more contingent upon relations with southern and eastern periphery and not Iran. The case that the Saudis now faced twin challenges to this predominance was emphatically clear after PDRY's independence on 1st November 1967, when the US Charge to Saudi Kingdom Douglas Allen reported his conversations with King Faisal's special advisor Rashad Pharaon on 28th January 1968 expressing Saudi:

'concern re future of Gulf in view [of]Brit withdrawal, growing Soviet activity in ME area and generally unsatisfactory Yemeni and South Arabian situations'.

The report was however a credible prognostication of future Saudi interests to prevent its eastern Peninsula's collusion with other challengers to its hegemony, in southern Arabia or Iran. In this very pursuit, Pharaon also intimated King Faisal extending security assurances to Bahrain against Iranian claims, should Bahrain managed to put together a "mini-confederation". The fact that the Saudi government considered an Abu Dhabi-centred integration in the region as a threat to her pre-eminence was palpable when Pharaon informed Ambassador Man about:

'Saudi capability to deal with each of Trucial States separately but Abu Dhabi, that now look to SAG and SAG in position [to]"surround" Abu Dhabi'.

The US ambassador however tried to discourage Saudi leveraging Bahrain issue to check Abu Dhabi, or demanding Iran renouncing its constitutional claims on Bahrain. He therefore refuted King Faisal's fears that future successor of the Shah might renege on

agreement over Bahrain. Arguing whether Bahrain was a price that Iranians would not be willing to pay for better relations with Saudi Arabia, Allen countered Pharaon's argument that Iranians were also likely to fear the same from Faisal's successors. Most importantly however, Allen tried to discourage Saudi policy of seeking leverage over regional interests through "lip service" to radical Arab states in order to discourage Iranian ambitions over smaller Arab states.

The US ambassador later conjectured whether Saudi willingness to cooperate with Iran and Kuwait (enhanced by Saudis making-up Nasser's war losses) was contingent upon asking Shah's renunciation as precondition for a Security and Economic Pact.

It is however doubtful whether Allen's reporting Pharaon's inquiry into British refusal to accept Abu Dhabi/Dubai's offers to pay for British military presence, and Saudi interests in taking this matter with the British, implied Saudi preference or the British to reject Sheikhly requests.

"Heartily" endorsing Allen's stand, the State Department authorized him to appraise Faisal before Shah's visit.

(NARA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, DEF 1 UK).

3.6. Bahrain, Arabi and Abu Musa islands: Resource struggle, historical "Irredenta" and US policy

The Arabi and Bahrain islands case as one of resource-security struggle among Iran and Saudi Arabia (and curiously not by Bahrain) in 1968 demonstrates how Johnson's policy-planners encouraged the Shah's obstreperousness to pressure Saudi acceptance of Iran's claims on Arabi's oil. Owing to Saudi interests in Bahrain's presiding over "min-Federations", this was however not US delivering on Saudi interests, as Feisal bin Saud as made out to be. Subsequent sections show that Bahrain became a strategic prize for US global security interests and a threat to Soviet security along southern borders. While its detachment from Saudi hegemony was leveraged through the Arabi island "linkage", archival evidence shows that US planners paid lip-service to Bahrain's resolution as a pre-condition for Iran-Saudi cooperation over broader regional issues, while trying to make covert deals with the British and Bahrain over its acquisition for stationing of the US MIDEASTFOR as a strategic leverage to seek Soviet conventional reductions against NATO, de-escalation in Europe and strategic nuclear arms limitation(SALT-I and MIRV Treaty).

In an 'eyes-only' memorandum to Meyer, Rusk relayed Eugene Rostow's conversations with Iranian Ambassador Hushang Ansary on 5th January 1968, which recognized key linkages between Saudi and Iranian interests in the Persian Gulf, and a future Iranian role after British withdrawal, without Ansary endorsing agreement about Iran's supposed role.

The fact that Iran-Saudi rivalry over Bahrain was not one of historical *irredenta*, but over resources was self-evident:

> '[Shah] had pointed out that his government was after all a nationalistic one and it would be disastrous both for himself personally and for USG interests in area if he were to give up Iranian claims to $2 billion worth of oil in dispute in median-line area. Ultra Nationalists, people out of sympathy with his regime, and Communists would exploit such concessions on his part to detriment of both his and our interests'.

Another fact that rivalry over Bahrain and Arabi ran the risk of spilling into other Iranian problems or increasing Iran's leverage for other US concessions was manifest when Rusk conveyed Ansary's warning that the Shah was losing patience in the ongoing negotiations with Consortium for increased out-put as a reward for Iran's continued supplies during the June War, and finance the 4th Development Plan. In fact, by citing Iraq and Saudis buying their weapons from non-US sources[27], and expressing frustration at delays by Johnson to extend low interest credits for arms, the Shah emphatically endorsed his 'determination' to continue buying US weapons. Nevertheless, Ansary observed that 'there would be a time when his patience would be exhausted'.

(State, CF, POL IRAN-U.S).

In the 6th March 1968 briefing given to Johnson about Shah's impending visit, Rostow did not go into the problems of Bahrain-Arabi islands or Shah's accusations at the USG siding with the Saudis. Instead he briefed about Shah's interests in seeking Johnson's blessing over a potential regional security posture against Soviet or radical Arab pressures to which he did into cite the Shah or Ansary making such illusions whatsoever. Working on a formula devised by Meyer as a way of "massaging Shah's ego, who wanted to be seen as an important US ally", he advised the President to restrict his meeting to personal conversations with the Shah

[27] The Shah had already cited Soviet presence in the southern Rumeilah oil fields as early as January 1968 to Meyer as encouraging Iraq's unilateral decision to confiscate IPC's concession areas, but still the case when British companies continued to conduct businesses in Iraq.

on broader Middle Eastern problems, while Helms and Rusk were tasked to handle crucial issues on one-to-one basis:

> 'With British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf now a certainty, the Shah will want to stay in close touch with you, and we have an interest in his cooperation with his Arab neighbors to prevent an undue increase in Soviet or Arab radical presence'.
>
> (NS, Country File, Iran, Vol. II, 1/66–1/69).

Another 6th March 1968 cable by Meyer to the State Department however suggests that he was kept ignorant about the on-goings on Bahrain between Ansary, the NSC and State Department. Contradicting what Saud argues about Meyer having been personally restrained by Rusk not to threaten King Faisal over Shah's threat of force to acquire Arabi Island, the following suggests that he was 'having this first inkling coming from the Shah himself and may be Ansary's own initiative'(Saud 2008:42-44). In fact, Meyer reported his explaining to the Shah that the USG had:

> 'not even suggested position that GOI must ratify initialled 1965 line but instead, expressed impartially to both sides in our hope that further confrontations can be avoided and reasonable mutually satisfactory solution found at early date'[28].

Meyer's however gave his personal assessments about the sudden hostility of Hoveyda regime, due to his personally encouraging the Shah not to cancel his visit to Faisal but more importantly exerting more pressure through USG deliberations over Iran's purchase of Soviet weapons.

(State, Central Files, POL IRAN–U.S).

The following advice however was only a reflection on Meyer's style of playing with Shah's psychology as part of his institutional background as the OWI-OSS official working under another intelligence operative Loy Henderson and followed with added cunning by Kissinger and Ambassador-at-large Averil Harriman subsequently(Rosoevelt:1988:130.367-73):

> 'He's at another point of needing reassurance that he can count on us. He isn't getting what he wants from the oil companies; the British are vacating the Gulf leaving him face-to-face in a dispute with Saudi Arabia over tremendous oil reserves under the

[28] Meyer was also ill-informed about Anthony Solomon's warning to the Consortium's discriminatory pricing practices towards Iran by favouring Saudi uplifts. Citing Shah's complaint of Consortium's practices, he confided into Rostow Consortium's inability to grant Shah's 'incessant demands since last year' and informed Rusk of advising Alam of Iran 'settling for increased refinery output and abolition of OPEC discounts, as a face-saving device for getting GOI out of box if it so wishes.'

Persian Gulf; his military sales agreement with us is pending; Kosygin is coming in April, and the Communist clandestine radio is raking him over and appealing to his opposition; he's not doing too well with the Arabs, and he may be feeling generally isolated at the moment'.

The memorandum however shows that while Johnson approved a private meeting with Shah on July 1968,coming on a private visit, he was neither given an in-depth analysis about Iran-Saudi rivalries including Arabi and Bahrain islands, nor about Abu Musa or Tunbs upon which rested the entire British-Iranian effort to forge a Gulf Security Pact during 1968-70. The NSC's wilful prevention of the Shah's categorical demands to reach Johnson for Bahrain's neutrality and non-accession to the UAE was a way of preventing a clear break between Iran-US relations which occurred with Nixon's decision to retain Bahrain for MIDEASTFOR operations as soon as Iran renounced its claims in January 1969. NSC's approach therefore implied the USG to let Iran and Saudis deal with the issue to prevent Nasser's interference on behalf of conservative Arabs, or even direct Soviet intervention on behalf of Iran or Saudi Kingdom.

(NSC, Iran, Vol. II, 1/66–1/69).

Meyer again reported Iranian 'isolation' in the region amidst hostility by the Soviets and Nasser, while the Shah viewed:

'…other Arabs, including Faisal, as Nasser's hostages and vulnerable to overthrow by radical Arabism'.

When in the 'eyes-only' correspondence to Eugene Rostow (State), he reported that the Shah 'is at odds with Ayub, while the Turkish friendship is not warm', he again treated the problem as one of resource rivalry instead of insecurity spun-out of its actions against the Arabs amidst Western refusal to honour its role during the recent War. Most of Meyer's reporting, assessments and recommendations, however were done in Shah's absence from Iran, when he imagined the Shah:

'Sitting in the Alps, ruminating his probable actions whether he should forcibly occupy Bahrain, the Abu Musa/Tunbs, and let the IPAC start drilling in the Median line!'[29].

[29] Reflecting another tendency of the US official putting much faith in Meyer's reporting was further evident when Saunders and Foster (NSC) wrote to Rostow on 18th March 1968, fully supporting Meyer: "The best explanation of all this Iranian edginess is Meyer's guess as to why the Shah called his ambassador to meet him in Switzerland and then had the ambassador bring back a bag full of crazy charges against Armin" (Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Iran, Memos & Miscellaneous, Vol. II, 1/66–1/69. Secret).

Elaborating on Shah's further dilemmas to militarize Iran's relations with the Arabs at the cost of relations with the US, Meyer warned about its repercussions for US interests in the Persian Gulf:

> 'he jeopardizes relationship with US, the one country from which he can least afford to be isolated, the entire basis of bilateral relations would be jeopardised. At stake is future of Gulf, role Shah will play and our relationship with Shah as he plays it'…(probably in consultation with British) we should address ourselves intensively to critical problems in Gulf area in wake of British departure, i.e. Median Line, Tunb and other mid-Gulf islands, and, of course, Bahrain. Purpose is to 'facilitate solutions with which Shah can live'.

Although no written record of the Shah's personal conversations with the US or Saudi officials over Bahrain are available in public domain, it seemed that Rostow and Meyer tried to play-up the Shah-Feisal rift over islands, before USG staked her own claims on Bahrain in the name of countering Soviet presence in Iraq

While Rostow communicated his further conversations with Ansary to Meyer on 8th March 1968, it was evident that Rostow concerned himself Soviet intentions to take advantage of the imminent power vacuum and radicalization in southern Arabian politics. The paradox however that Iran-Saudi dispute might involve direct Soviet intervention on Shah's behalf and conditioned US policy in Iran's favour was self-explanatory when Rostow quoted Pravda 4th March 1968 statement in anticipation of Kosygin's April visit to Iran:

> 'Soviet statement asserted that *the US "interest in the safety of the region is directed against the security of the southern borders of the Soviet Union"*. It endorses national liberation movements in the area, and attacks "imperialist and neo-colonialist regimes." And it offers Soviet protection to the governments of the area in order to safeguard them against imperialist encroachments…. there was no need to stress the implications of this bold public statement'.
>
> (State, CF, POL IRAN–US).

On 14th March 1968, Meyer reported his first conversation with the Shah upon his return and his previous initiatives on Bahrain, the Trucial Federation and Iran's interests in taking over Abu Musa-Tunbs islands, for which the Shah decided to send Zahedi to Washington on a diplomatic mission. Meyer's report on 'Shah's preoccupation' with Bahrain and Arabi Islands and effects on Iran-Saudi relations however exhibited his personal

indignation at the British role in encouraging Bahrain's intransigence against Iran and joining the Trucial Federation, and eschewed Shah's perceptions about its passing to US control:

'Brenchley as chief HMG culprit with George Brown not far behind'.

The Shah now threatened USG and the British at the same time of "tearing up the CENTO", he himself had so far prevented Pakistan from doing since US arms embargo in 1965:

'If British, who are allegedly allies, persist in present course, Iran will not sit at same table with them, e.g. CENTO'.

In effect, when the Shah referred 'to recent Soviet communiqué, Iran broadcasts, Soviet diplomatic demarche etc., he had again invoked his favourite "Soviet" card to get the British and Americans in-line behind Iranian claims, as he had done during July 1966 by threatening to buy more sophisticated Soviet weapons(MiG-21s, SAM-III and Frigates) over McNamara's refusal to extend easier arms credits. Meyer reported the Shah reminding the USG:

'it was "clear as daylight", that the Soviets have their own plans for Persian Gulf'.

As if the US policy was already not perceptive enough about the exclusive Nasserite or Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf, while Johnson needed Soviet cooperation over withdrawal from Vietnam, the Shah too put the stakes for Western interests on bargaining table by postulating a new threat originating from the Nasser-Soviet Colossus in the "Red Sea-Horn of Africa-Levant triangle", the centre of gravity of which was the Persian Gulf. The Shah was to recite and refine this theory of radical Arab threat backed by Soviets, during his successive negotiations with Johnson and Nixon administrations' whenever he demanded unconditional agreement to his modernization plans, until Nixon and Kissinger turned the same very "radical-Soviet sword" against Iran during late 1970 to seek his agreement to US retention of Bahrain. In early 1968 however, the Shah theorized a direct Soviet threat as:

'Not only has Communist expansionism been added to Czarist designs for warm water ports, but their major strategy is to control valves of Mideast oil. Soviet system has failed in competition with West, and world war is out of question for them, so they trying to dominate Mideast and its oil as means for destroying West European industry and thereby systems of government'.

Without any directive from the State Department, Meyer tried to dissuade the Shah from 'public denunciation of the Trucial Federation, as driving Bahrain more solidly into the

Federation', or providing 'open opportunities for exploitation by radical Arabism'. Nevertheless, after confronted by the Shah's reaction 'not being pushed over the Bahrain issue', he reported that the Shah, whom had previously proposed the 'plebiscite formula' for relinquishing his claims on Bahrain, was now being restrained by the 'present excitement on Bahrain question' by the Iranian public.

What however remains one of the most crucial discoveries of this study, not identified previously by other Iran scholars, was that despite Shah's proposals that, 'if (Bahrain) issue could be put in ice-box for two years, plebiscite might be possible then', it were nobody else but Meyer, who proposed the "linkage" formula for Bahrain-Arabi Islands on 16th March 1968, which centred on Abu Musa's accession to Iran as a condition for UAE's recognition:

> '[the Shah] might be satisfied by a package deal including: 1) clear cession to Iran of the Tunb and Abu Musa Islands (through British auspices); 2) a joint Saudi-Iranian venture in the mid-Gulf for exploiting oil resources on both sides of the 1965 initialed line; and 3) relinquishment by Iran of its claim to Bahrain'.
>
> (State, CF, POL IRAN-U.S.).

When on 16th March 1968, Rusk extended assurances to Zahedi regarding US neutrality over the Bahrain-Arabi issue, it was only after Zahedi pledged that Iran would not resort to force and even risk public opprobrium by agreeing to the 'plebiscite' on Bahrain.

As another crucial finding of this study, Zahedi also informed Rusk of Shah's opposition to Sharjah and Ra'as al-Khaimah inclusion into the FAA (including their accession of the Abu Musa and Tunb islands), for which he warned that the 'British would have to face consequences should this happened'.

Rusk's understanding (or lack thereof) of Persian Gulf's issues seemed a clear endorsement of US interests in maintaining an hegemonic balance of power between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It was a further reflection of the US regional policy which was conditioned by the superpower competition which by nurturing Iran-Saudi-British understanding over Bahrain or other territorial issues (Buraimi included) was sought to prevent Soviet interference on behalf of Arabs:

> 'Hard for us [to] think about problems except in framework [of] world situation. We would be disturbed if Iran and UK at odds. Would be serious if Iranian actions would create inflammation in Arab world against Iran causing Arabs to look to Soviets for assistance'.
>
> (State, CF, POL 7 IRAN-US).

Chapter 4:

The "Johnson Doctrine" and politics of regional security (1967-68)

4.1. Burden-sharing, financial interests and arms build-up in the Gulf:

Harold Saunders at the State Department, who later played a key role in the development of Nixon's Persian Gulf policy (as his special advisor at the NSC), tried to share' Johnson's burdens as:

> 'this time I set out to decide what President Johnson's interests are, given the goals that are closest to his heart… while we are engaged in Vietnam, we want to spare him the political--and the human--burden of having to commit American forces in the Middle East too'.

In order to demonstrate a complementarity of US interests with Saudis to the detriment of smaller states, a study by ex-ambassador to Saudi Kingdom Julius Holmes served the basis for further policy debates in the NSC. Its key recommendations were for the USG to 'assist the British to remain in the Persian Gulf', and:

> 'encouraging Saudi Arabia to assume greater responsibility there; seek normal diplomatic relations with whatever regime arises in South Arabia and take no initiatives with respect to Yemen'.

Holmes effectively endorsed a policy of US commitments to the region but only towards 'assured' American allies, and avoiding new ones:

> 'Reality compels us to build on those positions of strength we now have in states which are in various degrees fearful of and opposed to Egyptian imperialism. We will have to be more forthcoming materially and politically than in the past, as well as avoiding additional security assurances which harness us to particular leaders'.

What certainly became a self-fulfilling prophecy for the future US unwillingness to take over British role on the Arabian Peninsula, but base a policy with a broader ambit, albeit contradictory to regional power's sentiments, was the study's suggestions for US to maintain an 'on-call' military capability in the 'Red Sea-Indian Ocean-Persian Gulf area' in 'politically secure' British bases in the Indian Ocean territories(Diego Garcia and Aldabra island), in Libya's Wheelus AFB, as well as 'alternate access over-flight routes' in direct Western collaboration to 'avoid US over-commitment'.

Nevertheless, it also cautioned:

'in countries where we have a permanent military presence, we should strive for a low visibility to minimize problems for host governments'.

(NRC, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 72 A 2468, 17 July 1967).

The 17th July 1967 study representing a wider array of inter-departmental interests (the State, Defence and CIA), was however not represented by country staff from other embassies except Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. A retrospective analysis of Holmes' study however suggests its gravely erroneous assumptions in the direct context of the June 1967 War. The study's remit however suggested the initial contours of a policy doctrine that did not depart radically from the Nixon-era diplomacy of direct engagements with regional powers, irrespective of their size or capacities:

'to provide policy makers with doctrinal guidance that would be relevant to U.S. policy toward the area for the period 1967-1972'.

Holmes predicted that another large scale war between Arabs and Israel would not occur for the next 5 years, which in the past 'affected the regional situation as to cause a reconsideration of the continuing validity of the original study concept'.

The study however suggested that ' certain primal elements within the study area would continue to dictate the broad pattern of events and that a regional study covering the longer term would still be of value'.

It is interesting to note the dichotomy of US policy interests in the region, when despite recognizing the 'ability and will of the radical Arabs to resist Soviet pressures less than they were two years ago', a likewise Saudi gain in the region was registered as positive to usher-in moderation in the Arab politics, and hence ignored the hegemonic nature of Saudi politics in the region.

(CIA, Job 79-R01012A, ODDI Registry of NIE and SNIE Files).

Despite the fact that Holmes' Study concerned itself with the exclusive Soviet threat to the non-Persian Gulf region and in the predominantly American interest of weakening Soviet staying power in the Mediterranean/Northern Tier, it was still an advocacy of burden-sharing with Western partners in NATO or regional allies long before it was adopted in Nixon Doctrine:

'the U.S. has often had to deal with problems in the study area, virtually unaided and at considerable cost'.

It was therefore opined that:

‘a greater European involvement in the region will also lessen the present tendency toward unstable bipolarization and a direct U.S.-USSR confrontation’.

The study was also an emphatic recognition of the tensions underpinning Northern Tier countries’ relations with US by latter’s reducing commitments to their security concerns due to engagements in Vietnam or reaching agreement with Soviets over Middle East after the June War. It was recommended that the US government should heed to:

‘Serious doubts in the minds of Turkish, Iranian and Greek leaders concerning the likely responsiveness of the U.S. and most of the NATO community to Soviet challenges’[and] ‘must strengthen the blocking power of the Northern Tier of Greece, Turkey and Iran [as] highest importance’.

No other policy statement better captures the crux of Johnson administration’s policy which is so unqualifiedly attributed to Nixon Doctrine. Within a few months, this understanding was to become the administration’s sponsorship for Iran to assume greater security roles in the region without Shah ever taking these up with Johnson or with other officials during his August 1967 and July 1968 visits:

‘Iran also should be encouraged to play more influential roles in neighbouring Arab states’.

In this very context of assuring regional allies and retaining their confidence, the study however had the central US interest closer to heart:

‘to continue the use of U.S. military operational and strategic intelligence facilities insofar as they are needed to fulfil area and global needs’.

Even as a matter of partial *quid pro quos* for using intelligence facilities, provided by Pakistan previously, it was observed that although arms limitations had little chance of success in the current US foreign policy, the US should seek supply restraints upon smaller states in the Persian Gulf as part of a futuristic policy,:

‘We cannot unilaterally renounce the supply of arms as a tool for promotion of our interests. We should where possible divert arms requests to other Western suppliers; and should seek a coordinated position among all Western suppliers’

An 8th January 1968 CIA memorandum however reflected a rather “hands-on” activist approach for US policy towards the region after Nasser’s defeat, without Soviet threat at its core,.

Assistant Secretary Battle therefore decided to "dispense" with the findings of the Holmes' Study (NSC Draft on U.S. Policy Objectives Near East-South Asia 1968) by observing:

> 'The principal substantive differences between the two papers revolve around the treatment of the indigenous climate for Soviet penetration and the estimate of Soviet capabilities in the Middle East. The Holmes Study saw the issue basically as a cold-war clash and was more activist in approach, focusing on a direct US/NATO response'.

Battle therefore pointed out lack of 'comprehensive and well informed ME policy during 1967', as a 'patchwork of crises management in Aden and south Arabia':

> 'the IRG should, within reasonable limits, present the senior policy-makers with a realistic description of the minimum U.S. effort required to protect U.S. interests without attempting to pre-judge what was specifically feasible in terms of politics and resources'.

Underlining restrictions on a new policy for the ME, Battle also postulated 'burden-sharing' in pursuit of a Western interest, to be partnered by European and East Asian allies. Nevertheless, Battle proposed a policy of cooperation among regional members whose tactical management was to be overseen by European and Japanese involvement and reducing US-British footprints.

(CIA, Job 80 R-01580R, IRG).

It is however similarly intriguing, that despite controversy over US engagement with Nasser or engaging relatively smaller states, there was considerable agreement within the Special Interdepartmental Group(SIG) on passing regional security management over to Iran.

In fact, considering the Saudis being 'responsible for assuming more regional responsibility' were still considered as potential trouble-makers in the region: [due to]' their potential of intervention in North Yemen and Aden'.

The lack of willingness to engage with the region on a more hands-on basis, and let regional powers agree on a region-exclusive but Western-friendly security architecture, however remained the main US policy concern. As late as April 1968, however the State Department exhibited this tendency:

‘to maintain without significant change our current sympathetic but relaxed policy toward, limited commitment to, and moderately active participation in CENTO’. It was further observed that:

‘the regional members know too that the great bulk of our aid to them has been under bilateral programs rather than under a CENTO label’….’more should be done by the regional members themselves to exploit the potential of regional cooperation’.[30]

Nevertheless, it was impossible to conciliate US policy to maintain the region through reduced investments in CENTO which gave additional incentives for Iran to be less responsive to US concerns coming at the cost of its own national security. It was therefore observed:

‘strains in Iran's relations with the U.K. over the future of Persian Gulf area, and to a lesser extent in Iran's relations with Pakistan over the latter's increasingly close ties with the Arabs would result in alliance’s suffering’.

It was readily agreed that USG and the British would henceforth ‘avoid the basic military points of difference with the “regionals”, while continue to coordinate with the British ‘without giving appearance of ‘us ganging up on the “regionals’’:

(NARA, RG 59, 15th CENTO, London, April 23-24, 1968).

As opposed to a common understanding about Johnson administration’s lack of interest towards the PERSIAN GULF due to heavier commitments in Vietnam, and leaving the British to configure the last bits of regional integration between Iran, Saudis and the smaller Trucial states, Battle and Katzenbach (SIG Director) still insisted during July 1968:

‘the United States will continue to be active in the Middle East because our interests require it’.

Nevertheless, it was argued, that as opposed to Holmes’ recommendations for direct US/NATO response to deter Soviet penetration in the region, a more ‘flexible response’ approach to ‘temper the prospects for an aggressive policy by the Soviets be adopted’:

‘by understanding the Soviet resources and policy dilemmas under the conditions of ‘indigenous forces of nationalism and modernization, which act as barriers to Soviet dominance in the area’.

[30] It is clear from the deliberations of the CENTO’s London meetings that the State Department sought to de-emphasize the rift between Iran and UK over Bahrain’s accession to the proposed Trucial Federation (FAA) which Shah set as precondition to sitting alongside British in CENTO. The paper prepared for the CENTO’s foreign ministerial meeting in April 1968 maintained: ‘tacit agreement existed among the partners not to stir up controversial issues or to take initiatives which upset normal cooperation’.

It was therefore recommended that although US policy should be based on maintaining a regional military balance between the US and the Soviet Union, it seemed more realistic by strengthening the 'regional forces of independence':

> 'if the issues are important to us, as we are convinced they are, we should not avoid facing up to the priorities in allocating resources that they may entail'.

It is however evident that Battle was arguing about the employment of US resources to cater for "contingencies" in the region not geared towards intra-regional confrontations (as appraised to the SIG by the CIA in January 1968), hence catered to:

> 'Possible changes in the regimes in the UAR and Jordan, resumption of Arab-Israel hostilities and the related possibility of some type of U.S-USSR military confrontation'.
>
> (State, NEA/IRG Files, 68-29: Lot 70 D 503).

In a typical oversight of regional conflicts demanding more active US involvement on behalf of the smaller countries, a December 1968 National Intelligence Estimate was concurred-to by the State and Defence Departments which was similarly pre-occupied with the prospects of US-Soviet cooperation in restraining Israel and Arabs from another conventional war. This option was pursued despite the CIA observing that the June War had radically reduced American influence in the Arab world, while increased Soviet influence upon radical regimes which affected political stability of the UAR, Jordan, Syria and Iraq.

4.2. Southern Arabia: strategic linkage with America's Indian Ocean policy?

The constraints on British willingness to provide for a longer term security guarantee to Aden's NLF regime during early 1967 insured that Britain left southern Arabia to the sole predations of Soviets or let Saudi Kingdom manage regional politics through hegemonic security. Nevertheless, American understanding of Aden's strategic naval importance for US commitments in East Asia and Vietnam turned out to be a function of Defence Secretary McNamara's failure to start works on a modest air facility in Diego Garcia by late 1967. Instead, the Defence officials followed upon the US Joint Chief's recommendations for securing the Persian Gulf bases in Dhahran, Masirah and Bahrain.

In May 1968, the Pentagon informed McNamara of the implausibility of UAR and Soviet physical presence in southern Arabia through overt military bases, and the unlikelihood

of any regional power closing Red Sea to Western maritime traffic. Nevertheless, they similarly insisted on the construction of long-term military bases in the Horn of Africa (Aldabra) or Diego Garcia in the British Indian Ocean Territories. In addition, exclusive over-flight and staging-rights for USAF were sought in Dhahran or Addis Ababa.

Observing that 'Soviet effort to establish a direct military presence in the area of the Arabian Peninsula or the Horn of Africa', as unlikely, it was further argued that the 'loss of Aden would neither affect the British follow-up withdrawal from the Persian Gulf eventually', nor it hampers the 'execution of certain CINCSTRIKE/USCINCMEAFSA contingency plans in East Africa, Red Sea and the Persian Gulf'.

In the run-up for British evacuation from Southern Arabia, it was equally evident that the US Joint Chiefs viewed Aden's as "staging base" for 'contingency operations', and of limited strategic importance due to regional powers' political sensitivity to grant over-flight rights to other countries. It was therefore recommended that instead of committing military forces or providing military assistance to 'any government in south Arabia', it should be left to British forces or other western-oriented governments in 'preserving the internal and external security of south Arabia', whose retention was 'not critical to the security interests of the US'.

([1] NRC, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 72 A 2468, 9 May 67).

A State Department study on 15th April 1968, still tried to find working formulae for US security assurances to the smaller states straddling the Arabian littoral, through 'over the horizon' military presence and 'deter outside aggressive powers'…'particularly the Soviet Union, [in] a position of dominance in the area':

> 'Such a position could be used to put pressure on Western Europe, for which Near East oil is vital, and of the strategic location of the Arabian Sea littoral as a vital crossroad connecting Europe, Africa, and Asia'.

It is clearly possible that before the final recommendations of this State Department study reached the NSC, the former viewed US policy as a case for Johnson's political determination to secure the region against Soviet interference, and preventing Arabian Peninsula's absorption under Saudis. In fact, the broader geo-political and energy security architecture envisaged now took priority over Iran-Saudi interests; was perceptive of regional powers' potential to take advantage of the power vacuum and by implication was assurance to smaller states' security:

'denial of US access to this area by a potentially hostile power would constitute a blow to US interests considerably beyond those involved in the immediate area.'

Nevertheless, the policy deliberations over the use of off-shore naval and air facilities suggested the priorities attached by Johnson's planners to the northern Indian Ocean security and lower priority to local conflicts before Soviet appeared in Aden, Somalia or Iraq during 1969. It was therefore pointed out that the 'previously considered islands for refuelling and staging facilities besides Diego Garcia on an urgent basis' determined this 'reappraisal as a primary US responsibility…'.

By its very 'priorities' therefore, a clear case of trans-Indian Ocean strategic architecture and its denial to Soviet naval adventurism through the American naval preponderance had become clearly evident before its presence became a matter of Iran-US controversy under Nixon Administration. Nonetheless, the assumptions underlying these 'priorities' also implied that the ultimate political decision of USG's taking-over direct security or entrusting to Iran-Saudi, had to qualify upon its value for global US interests such as thwarting Soviet entry in the Indian Ocean, or on behalf of smaller states while Iran and Saudi Arabia had not renounced their claims on smaller neighbours, hence:

'the presence would have to be somewhat larger and more flexible than that represented by the current MIDEASTFOR'.

In picture since February 1968, about local reactions to Eugene Rostow's proposals of a regional security pact including Pakistan, Iraq and Turkey, the State Department remained conscious about the need to engage in 'low-key' diplomatic efforts in the Persian Gulf to persuade local states in a prospective security arrangement. Nevertheless, a "low-Key" effort towards building a self-defensive Security Community still reflected official understanding of how much the USG could contribute towards regional security as a transplant of British protective role:

'nor should we delude ourselves as to the real security value which such arrangements would represent'.

([1] IRG/NEA 68-24 Files: Lot 70 D 503, 7/10/68).

In the final event however, in July 1968, the IRG (NEA) under Battle, Elliot and CIA's Critchfield, considered the practical value of the MIDEASTFOR to the region in its 'political and psychological context', rather than military, and made recommendations for a modest

expansion of naval presence in Bahrain. In fact, it was argued that it's utility for US interests as a "flag-showing" was to 'counter Soviet port-calls in the Persian Gulf'.

An "over-the-horizon"', or "off-shore" presence instead was advocated by the IRG, to be complemented by construction of a base at Diego Garcia, 'should Bahrain become operationally unavailable'. The (in) dispensability of Bahrain was therefore already on the horizon should its retention became a strategic opportunity for achieving certain larger Indian Ocean objectives or keep regional powers in-check:

> 'it is neither politically feasible nor desirable to "replace" the British presence in the Gulf; our policy should be directed along the lines of encouraging greater cooperation among the Gulf states themselves, and particularly between Saudi Arabia and Iran'
>
> (State, IRG/NEA 68-27 Files: Lot 70 D 503).

Another memo of conversation between Battle, Rockwell and Brewer from the State Department (NE/SA) and the British FCO during 13th September 1968 finally clarified joint British-American interests to keep the MIDEASTFOR in Bahrain when British officials showed their eagerness to 'give the first refusal to the Americans' after British evacuation', since 'everything at Bahrain base was for sale'.

(NARA, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF. September 18.1968).

4.3. Nurturing Iran-Saudi cooperation: the contours of Nixon Doctrine and arms policy

The failure of Johnson Administration to resolve the controversy of long-term arms commitments to Iran on easy credits since early 1966 was the background against which the Shah visited Johnson on 12th July 1968. A long term Iranian interest in a guaranteed supply of US arms (on reasonable credits) since Congressional refusal to extend grant-aid to Iran after 1962, had now combined with another Iranian interest in securing US oil market and "barter" oil to buy arms and other industrial goods after the 1967 international currency devaluations. The prospect of Iran changing its arms acquisition and even trade patterns through the Soviet Western vendors since July 1966, therefore presented a key foreign policy dilemma for State, Defence Departments and the NSC as to its overall effects on bilateral relations that were bound to endanger key US security, intelligence and economic interests. This whole-sale shift towards the Eastern bloc and the possibility for the Shah to challenge core US interests in the

region in the impending security vacuum in the region and US commitments in Vietnam and NATO became more serious when Pakistan also served notice on removal of US intelligence facilities from Peshawar (Badda Ber) by 1970, in retaliation to US arms embargo in 1965 War and after the U-2 incident, and responded to Soviet mediation under Tashkent initiative to resolve the Kashmir problem.

Nevertheless, US record show that besides unable to moderate the Shah's behaviour towards the Soviet bloc since his June 1966 visits, and threatening to buy offensive Soviet weapons, Johnson administration's policy itself was contrived in pursuit of its interests in tying-down Iranian Petrodollars in the US banks to stabilize dollar reserves since the December 1967 financial crisis. In addition, a positive trade balance through weapon sales remained at the core of NSC policy, irrespective of McNamara's warning to Johnson about the Shah's "blackmail" for acquiring additional four squadrons of F-4s.

As this section demonstrates that the Shah's effort to draw Johnson's attention towards Iranian sacrifices and as the only reliable oil producer during the 1967 War and be rewarded through exclusive import quotas and need for more 'defensive' weapons were rebuffed by Johnson, citing non- availability of military credits and inability to extend an Iran-exclusive quota. The US documents therefore show that this failure compelled the Shah to put Johnson on notice for removal of intelligence facilities from Iran under its obligations under the 1921 Iran-Soviet treaty. In addition, he also re-started negotiations with the Soviet Union over supply of high-tech weapons including navel destroyers and MiG-21s which put the over-all Iran-US relations to risk. Nevertheless, a precedent which only facilitated Nixon Administration's foreign policy thorough arms diplomacy and support on Iran's claims on the oil-rich Abu Musa island as a novel way to finance arms supplies through the private route during 1969-74, the Johnson-era officials provided vital incentives and facilitated Iran's penetration into the US energy market by offering Defence Department's purchase of Iranian oil for operations in the Pacific as well as agreeing with the Shah's policy to arrange Iran's own finances through bartering its oil with private US oil and defence companies. In this pursuit however, Johnson Administration also sought Iran's exemption from the Church Amendment, making it eligible for US credits on special basis.

In anticipation of Shah's visit, a 21st May 1968 memorandum from John Hall (NSC) to Walt Rostow laid out the parameters of Iran-Saudi rivalry over issues such as control over Abu Musa and twin Tunbs islands, which he recommended to be resolved between Iran and

Saudi Kingdom as a conflict between two regional powers and a basic precondition for cooperation over a regional security architecture. Much as most Iran academics have made out of the Shah's exclusive ambitions to act as a natural stabilizing force in the Persian Gulf, Hall's memorandum is the first official recognition of an equally domineering Saudi interest in maintaining its regional hegemony over Arabian Peninsula as distinctly from the Persian Gulf, hence observing that [the Shah was]:

> 'assuming that Iran has the mission of controlling the Gulf, and the Saudi assumption that Saudi Arabia is responsible for everything on the Arabian Peninsula'.

Hall however believed that despite Iran-Saudi bilateral problems over the oil-bearing Arabi island and Saudi support to Trucial 'emirs', especially to Bahrain's membership of Trucial Federation, and the Federation itself, both countries still had a common dislike for Nasser. Hall's observation however put Iran in a more vulnerable position than his own attribution to Shah's ambition of 'controlling the Gulf': 'in the spectre of a Nasser-Saudi dominated Arab axis across the Persian Gulf'. Hall therefore pointed out the Shah's sense of vulnerability from Abu Musa and Tunbs' capture by Nasser, 'should they were awarded to the Sheikhs by the UK', and Saudi Arabia and other neighbours falling-behind Nasser, as happened during the June War.

Hall's arguments however revealed the key conceptual faults underpinning the Johnson-era policy towards Persian Gulf which was solely concerned with treating island problems as one between Iran and the smaller sheikhdoms, or a case for Iran-Saudi cooperation, without regard to Saudi interests in preventing the Abu Dhabi-dominated Trucial Federation or bigger claims on Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Oman than Iran's, especially after renouncing claims on Bahrain by October 1968. Hall therefore advised Rostow of letting Iran and Saudis deal with their "minor territorial disputes":

> 'the Shah and Faisal will let their common interest overcome minor territorial disputes. While, our policy is to stay out of the middle but to keep reminding both of them that the best way to keep Nasser and the Russians out is to work together'.
>
> (NSF, Iran,Vol. II, 1/66–1/69).

Keeping-in with an equally unsolicited advocacy of handing over regional security management to the sole Iranian and Saudi jurisdictions , without the Shah ever demanding such a role himself, Rusk however ignored Hall and Rostov's correspondence, when congratulating the Shah on 'his self-reliant foreign policy'. He instead affirmed USG's:

'desire not to replace the British in the Persian Gulf, but strong hope that the littoral countries, especially Iran and Saudi Arabia, can cooperate to ensure the Gulf's security and progress'.

(Memorandum Rusk to Johnson; June 7, 1968).

Nowhere in the entire evaluation of Johnson-era have policy shows the Shah being quoted on-record or expressing any desire whatsoever to take-up regional security with or without consensus from his Gulf partners. Rusk's intimation of the US interests notwithstanding, his apprising the Shah to take up vital security and geopolitical responsibilities alongside Saudi Arabia was a de-facto endorsement of Johnson administration's policy which Nixon policy planners were able to ease into their initial policy recommendations under the rubric of Nixon Doctrine during 1969-70, to facilitate takeover of Bahrain by the US in return of Iran's control over Abu Musa and Tunbs.

As most US correspondence during Johnson-era suggest, such expressions about Iran's statesmanship were heavily conditioned by NSC's foreknowledge and CIA's emphatic warnings about the Shah's intentions to serve notice for removal of vital US intelligence facilities. In addition, even more potent was Shah's threat of taking-over the Western oil Consortium's concession areas similar to Iraq in case Iran was not provided with $1000 million funds for the 4th Development Plan and buying US weapons on 'cash-basis'. A clear sense of Shah's ability to disrupt key US interests was on the horizon when Rusk informed Johnson about Shah's interests in finding exclusive US market for Iranian oil that could potentially change the entire economic relationship between Iran and the US. He therefore advised Johnson making the following reply, which was a clear insinuation of Johnson agreeing with the Shah's opening direct channels with Independent American oil companies outside Consortium Agreement (1954):

'… increased participation in the U.S. market for Iranian oil can best be obtained by the GOI ensuring, in collaboration with producing companies, that Iranian production is economically attractive to American refiners who have the allocations to import crude oil'.

(Memorandum Rusk to Johnson: Washington, June 7, 1968).

In the flurry of advisory reaching the President for the Shah's visit, Rostow too advised:

'although, we'd hate to commit ourselves on an oil import-quota without knowing what he proposes', but still 'want Iran's revenues to increase'…[when the Shah] 'ask help in

letting more Iranian oil into the US to barter for US goods, the President should urge that the NIOC Director should take it up with [Treasury Secretary]Solomon'.

(NSC Files, Saunders, Visit Shah of Iran, June 11–June 12, 1968).

A preliminary basis for Shah's inviting Independent oil companies to market Iranian oil inside the US, or elsewhere, and leveraging Occidental Petroleum's desperation to lift Iranian oil (after losing concessions in Libya and on Abu Musa Island during 1969) was therefore paved by the State Department itself, which the Shah and Nixon both used to circumvent Congressional oversight on appropriating Iranian credits for military purchases, until the Shah threw his weight behind the OPEC in December 1973 for demanding higher oil prices to pay for industrial goods from the West.

The nature of US interests in retaining Shah's cooperation over intelligence facilities as well other clandestine activities in southern Arabia were obvious reasons for which Johnson policy-planners did into seek to destroy the whole basis of bilateral relations. In a 'top-Secret' memorandum therefore Rusk advised Johnson to seek Shah's help, but leave the details for CIA director Richard Helms:

'somebody[less than 1 line of source text not declassified] will be speaking to the Shah along these lines on June 12 before he sees the Shah….While personally assure him that if it turns out (after determining the extend of the political costs as well other factors weighed since 'spring 1966'), we would desire to increase our operations in Iran, we would of course discuss the matter with him beforehand, [that] any such increases would be minimal and inconspicuous, and we would hope that he would be able to accommodate them'.

(National Security File, Iran, Visit of Shah of Iran, 6/11–12/68).

During the last days of Johnson Administration, with Iran having played a key role during the Arab oil embargo after closure of the Suez Canal since 1967, the Shah's confidence was high-mast when rejected Johnson's major requests during July 1968. After having witnessed his requests for soft credits rebuffed by McNamara since 1966, to develop a minimum aerial deterrent against Egypt's MIG-21 and destroyer threat, and the dollar-value of Iran's oil plummeting, it was the Shah who enjoyed reasonable leverage when he proposed his military orders to be included in the US military's orders to reduce costs to Iranian weapons, or persuading US arms manufacturers to give 'special favourable prices' to offset additional costs of commercial bank credits.

What however was even more radically different from traditional Iran-US arms relations was Shah's new interest in long-term military modernization plans when he presented demands for Iran's arms procurement through assured low-interest credits over longer terms rather than yearly "reviewed" by the State or Defence Departments.

The Shah's final visit to Johnson also heralded a new shift in Iran's strategic posture from Nasser to Iraq as surrogate of Soviet threat much before an historical struggle over Shatt al-Arab became the core of bilateral conflict in early-1969, and provided Kurdish issue as leverage on Ba'athist regime during 1972-75. De-emphasising his hosting naval visits by the Red Fleet during 1968 at the Bushire base, the Shah expounded Iraq posing as a threat to the regional energy security and to its southern borders:

> '[the Shah expressed] concern about Iran's having the capacity to deal with the missile boats received by Iraq …to be able to counter the psychological boost given the Soviet Union through their fleet visits'.

(NSF:Special Head of State Correspondence, Iran, 7/1/68–10/31/68; State, CF, POL 7 IRAN).

The tensions surrounding Shah's visit to get Johnson's blessings for a new "oil-for-weapons" relations was more than evident in a personally dictated memorandum by the President, and ordered that no minutes of their conversation were to be recorded. Besides agreeing to Shah's demand for hiring retired US air force technicians, Johnson himself showed the way by proposing whether the US Defence Department could buy Iranian oil for operations in Vietnam on incremental basis:

> 'should Iranian companies supply the required quantities at competitive prices for the Defence needs in East Asia, we would be pleased to purchase them'[31].

Here Johnson gave the Shah what could only amount to a trading "carte blanche" for future energy relations which paralleled with Nixon's agreeing to sell any US weapon desired by the Shah in 1972:

> 'NIOC is free now to barter oil with American companies if there are any companies with import permits willing to make such arrangements *i.e. Barter or Sale of Iranian Oil for American Products'*.

[31] However, the Shah was still encouraged by Meyer when he was apprised of another formula through which Iran could get entry into US markets, if US oil companies could prove that these 'products were exported' to outside markets.

US records however show that the Shah only needed a tacit understanding with Johnson over a policy that he had post-facto initiated even before he met Johnson on 12th July. However Johnson's refusal to accommodate Iranian oil for barter 'outside the import quota' suggested that an oil barter deal for 1000 Sheridan tanks with General Electric through the $75 million had to await Nixon's inauguration.

Johnson nevertheless now tried to consolidate the key financial interest for the US without any tangible *quid pro quo,* when asked the Shah to consider --what could only be refused by the Shah (on 26th August 1968):

> 'shifting some of Iran's dollar holdings from short term to a longer term basis to aid our balance of payments'.

When Johnson addressed the long term aspects of the US-Iran military relations, it was clear that he had already laid-down the foundations for an arms policy most commonly attributed to Nixon's post-1972 "carte blanch". Here too, Johnson effectively gave agreement to the Shah should Iran find its own revenues:

> "within the limits of our world-wide arms sales program…..Iran should enjoy high priority and be able to buy high quality modern equipment from us".

Johnson's assurance to the Shah notwithstanding, the USG still had bigger objectives to be achieved through the Shah, when he proposed long term Iranian participation in the R&D of sophisticated weapons with the American defence companies:

> 'what role Iran could play in the development of the Northrop-530 aircraft and the latter in the development of Iran's air force? Through participation in any consortium type arrangement'.

For Iran's regional problems however, the July 1968 visit did achieve a clear US deference towards its (re)claiming smaller islands (Bahrain, Abu Musa/Tunbs) as well as enticing Shah's interests in the control the strategic bottle-neck at Hormuz despite mere assurances of long term defence supplies. In fact, Johnson directly posed to the Shah, the most sensitive question of Western energy security which amounted to his blessing for Iran's role towards the Persian Gulf, never taken up by the Shah with Johnson. Here is the verbatim account of Johnson questioning the Shah about:

> 'the best military way of dominating the entrance to the Persian Gulf'? [It originated from the Shah's] concern 'about the Russian Fleet and the Persian Gulf' when [He]

asked whether the USG 'could fix surface-to-surface missiles owned and controlled by Iran on the islands in the Straits of Hormuz to dominate it'.

(National Security File, Iran, Vol. II, 1/66–1/69).

Although the USG had been rejecting Shah's demands for previsions of naval destroyers since 1966 which the Shah had tried to acquire unsuccessfully from the Soviets during July 1966, the Shah seemed to theorize a threat near to Iran's economic life-line at the Iraqi border which warranted a naval build-up. Taking courage from Johnson's interest in Iran taking-up Hormuz security to secure Western industrial interests, he likewise showed interests in 'a combination of naval craft, aircraft and land-based missiles to take care of his country's needs in the Gulf'.

(State, CF, POL 7 IRAN. Lot 70 D 418, Shah of Iran, June 11–12, 1968).

Although the Church Amendment of 7th November 1968 waived restrictions on Iran's military credits (along with 7 other US allies), it was clear that the Shah had actually requested US support in creating a 'missile-based' defence system to protect Hormuz Straits against Soviet entry which was rejected by the US Joint Chiefs.

In a follow up of Shah's requests therefore, the Joint Chiefs warned against the potential hazard of American-supplied surface-surface missiles being deployed at the Hormuz Straits (Qishm/Larak Islands) to challenge Soviet naval entry in the region:

'Iranian control of the Strait of Hormuz will not in itself keep the peace in the Gulf or maintain its Western orientation…..if the USSR should decide to move into the Persian Gulf, Iranian missiles would not be a deterrent'.

They instead recommended that the Shah should be dissuaded 'from procuring an island-based surface-to-surface missile system'. Even more, they also warned State and Defence Departments against Iran's actual intentions to remain in the Western alliance.

While the Shah toyed with the idea of acquiring the Destroyer-mounted Gabrielle missiles from Israel, he was content to accept the advice for developing Iran's air-capability as the 'primary instrument inside the Persian Gulf' against hostile navy, due to the "optical impact" of a land-base missile system.

While Johnson was desperate to extricate US forces out of Vietnam by not giving direct offence to Soviets in the Persian Gulf, Deputy Assistant Defence Secretary Kuss and Meyer's advise to the Shah could not have been more contradictory, albeit explicit of US agreement with Iran's security policies against Iraq, when they:

‘emphasized [upon the Shah] that Iran must be prepared by end of 1971, date of British withdrawal’.

(NRC, RG 330, OSD Files: FRC 73 A 1250, Iran 400, 25 June 68).

Kuss took further credit for persuading the Shah to postpone purchase of Sheridan tanks when either, he deliberately ignored Shah’s interests in the advanced M-60 tanks(1000), or was ill-informed of Shah’s taking insurance with British proposals for an equal number of Chieftain Tanks. In fact, when the Shah ‘stressed that the Sheridan were needed for tank-destroyer missions’, this orientation to develop a strong mechanized force implied operations against neighbouring rivals, rather off-shore deployments without sufficient amphibious capability . The Shah was to repeat this diversification strategy during 1973, when under US Congressional criticism over his interests in a new Main Battle Tank, he again placed orders for additional 800 Chieftain Tanks.

(State, Central Files, DEF 1–5 IRAN).

The key factor, which triggered Shah’s retaliation, was Johnson administration’s refusal for a 5 year credit commitment ‘due to Congressional oversight to consider military credit program on annual basis. With the things to come, when the Shah was to switch his moderate oil policy of requesting “increased production” to “higher prices” in league with the OPEC during late 1970, he served his disappointment with the USG by informing Meyer:

‘If military credit is unavailable via USG sources in coming years, he said, he would seek to purchase directly from American companies even using cash if necessary’.

(Telegram Embassy in Iran to the Department of State Tehran, July 29, 1968).

Chapter 5:

The 'Nixon Doctrine', Iran and the Gulf: ambiguities, expectations and dissonance (1969-70)

5.1. 'Oil-for-Weapons': A paradigm for Shah-Nixon relations?

On the eve of Shah's another official visit on 22nd October 1969, it was clear from Rogers' advice to Richard Nixon that the US policy did not depart drastically from Johnson's unless key US interests were achieved through a "grand-bargain" with Iran. It was clear that Shah was coming to demand Nixon to deliver on the two key interests i.e. long term assurance of military supplies beyond 1973, and, agreement over exclusive government quota on oil imports from Iran[32], only the former became a reality only after the Shah paid further price for assuming responsibility for Kurdish insurgency and serving as conduit for US arms to Pakistan in 1972. As it turned out, until Kissinger and Nixon arm-twisted another "grand bargain" from the Shah over Bahrain in late-1970, Nixon manipulated Shah's need for defensive weapons by creating the very financial incentives accrued through capture of Abu Musa's oil and earned Iran the trans-Arab hostility continuing to-date.

Roger's memorandum therefore clearly suggests USG's foreknowledge of Shah pressing for concrete assurances for Iranian claims over militarily insignificant Islands, the military value of which had been rejected by the Joint Chiefs as early as August 1968 to deploy Iranian defences. Rogers' advice under a highly resistant Defence Department under Melvin Laird and Richard Noyes however remained one assess the Shah's intentions and meanwhile restrain the Shah, lest he started another conflict in the Persian Gulf:

> 'We hope that negotiations and accommodation will be used to deal with other questions (after Bahrain's resolution under the auspices of the UN Secretary General's special representative formula) which may arise between states of the Persian Gulf, such as Iran's claim to the Tunb Islands and the Island of Abu Musa, in dispute with the Sheikhdoms of Ra'as al Khaimah and Sharjah respectively, improving relations with Saudi Arabia, and examine what he can do to restore relations with Lebanon….'

Although, Rogers intimated Nixon that the Shah would 'be alert to gauge whether this Administration will continue the support for him and his country which he considers that its

[32] Rogers therefore intimated Nixon that Shah would 'be alert to gauge whether this Administration will continue the support for him and his country which he considers that its predecessor showed'.

predecessor showed,' he also anticipated the Shah prospecting further arms purchases beyond the $100 million credit ceiling (after 1973). Rogers apprised Nixon about the new background of Iran's security perceptions, directly linked with the British withdrawal:

> 'his concern over the Soviet arms build-up of certain Arab states, particularly Iraq, the Shah will state his strong desire to purchase substantial amounts of new heavy military equipment on favourable credit terms'.

Nevertheless, Rogers' belief about Iran's military needs being sufficiently met through the 1967-73 Military Sales Agreement ($600 million) was a function of the State Department's long-standing view which disagreed with the Shah's perceptions about regional threats warranting a sustained arms build-up which encouraged a threatening posture towards other regional powers:

> 'Our traditional position has been to try to contain the Shah's military appetite, without creating a negative impression, since the need for so much additional equipment is questionable in our view and its purchase diverts resources from development'.

Although Rogers' advice to Nixon makes clear that he perceived Iranian security interests in the framework of American global objectives towards the Soviet Union, which needed fresh policy initiatives, he still advocated more flexibility in the US position hitherto resisted by Johnson and McNamara:

> 'if the $100 million annual ceiling poses problems in placing orders for certain items with long lead-times, or inhibits ability to take advantage of the most advantageous prices, we will examine alternative possibilities with the Shah's economic and military advisers'.

Rogers' advice however was another manifestation of playing-out on the Shah's desperation for a definite reply on military modernization- whenever he felt threatened by hostile Arab propaganda since early 1960- and partook from a psychological subterfuge mastered by Tehran staff under Meyer:

> 'The Shah may reflect disappointment that we are not prepared to make substantial new commitments to him at this time, although our attitude will be essentially what we believe he expects to hear'.
>
> (NA, NSC Files, Box 920, VIP Visits, Shah of Iran, DC, 10/21-10/23/69).

Conscious of Iran-US relations having suffered considerably after Meyer's threat of arms embargo or withdrawing US technicians during April-May 1969 Shatt-al Arab conflict,

Rogers clearly understood the "make or break" importance to Shah's visit after continued frustrations with Johnson and McNamara's resistance since 1966. He therefore requested Defence Secretary Laird not to turn down Shah's "every" request:

> 'provide more than half the number of pilot training slots (75 and even more) reserved for allied countries; cooperation in taking up case with private US defence companies for domestic arms production, as well as extending US air force technicians' tenure for another year'.
>
> (National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 7 IRAN) .

The lack of policy and consensus over improving Iran's deterrent capability and the suddenness with which Saunders tried to garner interdepartmental support during Nixon first year was obvious in a 20th October memorandum. No less a short-circuiting of sound policy-planning , an organizational tradition which thrived under Johnson, Saunders intervened into the Defence Department's purview when appraised Kissinger that Roger's advice was presenting 'practical problems' for Defence Department. He therefore advised Kissinger to suggest to Laird 'to be as positive as possible on three Iranian military requests'.

Saunders also educated Kissinger about the controversy over US technicians working in conflict areas such as during the Shatt'al-Arab conflict, which gave Laird concern with 'deepening the involvement of US military personnel in Iran, and his preference for the Shah hiring civilian American technicians'.

NSC documents about US arms and oil import policy however clear that in the run up for Shah's visit, Kissinger himself advised Nixon to be plain-spoken on Shah's demands for commitments over the oil import quota, which the Shah might interpret as a concrete commitment from Nixon. Having suddenly informed by the Deputy Under Secretary of State (Economic Affairs) Nat Samuels *et al,* about private oil companies misleading the Shah on the US import policy as sole Presidential prerogative, Kissinger rushed advice to Nixon on 22nd October, that the Shah had been 'over sold 'on the possibility of some changes in U.S. policy to permit Iran to exchange crude oil for American goods and products, by Planet Oil'. Kissinger therefore warned Nixon against such 'preferential treatment having wide repercussions... even if it seemed a good thing to do to please the Shah while he is here'.

While warning Nixon of the domestic political fallout from its press coverage, Kissinger wrote:

'I'm sure [this action] would put the worst possible interpretation on any decisions by this Administration that might be of substantial benefit to one of Mr. Brownell's clients'.

From Nixon's remarks however, it was evident that while refusing to commit himself to any preferential quota, he still ignored Kissinger's advice by asking Saunders:

'Get this done by the companies if possible—not by a change of quota'.

(National Archives, NSC Files, Box 920, VIP Visits Shah, DC, 10/21-10/23/69).

In another 21st October 1969 memorandum, Nixon and Kissinger went through lengthy arguments to sum up a "non-committal" to the Shah's oil quota, despite clear US interests in balance of payments. Starting from a position of caution, at this stage however Kissinger seemed to have come closer to Shah's point of view:

'it is not at all clear now that special arrangements for any country outside the Western Hemisphere will be desirable. On the other hand, if the US does decide to stockpile oil, Iran's offer might well be competitive'.

Kissinger however still argued:

'Saying "we will consider" the Shah's requests, He will read that as a promise to consider favourably. To avoid unpleasant misunderstanding, it is best where possible to say exactly how we will handle his requests, explaining where necessary why it is not possible to give a final answer immediately'.

Even on the military supplies, Kissinger stressed Nixon to avoid discussing long-term commitments on military sales programme:

'You regard the details of the program as part of a continuing discussion between our respective military experts. Secretary Laird will be discussing these with HIM further. You would only note that both the US and Iran have to work within budgetary limits. You know how well the Shah understands the need to balance domestic development against defence…'

The Shah-Nixon and Kissinger meeting however leaves a lot to intriguing guess-work since Kissinger did not keep written records of the two top-secret meetings between Nixon and the Shah, despite his embellishing Nixon-era policy for transparency (Kissinger 19989:72-75).

Kissinger even tried to appraise Nixon of Shah's proneness to psychological assurances which reflected USG's continued preference to perceive Shah as irrational and working on different wave-lengths than Western politicians. He underlined this by attaching

Shah's biographical sketch with Nixon's brief, the contents of which remain classified to this day, despite CIA's other de-classified profiles of the Shah and his regime, and another Top-Secret meeting on 23rd July 1973, detailing the politics of Kurdish option and the utility of post-1972 arms supplies as increasing Iran's response to crisis on the Pak-Afghan border.

When Kissinger termed Shah's October 1969 visit as a 'make or break visit as no other previous visits by the Shah to the US', he was informing Nixon about the central US strategic interests at stake in the Persian Gulf, despite Nixon's intimate relations with the Shah since his Vice-Presidency in 1952 under Eisenhower. The visit also took place in the background of Shah's warning the US about Soviet threat now emerging on Iran's western borders and collusion with Iraq. In the light of Kissinger's 21st October 1969 briefing to Nixon, Kissinger was to contradict himself 37 years later when explaining to Faisal Bin Salman al-Saud that the NSC lacked a well-informed policy of its own towards Persian Gulf during 1968-71 (Saud2003:65).

Kissinger however is seen on-record to educate Nixon of Shah's interests in a clear feeler for US policy towards Iran's claims on Bahrain, Abu Musa and Tunbs. Besides proving Kissinger's clear-headed understanding of how Iran-Saudi relations worked, but the following also sets historical record straight about the Shah's intentions towards weaker Sheikhdoms:

> 'Iran has an historic claim to Bahrain and three other small islands in the Persian Gulf. The Shah has said he would be willing to accept any arrangement the UN is able to work out for ascertaining the wishes of the people of Bahrain. In effect, he is willing to drop Iran's claim there, if he can find a face-saving way to do it. The British believe they are close to agreement with the Shah on Bahrain and would appreciate your encouraging him to complete what is potentially a statesmanlike act in taking Bahrain out of the field of controversy. The Shah still wants control of the smaller islands'.

The fact that Kissinger wanted Nixon to encourage Shah's territorial claims which affected the entire spectrum of Iran-Arab relations to date, is manifestly clear in the briefing points for Nixon when he kept these points on the agenda, while included oil imports and military supplies in the "points to avoid" list.

In fact, Kissinger's most emphatic advice, which no US policy expert has ever pointed out was his informing Nixon of what amounted to a clear Iranian preference to distance itself from the Western alliance to give offense to the Soviets or in case Nixon made some convenient agreements with Iran's adversaries :

‘He has, during his talks here at the time of General Eisenhower’s funeral, and in his first talks with Ambassador MacArthur, proposed that the US and Iran develop a special working relationship. He is not talking about an alliance, but about very close consultation and special consideration for each other's interests’.

What Kissinger however advised to Nixon was itself heavily contingent upon US interests in keeping the Shah with the Western alliance, and only assurances of US support for Iran’s reaching some modus-vivendi with Saudi Kingdom could prevent:

‘The Shah will speak of Iran's importance as a stabilizing factor when the UK pulls out of the Persian Gulf. This is a major part of his argument for special US help (US help over an Iranian quota and military credit supplies). Our reply is that we hope the Shah and King FAISAL will work closely for the stability of the Gulf’.

Kissinger similarly mentored Nixon on Shah’s understanding of Nixon’s philosophy about regional security which was conditioned by a strong focus on East Asian security most commonly understood as Nixon (or Guam) Doctrine. Here, Kissinger rendered one of the clearest rationalizations of its applicability to the Persian Gulf until he turned it on its head during 1970 by re-interpreting Nixon Doctrine when it warranted new reasons for acquisition of Bahrain over the Shah’s protests.

Kissinger therefore advised Nixon to express his ‘desire for close cooperation with Iran within limits imposed by present US mood’, which only suggested that Iran’s assumption of a direct security role was a “non-starter” under Nixon Doctrine:

‘[You might approach this by explaining in-depth the philosophy behind the policy stated on your Asian trip. The Shah will agree and then argue that this is exactly why he seeks special treatment—so Iran can save the US from involving itself in Iran's part of the world. While that makes sense and we should help as much as we can, the point is that the US mood which underlies your Asian statements also creates strong sentiment in some quarters against military credits and special import quotas. While this Administration is committed to a close relationship with its friends, translating that commitment into practical policies and programs is a political problem that has to be worked out a step at a time in our political system. The President of the US cannot make policy as easily as the imperial ruler of Iran. By combining appreciation for the Shah's policy and a description of the practical problems you face as a political leader, I hope you can be forthcoming without letting him expect too much] .

(NA; NSC Files, Box 920, VIP Visits, Shah of Iran).

Kissinger further reminded Nixon:

> '*You are aware that the Shah for some time has understood the philosophy behind your Asian policy. But when you took office you were struck by the many restrictions imposed by the present American mood*. You deeply appreciate the Shah's perceptiveness and hope he will continue to bear with us if we sometimes seem unable to do all that we logically should even to give substance to our own policy'.

Declassified CIA records also bring to light certain facts never noted before in Iran literature about USG understandings with the Shah's covert deal with Saudi Arabia over Bahrain and Persian Gulf Security Pact. Helms reported his secret meeting with Shah in Blair House on 22nd October 1969, which besides discussing CIA's covert intelligence facilities on Soviet ballistic missile tests, informed Nixon of the Shah's understanding, he had just reached over Bahrain with Faisal in Rabat:

> 'that if the Shah satisfactorily settled the Bahrain problem, he (Feisal) would make a public statement announcing that Saudi Arabia would make common cause with Iran in the Gulf area. The Shah added rather mournfully that no one has tried harder than he to get a satisfactory arrangement with Bahrain'.

In addition Helms also informed Nixon about Shah's real perceptions about Soviet threat which must have motivated his ambivalence with the US security posture in the Persian Gulf later:

> 'the Soviet intelligence in Iran was spying on behalf of Iraq. He is obviously concerned about Soviet build-up of Iraqi forces and wondered aloud whether they would be encouraged to move against him'.

The common ambiguity of Iran-Saudi connections over Persian Gulf's territorial rivalry and Saudi interests towards Iran staying out of Bahrain are therefore empirically proven that a quid pro quo understanding over Abu Musa and Tunbs islands and regional security had been reached between the Shah and King Faisal when the Shah led his opposition to US stay in Bahrain supported by Faisal and the Sabah's. Helms however never pressed Shah about Saudi interests in giving such assurances.

(Central Intelligence Agency, 80 B 01285 A, Box 11, Folder 9, DCI Helms, 01.12.1965 – 31.12.1972).

The American declassified documents detailing the Shah's October visit comprehensively uncover main issues of Iran's interests in oil, weapon procurements and perceptions on regional situation.

Despite the three sections(6,7,8) of Shah's meetings with US officials still classified, it is clear from Saunders' 22nd October Memorandum of what had transpired between the Shah and Rogers, with Zahedi, Sisco, McArthur, Jack Miklos(Iran Country Director) and Nixon's own Assistant Peter Flanagan (on International Economic Affairs) present.

The declassified sections reflect that the Shah placed more emphasis on increasing Iran's ground-fighting capabilities during various sittings with State and Defence Secretaries and not aspiring to maritime security management through Aircraft carrier navy. Nevertheless, being rebuffed by Nixon to promise supplies of modern tanks and fighter jets beyond 1973, the Shah was similarly pragmatic enough to moderate his demands for modest acquisitions, until he got Nixon's commitments on the major issues he had come to seek assurance about.

For example, with Defence Department not pushing the Shah for early response to General Motors for relatively older Sheridan tanks in the possibility of a new Main Battle Tank developed for the US Army, the Shah agreed to wait until. While expressing interest in retrofitting older M-47 tanks with new guns (105mm) or Shillelagh missiles, he instead showed preference for troops-carrying Sikorsky helicopters. The Shah even raised the issue of acquiring long-range artillery and increased anti-armour capability through attack helicopters (Cobra) and TOW missiles. In the absence of agreement over additional 32 F-4s due to credit unavailability, the Shah similarly remained ambivalent over investing in the stripped-down version of F-4 E/Fs, and F5-21s, after being informed of USAF interests in acquiring F-15 as a 3rd Generation fighter (or its naval version F-14), which suggested preference for shifting Iran's defence capability from air force and navy to mechanized forces. As suggested in the introductory chapter, the Shah's voluntary wait-and-see policy under an existential threat from Soviets and rivalry with Iraq after Shatt al-Arab, should have logically motivated him to take whatever was available on the shelf, but still chose to await new weapons developments that in his own representations to Johnson previously had admitted took long-lead times and delivery schedules!

The Shah also expressed interests in hiring retired 'blue suites', to work alongside serving USAF technicians to circumvent problems of the latter's working in conflict areas. Considering the 21st century nature of mercenaries fighting as Defence Contractors such as

those fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan during 2001-11 to complement US war objectives, the Shah-Nixon agreement was the first instance of a covert defence relationship and privatization of modern warfare.

It is emphatically clear that Shah's new interests in military modernization during 1969-70, were geared towards the new threat emanating from Iraq which he now sought to portray as developing into a joint Iraqi-Soviet "pincer" effort to replace British presence in the region. In fact, after informing Rogers of his interests in acquiring an "over-kill" capability through ground-forces, the Shah had now refined his strategic thesis of Johnson-era by pointing out Soviet-Iraqi threat 'converging on Kuwait and Saudi Arabia'. Despite however agreeing with Rogers on Soviet restraints in the region due to their key interest in the Iraqi Rumeilah oil reserves, he still insisted upon 'Soviet's using Iraq as a proxy for regional troubles'.

Despite the Shah's presenting a case for Iran's self-sufficiency or regional security through US support, it is equally clear that he was keeping the Soviet option open for getting Soviet support on regional claims, which he did receive eventually during UNSC debates over its takeover of Abu Musa and Tunbs Islands[33]:

> 'With reference to Soviet arms policy the Shah noted that two years ago the Soviets were urging on Iran all sorts of military equipment. Lately, however, they seem to have withdrawn and he and his Foreign Minister have asked the Soviets about a pending Iranian request for military equipment and so far have received no reply. He did not know what to make of this. (Iran reportedly asked the USSR for 400 23mm anti-aircraft guns in early 1969)'.

Even with respect to Iraqi restraint during the March 1969 conflict and in due knowledge of Iraqi forces tied down in the Kurdish regions, during Washington visit, the Shah remained non-committal about his true intentions towards Iraq despite that fact that Soviet arming directly facilitated Iraqi power projection into the Persian Gulf. Saunders therefore apprised Nixon:

> 'He said that Iraq had all but one division of its troops on the Iraqi-Iranian border. Perhaps this was because of their fear of Israel and, of course, some of them were busy with the Kurds, but, he said, he really didn't know if this was the full explanation of why they were there'.

[33] Chubin and Zabih 1973:26

As a way of preventing US interference in the Persian Gulf, the Shah however assured USG of not entertaining designs to disrupt the regional *status-quo*:

> 'Iran does not want anything from others in the way of territory. But at the same time, Iran cannot allow others to take away Iran's national heritage. Increasingly, Iran must take more responsibility for the region in which it finds itself'.[34]

(NA NSC Files, Box 1245, Visit of Shah of Iran, October 21-23, 1969; NRC, OSD Files, FRC 330-75-089, Box 74, Iran 1969, 091.112).

The Shah's first visit to the newly-elected Nixon administration -despite its various frustrating rebuttals on more cardinal issues - seems to suggest a relative success for the Shah receiving Nixon's endorsement of a regional policy, which effectively enabled the Shah work on the central issues of working out arrangements with Independent oil companies and US defence companies, in the availability of surplus oil form the Consortium production and the Abu Musa and Arabi islands..

Further NSC correspondence immediately after this visit, reveals an even more determined effort by the US policy planners, which built up on a fundamentally different policy perspective about Iran's central importance for US interests, and argued a policy-shift necessitated by strategic interests in the region. An "unattributable" memorandum by Saunders to Kissinger (5th November 1969) argued that current US policy rendered the retention of US influence untenable in the region despite military aid to Iran and Saudi kingdom:

> 'because most of the countries there will have enough income of their own from oil or will get help from oil-rich neighbours, we will have to build our presence on different foundations. One of these, I hope, will be the activities of US private industry and investment, especially in oil and oil-related fields'.

Suggesting that despite the technical nature of Nixon's Cabinet Task Force on Oil policy (The Schultz Committee), he argued that 'the Iranian argument is a clear case in point':

> 'and it seems to me that you and I, looking to the future, have a reason to fight for a policy. No one would even look at the Iranian case if we on the political side didn't

[34] In the part 3/4 of the Shah-State Department memorandum, the Shah elaborated further on his perceptions of Saudi unreliability as a stable regional partner due its succession problems and impossibility of internal reforms under King Faisal whom he considered as a religious puritan and Crown Prince Fahd as a 'weak, ineffectual non-entity'. Refuting Rogers about the unreliability of Lebanon 'as out of the only few remaining moderate Arab governments in the area', the Shah called its present leaders as 'untrustworthy liars'. An otherwise realistic endorsement of Shah's cooperative attitude towards Lebanon, (despite refusal to extradite the anti-regime General Bakhtyar), was perceptive of direct US interests when he assured Rogers 'he would attempt to exercise it in persuading them to counsel the [Palestinian] Fedayeen to be more moderate with regard to its neighbors', and do anything else he could to help the people of Lebanon maintain their integrity'.

press it. So for the tactical purpose of gaining a hearing for the argument, I have—at the risk of being brushed aside by the experts as naive—made myself an advocate for a general policy that would justify country quotas for a few selected friends like Iran, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and possibly Nigeria'.

(NA, NSC Files, Box 1236, Harold Saunders Files, Iran 10/1/69-12/31/69).

Further correspondence from Tehran Embassy suggests that upon returning almost "empty-handed", this time by Nixon- after 1949 which had necessitated Iran's nationalisation of the British oil company- the Shah eagerly awaited Schultz Committee's making a preferable decision to ease Iran's need for exclusive import quota. Nevertheless, he did not take focus-off the Soviet-backed moves in the region through naval visits to Iraq, Syria and Egypt, and military supplies as a:

'clear evidence of Soviet support of efforts of these radical regimes to topple more moderate regimes of their neighbours'.

In this new context however the Shah theorized an entirely new security threat, which effectively put Iran-US relations on-line, threatened by a direct Soviet danger. The Shah now invoked the clearest possibility of Iran's territorial integrity under threat by radical regimes, (supported by international communism) having 'territorial claims on Iran', which automatically obliged US security guarantees to Iran under the 1959 Agreement.

Presenting the USG a choice to either come to Iran's support, in case it went to war with Iraq (now supported by the Soviets), or stay neutral in the Iran-Iraq rivalry, was manifest after Shah's return when he compared Iranian claims on the smaller Islands with rivals' claims on the Arabic Khuzestan.

The Shah's assurance of the regional 'status-quo' in the Persian Gulf and Iraqi threat to this policy thus confronted Nixon officials with serious dilemma to determine Iran's military requirements, despite its various antagonists in the country teams.

MacArthur's 27th November cable detailed the new controversy of the broader application of indirect Soviet threat that had plagued US-Iran relations since 1958 and had motivated the Shah to seek a Non-aggression Treaty with the Soviets until Eisenhower made a commitment to Iran's security if attacked by a third party, controlled by international communism through the 1959 Executive Agreement. MacArthur reported Shah's attitude towards the impossibility of direct Soviet aggression, and making conditional US advice upon

a *quid pro quo* support on Iranian interests. A verbatim reading however does more justice to understand the paralysis of policy, with the Shah challenging the US right to dictate the terms of regional engagement the Defence and State Departments delivering on Iran's central aims:

> 'if the US were willing to give an iron-clad guarantee to come to Iran's assistance, we might have right to express view that Iran did not need this or that. However, were not in such a position and indeed doubted it would be wise to have such a guarantee even if we could give it since He thought time had passed when great powers could intervene in the ME and Asia. In light of this He thought we should recognize Iran must decide what its own defence requirements are since its security and independence are at stake'.

The Shah's further conversations with MacArthur in-fact suggested the former's determination to take care of Iran's own interests without direct US interference to invite Soviet counter-assurances to Iraq, which by its very implications was supportive of Soviet security interests threatened by US presence along its southern borders. Here is what the Shah had to say about Soviet interests and lacking any regional role imposed on Iran without the Shah's input:

> 'their naval visits and activities in Persian gulf area and their military strengthening of the radical Arab regimes in Iraq, Syria and Egypt was clear evidence of Soviet support of efforts of these radical regimes to topple more moderate regimes of their neighbours. he hoped and prayed that Saudi and Kuwait regimes would be able to withstand pressure from radicals but in any event Iran must be prepared to stand alone if necessary in defending itself'.
>
> (NA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, DEF 19-8 US-IRAN).

MacArthur's report on the Shah's rather clear perceptions of Iran's vulnerability and intention to take pre-emptive action against Iraq however carried dual implications for the US policy. While Nixon policy-planners failed to retain initiative on regional diplomacy towards the Iraq-Soviet entente, the world attention riveted on Iranian claims on the tiny Persian Gulf islands or problems with oil companies.

A 17th February 1970 cable from McArthur to Acting Secretary of State Joseph Sisco raised alarms about the Shah's frustrations reaching 'high-pitch' due to lack of US response towards his oil proposals. MacArthur was to however to develop a curious link between Iran's

security and oil quota after his urgent meeting with Premier Hoveyda whom apprised about Shah's threat perceptions now converging on Iran's nearer borders:

> 'speaking again "very privately", Hoveyda said dangerous situation developing in Gulf which is "Iran's jugular vein" has also added greatly to Shah's concern since he believes Iran is only country in Gulf region that can make contribution to stability of that vital area which is so essential not only to Iran but also to Japan, Europe and US. And he needs US cooperation to help assure stability and security there. This deep concern coupled with Shah's high expectations after Washington visit may have led to his present feeling of "deception" that nothing seemed to be moving although four months had passed since his visit'.

MacArthur demanded a sympathetic response towards Iran which was again a direct advantage to the US global interests, delivered through Iran's central role as a security provider:

> 'while we of course realize that all his requests cannot be met, we do urge that we do all we can to respond as favorably as possible wherever we can, particularly since there seems to be general agreement that after 1971 the future stability and security of free world interests in Gulf (an area of vital importance to Japan and NATO from which US nets one and half billion dollars annually from US oil company sales) will almost inevitably depend to very considerable extent on Iran - the only plus in the area'.
>
> (NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

It was however clear that initial policymaking under Nixon Administration during 1969-70 remained one of standard policy of procrastination to dissuade the Shah from drastic actions against oil companies, which effectively had the opposite effect. In another central policy aim of Nixon's foreign policy manifesto, the NSC now tried prevent to Iran from selling its excess oil to Norwegian companies who wanted to sell this oil directly or indirectly to Cuba through the Soviet Union. Considering this option as prejudicial to the core US policy of preventing Cuban influence spreading to Asia or Africa (Aden or Angola), Flannigan and Kissinger both opposed Nixon's agreeing to Iranian sales. It was observed that despite the Cubans getting Iraqi oil with Soviets paying for it:

> 'Our economic denial policy is intended to isolate Cuba from the Western world, because of its conduct in stimulating subversion; hamper its economic growth, and

thus reduce its capacity to export revolution; and increase the USSR's burden, by keeping Cuba dependent on Soviet aid and supply'.

Although Nixon agreed to refuse Iranian requests on such grounds, the memorandum also recorded Nixon asking Flanagan to take up the case with oil consortium to help Iran:

'Flanigan — Tell them unless they help us on this I shall reverse the oil import decision. This is an order. Not appeal'

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 19-8 US-IRAN).

In addition, Flanigan and Kissinger also confronted Nixon with a policy dilemma due to the 'inability to convince oil Consortium to be forthcoming on Iran's revenues needs'. This failure effectively compelled Iran to reach out directly to the Independent oil and defence companies by taking advantage of the imminent production cuts against Occidental Petroleum in Libya during June 1970, and also disrupting its concession around Abu Musa, facilitated by Sharjah's action to post-date claim the oil discovered 9 miles outside its territorial sea limit. Flanagan informed Nixon:

'Despite intensive conversations with US members of the Iranian Oil Consortium', I now sees no prospect of persuading the Consortium to increase its Iranian oil liftings in the coming year. The Iranians have also been told that they should expect no help in 1970 from the report of the Task Force on Oil Imports'.

(NA NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, 1/20/69-5/31/70).

5.2. Islands and Security: the politics of American "Hands-On" policy post-Shatt al-Arab?

The commonly accepted notion of the Nixon Administration adopting a "hands-off" policy towards the Persian Gulf and leave the final resolution of disputes and political integration to exclusive British preserve is not proven by a closer scrutiny of the advice originating from regional staff and acted upon likewise by Nixon policy-planners. After the resolution of Bahrain-Arabi Islands crisis just before Nixon's inauguration, although the general US policy orientations towards the Gulf remained one of fostering Iran-Saudi understanding with a manifest preference to secure Iran's minor territorial claims, the first year of Nixon administration was still punctuated by indecisions on the major issues of Iran's direct access to US energy market and long term guarantees of soft military credits at the same

time when Iran faced extreme resistance from Consortium companies. Unable to find additional resources to fund its double digit economic growth through 4th Development Plan and an above $100 million yearly defence sales orders, the US foreign policy developed a new 'Hands-On" approach towards regional security under another creative interpretation of Nixon Doctrine.

The following sections demonstrate that the US field staff, the State-Defence Departments and the NSC concurred on the Iranian inability to thwart radical Arab or Soviet pressures due to its own severe conflicts with moderate/radical Arab regimes, despite mastering sufficient military capability. A number of CIA studies discussed in the NSC revealed Nixon and Kissinger's own lack of confidence upon Iran to take care of the region under CENTO's auspices or the Gulf Security Pact, hence their preference for a 'wait-and-see' on Iran's regional potential. This section demonstrates while this test came to pass during 1969, Bahrain became a predatory target for US policy-planners as a favourite US redoubt and delivering on even larger interests in the Indian Ocean. The subsequent sections prove that after the Shatt al-Arab conflict, necessitating Soviet crisis deployments in the region, Nixon field advisors and the likes of Saunders and Kissinger started to fear Iranian posture towards weaker Arab regimes becoming a liability for a US-sanctioned architecture, which could trigger a Soviet reaction on behalf of moderate and radical Arabs alike.

The real linkage between the US strategic interests in the resolution of Iran-Saudi dispute and Bahrain's independence outside the UAE or Saudi hegemony, never empirically proven until now stands out in terms of its another relationship with the militarization on Shatt' al-Arab with Iran seen as an aggressive power to the detriment of regional security.

On 6th October 1969 therefore, the advice given to the State Department by Tehran Charge Thacher, detailed Shah's:

> 'particular concern over radical Arabs and explaining Soviet presence in Mediterranean, Indian Ocean areas, intensified by what he see as Soviet exploitation of deteriorating situations in Iraq and Syria'.

Thacher nevertheless imposed another strategic policy template upon Iran's assuming regional security as compatible with US interests, which had close resemblance to what Kissinger had to advice Nixon under CIA's Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE 34-70) of September 3, 1970:

'Iran's assumption of regional security responsibilities fits current US policy as enunciated *during president's Asian tour'.*

Nevertheless, one of the most intriguing and perhaps pioneering policy advices originating from Tehran embassy was Thacher's elaboration about how Bahrain could be used as a bargaining chip for Shah's purported interests. Underlining Shah's acceptance of a formula on Bahrain, Thacher implied that:

'he is prepared to accept any formula UN able to work out with British on eliciting political will [of] Bahraini populace concerning future status'.

Thacher advised Rogers what could tantamount to the US acquiescence into Iranian claims, albeit through a bigger bargain on Bahrain:

'we doubt very much he will comment like Zahedi (USUN 3257) regarding Iran's expectation of receiving Tunbs and Abu Musa in return for relinquishing Bahrain claim. If subject those islands touched upon, we might usefully avoid any intimation that we are wedded to status quo'.

The notion of the US interest in resolution of the Gulf's disputes by supporting Iranian claims and a considerable Iranian *quid pro quo* was patented in Thacher's advice to make conditional US support on Abu Musa and Tunbs Islands with the Shah's acquiescence on stationing of MIDEASTFOR in Bahrain. A verbatim scrutiny of Thacher's advice is important without the risk of generalization and a key empirical forensic:

'Shah has already said in Hanson Baldwin and all friendly interviews that he would prefer US not have naval force based in Gulf. Reiteration [of] this line through more dramatic medium of planned TV interview ('Meet the Press') might strike significant adverse note with US public and some Congressmen, besides further committing Shah to this unhelpful position. However, heading him off this line, which stems inevitably from his present independent, nationalist caste of' mind, will be delicate matter. Perhaps Secretary might find opportunity [to] reaffirm to Shah our conviction [that] future stability and security of Gulf depends first and foremost on cooperative efforts between riparian powers. Indeed we hopeful latter will succeed in evolving stable new system assuring security and progress of all Gulf States.

Nevertheless, US and rest of world have important interest in seeing that an area containing such great resources does not slip, as others have in post-colonial eras, into state of uncertainty and chaos. While riparians must play dominant role, others can

perhaps be helpful also. Accordingly we believe wise not foreclose options with regard future usefulness of facilities now existing in Gulf. If Shah shows inclination, pursue matter further, he, might be remained gently there is always possibility Soviets can find some means, perhaps in collaboration with Iraqis, establish more or less permanent naval presence in Gulf.

While we would not suggest point argued still Secretary might find opportunity note that once we had withdrawn naval force from region, its reintroduction would be difficult and operation of over-the-horizon presence (which shah has mentioned) impractical. Perhaps best course would be simply endeavour convince Shah that on this question our views are flexible and we hope His can remain that way also'.

US policy-planners not only sought to strike convenient bargains with the Shah on not only territorial claims in pursuit of core US security objectives , but also on those interests which Shah was unable to achieve under Johnson administration. Arguing for a good homework before Shah's visits to Nixon (August 1969) through a policy coordination with a view to assure the Shah of USG's fullest sympathy for finding a solution to Iran's exclusive oil imports, Thacher now put Iran's core economic interest on the bargaining table, when he effectively linked regional security with the economics of Iranian development:

'he will hope for indications that we will nudge oil companies to take his regional responsibilities as well as commercial considerations into account in their negotiations and that we will be sympathetic regarding any barter deals for military equipment that he may be able to work out within current import quota system'.

(NA, RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 7 IRAN).

The fact that the previous preachers of Iran's exclusive role as supportive to US security objectives in the Gulf had now become the "Latter-Day" theorists of an equally aggressive US "hands-on" policy was demonstrable, when they confronted the Shah with his own security assessments he had argued with Johnson Administration as a way of acquiring sophisticated weapons and long term credits assurances. By invoking the Soviet-radical Arab threat ,alongside the threat theory of a Suez-Aden-Djibouti Triangle converging on the Gulf with its accession by Syria and Iraq, the Shah's threatmongery was to haunt him the rest of Nixon Presidency by unable to get US evacuation from Bahrain under the pretext of Soviet presence in Iraq.

The Shah coming to attend Eisenhower's funeral(28th March 1969) now pointed out Soviet interests in Iraqi ports as threats to Western interests to the State and Defence officials, as well as the threat of freed Arab forces from the Arab-Israel conflict after its resolution. As subsequent US planning towards the Gulf during October 1969 reveals, Nixon advisors confronted the Shah with the same threat they had been rejecting since early 1969 in the aftermath of Shatt al-Arab crisis which the Shah blamed on the Soviets. From a narrow interest in developing a deterrent military capability against Iraq, the US policy strategists took advantage of Shah's military weakness by rejecting these as his "drawn-out" fears. During his presence in Washington, the Defence Department and Meyer were to view Shah's threat perceptions as following:

> 'It was clear to the Shah the Soviet Union wanted to penetrate the Gulf area. It was equally clear that the Shah was concerned, in a general way, about the Soviets' behaviour in the area and, more specifically, about the Iraqis' "reckless behaviour"'.

Nevertheless, the Shah was to regret his strategic analysis that sought US military weapons by spinning the Soviet-regional threat in the wake of recent conflict with Iraq:

> 'In point of fact, the Shah indicated, he did not fear outright aggression by the Soviet Union since it was his belief such aggression would elicit a concerted Free World response. That provided, in his judgment, a satisfactory deterrent. The more probable and more logical threat was that of local and limited war. The Shah said he sought adequate strength to ward off any "foolish aggressor.'
>
> (NRC, OSD Files, FRC 330-75-089, Box 74, Iran 1969, 091.112).

The records from mid-1969 therefore underline the fact that US policy-planners had turned the Soviet-Iraqi sword against Iran, well before the Soviet-East German Defence officials visited Iraq, Egypt and India in July 1971. On 13th October 1969, the new ambassador Douglas McArthur II, reported Shah's analyses about Soviet ambitions in acquiring naval bases in Iraq, which the Shah argued was a Soviet priority 'over defensive weapons to the UAR since 1967 War'.

It is clear from MacArthur's elaboration that the Shah's ambivalence over US focus on Turkish security and "neglecting its Iranian flank" had a direct correlation with his dissonance with the possible US arms embargo since early 1969, an option the US had exercised on Pakistan since 1965 compelling Ayub to diversify its arms supplies to China. He

therefore sought to rectify the balance by attributing Shatt al-Arab conflict to Soviets encouragement during April.

> 'he said he had "needled" the Soviets about their supplying offensive weapons to Iraq and that such action not only supported Iraqis in their defence of a colonial-imposed treaty (Shatt' al-Arab), but was also inconsistent with Soviet declaration of friendship with Iran. However, Soviets had waffled and given no satisfactory answer'.[35]

The Shah was to subsequently cite this very Soviet threat to the Americans after Saddam-Brezhnev agreement (11th March 1970) as a de-facto Soviet interest in establishing a Communist republic of Kurdistan. Soviet initiatives in the region however lacked insightful analyses by Tehran field staff about Soviet interests in Iran, and mostly based in direct quotations from the Shah. Hence, MacArthur cited Shah's statement on Soviet intentions:

> 'given Iraq's very short sea coast and its strictly limited territorial waters, furnishing of missile- firing vessels, etc., is most sinister, particularly since such offensive capability is not needed in view of present modest array of Iranian and other naval strength in Gulf. …Among other things, Soviets doubtless laying groundwork for port facilities in Iraq which would enable them to augment Soviet naval presence in the gulf, which had been increasingly evident in the last 18 months'..

Before MacArthur delivered an 'obitur-dictum' on the retention of Bahrain by the US in November 1970 to counter this very Soviets presence, the Shah insisted that Iraq was on the verge of becoming a naval power through Soviet arms.

It became clear that the Shah had been alarmed at the spectre of the Iraqi-Soviet pincer developing on Iran's borders, long before the actual February 1972 Treaty of Friendship, when he pointed out Iran's vulnerability against a Soviet-armed Iraq in the absence of Iran's lack of manpower and short warning times on western borders:

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[35] A verbatim reading of McArthur's rendition of Shah's perception of Soviet threat is vital to understand its implications: "shah opened by saying he increasingly concerned by Iraq situation and soviet efforts to gain position of primary influence in that country. Whereas at present soviets are supplying largely defensive equipment to UAR, they are equipping Iraq with offensive armaments including aircraft, comar missile vessels, and other offensive hardware. this is giving Iraq offensive capability which soviets might at some future time wish to exploit if they succeed in their efforts to have Iraqi communists participate in a future Iraq government—a step that would lead to soviet domination of Iraq. He said there is presently in Iraq a soviet naval mission of several hundred and that only a week or so ago 170 Iraqi naval personnel went to Soviet Union for training".
... Having built up a substantial force in the Mediterranean of some 70 vessels, soviets are in process of laying groundwork for build-up of naval forces in the gulf. I commented I had heard rumours Soviets were planning to give Iraq comars, had not heard confirmation vessels had actually been delivered. Shah replied vessels had been delivered, but soviet missiles not rpt not yet furnished. He mentioned that recently he had sent intelligence officer to London who had coordinated estimates of Iraqi strength with British intelligence and that Iranian estimates coincided very closely with British.

'if Iraq engaged in surprise attack, the first three days could be crucial and Iraqi advantage from first strike could lessen degree of Iran's superiority'.

Nevertheless, Shah's warning of Iran's vulnerability carried dual advantage wherein this perception of Iraq-Soviet collusion in the Persian Gulf was something Iran could not expect to challenge. While the US policy planners since Johnson's times rejected the possibility of Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf, Iran could only hope to isolate Iraq by pinning blame for revolutionary surges on Iraq:

'these capabilities, he said, were not designed to cope with an overt, all-out Soviet attack, as only the US was in a position to do that. However, increased capabilities were essential (a) to give credibility to Iranian position vis-à-vis Soviets that Iran would resist militarily any attack from any source and would fight to end and in process destroy its industrial capability so potential enemy could not profit; (b) to deter Iraq, with its increased military capabilities, from making miscalculation and engaging in aggressive steps in Gulf and against Iran which could escalate into hostilities'.

MacArthur's report did not contradict the Shah's assessment at all, in order to tie the Shah to his own threat perceptions while Washington agencies carried out more detailed analyses about US policy towards the Gulf.

Nevertheless, when MacArthur solicited another demand for more weapons, it was evident that the Shah had already written-off Iran's interests in serving as an auxiliary to the over-all American strategy by serving notice against US intervention in the region:

'He was not asking for grant assistance …. but for cooperation, economically and militarily, to permit Iran to shoulder its responsibilities in this part of the world without having to be dependent on US or other great power intervention. He felt that a most critical period lay ahead and since Iran and the US share the same basic objectives and purposes, closer cooperation in the future was even more important than it had been in the past…They are equipping Iraq with offensive armaments including aircraft, Comar missile vessels, and other offensive hardware. This is giving Iraq offensive capability which Soviets might at some future time wish to exploit if they succeed in their efforts to have Iraqi communists participate in a future Iraq government— a step that would lead to the Soviet domination of Iraq."

MacArthur's desperate message was immediately (but without comments) attached to Kissinger's briefing to the President.

(NA NSC Files, Box 1236, Iran 10/1/69-12/31/69; RG 59, CF 1967-69, POL 17-1 US-IRAN).

On 13th October 1969, the Shah again informed McArthur of the common benefits to both countries in addressing Nixon administration's problems in stabilizing US financial situation since December 1967 crisis. In this pursuit, he proposed to contribute at least $400 million a year to US balance of payments through purchasing his needed industrial, agricultural, construction equipment and weapons through oil bartering[36]. It was clear that Shah continued to have faith in future relations with the US.

Although the Shah's perception about Iran's relations with the US as serving both countries' interests had been categorically emphasized, the 13th October report was a direct allusion of interests in playing-down its pro-US relations before US presented another policy dilemma through its presence in the Gulf. The new orientations therefore seemed more perceptive to Soviet interests in ensuring a complete eviction of Western presence along the Soviet borders. The Shah therefore offered his following observation:

> 'he felt that rather than trying to treat all countries generally alike, the US and Iran should both try to develop especially close and cooperative arrangements with countries that shared their basic political and international philosophy, and were in a position to work towards stabilizing areas that today were in a precarious position. Special relationships of this kind could be extremely helpful in different parts of the world, where the countries enjoying such a relationship with the US. [Iran] Could "carry the ball" and exercise an influence for stability and peace without the US having to become too directly or overtly involved'.
>
> ([1] NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, Vol. I, 1/20/69-5/31/70).

An intelligence estimate of October 17, 1969 from the Deputy Director of Intelligence George Denney (Jr.) at the Bureau of Intelligence and Research again sounded out to Rogers the Shah's determination to shun Iran's dependence on American weapons in a strategic situation where direct Soviet threat to Iran was heavily discounted and hence contradictory to MacArthur and the Shah's own assessments:

[36] McArthur also reported Shah's foreknowledge of US import policy of granting special quotas for Venezuelan and Canadian oil along with 'oil imports that flowed through Virgin Islands by special type arrangement which were not subject to regular US Import quota limitations' that he hoped could also work out for Iran.

‘Shah’s assessment of the Gulf situation and of Iran's role may be overdrawn, there is no denying that he is wedded to it, and that Iran has the wherewithal to look to other arms sources if he decides the US is not sufficiently meeting his demands for arms. He is still wary of the USSR and is aware that the US remains the only guarantor against Soviet attack, but he also considers such an attack to be a remote possibility for the foreseeable future’.

5.3. Abu Musa: resource rivalry or irredentist nationalism?

The most important aspect of US support for Iranian control over Abu Musa/Tunbs islands became obvious immediately after Shah’s return from the US and getting Nixon’s assurances over supporting Iran-Saudi reaching agreement over Persian Gulf issues.

As a background to December 1969 flare-up over Abu Musa’s oil concession contested by Ajman, Umm’ al-Qawain’s and their concessionaire Occidental Petroleum, the Shah’s threat of force against the British occupation of Abu Musa on 25th May 1970, was interpreted by MacArthur as a reaction to the imperialist act by Britain:

‘islands which Britain seized by force in last century and now for its own convenience desires to dispose of’. [the British were] handling problems of relinquishment in a way which will justify its original act of seizure and allocation to respective sheikhdoms’.

MacArthur’s warning that Iran will not renounce its claims on the islands therefore avidly confronted another dilemma for Nixon to decide which party the US should be supporting. He therefore argued that Iran’s action (to reclaim the island):

‘ultimately oblige US to side either with Britain, which is withdrawing from Gulf and will have progressively less influence there, or Iran, which holds best hope of peace and stability in Gulf and prevention of extension of radical Arab-Soviet influence into that vitally important body of water’.

MacArthur took issues with British ‘arbitration’ which made the conflict as one between Sharjah and Umm al-Qawain, and warned that Iran would dispute the procedure as a claim between sheikhs instead of Iran and the British. MacArthur therefore effectively positioned the Abu Musa problem as one of territorial nationalism instead of a resource-conflict between Trucial sheikhs after British removal of Occidental Petroleum from Abu Musa’s extended territorial waters:

‘This is not to say that discussions between Abu Musa and Iran should not take account of Sharja-umm-al-qaiwan ‘territorial waters’ problem. *But this should initially be dealt with in context of Iran-sharja and then Iran-umm-al-qaiwain negotiations and not by activation [of] British proposal for arbitration* between two sheikhdoms which we believe will "tear" it.’

Arguing that accommodating Sheikhly claims implied a tacit recognition by Iran of their disputed nature; MacArthur expounded a formula for its resolution by making Abu Musa’s control as a security issue instead. He therefore supported Shah’s stand over the islands:

‘as vital to Iran’s security, particularly should Arab side of Gulf fall to radical Arab-Soviet subversion’.

After Meyer’s berating Brenchley and George Brown as “HMG’s Chief Culprits” in March 1968, it was MacArthur as equally condescending about the British FCO officials, whom he blamed as lacking understanding about ‘Iranian sentiments’, and:

‘the realities of what will probably happen if British initiate their arbitration plan now instead of waiting for Iran to reach agreement with Sharjah over Abu Musa’.

Available US records suggest that Iran-Umm al-Qwain-Ajman negotiations in fact never took place except in which case Alam’s brief account acknowledges the sheikhs of Sharjah and Ra’as al-Khaimah’s presence in Tehran during the period, while Dubai’s Sheikh Mohammad, came to warn the Shah about Iraqi offer of support for the nascent Federation and sounded highly derogatory of Sharjan Sheikhs’ treatment of their subjects (Alam 1991: 2nd October 1969)

What is crucial for our understanding of the US policy towards the resolution of Gulf islands’ conflicts was one the one hand a convenient interpretation of the Nixon Doctrine whenever it suited US interests while effectively setting-in motion a ‘prescriptive’ policy by MacArthur on the other hand where Iran’s contribution to regional security was inextricably tied to Abu Musa’s control by Iran:

‘as test of our sincerity in wanting Iran to play major stabilizing role in Gulf after UK withdrawal in keeping with Nixon doctrine which Undersecretary Richardson recently assured Shah was relevant to Iran’s future role’.

To insure a highly favourable State Departmental policy towards Iran’s interests in Abu Musa, MacArthur emphasised upon Iran’s strategic importance to America’s Southeast

Asian policy; retention of intelligence facilities; and over-flight rights, in case USG not sided Iran against the British. His warning to the British also stood him in a policy-making role than an ambassador taking orders from the State Department on vital policy issues:

> 'if they proceed on arbitration course and create crisis with Iran they must not expect our support. In short, UK should be reminded of vital interest they, we and free world as a whole have in ensuring maximum degree of stability in Gulf after British withdrawal'.

MacArthur's reasoning in the context of a smaller dispute than Bahrain or Shatt 'al–Arab however could not have been more direct about US regional policy which partook from the greater dangers to regional stability from Soviet or radical regimes. Suggesting the numbering of British days in the region after which Iran provided the stabilizing forces to keep the region out of radicals' reach; MacArthur's observation must be kept in mind when he confronted the Shah fter 6 months by rejecting his ability to play the role he had advocated over Abu Musa issue:

> 'British influence there will continue to shrink providing little if anything in practical terms to capacity of moderate and friendly Gulf forces to resist Soviet-Radical Arab efforts to take over. Whether we like it or not Iran is key to holding Gulf and constitutes only positive element of strength and progress there, with which we and others can work'.

A footnote in the memorandum by Riyadh Ambassador Herman Eilts however contradicted MacArthur's basic assumptions about Iran's potential as a stabilizing actor, and argued for a cooperative resolution of territorial problems between Iran, Sharjah and Ra'as-al-Khaimah over 'sovereignty' issues:

> 'it just a bit difficult to accept suggestion that Iran's vital security and "even survival" may depend on possessing these islands'.

(NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF).

Subsequent reports by MacArthur however suggested that he had effectively rejected Soviet threat to Iran expressed by Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Khalatbary when the latter informed him of Shah's pre-occupation with Soviet advances into the area; the British connivance with Iraqis and Kuwaitis(in the anti-Iranian press campaign); and encouraging Sheikhly intransigence through their military presence.

Although MacArthur reminded Khalatbary of Iraq's own claims on Kuwait, and latter's oil revenues providing up to £700 million to stabilize British Sterling reserves, McArthur conveyed his impressions to the State Department rather differently:

'Whether or not suspicions and fears of shah and some senior members of his govt are justified is quite beside point'.

MacArthur's further report on his conversations with the British ambassador Sir Denis Wright also suggested latter's rejecting any threats made by him or by the British government to Iran to defend the sheikhs, while British were making sincere efforts to resolve islands dispute by trying:

'to persuade them to reach amicable agreement with Iran re-islands'.

Nevertheless, McArthur's discouraging British efforts to legally define their 'first-occupation' of Islands 150 years ago, in the international court "being their only choice", demonstrated his efforts to fudge legalistic and sovereignty issues to deliver on Shah's demands until core US interests in the region were being clarified in the NSC. A relatively hands-off policy under Johnson administration by ordering Meyer's non-interference in Iran-Saudi dispute over Arabi-Bahrain islands had come a long way through a direct American role in resolution of even smaller disputes. Nevertheless, the nature of US interests was soon to confront Iran with a far bigger security dilemma than the Shah had hoped to achieve through US support. MacArthur's efforts during early 1970 to temper-with the State Department or British policy however cannot be attributed to the Shah's voluntarily taking-up a regional security manager's role, even by assuming control over smaller islands.

The insinuation of Iran's security role on behalf of the West or emanating from Iran's role aspirations is not borne in light of Shah's personal letter to Nixon on 15th June 1970, when he requested Nixon to abolish the Annual tranche system for Iran's military supplies:

'[to obviate] the necessity of seeking the approval of the legislature of the United States of America on yearly basis'.

In the letter, the Shah drew Nixon's attention towards 'new developments have again occurred which may have a negative bearing on the future destinies of this region':

The Shah informed Nixon of his wisdom of controlling the contested Islands without developing links to Soviet threat and instead pointing out Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Kingdom in danger from radical threat:

‘New and reliable information has been received to the effect that intense efforts and endeavors will be made to upset the security of the Persian Gulf area. It appears that plans are in the making to threaten and possibly to gain control of the strategic Straits of Hormoz by exercising influence on the Tumbs and Abu Musa Islands, which were forcibly wrested from Iran by the British sixty-seven years ago’.

Nowhere in the latter however, the Shah is seen to entertain any interest in dominating the Gulf on behalf of the US or pointing out Soviet threat to legitimize claims on islands.

It was in the context of the removal of Libya’s concessionaire Occidental Petroleum, and after Libya cut-off its production by 800,000 barrels/day that the Shah repeated his requests for the USG quota which he proposed to be taken from Iran. Although Shah never acknowledged his making arrangements for military purchases through Occidental Petroleum, the following was a clear-cut allusion to this very link:

‘we would then be able to enter with your approval into contracts with American firms in order to buy our requirements’.

In fact, Iran’s swapping its oil for military purchases suggested the Shah’s attaching greater importance to major objectives to be achieved through Nixon’s support on Abu Musa Island and not for satisfying national pride:

‘we will perforce have to re-evaluate our defense arrangements. We will have to face up to all these eventualities and in order to be able to achieve this we must take the necessary steps to equip and prepare ourselves’.

Nixon subsequently addressed the issue in a 30th July 1970 letter which by no means contested Iran’s claims but effectively served as a blessing for the Shah to pursue its security interests through control of the islands:

‘I know of your concern over the possibility that the islands of Abu Musa and the Tumbs might fall into hostile hands. I sincerely hope that conversations you have had with the Sheikhs of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah will lead to an amicable arrangement for the future of these islands’.

(NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL IRAN-US).

In further desperate messages by MacArthur about the urgency over Iran’s 1970-71 military tranche, as yet un-appropriated by the Congress, Rogers contemplated a ‘supplemental’ request (to Congress) for the year 1971, while the Shah carried initiative in the

Gulf politics before a certain decision by the US or Soviets Union restricted its manoeuvrability.

A 20th June 1970 memorandum by the State Department(to Tehran) suggested that the Nixon Administration itself was severely handicapped by legislative restrictions on Foreign Military Sales to the economically-developed countries like Iran, with the Shah's orders affected by Congressional priority towards 'non-oil' countries. Rogers therefore advised MacArthur for keeping the Shah awaited until a decision on the military credits was finalized:

> 'We badly need FMS for a number of other countries, some of whom are in our own NEA area. These countries for various reasons have no chance of obtaining alternative financing'.
>
> (NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

5.4. The Soviet threat, Iranian vulnerability and islands

In pursuit of Iranian irredentism across the Persian Gulf, and protecting Khuzestan from counter-claims by Iraq, Iranian diplomats themselves left no stone unturned, the extent of which was manifested in the Shah's re-invoking the Perso-Soviet Treaty of 1921, which obligated Iran against making its sovereign territory available for anti-Soviet activities and allowing foreign intelligence installations.

Immediately after claims on Abu Musa; rejecting military credits and MacArthur's advice for carefully planned military modernization to "suit the cloth", without explicit US security guarantees, the new diplomatic posture presented US planners with a choice by Iran to retain its facilities.

There is clear evidence that Kissinger had apprised Nixon about the Chairman Joint Chiefs General Wheeler's assessments about the lack of Soviet threat or creating mischief in Trucial sheikhdoms as early as April 1970. In fact, despite his briefing to Richardson and Sisco who visited the Shah in April 1970, and tied him publicly to Nixon Doctrine in return for long term guarantees to support Iran's military modernization; the General had only reluctantly endorsed the military 'stretch-out' plan up to 1976, which was a function of MacArthur and MAAG Chief General Twitchell's suggestions to the Shah. US records however suggest that this gesture was only a "stop-gap" measure to prevent the Shah from a

desperate action through the Soviet or European supplies, until the NSC and other advisory agencies concluded deliberations on the NSSM-60 and the SNIE-34(September 1970) about US policy towards the Gulf and Iran's actual role as supportive to the Western interests.

Nevertheless, this time, the Shah used the Soviet card to its extreme, when he reminded the USG of its vulnerability to Soviet intimidation or direct attack under Article 6 of the Treaty in case Iran's territorial integrity was threatened by a third party. In the direct context of Iran's claims on Abu Musa Island and the possibility of militarily confront with the British, inviting Soviet help to defend Iran's maritime possessions under threat by a third party was a real possibility.

This new controversy was the focus of MacArthur's urgent cable to the State Department in June 1970 when the Shah send Khalatbary to inform him about the Shah's alarm after Podgorny's 25th April visit along with top economic officials to Iran.

According to Khalatbary, the Soviets had suddenly invoked Iran's obligations under the 1921 Treaty for not inviting foreign interests in northern Iran, where some joint US-Iranian venture on 'forestation' was operating. Nevertheless, it is still arguable whether Soviet demands were not conditioned by Iran's providing intelligence facilities in northern Iran which the Shah invoked at a low point of relations with Western oil companies and with Arabs across the Gulf. Khalatbary however explained to MacArthur about the threat from Soviet entry into Iran under Article 6, should this joint venture was not called-off[37]. As a matter of historical accuracy however, Assadollah Alam's record of the period also suggests the Shah toying with the idea of inviting Soviet entry in case the British and Americans threatened Iran due to his impending action against the Consortium (Alam1991: 6 August 1969 entry). As a matter of retaining initiative in the Iran-British conflict however, Khalatbary now informed MacArthur:

> 'what worries Shah is that Soviets may be reading extreme preoccupation of USG with southeast Asia and to lesser extent Israel- UAR situation as indication that USG has such urgent problems elsewhere that it has neither time nor energy to be deeply concerned with future of Persian Gulf region, thus enabling Soviets to become "arbiter" of entire Middle East'.

[37] During 1972, the possibility of US making the Jufair Agreement with Bahrain into a treaty was also confronted by Washington ambassador Zahedi to Rogers as analogous to US making Azores agreement into a formal 'treaty', which could compromise Iran's Treaty obligations with the Soviets.

In response, MacArthur indulged in a long discussion with Khalatbary on US pre-occupation with South-East Asian problems, but also expressed American interests in Iran's ability to fill the security vacuum:

> 'Shah hopes USG will make clear its interest in this vital area and will also move ahead with joint projects Iran has discussed with US with view to strengthening Iran's ability to cooperate with other like-minded countries in Gulf to assure peace and stability there after British withdrawal in accordance with Nixon doctrine'.
>
> (NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL IRAN-USSR).

Despite the ambiguity as to how two disparate issues interacted with each other suddenly for the Shah to seek US guarantees, a 6th June cable to Tehran Embassy suggested a relatively nuanced understanding by Rogers about Soviet threat and its concomitant restraint in the vital areas of Soviet interests. He authorized MacArthur to assure the Shah of the abiding American obligations under the March 1959 agreement against Soviet threats. He cited Nixon's action in Cambodia recently:

> 'as clear evidence our resolve and ability to act when we believe our interests affected. This step was taken in the full realization that it would not meet with full public approval'.

The fact that Iranian policymakers had invoked 1921 Treaty obligations was right on the mark as it carried the dual advantage of assurance to the Soviets against future US presence and a prior Soviet *quid pro quo* on Iran's Gulf interests. Rogers captured this motive accurately when he explained to MacArthur the 'possibility' that the 'Soviets reminding the Shah of the more favourable aspects of the 1921 treaty':

> 'have developed some suspicion that US intends to move in behind British after UK withdraws from Gulf in 1971' and may have 'speculated US may ask Iran for military base facilities'.

The following was another clear assessment on part of the State Department about the 'low-intensity' threat posed to Iran by the Soviets, but that the Shah was able to get the most tangible security guarantees by both superpowers by not making US or Soviet presence in the Gulf (or inside Iran) as threatening to its own security:

> 'While we agree with Iran that there is no room for complacency, we nonetheless do not believe that Soviet power and influence in the Middle East or the Gulf should be overdrawn. Soviet relations with Syria and Iraq, for example, are not uniformly

harmonious or entirely to Soviet liking. Both countries have demonstrated decidedly independent attitudes when the Soviets appear to become too overbearing.

We believe, therefore, that Soviet efforts to become arbiters of Gulf and entire Middle East face formidable obstacles not only from strong moderate countries such as Iran but also from indigenous forces in countries where it has already established a substantial presence'.

On 13th June, MacArthur requested the very assurance from Rogers that Iran would have wanted against British efforts to subvert its major plans for military modernization through Independent companies. MacArthur requested Rogers that 'the British be urged to reach an agreement with Iran over the Gulf States so as to prevent an Arab-Iranian rupture'. In addition, he advised that:

'British put forward a reasonable arrangement that, while not impairing the Sheikhs' legal claims to the islands, would meet Iran's basic security requirements', in return for which, 'United States use its influence informally to persuade Iran to blur the issue of sovereignty'.

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL IRAN-USSR).

5.5. The Arms-Oil-Abu Musa 'linkage': policy imperatives vs. political convenience

This section uncovers the debates on US interests in facilitating Iran's policy of financing military modernization through Independent oil companies which was doggedly supported by MacArthur after Undersecretary Richardson's assurances to the Shah in April 1970 and was opposed by the Defence Department. This section demonstrates that despite all the caution in the Defence Department's efforts to prevent Iran's unrestrained military build-up and due to Nixon's political weakness viz-a-viz the Congress, a conscious and even uncritical encouragement of the Shah by MacArthur, the NSC and the State Department effectively facilitated Iran's ability to circumvent Congressional scrutiny on its military build-up, while it was able to exert similar pressures on the Major oil companies through direct support by Nixon. At the start however, the State Department found it impossible to challenge the Defence official's resistance to Iran's military request, until Nixon made an executive decision to bring Defence in-line with NSC's policy.

A 20th July 1970 State-Defence Department memorandum to MacArthur underlined a cautious US policy of providing Iran with the needed military equipment and posed the fundamental question whether arms supplies:

> 'to Iran are in our overall interests, whether they may affect area security and stability, and whether there is a military requirement for this equipment'.

Although at the core of arms policy-making remained a rather favourable (and a covert) response by Nixon with assurances for long term military supplies (under the Toufanian-Twitchell Study), the underlying assumptions of the Memo remained one of tying-down the Shah to a long-term planning and delivery schedule. In addition, a critical threat-based evaluation of Iran's requirements also remained contingent upon their compatibility with US interests:

> 'instead of piecemeal approach purchases such as those mentioned above will be included in an overall plan which emerges from the Toufanian- Twitchell Study now underway to provide a consolidated list of equipment each armed service wishes acquire to enable HIM to make rational decision on allocation of resources among competing services'.

In fact, both Departments remained aware of the potential implications of Iran's direct liaison with the independent oil companies and defence suppliers, and tried to impose caution upon the Shah about its political fall-out on the region and long term US-Iran relations:

> 'GOI contacts with manufacturers concerning acquisition of C-130's and F-4's in expectation that special deal with Occidental Oil may provide funds enabling Iran to make additional purchases gives US concern that the GOI clearly understand [that]USG policy decision on sale of these additional major items has not yet been made. Realize that negative decisions would cause grave problems in our relations with Iran….In meantime MAAG should ensure continued GOI understanding that MAAG participation in TTS in no way implies USG endorsement of total equipment acquisition wants of GOI armed services'.
>
> (NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

This memorandum received MacArthur's vehement opposition and underscored a lack of responsibility for accuracy of facts on part of either the NSC or Richardson's 22nd April pledge to the Shah. The State Department's complicity in encouraging the Shah's resort to

private channels and its sidelining the Defence Department was evident in the 1st July 1970 Telegram (105171) when MacArthur was advised in the State Department's positive interests in such a deal:

> 'its attempt to encourage American oil companies to replace reductions in Libyan production with Iranian oil had been unavailing to date, but that the Department would continue to pursue these efforts'.

The following however was a case of State Department not going against Nixon's preference for the Shah to finance his own weaponization programme, which despite resistance to Iran's going the independent route was nothing but a "blank-cheque" for the Shah's future actions in the Gulf against Major oil companies and smaller sheikhdoms' squabbling over scarce oil resources::

> '..Fact that Iran might acquire heretofore unanticipated resources through some special arrangement with Occidental US Oil Co., does not in our view lessen the need for both US and the GOI to assess carefully the broad policy implications as well as narrower financial and manpower effects of major new purchases. Such assessments [however] are not intended and should not be interpreted as a sign of our lack of confidence in the Shah or a signal that some basic USG policy change is in the offing. Rather they are intended to insure, however, that rational, conscious decisions are made only after all relevant factors have been taken into account'.

Interestingly, the telegram despite all its caution and caveats for Iran-Gulf and relations with the Major oil companies was appended to the letter written by Nixon to the Shah on 30th July 1970. The underlying assumptions of the letter therefore should be read in conjunction with MacArthur's opposition to the idea of discouraging Iran-Occidental deal for buying 73 F4s (worth $300 million).

Encouraging Iran's options to deal directly with Independent companies was the orientation evident in McArthur's dogged defence in a 7th August 1970 reply. This reply went beyond diplomatic advice by an ambassador to an outright challenge to the State/Defence Department's privilege of vetting Iran's military orders when MacArthur pointed out the "commitment" given to the Shah privately by Richardson during his April 1970, for extension of the 1968 tranche system beyond 1973:

> '…MacArthur relayed: 'unanimous recommendation of the country team that a "fundamental US policy review with respect to Iran be considered ASAP by highest

level of USG in the broad context of the over-all rpt over-all role of Iran in terms of Nixon Doctrine and our national interests" in this vitally important part of world where Iran is the solid and only dependable eastern anchor of our over-all Mid-east position'.

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

Nonetheless, before Nixon's letter (30th July 1970) could reach the Shah, MacArthur informed the State Department that the Shah had already invited a change in the 'letter of intent' for the 73 F-4s, (instead of the 64 promised by Richardson), as soon as Occidental deal went through (deadlined 30th July 1970) to "over-lift from Abu Musa Island".

After tying the Shah to a far long-term arms commitments up to 1976, MacArthur now argued that since 'Iran was not receiving grant military or economic aid; was effectively buying what was assured to him by the President; while Secretaries Rogers and Laird "were not challenged then", a long term appraisal would now tantamount to:

'Refusing to let Iran purchase military equipment from US and at same time reversing our policy with respect to Iran and in effect reneging on 1968 understanding'.

The fact that Nixon Administration suffered from either a paralysis of coordinated policy or Nixon himself was calling shots behind-the-scenes was most obvious when MacArthur put Richardson on spot by quoting his pledge made in Tehran to the Shah:

'we recognize relevance of Nixon doctrine to Shah's proposal for maintaining peace and stability in Gulf area and that US should seek to help those who are willing, like Iran, to bear regional defense burdens'.

A closer scrutiny of NSC documents however reveals that MacArthur was again poorly informed of this advice straight from Kissinger to Richardson to publicly tie the Shah to Nixon Doctrine. MacArthur advised continuing the arms policy as a 'consequence of the special relations', so:

'that Iran can survive even if, as is possible, other side of Gulf falls to radical Arabs and their Soviet supporters'.[38]

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

[38] Although MacArthur's own grand strategic view on Iran's ability to sustain a trans-regional role were far too ambitious to be shared by people in Washington, the NSC itself was about to a drastic U- turn from a policy of appeasing Shah to outright replacing British in the region: 'it is only positive and dependable element of strength stability and progress that we have to work within the entire great south Asian-Arabian peninsula complex'.

It was Nixon who finally made the executive decision to arbitrate bitter policy differences over Iran's arms and energy policy when he sent a personal letter to the Shah which endorsed MacArthur's advice as well as Shah's own preference to finance Iran's military build-up through the independent route.

The 30th July 1970 letter was a factual blessing by Nixon for Iran to engage Occidental Petroleum to arrange finances for the 73 F-4s and 30 C-130s, previously agreed under the FMS credit agreement (1968-73), and proving MacArthur's insistence about Nixon's personal assurance during the Shah's August 1969 visit with Richardson's conveying the same in March 1970.

Nixon however first outlined his own inability to deliver on an oil policy:

> 'unable to do anything in this regard in the foreseeable future…a complex one for my government both economically and politically, involving as it does this country's entire import system and policy'.

Nevertheless, Nixon also appended his blessings for Iran making-up for Libyan shortages which the Shah had not been able to achieve through Major oil companies by increasing production, compared to Libya and Gulf's OPEC's demands for higher prices:

> 'I want you to know that we have urged several American firms to explore urgently the practicality of purchasing Iranian oil, at least in part as an offset to recent production decreases ordered in Libya'.

As a matter of historical record for Iran to weaken OPEC's bargaining power until late 1970, despite its failure to generate more revenues under the unity of Western oil Consortium, it was Nixon who encouraged the Shah to break OPEC's stand against Major oil companies- supported by his anti-Trust waiver- while Gulf producers refused to increase production not to break Libya's stand. Before the Shah threw his weight behind OPEC during late 1970-early 1971, Nixon showed the Shah a way forward:

> 'We shall continue to encourage other companies to try to find ways of dealing with the particular problems each of them may have in connection with shifting their purchases to or increasing them in Iran. I hope that these initiatives will help in some significant measure'.

Deliberately ignoring Kissinger's informing of the resource-intense rivalry over Abu Musa Island, Nixon seemed completely indifferent to the plight of oil-less sheikhdoms, when he informed the Shah:

‘I know of your concern over the possibility that the islands of Abu Musa and the Tumbs might fall into hostile hands. I sincerely hope that conversations you have had with the Sheikhs of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah will lead to an amicable arrangement for the future of these islands’.

The paradox of Nixon extending a ‘blank cheque’ to Shah in the wake of Iraq-Soviet Agreement (February 1972) therefore occurred “de facto” in July 1970, when he apprised the Shah of the ‘great merit of planning military acquisitions over a 5 year period’, in the ‘certainty’ of Toufanian-Twitchell study providing ‘a framework for the greatest possible continuing cooperation between us’.

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL IRAN-US).

US records henceforth show that after Presidential intervention on Shah’s behalf, the State Department got into line and distanced itself from what Defence Department and the CIA had been advocating against.

Another fact of Nixon-Kissinger running a parallel foreign policy outside the normal planning channels of the State and Defence Departments was evident in 27th August 1970 by State Department‘s Executive Secretary Theodore Elliot asking Kissinger to write to the Exim Bank’s Chairman Mr. Kearns ‘urging White House interests in the Bank being responsive to Iranian requests for credits to finance its purchases of US military equipment’.

While further asking Kissinger to urgently arrange alternative funding for Iran should it defaulted on debt repayments or faced a ‘short term’ financial crisis, Elliot’s request to Kissinger to urge coordination between State Department and the Bank amounted to short-circuiting of normal policy channels:

‘to coordinate the timing of any consultations on the Hill on this subject with the State Department in order that they do not jeopardize any other consultations designed to secure authorization for foreign military sales’.

On 2nd September 1970 therefore, Saunders took-up this very controversy with Kissinger when he drew attention towards a CIA’s Memorandum reflecting MacArthur’s ‘concern that certain bureaucratic turnings in Washington might undercut what the Shah believes is a commitment by the President to provide a substantial number of F-4 and C-130 aircraft’.

One of the most controversial aspects of Nixon-era foreign policy was a deliberate effort by the NSC and Tehran field staff to circumvent traditional policy-planning institutions

as was the case with NSC going by the procedural requirements of intramural debates, backed by CIA analyses, but letting Kissinger and Nixon to be the ultimate judge of arms policy, no matter how much opposition was faced on the policy of developing Iran's military strength not warranted by threats.

Partially de-classified sections of the CIA memorandum suggests MacArthur's efforts to discourage Defence Department's continued interests in the Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE-34-70) to assess Shah's much-argued about threats, such as the resolution of Arab-Israel conflict releasing Arab armies to threaten Iran or moderate Arabs. Saunders however seemed to take issue with the validity of Soviet threat as constantly originating from Tehran Embassy, when he suggested to Kissinger:

> 'Visible threat is probably not great enough to justify as much hardware as the Shah wants'.

The fact whether NSC itself was interested in being restricted by Defence Department's approach to vet Iran's military needs through a joint study was self-explanatory when Saunders sounded in agreement with MacArthur's suggestions:

> 'The Shah is building not just a military establishment suited to the threat, but a deterrent as well. An effort is already being made to broaden the framework of the SNIE so that it will not turn out to be so limited as to make it more difficult for us to operate from a broader view of the situation'.

The attached CIA memorandum by Helms therefore clearly laid out the policy debates in Washington and Embassy divisions over what US interests Iran was supposed to have delivered, as part of a regional security arrangement. Helms therefore informed Kissinger:

> 'While this may seem a somewhat unusual channel, the Ambassador wished to [*text not declassified*] to ensure that I became fully aware of the background of his thinking on a developing situation which could seriously affect our very considerable intelligence interests in Iran'.

Helms' communication suggested the stone-set nature of Nixon's commitment to the Shah about which Nixon and Kissinger were tight-lipped, while Kissinger awaited more input from traditional policy channels and the CIA to re-evaluate Nixon's strategic policy towards the Middle East and Soviet relations, with Gulf as an appendage to a broader Indian Ocean policy. Helms also questioned Defence Department's efforts to re-evaluate Iran's defence needs:

'joint State- Defense cables to Embassy Teheran put in question the validity of the Shah's judgement as to his aircraft requirements'.

The fact however remained that Helms was also supportive about a certain role that Iran was being touted to play in pursuit of the overall US interests in the Indian Ocean, hence his personal ambivalence with "re-evaluation" at this particular juncture and warning to Kissinger:

'to reconsider the need at this time for a major re-evaluation of Iran's defense needs, particularly as this re-evaluation process is certain to become a substantive, and adverse, factor in Iranian-U.S. relations'.

A note appended to the memorandum contained Kissinger's remarks for Saunders: "Make sure this is followed", however suggested either stopping this re-evaluation altogether or Kissinger's agreement with Helms' assessment about the negative consequences for Iran-US relations which he could try to minimize. (NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, Vol. II, 6/17/70-12/70).

5.6. Arms Policy (1970-71): politics of convenience or contrived "diversification"?

Notwithstanding the fact that Iran had arranged additional finances for the 41 F-4s and 30 C-130s through signing the 'letter of intent' (with McDonnell and Lockheed) under Nixon's personal backing for a 5 Year 'stretch-out' plan, the Defence still remained ambivalent about an urgent arms policy. Arguing that no such threats warranted a military build-up at such scale and would pre-empt Soviet arms supplies to radical regimes and be counterproductive to vital US interests in the region, the following is just another manifestation of how short-sighted the Nixon-era policy had become where on the one hand it focused on global relations with the Soviet Union but viewed non-European arenas open for an equally dangerous arms diplomacy on the other.

In this vein, the Defence Department dug its feet when it came to know of Exim Bank's lavish credit grant of $120 million (secured covertly through Kissinger, MacArthur and Saunders) exceeding the $100 million ceiling for funding the sale of 32 F-4s and 30 C-130.

A 2nd October memorandum by Deputy Assistant Secretary James Noyes to Assistant Secretary (ISA) Warren Nutter argued to oppose '…the Bank'' decision to provide additional $20 million, even when the State had concurred'.

Anticipating additional $20 million as precedent-setting for the next 5 years requests, and therefore a 'deciding factor' for additional 41 F-4s, Noyes observed:

> 'Since we are not yet convinced that it would be in the best interest of either Iran or the U.S. for Iran to have an 8-squadron F-4 force (128 aircrafts), we do not believe that we should do anything to encourage Iran to make a positive decision at this time'.

Reminding Nutter of the history about the Shah's interpreting un-vetted decisions as signs of USG commitments; Noyes challenged the security logic for arms acquisitions:

> '…no U.S. decision has yet been made on the sale of these additional aircraft, which cannot easily be justified in terms of the threat Iran faces. Notifying the GOI of US willingness to loan $120 million would imply the decision has already been made". (Memorandum, October 2, 1970).

Informing Secretary Laird on 12th October 1970 about the policy difference between the Joint Chiefs and Defence System's Analysis Team, with latter objecting to the former's recommendations for a 128 F-4 force, Nutter agreed with Noyes but with political expedience remaining at its core. Warning Laird about a US –initiated arms race running 'the risk of destabilizing the military balance in the Gulf area', Nutter confronted Laird with two stark choices between:

> 'an unwise and possibly dangerous arms program, .., and denial of the Shah's wishes and likely damage to our relationship with Iran, ….'.

In addition, Nutter put forth the crux of US arms control policy in which Noyes and the Systems team's arguments were backed by the SNIE-34, agreed to by Kissinger, Saunders and Nixon himself:

> 'Shah's force goals are excessive in view of the threat'.

One of the most emphatic caveats which should have moderated State Department and NSC's political logic against the security imperatives as the basis of resisting Defence or CIA's objections were inhered in Nutter's warning to Laird about other domestic, political and economic effects on the $800 million defence programme, with direct implications on the global arms balance. More importantly however, he warned against:

'Iraq's reaction to seek additional assistance from the USSR, which 'nullify any temporary improvement in Iran's security'.

Nevertheless, the political conveniences under which Nixon's entire arms policy had been allowed to drift well before 1972, was strikingly clear when Nutter apprised Laird of the direct US security interests being served through Iran. His recommendations therefore became instantly freed of the nuances of security logic impugned by the likes of Noyes, upon which most inter-agency debates under the SNIE-34 and NSDM-92 study were conducted.

'We are at a major decision point in our relations with the Shah of Iran over his arms acquisition program. The Shah desires to purchase amounts of military equipment that exceed the ability of his services to absorb, lie far beyond his military requirements, and run the risk of destabilizing the military balance in the Persian Gulf area. If we do not acquiesce to the Shah's wishes, we may seriously damage the currently close relationship with Iran. Our choice is, therefore, between an unwise and possibly dangerous arms program, on the one hand, and denial of the Shah's wishes and likely damage to our relationship with Iran, on the other hand'.

(NRC, OASD Files, ISA Files, FRC 330-73A, 1975, Iran, 334—1970, 400).

In a joint State-Defence memorandum to Tehran Embassy on 23rd October 1970, a slightly truncated acquisition plan was approved, agreeing to the sale of 39 F-4s, and 30 C-130s for 1971, but withheld two additional squadrons agreed with McDonnell through Occidental deal.

On 27th October 1970, Laird further informed Rogers of intelligence community's assessment about the sufficient Iranian capability to withstand any regional aggression. Nevertheless, still favouring a policy of restraining Shah's military modernization plan not warranted by associated threats, Laird prophetically warned Rogers:

'To agree to his full-purchase program would, to my mind, be destabilizing in the Persian Gulf area, lead his neighbours — principally Iraq — to increase their arms inventories, strain Iran's financial and personnel resources, and present new opportunities for the Soviets and radical Arab states to penetrate the area'.

One of the most candid explanations by the Defence Department behind its opposition to the release of 32 additional F-4 came when Laird's warned Rogers on 2nd November 1970:

‘Nevertheless, I consider the course he appears to be following inimical to Iran's interests and our own, and I think the time has come to talk bluntly with him about arms stability in the Persian Gulf area’.

(NRC, OASD Files, ISA Files, FRC 330-73A- 1975, Iran, 334-1970, 470).

Saunders also took up the issue of Iran-Company relations on 6th November 1970 with Kissinger, in agreement with Defence Department’s efforts to curtail arms manufactures’ greed to cheat the Shah by pressuring him into early and highly expensive orders. Saunders cited McDonnell’s charging additional $32 million for an early delivery of 32 F-4s, for which Defence had received company assurances against price hikes, and instead suggested cheaper versions after 1974-75 alongside West German orders.

On 4th November 1970 Saunders informed Kissinger of Defence Department’s objections to additional orders:

‘The Defence Department believes that this additional equipment is not warranted by the military threat to Iran; that the Iranian Air Force will have technical difficulty integrating the additional equipment within the next four years because it is already introducing over a hundred of these aircraft in that period and having manpower problems in handling them; and that the financial burden is at the moment beyond Iran's or our capacity to manage’.

Nevertheless, despite informing Kissinger of the vital technical and arms control issues behind Defence’s approach, he approached Kissinger through the political logic, echoing Kissinger’s directive to the Pentagon after May 1972 about Nixon’s agreement with the Shah for sales of every conventional weapon in the US inventory (Kissinger 1999: 582-83):

‘….. State's a approach is not to try to dissuade the Shah but to make sure that he has had a chance to consider possible alternative which might be advantageous to him…..I have talked with both State and Defence to press the line that nothing should be done to call into question U.S. support for Iran's military development but that—within that framework—there is no reason not to have a discussion with the Shah about possible reasonable alternatives that our production plans may offer, provided that can be done in a way that does not upset the political relationship’.

The record suggests the Kissinger approved Saunders’ request.

(NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, Vol. II, 6/1/70-12/70; NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, Vol. II, 6/1/70-12/70).

A closer scrutiny of the process underpinning contested sales of the F-4s is highly instructive of the initial State-Defence-NSC agreement to emphasize "time-delay" devices until 1972, but unwillingness to support Defence to the end. On a macro geo-economic level this very approach effectively facilitated Shah's taking on Major oil companies during late 1970 to demand "higher prices" commensurate with Western industrial products.

A 6th November 1970 joint State-Defence message to Embassy suggested just this reluctant resistance to the Iran-Company deals when both refused the USG becoming party to these negotiations outside the FMS programme. In order to accommodate Defence's objection however, MacArthur was advised to pass the following to Shah:

> 'We also assume that the GOI will wish to consider with us the possible impact additional acquisitions could have on the regional arms balance as we are certain they share our hope that an arms race in the area can be avoided'.
>
> (NA, RG 59, CF1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

During 1970 Kissinger seemed a lesser believer in the virtues of arms control as a device to affect Persian Gulf's evolution especially Iran's, when he append his views in a 20th November reply to Saunders in the context of Defence's 'vigorous resistance' to State Department's favouring the release of additional 32 F-4s:

> 'There is nothing to resolve. Pres. wants to go ahead. Al—take up with [Laird's aide, Assistant Brigadier General Robert E.] Pursley'.
>
> (NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, Vol. II, 6/1/70-12/70).

What however had become an exercise in political expediency was State Department's getting in line with NSC's policy. Informing MacArthur on 14th December 1970, a joint Departmental agreement over release of additional 34 F-4 sales

(NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

In the political expedience of maintaining Shah's goodwill, the sales controversy was resolved in Defence's withdrawing its objections towards additional 32 F-4s, withheld since 1968.

(NRC, OSD Files, FRC 330-76-067, Iran 1970, 452).

Despite assuaging Defence department's sensitivities, Rogers addressed the arms issue to Laird which amounted to nothing but acquiescing into NSC's sentiments ostensibly

working through Nixon's blessings. In a 19th November letter to Laird, he laid bare the realpolitik of State's arms policy as a political lever:

> 'I believe that we are on the right track and that we should continue to provide factual and technical information which should help Iran reach informed decisions on its military acquisition plans. Whatever decisions it may reach, we shall of course want to consider carefully their impact on our overall relations and larger interests in the area'.

Nevertheless, Rogers was again effectively endorsing Shah's threat perception from a pre-emptive first stake by Iraqi air forces, despite CIA's rejection of this possibility (under the SNIE-34). In addition, and as a matter of retrospective rejection of the logic underpinning the US perspective for Iran to confront Soviet emergence in the Gulf, Rogers effectively endorsed Shah's interests in preventing Iraq's military predominance despite SNIE's rejection of the Ba'athist regime entertaining such motives. Referring to the Shah's October 1969 visit, Roger's insisted:

> 'He was of course, concerned about the growing military strength of radical Arab States, particularly his immediate neighbour Iraq. …. It was in the light of this situation and how he felt it might develop that the Shah spoke of the need to develop and maintain a security force sufficiently impressive to deter any potentially hostile neighbour or group of neighbours from launching a first-strike against Iran's vulnerable urban centres and vital oil installations'.

Ignoring every possible caution by other agencies, Rogers was content to believe that nothing had changed since then, to have transformed Iran's own strategic thinking to oppose US stay in Bahrain:

> 'I am certain that he continues to hold to this view and that it would be futile to try and persuade him otherwise as long as current conditions and leadership in his part of the world remain relatively unchanged'.

Rogers also seemed wedded to CIA-Embassy's perception of the vital intelligence facilities furnished by Iran as the central US interest in the region, to be endangered:

> 'To do otherwise, am convinced, would reduce greatly the considerable influence we now have … I fear also that it could lead to the Shah making a direct linkage between the amount of assistance he expects of US in the future and the very valuable and, in some instances, unique intelligence and security facilities Iran now provides to us, a notion the Shah has scrupulously avoided heretofore'.

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN).

A more detailed analysis of the US arms policy before British withdrawal however suggests an inextricable link between US policy to prevent a total break with the Shah over the key interests in retention of intelligence facilities and also the MIDEASTFOR. In order to facilitate Shah's military build-up, advisors like MacArthur tried to facilitate a minimum Iranian military build-up by manipulating Soviet threat to the region. Not only MacArthur rejected US supplies prompting an arms race in the region but even rejected British ability to moderate Iran-Arab dispute, at the same time when he was involved in covert deal with the British over facilitating Iran's control of the smaller islands. Discouraging the Defence officials' visits to Iran for more informed policymaking by citing extra expenditures and workload on the Embassy, MacArthur's April 1970 briefing was a masterful act to keep Defence in the dark about the on-goings of Iran-US defence relations.

When therefore MacArthur visited Defence Department during April 1971 to persuade its officials to waive their disagreement to sales of 32 F-4s under the FMS agreement he fought his case in total disregard to Department's foreknowledge of Shah's interests in pre-empting Iraq's rise as a military power and a lacking Soviet threat to warrant MacArthur's solicitation. Visiting the Department but without informing them of his serving notice on the Shah about US decision to stay in Bahrain, the record of the meeting makes clear that MacArthur was tight-lipped over its more global implications.

MacArthur's main purpose of visiting Defence Department was however demanding more flexibility from Defence officials over providing 50% credits for the $140 million that he, with covert support by Kissinger and Saunders, had arranged with the Exim Bank.

During 8th April meeting, attended by Deputy Assistant Secretary James Noyes, and directors Thomas Pickering and John Reed, the most intriguing part of McArthur's solicitation was his wielding the Soviet threat as a legitimate Iranian security concern which surprisingly Noyes or nobody else challenged for a retroactive analysis of the disastrous arms policy by Noyes in 1982.

Although agreeing with a political motivate of moderating Shah's regional behaviour through arms diplomacy, it is not clear how MacArthur justified its compatibility with arms control when he advocated sustained arms supplies to Iran as a way of keeping the British, French and Italian manufacturer's out:

‘The Ambassador made it clear that he was not suggesting that we give Iran a blank check to buy whatever it wished in the United States, but he wished to stress that in his view it might be preferable for US to cede to a sale rather than to see the sale go to another supplier as he believes that to the extent that Iran purchases from other suppliers our ability to influence them in their decisions to purchase any armaments and equipment is diminished. Other suppliers of arms in his view have little or no desire to limit but on the contrary look to boosting sales of arms to Iran’.

MacArthur was similarly non-committal to the main objection by Noyes about arms supplies as prejudicial to the US arms control regime, and acted as a primer for the Soviets taking advantage with a weaker Iraq:

‘In his view the Soviets have already made gains resulting from the polarization in the Arab-Israeli War as well as Iran's strengthening of its defences does not motivate the Soviets to increase arms supplies in other Middle Eastern countries’.

In fact, by suggesting that a regional security architecture since World War II was already penetrated by Soviets, MacArthur argued that they were now’ attempting to achieve their goals through Syria, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula.’

The fact that MacArthur held no confidence in a policy of arms control which endangered Iran’s economic development was further evident when he rejected Noyes’ inquiry as to whether:

‘he was not concerned with the impact of Iran’s military purchases, on the country, over the next five years: His reply was an equally straightforward “Not”.

MacArthur’s obduracy to circumscribe regimented policy-planning was inhered in his lack of transparency when he avoided the central regional question of territorial conflicts for Defence officials to make informed judgments about the threats confronting Iran:

‘[he] recalled the Shah's public statement that the Islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs belong to Iran and that if an accommodation is not reached prior to the British withdrawal the Iranians will take them thereafter’.

Nevertheless, to McArthur’s credit, he was honest to the extent of acknowledging the “precedent-setting” nature of Iran’s taking islands by force which ‘could lead to Saudi Arabian moves against Abu Dhabi, and an Iraqi move against Kuwait’.

The fact that Nixon-era policy planning on the global security issues remained one of depriving Defence Department’s input and based in covert diplomatic channels was again

evident, in that while he never volunteered information on Shah's main concerns with the US decision to retain the Bahrain base, he did not labour on the precedent-setting nature of Soviet requests for bases in Iraq or South Yemen.

MacArthur's foremost lack of confidence in British ability to moderate the intra-Gulf rivalries, backed by US pressures on Iran was to leave a legacy of bitterness against both great powers without the world to know what role Nixon's policy executives played to encourage the Shah in pursuit of the US global interests . Here MacArthur is seen to reject British intentions to stay in the Persian Gulf upon inquiry that:

> 'the British believe that when they pull out at the end of 1971 they will be in a position to maintain their influence as heretofore'.
>
> Here is the verbatim record of MacArthur's reply:
>
> 'MacArthur's view, seconded by Noyes, was "*nonsense"'.*
>
> (NA, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL IRAN. NEA/IRN).

In 1970 however, the Shah's invocation of a new strategic threat posed on Iran's non-Soviet borders was defended by McArthur as mandating a 'minimum-modest' deterrent of a 6 Division and multiple Brigade sized- forces:

> 'Similarly, the naval and air requirements he had indicated to us were essential minimum. While in principle he would like to acquire all his equipment from US, he knew this was not possible, but he did wish to equip his air force entirely from US and other selected items from credit that remained'.
>
> (NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF).

Chapter 6:

"The Nixon Doctrine": Theorists and dissenters

6.1. Introduction

Saud's contention whether the NSC (directed by Kissinger) lacked a coherent or well-versed policy about Persian Gulf issues during 1968-71 while Nixon and Kissinger were occupied with the Arab-Israel or East Asian security dilemmas does not hold after another careful scrutiny of declassified records(Saud 2003: 63-66).

The record to the contrary comprehensively proves that Kissinger was very well-informed of the modesty about the Shah's "ambitions" and well-versed on the most complicated issues of intra- Gulf resource, territorial, security and ideological issues and briefed Nixon accordingly. As this chapter shows, that Kissinger's rationalizations of the US interests in the broader Middle East and theoretical interpretations of Nixon Doctrine converted Nixon from an apparent sceptic of Iran's ability to give force to his peripheral security philosophy to outright interventionist through Kurdish insurgency and Pakistan's re-armament, in order to strengthen India's strategic superiority in the broader Indian Ocean and neutralize Iraq from the Arab-Israeli equation during 1972-75 through Iran.

As this section demonstrates, Kissinger himself first supported Iran's claims on smaller Islands in the name of Gulf security but warned Nixon against putting too much faith on Iran's capability to protect the region from subversion and chaos after British departure. Until the NSC came up with well-thought through ideas about US strategic interests in the broader Gulf-South Asian region, Kissinger's advice to Nixon was one of encouraging Iran's regional posture as a stop-gap measure, while keeping the final say on regional security as a US prerogative until both reached some compromise with the Soviet Union over de-escalation in Europe, withdrawal from Vietnam and strategic disarmament. Until the CIA's Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE-34-70) came to dominate the inter-Department's strategic thinking about the central role incumbent upon the US over Gulf's major powers through naval preponderance, Kissinger's strategy remained one of supporting the Shah's regional claims but procrastinating on the three cardinal issues of Iranian interests: arms supplies, oil import quota and US presence in Bahrain.

In spite of the still-classified NSSM-60 about US strategic priorities and actions thereof towards the Gulf, the key policy recommendations made to Nixon on priorities and how to get involved in the Persian Gulf can still be gleaned from various correspondences.

Although after the 22nd April 1970 visit by Elliot Richardson and Sisco to the Shah, the State Department came under new pressures from MacArthur and General Wheeler through policy advocacies about Iran's ability to assume British role after December 1971, the fact that the State and the NSC remained indecisive as to what role Iran was capable of playing in the Gulf against non-Soviet threats and yet be restrained to invite Soviet counteraction remained one of political expediency.

The key policy initiative to resolve this dilemma therefore came from Nixon's personally deputing Joseph Sisco (during CENTO's ministerial conference in June 1970), to initiate a study about Iran's potential role in the region bourn by his doubts as to Iran's ability to be a stabilizing force in US absence:

A footnote appended to the 25th June 1970 memorandum (sent by Kissinger to Nixon) therefore read:

> '…Give me a report (no priority) on the Shah's idea of Iran (& Cento) playing a greater role in the Persian Gulf—Is it just too naive—'.

Kissinger's report on the nature of Iranian involvements with the Peninsular Arabs was a candid admission about Iran's merits to be deputized in a security role on behalf of Nixon Doctrine, and an honest analysis of what it was actually capable of doing, in light of its pro-Arab orientations. Despite explaining regional disputes in terms of intra-Arab resource rivalries, Kissinger pointed out Iran's own territorial and resource disputes over Abu Musa and Tunbs Islands:

> 'as often as not these disputes are grievously complicated by the actual or suspected presence of oil'.

Positing the Arab-Iranian rivalry in a religio-ethnic context, Kissinger still apprised Nixon of Iran's potential to "give preference to improving its Arabic relations", as a result of which its accession to a Western-led CENTO was a "liability".

Kissinger pointed out the centrality of these very Arab-Iranian common interests as an impediment to Iran's ability to act uncritically on behalf of US interests, which were made even more difficult by the post-1967 Israeli belligerence against the Arabs. Beside the over-whelming potential of Iran unable to support broader US policy in the Middle East, Kissinger

undertook a "two-dimensional" analysis of "what Iran can and cannot do", whose central terms were Iran's ability to safeguard Arab moderates from internal subversion.

Acknowledging, Iranian claims and threats from radical Arabism, as posing security threats to the smaller states "(the FAA of Nine)" after 1971, Kissinger's focus remained on Soviet expansionism in the region through proxies which he rejected conclusively.

Nevertheless, Kissinger's apprising Nixon about what Iran "could not do" is more instructive for an appraisal of Nixon-era policy towards the Shah, whose implications went beyond his own fall in 1974. Reminding Nixon that after relinquishing Iran's claims on Bahrain and undertaking a skilful, cooperative and aid-based diplomacy towards Arab neighbours, as well as 'even offering secretly the military cooperation and steps Iran might take to come to Saudi aid in time of emergency', it could still not *'prevent incipient subversion and revolution among its neighbors'* .

In fact he argued that:

> *'her ability to contain the growth of radical Arabism in the area is also severely circumscribed', as, a very 'limited'* ability to prevent the growth of Soviet influence in the Gulf area through the ascendance of radical Arabism'.

In the narrower focus of a Soviet expansionist threat, Kissinger contradicted the Shah's theory of a Soviet-inspired subversive threat to the Gulf by pointing-out the Soviet 'problem' of having to take sides in Iran-Iraq conflict due to their own:

> 'Interest of preserving good relations with Iran, Turkey and Pakistan. This position was assumed even though Soviet influence in the Gulf area is concentrated mainly in Iraq'.

It seemed that until late at least, Kissinger did truly believe in the Shah's personal interest in playing a role in regional security but did not challenge it then. He therefore informed Nixon of Shah 'making clear its intentions to assume a leading role in providing for the security of the Gulf in the future'.

Nevertheless, Kissinger still provided Nixon with two honest caveats for making a political judgment, both of which implications were to affect first arms race in the region and territorial rivalries, both continuing to this day. The first was the possibility of Iran's orientations shifting towards Arabs should a prolonged Arab-Israel conflict ensued. The other was challenging the wisdom of US military support to Iran without impugning his real motives against Arabs:

'Used wisely, as we hope and expect it will be, this military force can be an important factor in preserving stability and security in the Persian Gulf after 1971'.

A critical analysis of Kissinger's memo however suggests that he advocated Iran's national security interests better served through a "self-help" posture, and not through a region-wide security role that such deputization entailed, about which he still remained dubious. Until 1972, Kissinger left the basic ambiguity of Iran's military build-up as directed against Iraq and located Iran's interests away from the locus of Gulf's north-western sector:

> 'Iran's goal is to develop a deterrent of such credibility that no area nation or likely combination would dare attack it or seriously challenge Iranian unrestricted use of the Persian Gulf or access to the waters beyond….There are also real limits to what it can achieve. Its best chance of achieving its purpose lies in its gaining the active cooperation of its Islamic neighbors, particularly Saudi Arabia and Pakistan'.
>
> (NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, Vol. II, 6/1/70-12/70).

Not only Kissinger's memorandum, but its attached NSC-Interdepartmental Study under the SNIE-34 (below cited) suggest a clear preference of US policy-planners for keeping Iran free from the obligations of Nixon Doctrine for a trans- Gulf role as opposed to what MacArthur and Richardson tried to hard-sell to the State, Defence, NSC and the Shah.

(NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN) [39].

6.2. "Hands-On" US policy and the politics of islands

The paradox of US policy towards the Persian Gulf as handicapped by indecisions about its tangible objectives- while Nixon was trying to extricate US forces out of Vietnam- as well as the suggestion that Nixon policy-planners arrogated the region to sole Iranian or Saudi hegemonic jurisdictions during 1969-72, cannot be resolved without the insights of one of the most fundamental studies conducted by Nixon Administration about the ultimate US security

[39] The fact remained that Richardson was advised by Kissinger himself to tie Shah publicly to the Nixon Doctrine, an advice he repeated to Nixon in the wake of his May 1972 visit. During April 1970, Richardson was known to have assured Shah which MacArthur reminded Rogers on 22nd July 1970, and Noyes on 8th April 1971, before meeting Nixon personally: "we recognize relevance of Nixon doctrine to shah's proposal for maintaining peace and stability in gulf area and that us should seek to help those who are willing, like Iran, to bear regional defense burdens".
(National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, DEF 12-5 IRAN. Secret; Priority; Limdis; National Archives, RG 59, Central Files 1970-73, POL IRAN. Secret. Drafted by Robert L. Dowell, Jr. (NEA/IRN).

objectives in the Gulf. Loosely carried out under the auspices of Nixon Doctrine, the study delineated most US objectives deliverable by Iran as part of the Western coalition after British withdrawal and became the NSSM-92 of June 1970.

As subsequent sections demonstrate that this study and another by the CIA (SNIE-34 of September 1970), were to have serious implications for the regional security orientations of the Shah, when Nixon and Kissinger took strategic initiative on most Gulf affairs, even when Iran ostensibly undertook direct pre-emptive action against Iraq and in South-western Asia against Indian and Afghan encroachments during 1972-78.

Until 1972 however Bahrain remained at the core of US policy-planner's focus as soon as its independence was assured by early 1970 through an equally pernicious role played by the UN Special representative Vittorio Guicciardi on March 1970 by "ascertaining the wishes of the people of Bahrain" and agreeing to the Shah's demand not to hold a plebiscite during March 1971(UNSC Resolution 287/1970) [40]

The following section demonstrates that besides contradicting various assumptions held by Tehran embassy and certain protagonists of Iranian management of the regional security under European and American oversight, deliberations amongst US policy-circles during 1970 were highly critical of Iranian "heavy-handed regional posture and uncertainty about its political evolution. Doubts about Iran's potentials therefore laid the ground-work for a new policy shift where core US interests in the region were (re) enunciated under a new interpretation of regional security. Not only such recommendation served to change the entire US policy trajectory towards a highly intrusive security management of the region, but as subsequent sections will show that Nixon used arms supplies to Iran as a way of mellowing Shah's criticism at US presence in Bahrain after May 1972 by ignoring CIA's warnings

While Kissinger tried to keep a balance between key US policy priorities and Iranian interests under the broader rubric of its relations with the Arab World to keep the US out of the Gulf's minor territorial problems, there were two dissenters of letting Iran carrying initiative in the region to the detriment of US interests.

Deliberating on the NSSM-90 under Presidential Directive NSDM-92 of 5th June 1970, the purpose of which was to search for "possibilities" of 'new polices and programmes' towards the smaller Gulf States, in particular Bahrain, Saunders and Richard Kennedy

[40] Middle East Journal, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Summer, 1970), pp. 373-380

concurred upon two key objectives for US policy in the Persian Gulf Review Group that effectively sought to involve US directly into the region.

As a matter of common knowledge, Nixon had already alluded to a policy of direct engagement with smaller sheikhdoms, besides dealing with Iran and Saudi Arabia as its core powers, in his Foreign Policy address to the Congress of 1970. It seemed that Saunders still viewed US interests best served through Iran-Saudi cooperation. Reporting to Kissinger on 3rd June 1970 about the results of the study conducted under Nixon's order to Joseph Sisco during June 1970 CENTO Conference, he now advocated a 'logical US strategy' of marrying the two strands of an 'extensive support for Iran as the unquestioned power in the area', with the 'logic of cooperation between a strong Iran and a weak Saudi Arabia':

> 'Though not likely to diminish our relationship with Iran; we do not want to have to choose between Iran and Saudi Arabia; Saudi-Iranian cooperation is the optimum'.

Saunders therefore addressed the central policy dilemma animating direct US involvement with the Gulf where four options for US engagement were debated. Curiously, being the initial theorist of the Gulf Security Pact to include non-littoral Pakistan and Turkey, Saunders was to reject the two key options out of hand: (a) 'assuming the UK's role as a protector', and (d)'actively promoting a regional security pact'.

Emanating from his previous caution to restrict Iran's military build-up to affect US objectives in the Gulf stability, despite supporting a dubious policy of non-restraint on Iran's threat to Bahrain and Saudi Arabia (over Arabi island), Saunders viewed Iran's expansionism costing the US to lose its political credibility with the Arabs. Out of two chosen options therefore, the NSC reached a consensus over making a real choice as to 'how much political capital to spend with the Shah to restrain Iran', in the real possibility of Iranians 'preparing to seize the small Arab-held islands at the mouth of the Persian Gulf'.

In any case, despite a 'logical US strategy" of encouraging Iran-Saudi cooperation, it was opined the key qualification was 'but to recognize that Iran is the real power in the Gulf and to pursue the fullest feasible U.S-Iranian relationship in that context'. In fact, both Saunders and Kennedy intimated Kissinger this determination being made to "counter those who argue, for instance, that our military credit assistance is making Iran too powerful".

Another contradictory advice reaching Kissinger therefore was their "working view" that US policy cannot interact on an exclusive basis with certain local rulers in the knowledge that the 'British had refused to oblige with the smaller states'. The Group therefore concurred

in a policy which sought to reduce US exposure to supporting Iran-Saudi preponderance on smaller sheikhdoms but took the position that in the absence of Congressional willingness to underwrite a diplomacy of 'cultural, technical and educational assistance, to these states "having resources of their own", the USG was better-off providing 'a technical assistance effort (mainly using private U.S. experts for whom the sheikhs would pay)'.

The new policy prescriptions therefore goes to the heart of historical British interests in providing technical, military and diplomatic advice under the 1872 Treaties with the Trucial and upper Gulf Sheikhdoms, which were pre-empted as a manifestation of direct US interests in replacing British footprint from the Gulf after 1971.

Nevertheless, a policy of fostering bilateral understanding between Iran and the US over a regimented security management was still animated by its costs to US relations with the lower Gulf Arabs. Hence both planners warned Kissinger against 'relaxing and pinning all our hopes on the Iran-Saudi cooperation', in the prospect of Iran 'becoming a heavy-handed peacemaker' in the region after a breakdown between Iran and the Saudis:

> 'If the above is a logical view of U. S. strategy, the U.S. still has an interest in making the Arab participants in this cooperation more effective and stable partners'.

The anomaly that US policy-planners during 1969-71 acted as honest peace-brokers in the intra-Gulf conflicts is strongly disproven when seen in further debates about the core US interest in the acquisition of Bahrain. The fact remained that despite the option of diversifying American dependence upon "one half-pillar" option, the NSC posed the cardinal question coming as a direct challenge to the region's agenda-setter's namely Iran and Saudi Kingdom:

> "Should we maintain our small naval force in the Persian Gulf based on Bahrain?"

Despite favouring a 'psychological presence' over the physical- value of a naval fleet, and 'recognizing that the Shah is not especially anxious to see US stay on', the contradiction between a regional power's agenda and the broader Indian Ocean strategy of the US and Britain, remained one of principle:

> "The decision required is a decision in principle not to reduce our presence at this time".

In the foreknowledge of Iran's interests in reducing Western presence to prompt Soviet counter-action in the region, Saunders observed that the 'decision' served as a 'trigger to determine feasibility' for US presence over the head of regional protests. This "trigger"

became the first official advocacy of a "hands-on" policy whether or not Iran liked it, after Thacher's advice to Rogers on the retention of Bahrain in October 1969.

The group therefore recommended that the USG inform the British government about the retention of Bahrain to sort-out "operational" problems of acquiring naval facilities without ascertaining Iranian agreement. In fact, as a direct insinuation of a far more active role over the head of regional sensitivities was the following request made to the British:

> 'to arrange with the Bahrainis for US to go on using a small port facility with a U.S. flag over it', and, 'sound out the Shah in more detail.'
>
> The Group finally agreed that the President should be persuaded in:
>
> 'his endorsement of a general U.S. strategy; in principle not reducing our naval force (if that is the judgment of the Group); and 'drafting a plan for fuller U. S. representation in the sheikhdoms.'

Despite the still-secret classification of the NSDM-92, even a cursory look at the briefing memorandum suggests that Nixon forthwith endorsed its policy recommendations.

It is further evident from the preceding divisions among policy-planners over a US strategy of basing the entire Gulf policy on a potentially dangerous Iran-centric architecture, which Saunders and Kennedy had advocated. In fact, some planners perceived Saudi Kingdom as strong enough to secure its own South-eastern periphery.

6.3. SNIE-34-70: dichotomous interests vs. regional aspirations

While MacArthur, Twitchell and Richardson remained the hard-core trio of a "no-questions-asked" arms policy for the Shah during 1969-72, with the State Department a reluctant confessor of arms control, the new policy towards Iran became one of preventing Defence Department to vet Shah's arms orders, to prevent an explosive arms race in the region. As this section demonstrates the Nixon-era policy during 1970-72 became one of intra-Departmental rivalry over the political expedience of arms supplies.

Nevertheless, the Defence Department's demands for evaluations of the threats warranting a break-neck arms regime and the US policy objectives achievable through the Shah were finally deduced under the SNIE-34-70 dated 3rd September 1970.

The Estimate was one of the most nuanced crystallization of the contradictions of US arms policy as the central leverage on Iran's regional evolution and its limitations since 1964.

In addition, the issues underlying the study were the most evocative and clearest of Iran-US relations to-date, which departed from Johnson-era assessments of intelligence relations as the omnipotent factor for the US to have to put-up with the Shah's intransigencies. In any case, the fact that Iran ceased to be the only remaining "venue" for intelligence activities had already been underlined by CIA's initial recommendations to Nixon against expanding intelligence facilities until Iran's willingness to host such activities was ascertained. In fact, as early as 16th April 1970, Helms had informed Saunders and Kissinger of the technological break-throughs which further reduced dependence upon Iran's intelligence facilities[41].

Kissinger had therefore written on the memo:

'Hal - where do we stand on mil credit? HK.'

(NSC Files, Box 601, Iran, Vol. I, 1/20/69 - 5/31/70).

The fact that the SNIE-34 served as a new policy blue-print for US arms policy towards Iran, and affecting conservative Saudi and other sheikhdoms across the Gulf, was inhered in the 'perimeters' of the study, which had necessitated a new review:

> 'This estimate deals primarily with Iranian foreign policy over the next several years, the place military forces have in that policy, the likelihood of hostilities between Iran and its neighbours, and some implications of these matters for the US, including the question of arms sales.'.

Despite pro-forma recognition of intelligence cooperation, a wider scope of the Estimate was evinced in its focus on the regional as well superpowers' bilateral relations, for Iran to make strategic judgments of its own, hence the warning:

> 'If US rebuffs or deferrals of his arms requests should convince the Shah that the US was no longer responsive to his needs, he would conclude the US was downgrading its relations with Iran'.

Recognizing some of the adverse consequences of Johnson-era arms credits policy, the Estimate anticipated future consequences of such downgrading of bilateral relations, which

[41] In April 1970, Saunders forwarded Helms' advice to Kissinger in the run-up for Iran's future military orders that were being challenged in the State-Defence Departments not adduced to logical threats to Iran's security. Helms therefore pointed out:"To you and a very few others I can say that the [text not declassified] collection activities in Iran [*text not declassified*] Ruling out Afghanistan as politically infeasible, there is no place to which we could transfer these activities were Iran denied us. In time we hope that some of the important coverage now obtained from Iran can be picked up by overhead sensors, but for some years ahead the ground-based facilities will remain absolutely essential if we are to keep our knowledge of the Soviet programs up to date".

besides motivating the Shah's demands of a new geo-economic and ideological re-configuration between the South and the Industrial North, now surmised:

> 'Consequently, he would readjust Iranian policies in the direction of closer ties with certain West European states; a more accommodating attitude toward the USSR; resistance to US advice on international issues; probably increased pressures on US oil interests, and possibly termination of US special facilities and military over-flight rights'.

Any further doubts as to the Shah's lack of interest in asserting some hegemonistic security architecture of Iran's own contrivance or usurp territorial or resource belongings of weaker sheikhdoms was again contradicted when the CIA opined:

> 'B). The Shah regards a modern, well-equipped military establishment as essential to maintain and further Iranian interests in the Gulf, to deter hostile moves by Iraq, and to assure Iranian egress from the Gulf. The existence of a large military force will help him to get the cooperation of conservative Arab rulers in opposing the spread, of radical doctrines and forces in the Gulf.'

In fact, the notion of Iran setting the terms of internal as well as external security agenda through a regional consensus was clearly acknowledged:

> 'The Shah cares relatively little who runs the Arab states of the Gulf, as long as they do not challenge his pre-eminence, are not hospitable to radicals and revolutionaries, and are responsive to Iranian security objectives. Nevertheless, he does view physical control of certain locations as the key to stability in the Gulf. Thus, he wants control of the tiny islands of the Tunbs and Abu Musa on the grounds that forces hostile to him might physically seize these islands and control entry to and exit from the Gulf. Control of the islands also involves conflicting Iranian and Arab oil claims. He recognizes that too heavy a hand could be counterproductive, and has indicated that he will not press the sovereignty issue so long as Iran obtains effective control of these islands. If such an arrangement is not worked out before the British withdrawal, the Shah will exert increasing pressure on the tiny Trucial states which claim them, and in the last resort would probably occupy the islands by force'.

Nevertheless, in the direct context of Soviet interests in the Persian Gulf, and relations with Iraq, the CIA's Estimate was a proof of the contradictory assessments emerging from Tehran Embassy and the NSC itself, as well as rejecting the Shah's own Soviet-centric threat

theories. Instead the CIA argued that Soviet interests in 'normalization with Iran' were at the background of 'Soviet restraint during the April 1969 flare-up over the Shatt' al-Arab'.

Another source of Shah's anxiety from a Soviet-inspired subversion or military threat on Iran's borders until late was similarly rejected by the CIA. The foregoing also contradicts Kissinger's own rationalization for building-up Iran's military deterrent which he rationalized under the Soviet-radical threat as to have motivated Nixon to grant a 'blank cheque' after the Iraq-Soviet Treaty(1972). In fact the spectre of a radical-Arab military coalition acting through Soviet support on Iran's south-western borders (Iraq and Syria) or along the Red Sea-southern Arabian axis was also down-graded in CIA's assessment to warrant a military build-up that the Shah and MacArthur had theorized during Shah's October 1969 visit to Nixon:

> 'Arab disunity and dislike of external direction almost certainly will prevent the formation of an effective radical Arab military coalition against Iran. Moreover, an overly active Soviet policy of support for radical Arab movements against Iranian interests could jeopardize the USSR's currently satisfactory relations with Iran'.

The Estimate similarly identified no threat whatsoever to Iran's 'territorial integrity by any of its Persian Gulf neighbours'. Another crucial determination by the CIA was to be over-ruled later by Kissinger and Nixon during 1972 when Helms disagreed with the plausibility of Iraq initiating hostilities against Iran considering Shah's armed forces as 'substantially larger and better trained than those of Iraq'.

In fact, Helms quite honestly warned Nixon about Shah's pre-emptive tendencies against the regional rivals, whenever opportunity presented itself, an option jumped by Kissinger and Nixon when it came to preventing Iraq from becoming a threat to Israel's' security in the run-up for another War in the Middle East(October 1973) Nevertheless, Helms still identified a restraint on the Shah's future aggressive options to prevent disintegration of a pseudo-cooperative arrangement, which was heavily dependent upon Arab consensus:

> 'Should a radical movement succeed in establishing itself in one of the smaller states, he would almost certainly try to contain or unseat it by clandestine means, but might use overt force as a last resort. A unilateral use of force by the Shah would virtually compel even conservative Feisal to support fellow Arabs, and this would upset both Gulf stability and the Shah's designs for cooperation of conservative Gulf States under his leadership*'.*

Another endorsement of the narrowness of US interests, attributed to the "security-consensual" basis of Nixon Doctrine and a necessary condition for a Gulf Security Community was manifest in the cooperative potential of Iran's common cause with Kuwaiti-Saudi interests in the "stability of the Persian Gulf":

> 'Neither Kuwait nor Saudi Arabia is likely to challenge Iranian efforts to play a pre-eminent role in Gulf security, for example, by naval patrols, so long as Iran respects territorial waters and agreements on undersea oil rights'.

The fact that the Estimate ultimately failed as a politically adaptable security blue-print after 1972 was manifest not in its lack of insight, intimate knowledge about Gulf affairs or Iran-Arab interests, but CIA's warning-out Iran's interests in destabilizing the Iraqi regime by instigating Iraqi Kurd's rivalry with Baghdad. This very threat to regional security became a common Iran-US after Nixon's 1972 visit, operated by Kissinger through covert channels of Johnson's ex-Treasury Secretary William Connolly with the Shah, most of which documents remain classified to date.

Nevertheless the Estimate still gave one of the most vital prognoses for policy-planners which goes to the CIA's (and Defence Department) credit of predicting what was to be the Gulf's tortuous future. A verbatim reading of the text is warranted to understand how Nixon-era diplomacy was one of ugly Faustian deals and ignored all warnings against an arms race when the Soviet threat was conspicuously rejected to warrant it:

> 'Iranian relations with Iraq have been antagonistic in recent years. The Iranians have unilaterally denounced the treaty of 1937 …The Shah believes that the revolutionary regimes in Baghdad threaten his interests, and he has actively opposed them. For instance, he has supported Kurdish rebels in Iraq extensively over the past 7 or 8 years. This support has involved direct military aid, cash subventions, and some haven on the Iranian side of the border for Kurdish rebels. At the same time, the Shah prefers to keep potentially troublesome Kurdish leaders occupied outside Iran, which also has a Kurdish minority. The Iranians were considerably annoyed when the Kurds accepted the Baghdad government's proposals for a cease-fire and settlement in March 1970, but Tehran maintains contact with Kurdish leaders against the day when fighting may start again.
>
> It seems likely that Iraqi-Iranian relations will remain poor, at least as long as the present Ba'ath government is in power in Baghdad. The Ba'athist regime will continue

to use the party and the state apparatuses to further Iraq's aims of replacing of traditional rulers in the Gulf with revolutionary governments, and, as far as possible, to exclude Iran from Gulf affairs. The Ba'ath groups in Bahrain, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and a few other Principalities are likely from time to time to attract Iran's attention….The Iranians and the Iraqis continue to support the activity of political exiles from the other country. For example, an Iranian-supported group tried to oust the Ba'ath regime in January 1970. Especially since Iraq became heavily involved in the Arab-Israeli dispute, however, these endeavours have been largely rhetorical. Nevertheless, the Shah is seriously concerned about Iraqi pretensions to Khuzestan. Hostilities between Iraq and Iran, though not likely, are clearly possible...This could happen again, and an incident might touch off fighting-e.g., border skirmishes, exchanges of artillery fire, and occasional air raids. ***Iraq will, however, be particularly inhibited from initiating provocative actions as long as about a fifth of its army remains in Jordan and Syria… The Iraqi Army has not reached the border in the mountainous north for 10 years, thanks to the Kurdish rebellion***.

The Iranian Armed Forces are substantially larger than those of Iraq, although the two sides are about evenly matched in numbers of such weapons as tanks, artillery, armoured personnel carriers, and aircraft. The Iraqis, despite their nearly 10 years of warfare against Kurdish guerrillas, do not seem to have developed much spirit and dash. Their senior officer Corps has been decimated several times by political purges'.

One of the central concerns for US policy-planners about Soviet interference in the region on behalf of radical or conservative Arabs and affecting a pre-emptive US naval posture in the Indian Ocean and CIA's agreeing with Iranian opposition to US stay in Bahrain was emphatically addressed in the Estimate:

'The Soviets have attempted to build good relations with Iran and other states along its border which are allied to the West. At the same time, it has courted the "progressive" Arab regimes and become the major arms supplier for Iraq, Syria, and the UAR. The USSR places considerable importance on expanding its presence in the Gulf, where it has limited diplomatic representation and few political assets. Showing the flag by Soviet naval vessels is certain to increase in the years ahead. However, an overly active policy of support for Arab radical movements in the Gulf or undertaking independent conspicuous political or military efforts there could jeopardize the USSR's currently

good, if not overly cordial, relations with Iran. ***The Soviets would therefore prefer not to be put in a position of having to choose between Iran on the one hand and Iraq and the radical Arabs on the other. This consideration will set limits on how aggressive the Soviets will be in pursuing their policy in the Gulf in the next few years'***.

Nevertheless, the Estimate also pointed out the true nature of Iran-Soviet relations which tantamount to rejecting the Shah's rationalizations for building-up a military deterrent to thwart Soviet threats to the region, as well as mandating US presence on behalf of local allies:

'He believes, however, that good Iranian-Soviet relations offer benefits to Iran and that he can control any Soviet presence and subversive activities in his country'.

In effect, the Estimate was a general rejection of Soviet intentions to support a radical outflanking manoeuvre into the Persian Gulf. Nevertheless, it was also not an outright rejection of further regional security perceptions based in threats by some exclusive Iraqi-Arab coalitionary movement which depended on the Soviets.

As an empirical evidence of Iran's ability to contribute to a regional Security Community by deterring non-status quo powers, the Estimate similarly argued about Iran's ability to deter any regional threat on its own operating beyond its immediate periphery:

'The Shah wants modern sophisticated armed forces to establish military superiority over neighbouring Arab countries, particularly Iraq, in order to deter present or potential hostile forces from any notions of armed adventure in Iran, and to promote Iranian interests in the Gulf. In recent years, he has emphasized improvement of his airforce, and to a lesser extent his navy. Iran's Armed Forces are already larger and better equipped than any the Iranians are at all likely to fight-notably that of Iraq. The additional aircraft which the Shah wishes to purchase- about 70 F-4s and 30 C-130s- will make a dramatic increase in certain Iran's capabilities….If he gets these C-130s, Iran would have the capability to airlift over 4,000 combat soldiers at one time to any likely trouble spot in the Gulf region. Forces of this nature would permit Iran to conduct military operations in, say, Saudi Arabia in response to a request for help against insurrection".

It was similarly clear that whatever US policy was being contrived, either in the direct context of an Iraqi-Soviet coalition threatening the conservative balance of power on the

Arabian Peninsula, or converging on Iran; the spectre of Soviet-dominance in the Gulf was considered highly contradictory to Iraq's own regional interests and by implication making Iraq a member of the Gulf Security Community, should Shah was restrained from over-reaction:

> '…In the Persian Gulf, Iraq and the USSR will, to some extent, be carrying out parallel activities. The Soviets are likely to make the "correct" diplomatic moves, naval visits, and the like, while the Iraqi Ba'athists promote their revolutionary interests. The Ba'athists will be willing to cooperate with other revolutionary forces in the Gulf, including the Communists, as long as such cooperation seems likely to further Ba'ath interests.
>
> ***Iraq is not likely to help in promoting the fortunes of other Arab radical movements or of the USSR at its own expense. Moreover, Baghdad would resent Soviet efforts to direct Iraqi activities in the Gulf***.'

In addition, the Estimate was quite prophetic of the things to happen had it not been for Nixon to concur with Shah's radical-Soviet threat theories. Rejecting the prospect of Soviet influences taking roots inside Iraq or Iraq threatening the regional status-quo through overt military aggression to warrant a military build-up therefore became one of Nixon' per-empting Iraq's rise as a challenger to Western interests in the region and prompted a Soviet diplomacy to take advantage of Iran-Iraq rivalry:

> 'Iran's neighbours are probably not yet aware of just how impressive Iran's forces may become by the mid-1970s--even without these additional purchases. The conservative Arab rulers in the Gulf have and are likely to continue good relations with Iran; in any case, there is little they can do militarily about Iran's preponderant force. The Iraqis, who have built up their forces considerably in recent years but are still militarily inferior to Iran, are likely to get quite concerned when they realize the levels of air-power toward which the Iranians are building. Baghdad will probably believe that the Iranians are doing so with operations against Iraq in mind and will almost certainly seek to add to its own forces'.

The most crucial finding of the intelligence Estimate was about the implications of US arms sales for direct Iran-Arab relations, when it explicitly pointed-out 'formidable obstacles' in the way of intra- Gulf cooperation in the overall Middle East context. Warning that the existence of a large military under Iran would make 'even the conservative Arabs in the Gulf

are likely to view a projection of Iranian power in this area with some suspicion', should have been the guiding security doctrine for the US policy afterwards.

One of the most emphatic (and perhaps prophetic) warning for the future of Arabian Peninsula-Persian Gulf community was pointing-out a situation in which the US was seen as a supplier to 'both regional contenders(Iran and Saudi Arabia), both carrying vital US interests for its petroleum companies', and hence a prophecy for its unravelling after 1979:

> 'The means by which the Shah seeks to make Iranian power felt in the Gulf could set Iranian and conservative Arabs at loggerheads. Feisal might help the Shah if the latter moved covertly, but should radical turmoil break out in one of the shakier mini-states of the Gulf, for example, and the Shah were to intervene openly, the need to show Arab solidarity would probably compel Feisal to denounce Iranian intrusion-even though his sympathies probably would be against the radicals...
>
> Even if matters do not reach such a stage, Iranian moves in the Gulf could cause much Arab opinion to believe that the US is supporting Iranian efforts, including those clearly directed against Arab interests. Such a belief would have some adverse effect on relations with the Arab world; the issue could become serious if Iran did use force on the Arab side of the Gulf'.

Nonetheless, one of the few tests about the tangibility of Iran-Arab relations, the Estimate's predictability was found wonting, when it warned against the personal nature of the Shah and King Faisal's cooperative relationship, 'rather than a firmly-grounded matter of national policy of the two states':

> 'in any case cooperation between the two is a prerequisite but not a guarantee of stability in the Gulf'.

Although the core strength of the Intelligence Estimate was the analysis of the threats posed by Iran's military posture; its ultimate utility to prevent an arms race in the Persian Gulf was rejected by its own commissioners forthwith. As to its very tangible implications for Nixon Doctrine and the Shah's potential deference to Soviet security interests, it observed:

> '[…] deferral or even refusal of a particular request would not cause him to make major alterations in the overall relationship unless he considered this request essential. Yet, his suspicions that the US does not fully appreciate him would increase. He would probably become correspondingly resistant to US advice on future arms purchases and on Iranian policies generally'.

(CIA, NIC Files, Job 79, R01012A, Box 387, Folder 3, SNIE-34-70, Iran's International Position).

6.4. The "Kissinger Doctrine" and Bahrain: alternative to Iranian 'pillar' or impediment to regional security?

As one of the most ironic aspects of Nixon-era diplomacy towards Iran as pursued through the covert-channel operations by Kissinger, however had not materialized until late 1970, when Kissinger gave a new strategic appraisal for Persian Gulf security to Nixon on the basis of SNIE-34, which centred on hardcore Realism interests and dangerous enough to the prejudice of Iranian sensitivity to Soviet presence along her three flanks. The new appraisal departed considerably from previous policy prescriptions of 5th June 1970(NSDM-92), and was grounded in the basic assumptions about Iran's regional and Soviet-centric interests enunciated in the SNIE-34. On the whole, Kissinger's prescriptions suggested a radical interpretation of Nixon Doctrine for the Persian Gulf which as we shall see, was not countenanced by Iran until 1972.

Kissinger's policy orientations now reflected a broad-based agreement with US policy interests identified by Saunders and Thacher but heavily conditioned by the CIA's new Estimate. The core strategic shift in the US retention of influence in the Gulf (or over its powers) was based in the "principle" of retention of Bahrain, which by its central premises amounted to reducing US dependence upon Iran's military value due to its "heavy-handed" role in the region and becoming a liability for US policy towards the broader Middle East.

Kissinger's 22nd October 1970 memorandum to Nixon therefore served the basis for NSDM-90 by endorsing Bahrain's retention, as a central objective for US Indian Ocean policy to deal with the Soviet emergence in the Gulf and Red Sea bases. While the Suez Canal remained closed for Western maritime traffic (until March 1974) and works on Diego Garcia pended due to commitments in Vietnam, it was for another systemic shock of the Iranian revolution; the seizure of the Grand Mecca Mosque by Bin Laden's brother Mahrous Bin Laden (and collaborator with Seif al Uteybi**'** and al-Qahtani) in 1979 and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1980, that Diego Garcia made its importance felt in the Indian Ocean affairs.

Kissinger now undertook a radically different view of British presence in the Gulf, when their potential reversal after Conservatives victory in June 1970 had recently created new dissenters in Iran and other Arab states against Western presence. Clearly, Kissinger had

warmed to the possibility of US presence in the region, for which a new diplomatic paradigm was warranted.

Kissinger's new strategic assessment about US goals and objectives in the broader Indian Ocean, affected by NSC's analysis of the SNIE-34(1970) envisaged US presence in Bahrain, until Diego Garcia became operational for minor contingencies by 1974. Kissinger therefore apprised Nixon about the potentials and limitations of the Gulf policy.

> 'When the British announced their disengagement decision (in January 1968), they invited US to come in, once their withdrawal was completed. One of the major purposes of our policy review exercise, therefore, was to begin to determine the nature of our future presence in the Gulf. There are two serious issues: (a) our diplomatic and aid presence, and (b) the future of MIDEASTFOR.'

In fact Kissinger now presented Nixon with the options in which most irritants of Iranian claims on the Gulf islands were still unachieved due to Arab opposition and Iran-US relations were at a low-ebb without Nixon extending a lavish arms package and oil import quota to the Shah. In addition, with British Ambassador Denis Wright and MacArthur confronting the Shah not to pressure Major oil companies, after the Shah's failure of direct Independent oil and arms suppliers route, Kissinger had no easier convincing Nixon in the wisdom of a "hands-on" policy, over the head of its central powers and Soviet interests in matching US presence in the region though Iraq or PDRY:

> 'The Bahrainis would like US to stay...."The question is, do we want to stay?". A decision is needed now, so that arrangements can be worked out with the Bahrainis and the British before the British go. More importantly perhaps, we will have to sound out the Shah to see how strenuously he will object to the continuation of an outside military presence. He will be sceptical, but the problem may be less complicated now that he has relinquished Iran's claim to Bahrain'.

Kissinger's new cost-benefit appraisal suggested that from a previous hesitation by the USG to interfere in Gulf's multiple territorial and resource conflicts to offend the Shah, the US policy had come to confront the Shah with a radically new orientation towards achieving global interests with the Soviets at the cost of regional security imperatives and by its very implications posing a threat to the region, in case the US decided to use Bahrain as a bargaining chip for de-escalation in Europe or Soviet withdrawal from the Caribbean Sea and Western Africa.

Taking advantage of Soviet restraints on behalf of Iraq or other radicals since the closure of Suez Canal (1967-74), the new US global security framework (with Europe and SALT-I at its core) subsumed regional security despite CIA's warning about Shah's reservations. Nevertheless, until Nixon could achieve NATO's tactical (re)armament with European allies and at the same time strategic disarmament with the Soviets, and opened to China, Nixon- Kissinger's interests centred on retention of Bahrain and making use of other British Indian Ocean bases(Aldabra, Kagnew, Gann and Oman) the last of which became unacceptable to Saudi Arabia after 1979. In the pursuit of Détente in Europe but directly threatening Soviet southern borders through Bahrain as an Indian Ocean proxy, Kissinger's advice effectively endorsed a policy with an optimum British deterrent (in Oman and directly in the Trucial Coast) in cohort with a strong Iranian auxiliary against Iraq and the PDRY, while Bahrain was to become the staging-base for crisis deployment in the Red Sea-northern Indian Ocean littorals in case of a future Arab-Israel conflict. As the latter sections demonstrate, the impossibility of maintaining a long logistical line between Diego Garcia and Bahrain after 1973 War was further complicated by Bahrain serving notice for its evacuation.

Contradicting the most commonly touted assumptions of a "power vacuum" after British departure in-line with Onley's research (2009:24-25), Kissinger informed Nixon how the continuity of British military, political and diplomatic influences in the region was to be insured:

> 'We have to bear in mind in formulating our basic strategy that the British will still be actively involved in Gulf diplomacy. This is another reason why it is wrong to assume that a vacuum is in prospect. Heath's victory in June has little to do with this. The Tories may indeed stretch out the period of British military withdrawal slightly beyond Wilson's deadline (the end of 1971). But it is too late to reverse the process of local political change that the original U. K. withdrawal announcement of 1968 has set in motion. (The Shah, the Saudis, and the Kuwaitis have all been emphatic on this score'.

One of the most bizarre aspects of the British military withdrawal as generally accepted to have occurred after December 1971 are mainly contradicted in Kissinger's assurance to Nixon of the US presence complemented by British retention of key military facilities and functions inside and along the entire Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsula axis. Kissinger therefore surmised that the British had the "leeway" to decide 'what their disengagement would amount to';

> ‘Wilson never planned to withdraw Britain's political presence from the Gulf. Its active and expert diplomacy, its commercial involvement, its military supply and training in the Sheikhdoms, and possibly even its military contingency planning will all continue, and will likely outweigh that of any other outside power in the lower Gulf. The RAF complement at the staging base on Masirah Island (in the Arabian Sea off Muscat/Oman) will also remain’.

Suggesting that the British who had earlier discouraged US diplomatic presence in the lower Gulf were now insisting on the USG to retain the MIDEASTFOR as an assurance to conservative Arab’s security, despite aggravating Bahrain’s security dilemma against radical-conservative and Soviet pressures:

> ‘The force is of little military value, and its presence could increase the vulnerability of the already-unstable Bahraini regime. On the other hand, a U.S. withdrawal at the same time as the British withdrawal could have a harmful psychological effect: It would seem to signify that the West is abandoning its interests….On balance, I think that even though we cannot count on its being welcome or useful for very long in the future, this is probably the wrong time to remove MIDEASTFOR. The decision required is a decision in principle not to reduce our presence at this time. This would trigger necessary feelers (with the Shah, the Bahrainis, and the British) to determine the political feasibility. If the political cost of staying on looks as if it will outweigh the psychological utility of maintaining this form of "presence,” then we should remove it.’

In fact when Kissinger acknowledged this US action prompting radical pressures, he was effectively warning Nixon against the foreign policy orientations of Sheikhly regimes that needed not be friendly towards Western interests. In addition, he ignored another key strategic argument whether this action would not have invited Soviet counter-action in Iraq, PDRY or even in the Trucial Coast, while the Shah had already intimated Rogers about Soviet objections to the presence of hostile powers on Iran’s sovereign territories under its treaty obligations. Nevertheless, Kissinger’s intimation of the intra-Arab rivalries on the Gulf’s southern coast was another masterful stroke of an Imperialist “divide and rule” stratagem which made possible this new strategic posture, with Iran and Saudi Arabia falling-out over Bahrain:

‘But the Sheikhs are divided by territorial disputes (exacerbated by oil) and by personal jealousies and mistrust. On their own, not all the Sheikhs would have the competence to govern intelligently and maintain order at home, let alone conduct a coherent foreign policy. Bahrain and some others are quite vulnerable to radical pressures’.

Kissinger’s reasons for US presence to the consternation of major regional powers laid down the complexities of US involvement over the head of Iran and Saudis, when he ignored Iran-Saudi opposition and sensitivity to Soviet proximity in Iraq and Yemens. In order to rationalize a policy by wilfully ignoring, he now argued in a similar vein- which had been the central basis of Saudi opposition to Iran- that Saudi stability was ‘threatened by the radical pressures on collaboration with Iran, as when the Shah recently extended military aid to the Saudis when their territory was raided by South Yemen’.

‘But this collaboration also stigmatizes the Saudis, since the Shah's ties with Israel make him a pariah to Arab radicals. Saudi Arabia will clearly be the weak link in the chain. Its future stability is already somewhat problematical. The longer and more intense the Arab-Israeli conflict, the greater the radical pressure upon all the conservative Arab regimes from both outside and inside.’

Kissinger now laid down 5 policy options for the US engagement with the Gulf, four of which had already been suggested by the NSC Policy Review Group (under Nixon’s Directive to Sisco and Saunders on 5th June 1970). Kissinger rejected outright (a) and (e) options, in line with Saunders’ rejecting of (a) and (d):

‘The Review Group went through the exercise of considering five distinct strategy options: (a) assuming the U.K.'s role as protector ourselves, (b) backing Iran as our "chosen instrument" and the key to stability; (c) promoting Saudi-Iranian cooperation: (d) dealing directly with the new states of the lower Gulf; and (e) actively promoting a regional security pact’.

As a radically new strategic manifestation of US interests, Kissinger strongly recommended marrying the three remaining strands of policy, Saunders and himself had recently rejected. The new prescription therefore implied USG’s willingness to deal with all regional powers on a more “hands-on” basis than putting faith in Iran-Saudi or exclusive Iranian preponderance:

‘The logical and obvious strategy is to ***marry the middle three options[b,c,d]***: to promote Saudi-Iranian cooperation as the mainstay of a stable regional system, but to recognize Iran's special importance as the preponderant power in the Gulf, and to do what we can to develop a working relationship with the new political entities in the lower Gulf. There is no way to promote cooperation without recognizing Iran's preponderance (else we would lose our influence with Iran); there is no reason to back Iran and not use our influence to encourage Saudi-Iranian cooperation; there is no reason not to develop ties with the sheikhdoms’.

Kissinger’s following recommendations(to a greater extent echoing Saunders’ Memo) however were most honest and rooted in his previous circumspection about US policy support behind every Iranian interest in the region, which costed strategic disadvantages to the US:

‘This strategy is upset, however, if we are ever forced to choose between Iran and the Arabs. A crisis could result, for example, if the Shah moves to seize the small Arab-held islands at the mouth of the Gulf (the Tunbs and Abu Musa) …. In the circumstances like those, we would have to ask ourselves how much of our political capital to expend with the Shah to restrain him. In the short run, the most serious strains on Arab-Iranian collaboration will indeed come from Iran's behaviour: Iran is determined to step into Britain's shoes as the dominating and protecting power in the Gulf. The Arabs do not relish this concept, and there may be a necessity for the U.S. to restrain the Shah’

In line with Sisco, Saunders and Kennedy’s previous suggestions, Kissinger now recommended direct engagement with the ‘smaller oil-rich states that needed educational, technical investments promotion and cultural exchanges, despite being awash with surplus capital’.

Most importantly though and for even more bizarre reasons, Kissinger did not even acknowledge local resistance to US presence in Bahrain when advised Nixon for a decision in principle as to US military presence in the region as an added assurance to smaller sheikhdoms:

‘We should also sound out the Shah. There would be an argument against introducing new forces, and the present force may not be welcome there for a long time. But while most of our friends regard it as an important sign of U.S. interest, it seems untimely to remove it.’

Most of the subsequent US policy initiatives under Nixon administration even after 1972 were undertaken under this policy blue-print drafted by Kissinger into which Nixon acquiesced forthwith. It was made part of the National Security Decision Memorandum 92, November 7, 1970.

(Kissinger Papers, Box CL-315, NSC Files, NSDMS 11/70-9/71).

In 1979, Kissinger was to observe that 'we could either provide the balancing forces ourselves or enable a regional power to do so'. As a background of Nixon's policy of strengthening local moderate regimes to thwart a more aggressive Iraq-Soviet posture to contain Soviet threat to 'Europe's and Japan's economic lifeline fall into hostile hands', Kissinger argues that:

> 'fortunately Iran was willing to play this role. The vacuum left by British withdrawal, now menaced by Soviet intrusion and radical momentum, would be filled by a local power friendly to us. Iraq would be discouraged from adventures against the Emirates in the lower Gulf, and against Jordan and Syria'.
>
> (Kissinger 1979:1263-64).

It is evident from the policy paper that Kissinger's linking US global interests with a nominal presence and willingness to withdraw 'should prove it politically unacceptable to friends of the U. S. in the area', did not acknowledge its key purposes as preventing Soviet interference in the region but was heavily conditioned by Iran's military and diplomatic posture against smaller sheikhdoms whose policy trajectories were suspect at best. It can therefore be guessed that Kissinger himself nurtured a dual purpose of Iran-Saudi cooperation to keep smaller powers' in check, as well as using Iran's military strength against those actors whom the US could not directly challenge as a trigger of Soviet reaction. But is still difficult to maintain that Kissinger had not anticipated Soviet counter-action in the Gulf had it not been for his broader Indian Ocean strategy to bargain on the Soviet good-behaviour in the region, while a behind-the-scene Indian Ocean preponderance was being contrived through Diego Garcia and reaching out to India by tying her down through Pakistan. In fact, after Kissinger's favouring a US presence in Bahrain, he even suggested direct militarily engagements with the smaller powers, even if that entailed weapon supplies on a "case to case" basis such as honouring Kuwaiti requests.

(Kissinger Papers, Box CL-315, NSC Files, NSDMS 11/70-9/71).

The foregoing suggests that Kissinger's contrived security architecture provided cardinal leverage to Nixon during his Moscow Summit (May 1972) to seek Soviet respect for European security and Strategic Arms Limitations, from a position of strength, which was gained through presence along her southern borders. On their own, although the Soviets remained handicapped in quest for naval bases in Iraq, Libya, Aden except for crisis deployments and staging-operation in the Red Sea during the rest of the Cold War, the invasion of Afghanistan and removal of Iran from the Western alliance after 1979 due to just this Euro-centric Détente saw US undoing Soviet threat by supporting Iraq against Iran and later neutralized Iraq as a potential Soviet-leaning actor and existential threat to Israel after 1991..

The fact that the State Department, already in hot pursuit of direct engagements with the smaller Sheikhdoms but especially in Bahrain was manifest in a telegram to the Country teams in Iran, Saudi Kingdom and Kuwait on 16th November 1970. Anticipating Iranian reaction to complicate publically an American-Bahrain Agreement, Rogers informed:

> 'Primary problem is, of course, Iranian sensibilities, although we suspect that neither SAG nor GOK will be enthusiastic about MIDEASTFOR's remaining. Department's thinking is that we should not seek approval of littoral states but merely inform them that we plan to discuss with Bahrain MIDEASTFOR's continued use of facilities on island. We visualize first notifying Iran and, barring strenuous objection from Shah, shortly thereafter simultaneously notifying Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.'

The post-haste aspects of Nixon's decision and sheer arrogance on part of strategy planners were however *pro-forma*, since Rogers had already dispatched Sisco to ascertain British views on the possibilities of putting Bahrain government on prior notice, after which the State intended to apprise regional states of Nixon's decision [42]

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF).

When MacArthur therefore reported Shah's reaction back to Rogers on 10th December 1970, he linked Shah's prior acquiescence to American retention of Bahrain's naval facility for the MIDEASTFOR with Iran's control of Abu Musa-Tunbs. Informing the State

[42] Rogers apprised country teams about Sisco's visit to the Middle East and Persian Gulf as a post-facto agreement already reached on the political problems with the British over Bahrain and was a pro-forma rehearsal of earlier agreement reached in the NSC, Tehran embassy and the British since MacArthur had sounded this out to the Shah.

Department of Shah's frustration at Saudi-Kuwait opposition to Iranian control of islands, and pointing out Kuwait's vulnerability from Iraqi claims, the Shah over-played his hand when MacArthur led the Shah into a nervous replay of "Cassandra-like fantasies" to lure him into a legitimate case for US stay in Bahrain:

> 'Shah then mentioned that if there is Arab-Israel settlement and Suez Canal is opened, Russians would be able to increase their naval presence in Indian Ocean and Arabian sea area which was additional cause of concern re-Gulf. As obviously Russians will support radical Arab regimes, particularly Iraq, as "cat's-paws" to pull down moderate Arab regimes in Arabian Peninsula and thus increase Soviet influence in area'.

MacArthur therefore agreed whole-heartedly with Shah's assessment by putting his own spin on the Soviet intentions, which no US agency of Kissinger had validated to date:

> 'I replied Soviets increasing their naval presence in Mediterranean and agreed fully with HIM. They also doing same thing in Indian Ocean and Gulf area. Said I understood he had recently seen reports of concern in UK and US over steadily increasing Soviet presence in Indian Ocean area'.

It was now that McArthur confronted the Shah with the Soviet threat to the Gulf which had been the basis of his opposition to superpowers presence in the Persian Gulf since January 1969, as much an instrument for convenient arms build-up through credits: 'this afforded me opening to raise future of MIDEASTFOR':

> '….whether US or Iran liked it or not, this was fact of life and we would doubtless see further expansion of Soviet naval activity in Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf. I was sure he would agree it would great tragedy if Russians succeeded in turning Indian Ocean and Gulf area into what amounted to Soviet lake. For these reasons USG wanted HIM to know confidentially that we planned to continue MIDEASTFOR as at present. This would help counterbalance increased Soviet naval presence both in Gulf and in Indian Ocean area where MIDEASTFOR spent approximately two thirds of its time covering its area of responsibility from Ceylon across to Africa'.

The Shah's reply makes clear that the bed-rock of Iran's objectives in the region was effectively a function of Soviet reactions to US presence and regional powers' political posture not to aggravate its southern borders' security. This in turn aggravated Iran's own security dilemmas during a phase of further regional relations after going against Arab policy of oil embargoes against the West and Israel:

'Shah replied he had made clear to Soviet ambassador that when British navy left Gulf, he did not want it replaced by Soviets, Americans or anyone else. (He added he told British he had no objection to British naval base outside Gulf in Oman.)'.

MacArthur's response to Shah's protestations now was as indifferent as he disregard smaller sheikhdoms' rights to economic prosperity, while encouraging the Shah to manipulate their oil interests as well as supporting Iran's arms orders uncritically:

'I said I knew he did not wish a British or American pretext for Russians to come into Gulf, but hard fact of life is that they are already in Gulf and obviously intended to continue to maintain some sort of presence there whether anyone liked it or not…'.

MacArthur also confronted the Shah with his policy of hosting Soviet naval visits during 1969 which he himself had reported reluctantly agreed-to by the Shah:

'Perhaps even more important was fact that Russians constructing naval facility in Umm' al-Qasr in Iraq nominally for Iraq but obviously to have an available port under control of a country heavily dependent on Soviet Union for assistance. Obviously Russian ships would use this port as they use port they [are] constructing in Egypt as Mas-al-Matru which, while nominally for UAR, is actually for Soviet naval vessels'.

MacArthur's conversation and rebuttal to Shah's protests can be understood as emphatic American rejection of Shah's objective of making Persian Gulf free from superpower rivalry over which he had already achieved a security consensus with Saudi Arabia, Kuwaiti and even Iran. Nevertheless, the 9th December 1970 meeting was also a subtle modus-vivendi reached between USG and the Shah, the final *quid pro quo* over which were formally worked-out during 1972-75. Meanwhile the Shah took the next 18 months to reduce Iran's exposure to Soviet pressures by hosting high-powered Soviet economic and political missions especially during the October 1971 Persepolis Celebrations:

'Shah did not comment, offering no rpt no specific objection and discussion on MIDEASTFOR ended on this note. I did not press HIM to agree because we felt he might prefer not be put in position of approving'.

An ultimate display of cunning and indifference in the US policy was further demonstrable in McArthur's submitting his personally "strong recommendation" to the State department:

'I therefore feel that having given HIM notice of our intent it would be appropriate now to inform Saudis and Kuwaitis and the Bahrain of our plans. However in

discussing this with Saudis, Kuwaitis, Bahrainis, etc., I strongly recommend we not rpt not volunteer fact we have discussed this matter with GOI. If they raise question about position of Iran, would recommend we simply say Iran also being informed and we have no reason to believe GOI will object'.

US documents at this stage correct the most under-rated anomaly about the Shah's real intentions for Abu Musa and Tunbs Islands that a careful reading suggests amounted to extending direct support to the Sheikhdoms against Iraqi or Saudi pressures and has animated Arab ill-will against Iran to this day:

'Turning to islands, he said he had made absolutely and unequivocally clear to British and Arab friends on other side of 'Gulf that these islands were Iranian and at very least Iran would insist on stationing forces on them. If Sheikhs were unwilling to reach some agreement, fault would be theirs, but Iran could and would not leave these islands which controlled mouth of Gulf solely in hands of tiny sheikhdoms which might or might not survive radical Arab offensive, which has already begun through installation of subversive cadres. If sheikhs remain uncooperative, they could not later expect cooperation from Iran.'

(Kissinger Papers, Box CL-315, NSC Files, NSDMS 11/70-9/71).

Chapter 7:

The Nixon-Kissinger support over Abu Musa and the British role: A quid pro quo on Bahrain?

7.1. Introduction

The anomaly whether Nixon officials remained benevolent by-standers in the Iran-British dispute over the smaller Gulf islands need to answer certain basic questions as to what interests animated US and the British policy interests to support or oppose an otherwise "unjust" claim, if that seemed to the case of historical irredentism. In pursuit of their interests and conscious about Iran's pivotal role to have disrupted the broader US-British strategy in the Indian Ocean, ensured that both governments played a wilful role in contriving novel solutions for Iran's control over the Abu Musa and Tunbs islands. In the light of further diplomatic initiatives undertaken by MacArthur with the British Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home and Sir William Luce, declassified record uncovers the central British role so far hidden from public scrutiny in the British Foreign Office documents. On the American side, MacArthur played a dual role with the British by reminding them of certain global interests at stake in the Gulf due to Soviet interference on behalf of radical-moderate Arabs, while rejecting British concerns against Iran's disrupting the very regional security architecture and destabilizing the Trucial Federation.

This section also details the role, Secretary Home was willing to play in pursuit of British global interests which makes him an accessory to an act of imperialist betrayal to weaker protectorates by selective application of imperial commitment Despite a confessor of imperial honour and upholder of treaty commitments, some of which he personally defended during the Nigerian Civil War in favour of General Gowon and against the Ibo-Biafra Republic(June 1967-Janura 1970), or preventing the oil-rich Brunei's absorption into Malayan Federation (not to mention Gibraltar and refusal to take military action against Rhodesia's racist break-away Republican regime by rejecting Common Wealth resolutions) [43]. Most of

[43] Defending the policy of arms supplies to Nigeria to thwart Soviet , Nasserist and French supplies to General Gowon's regime, Home rationalized British policy during Nigerian civil War, as 'for a contract had been made with a friendly Commonwealth country which had relied for years on British equipment. We took the view that to fall down on our obligations would be a breach of faith for which we should not be forgiven, and that we

Home's diplomacy of contriving easier Federation formulae all over the Empire occurred in the background a rear-guard action during 1966-68, with southern Arabia and East Asian "Confrontation" as the test cases where states whom Britain was unable to wring economic advantages had to take the brunt of "perfidy". Home's record in protecting the suddenly-rich and oil-less Qawasimi sheikhdoms (Sharjah and Ra'as al-Khaimah) exposes his complicity to clear culpability as well as an honest rendition of Sheikhly struggles over scarce resources.

Despite the British government denying access to these classified records under "not in the public interest" (Appendix-III), which dealt with both British interlocutors' role in resolution of the Abu Musa's dispute, US diplomatic records uncover how Home tried to deliver on Shah's demands by convenient interpretations of the Gulf Security Pact, long after it was dead. One of the original protagonists of British intentions to stay in the Gulf by reversing Labour Government's decision, Home's personal account makes him as just one self-professed realist to contrive solutions which even the pro-Shah MacArthur was not able to come-up with.

7.2. Abu Musa Controversy: the British role and US pressures

Although MacArthur's solution is on-record a product of his own strategy, devoid of the State Department or NSC's oversight, the record is equally clear that Home remained wedded to the idea of easing Abu Musa-Tunbs' control through surreptitiously handing it over to Iranian "Civilians". He is one record the theorist of this solution during a 19th March 1971meeting with MacArthur alongside Luce.

The meeting despite a renationalization of the broader British interests at stake in the region was another display of MacArthur's duplicity to manipulate Soviet threat whenever it suited US interests and reminding his British interlocutors of Iranian contribution towards regional security.

Before Nixon could affirm his executive decision on NSC's SNIE-34 in October 1970, as a radical departure from the previous incantations of Nixon Doctrinal philosophy by Kissinger and MacArthur, USG policy remained an all-out endorsement of Shah's claims, and even resorting to pressuring British policy planners to exert maximum pressures on the Sheikhs.

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would lose the confidence of the one country in West Africa which had a real chance to influence events in that part of the continent, in the direction of order, moderation and unity' (Home, 1990: 233).

On 9th September 1970 therefore, Joseph Sisco recommended Rogers to inform Home about Shah's threatening to denounce Arab Federation in case British government failed to get an agreement with the Sheikhs (over Abu Musa and Tunbs) on certain conditions British diplomats had recently reached with the Shah. Sisco also asked Rogers to request British intimation to MacArthur on the progress on islands, prior to informing the Iranians, 'if the sheikhs' reaction to the plan should be negative, so that Washington itself could approach the disputing parties if need be'.

Sisco's message to Home was itself nothing short of pointing out the direct threat made by the Shah to the HMG's government:

> 'Iran's relations with UK will be seriously jeopardized; Iran will denounce the proposed Federation of Arab Amirates; and, c) Iran will reserve its right to take such action as it deems necessary to protect its national interest.'
>
> Home rejected the Shah's threat and instead attributed them to the Shah's:
>
> 'anxieties about having his bluff called since he cannot want to use force if he can avoid it, thus jeopardising his relations both with the Gulf States and the whole Arab world… He is, of course, as we all know, a very accomplished brinkman'.

(NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL 33 PERSIAN GULF).

Roger's 13th September 1970 letter to Home however expressed satisfaction on the arrangement reached by Luce on islands 'in principle with the Iranians […] which would satisfy basic Iranian demands'. Nevertheless, his letter was more than evident of US preference for the British government pressuring the Sheikhs and by no means sensitive to their interests:

> "I am confident, however, that the terms which you have negotiated (by Sir William Luce) on their behalf are as good as the shaykhs can expect".
>
> The letter shows that Kissinger was kept update on all the issues about Iran-British and Sheikhly undertakings, which he briefed to Nixon on 8th September'.

(NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL 33-3 PERSIAN GULF)..

In the much-favoured strategy of encouraging the Shah in a regionally aggressive posture to take further blame for disrupting the Trucial Federation, as well as getting Saudi agreement to Bahrain's independence, McArthur proposed further options for resolution of Abu Musa and Tunbs Islands to Home and Luce in the 19th March 1970 meeting.

Expounding different solutions to the British such as passing Abu Musa-Tunbs' control to in Iran's trust under the rubric of Gulf security pact, MacArthur tried to mislead the British on the Iran-Occidental deal at the root of Abu Musa problem:

> 'he stressed he did not know all the problems this might entail nor how Shah would react but felt that it could possibly lead Shah to support federation and to be forthcoming and generous to the rulers. If UK could accomplish this, it would put UK in position of being forthcoming with Shah. True, rulers might be forced to make some noises, but this might very well be bearable.'

Advocating a 'package deal' for Sharjah and Ra'as al-Khaimah to reach agreement with the Shah which he argued 'the Sheikhs could stomach […] without publicly agreeing to it', MacArthur suggested a British role in handing over islands to Iranian civilians for eventual transition to a military takeover', which could then be 'justified on the basis of regional defence in Iranian trust'.

The record of the meeting however suggests this option was actually proposed by Home and not by MacArthur and followed-up accordingly by Home:

> 'Alternative possibility that an HMG invitation for the Iranians to take over the islands might be justified on the grounds of ensuring the future security of the Gulf'.

One of the most intriguing finding of this research to render any classification of British documents useless is catching Home on-record to have ascertained MacArthur's views on his proposal as to how Arab powers in the region would react to Iranian seizure, in case British pursued this solution. On a similar note, the most commonly-attributed blame on the Shah's opposition to the Federation stands contradicted if the real reasons for the Shah's preconditions are ascertained. Hence the record proves beyond doubt that the Shah's real motives were only instrumental or at most tactical, especially in the wake of far bigger Iraqi and Saudi claims on Kuwaiti islands and on Buraimi. In fact, by acknowledging the threat of force from the Shah, Home and MacArthur agreed that such approach could serve as 'precedents for Saudi and Iraqi claims on Abu Dhabi and Kuwait, if Shah's claims were achieved through direct US-British pressures on the Sheikhs'. A verbatim account serves the purpose:

> 'Sir Alec asked how far UK would offend moderate Arabs if it were to connive in an Iranian civilian presence. Amb MacArthur recalled that Shah had told him personally and privately that he had reason to believe that King Feisal would not be a problem

when Iran occupies islands. Furthermore, Shah feels that Bahrain, Abu Dhabi and Dubai will look the other way. However, he also feels very strongly that *if there is a federation, any member state could raise a cry opposing Iran's taking islands and other members of federation would feel bound to go along*. This is why Shah adamantly opposes Federation until there is Iranian presence on islands'.

Although Luce considered MacArthur's suggestion as highly deleterious for the proposed security agreement by the British to conservative Gulf Arabs, Home's agreement with MacArthur to insure the Shah's control through the "civilian" option makes his defence of Imperial commitment meaningless. Luce however warned:

'such a British hand-over would ensure that none of the Arabs would agree to a regional arrangement. This would seem to be particularly so since the UK had made a point within recent years of removing Iranian buoys from the vicinity of the islands. Amb MacArthur stressed that situation has drastically changed since British withdrawal announced. Now we know that Shah will seize islands'.

This meeting went a step further to address the Shah's real motives in a "loose" security arrangement in the region, which did not seek to subvert or even making conditional his recognition of the Trucial Federation by taking control of islands. It was however MacArthur who informed Home and Luce about Shah's motives that put Shah in the role of a peacemaker going by the Arab consensus on Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsula Security Community rather taking directions from Western masters::

"Amb MacArthur recalled that Shah, in Rabat in 1969, had put to king Faisal the idea of cooperative regional security arrangements and had assured Feisal that he would agree to any type of arrangement which would be acceptable to the Saudis whether it be formal security treaty or tacit and informal understanding that Iran would come to aid of Gulf states if requested. Shah had suggested informal arrangements since he thought it would be difficult for moderate Arabs to sign a formal security treaty as radical Arabs would accuse them of splitting Arab world."

MacArthur and Home seemed to agree on many things, some of which are again quoted verbatim to set straight the debate of US-British interests:

'Amb MacArthur agreed British government had no real choice except to withdraw. He also agreed fully that the Soviets and their radical Arab protégés pose a genuine threat…. now they are trying to leap-frog Turkish-Iranian barrier by (a) placing

radical-Arab states such as Iraq, Syria and southern Yemen in a position of increasing dependence on Moscow and (b) encouraging these radical Arab states to seek triumph of "Arab socialism" by overthrowing the regimes in the moderate Arab Gulf states that have friendly relations with the West. In effect they seek to eliminate Western influence in any way they can'.

MacArthur's conversation is one of the very few de-classified accounts of British officials' orientations towards the greater pursuit of keeping the Soviets out the region, hence community with US and clearly pretentious public discourse. Home delineated the over-arching global principles under which British imperial responsibility towards Gulf Arabs was being discharged.

In addition, Home's assertion also brings new understandings about Conservative Government's interests in staying in the Persian Gulf until late, even when Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were opposed to it:

'The government, had a choice of staying on, or of making arrangements for new agreements which would enable the UK to play a role in future Gulf stability with the consent and cooperation of the Sheikhdoms. … Britain is prepared to maintain permanently small contingents of navy and army. The general thrust of British policy is to pre-empt any possible Soviet intervention. A federation is the best way. However, if no Federation can be formed, the UK must make deals with the separate larger states. The situation now is that the islands dispute with Iran interferes. The two small Sheikhdoms of Sharjah and Ra'as-al-Khaimah are intimidated by their fear of Arab reaction to their giving up the islands to Iran. The Shah has 'put his foot into it' by his public insistence that he must have sovereignty'.

The meeting was also another demonstration of Home's imperialist tendencies that effectively killed any prospects whatsoever of the Gulf Pact when he proposed to MacArthur despite implied intentions to the contrarily:

'Sir Alec asked if Shah would be agreeable to a regional defence arrangement if he obtained the islands. A British hand-over to the Iranians could conceivably be justified on basis of regional defence needs'.

Nevertheless, the meeting was not just a straight-forward rationalization of crude realpolitik and Faustian deals between the British and Iran, but an on-record vindication of Luce's defence of Trucial Sheikhs and the Federation. Luce's indictment by Sheikh Saqr' of

Ra'as al-Khaimah, as an bullying Imperialist who prevented him from seek Iraqi or Saudi help, vindicates Luce's loyalty to Imperial Protectorates (Saud 2003: 113-15).

The meeting suggested serious difference of opinions on the part of Luce who variously objected to Home and MacArthur's suggestions of acquiescing into Shah's demands and seeking his blessing as a precondition for Federation:

> 'Luce interjected that UK does not accept that shah necessarily can prevent the formation of a federation. Amb MacArthur said this was of course matter of judgement. If all the nine states strongly desired a federation, this could be so. However, given faint-hearted support of Federation idea in Sheikdoms, Shah's opposition could be determining factor'.

Despite the on goings of Britain-American interests in finding "creative" solutions to the Islands problem, the foremost US interest in retention of Bahrain is further proven as the basis of US support to Iran. This was discernable in MacArthur's efforts to sell the idea of Iranian cooperation as central to US interests towards the broader Indian Ocean strategy. MacArthur therefore emphatically positioned the entire US strategy towards Iran in the superpower context:

> 'that not only must we be concerned about growing Soviet presence in Gulf and Soviet aid in constructing port facilities at Umm' Qasr in Iraq, but also by ChiCom attempts to establish themselves in Kuwait. Furthermore, we must also remember relationship of Gulf situation to our security concerns in Indian ocean'.

MacArthur also tired to temper with Home's central concerns about Soviet threat to seek a bargain with other Persian Gulf countries after Iran's control of the islands, when he discouraged Home's suggestion about the possibility of staying back after 1971:

> 'since neither US, British nor any combination of West European states and Japan is in position to do so, if radical Arab-soviet attempt to fill vacuum is to be frustrated, it be done on basis of Shah's proposal, namely, close cooperation between Iran and moderate Arab states'.

With the overwhelming Saudi-radical threat converging on their historical patrimonies, it would however be unfair to lay the blame of resolution of islands controversy squarely at the "Perfidious Albion", considering the deep insights British diplomats held about their imperial subjects' interests since the arrival of the British East India Company in 1600. One of the most insightful observations only to be retrospectively proven was about Sheikhly divergence of

interests and a direct US role in ascertaining Sheikhly views on the islands, over the head of the British:

> 'The Foreign Secretary wondered what sort of figure UK would cut with rulers if it were to sell Arab soil down the river. Amb MacArthur rejoined that there is at least a reasonable chance that while they will complain they will not raise major outcry. Some sheikhdoms count on Iranian help in time of need'.

The following observation corroborating MacArthur's suggestions however came directly from another US diplomat when Richard Murphy apprised him of his 22nd March 1971 visit to the Gulf. The observation goes to the heart of intra-Sheikhly interests which only facilitated the British mediation as mere facilitators (albeit for Sharjah and not for Ra'as al-Khaimah, Umm'al Qawain and Ajman). Murphy's observation therefore directly reflected the central reality of Gulf Arabs not acting as a political or ideological monolith:

> '… Murphy when in the Gulf Sheikdoms had heard repeatedly that Iranian seizure of the islands would present an opportunity for dissidents to rise up against the rule of the sheikhs and that the "United States would be tarred with same brush because area's people aware of close U.S.-Iranian ties and there is assumption that what Iran does is in line with US desires…Under normal circumstances, after the UK's withdrawal, "at least Sharjah's and Dubai's rulers would probably turn to Iran for help in time of trouble. Seizure of islands would render this kind of relationship with Iran out of question … Iran is setting course toward seriously weakening its ties with Arabs'.

By December 1971, Rogers was informing Nixon of the successful transition of the Persian Gulf in the wake of Iranian occupation of the islands through agreements reached with Sharjah, and "with knowledge (but without acquiescence)" by Ra'as al-Khaimah, with the core US interest secured over Shah's protests:

> "as the difficult transitional period in the Gulf ends, Anglo-American cooperation in the area remains unimpaired as do our relations with the littoral states….. We are also negotiating with Bahrain stationing arrangements to permit the continued presence of the U.S. Navy's Middle East Force in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean'.
>
> (NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 1 NEAR) E)

What remains another ironic fact of US indifference to the overall effects on regional security by this (re)occupation was Roger's passing mention to Iraqi reaction of breaking diplomatic relations with Iran and Britain on behalf of Ra'as al-Khaimah; Libyan confiscation

of British oil properties. He further glossed over the Saudi refusal to recognize the Federation until its territorial claims with Abu Dhabi(and Oman) were satisfied.

Informing Nixon of the resolution in a "friendly atmosphere", Rogers seemed totally indifferent to its "precedent- setting" implications for Saudi and Iraqi claims on neighbouring states that prompted Soviet entry in the region after Iraqi occupation of Kuwait's coastal strip in March 1973.

7.3. Bahrain in the Indian Ocean politics: US assurances as liability for Persian Gulf?

Bahrain continued to confront Iran with its main strategic predicaments for Soviet activities in the region as reported by MacArthur on 15th January 1972 to Rogers. While Iran fought a diplomatic war in the UNSC with radical Arabs (with Kuwait joining the anti-Iran bandwagon and ignoring Iraqi-Saudi claims on its jugular islands) over the tiny Gulf Islands, he reported a deliberate Iranian media campaign which opposed American (and Western) presence in Bahrain as 'another outside power replacing British Colonialism'.

On 14th January 1972 MacArthur reported been immediately summoned by Court Minster Alam to convey the Shah's concern to Nixon and Rogers about US intentions about staying in Bahrain against Soviet and radical Arab pressures, including Sadat's.

Alam's explanations to McArthur about Shah's diplomatic strategy however suggested Iranians taking advantage of the broader Arab opposition to US presence as a way of reducing their exposure to Arab hostility and assure Soviets out Iran's neutrality.

> 'message is to effect that even though us under fire from radical Arabs and their communist supporters for maintaining its port facilities in Bahrain, if US sticks firmly to its position and remains there, it will be a blessing "for you as well as for us." however, if us should ever contemplate withdrawing from Bahrain either (a) because Bahrain asks US to go or (b) because of pressures for US withdrawal from radical Arabs and possibly Egypt encouraged by Soviet Union, Shah asks that we let him know before we announce any withdrawal decision so that he can lead campaign for our withdrawal rather than let it be portrayed as a result of pressure from radical Arabs and Soviets. This would enable shah "to shout louder and longer" against any Soviet efforts to subsequently obtain additional naval facilities on Arab side of Gulf.'

In the background of Iran's unsuccessful opposition to US retention of Bahrain this opposition was given a facelift by the media challenging Bahrain's right to grant such facilities to foreign powers:

> 'since this development "relates to security of all peoples of the region no littoral state has the right to grant permission to foreign country, large or small, to maintain military presence in Gulf even for repairs and refuelling purposes because there is always the possibility that such action may lead to endangering security of other nations'.

MacArthur however continued to interpret this move as motivated by Shah's interests to speed-up delivery of 32 F-4s by 1972 (ordered for 1974) in anticipation of Soviet delivery of 25 MiG-21s to Iraq. Nevertheless, Iran's stronger position to deliver on Soviet vulnerability and bargain with the US, before Iraq achieved a military parity with Iran was evident in MacArthur's request with Alam to stop further publicity on Bahrain:' since the Gulf States might take Iran at its word that it desired U.S. withdrawal'.

(RG 59, 1970-73, POL IRAN-US.)

The fact that Shah's opposition to US policy towards Bahrain was briefed to Nixon by Kissinger only on 18th January 1972 can be read as another manifestation of Kissinger's dual strategy to use local opposition to non-littoral naval presence as a way of discouraging Soviet counter-claims in the Indian Ocean in the knowledge that US presence in Bahrain would be untenable anytime soon.

The State Department's reaction to Iranian opposition however reflected a determined US policy to oppose Iranian rejection to US presence in Bahrain. On 17th January 1972 Rogers asked MacArthur to seek clarifications of Iranian policy regarding Bahrain. Anticipating Iranian government to 'be quietly working behind the scenes to dampen criticism in neighbouring countries', Rogers asked MacArthur to pointedly inform the Shah about the following USG policy:

> '(a) we have no intention of giving in to radical Arab pressures to withdraw COMIDEASTFOR from area; (b) pressures themselves appear to have subsided after initial outburst; (c) Bahrain which is making arrangement clearly anticipated possibility some adverse Arab reaction, has made no request of US to withdraw and we do not expect it will; (d) agreement with Bahrain provides either party can terminate it at any time but we are given up to one year to withdraw; thus in unforeseen situation in

which we for whatever reasons decide to give up Bahrain facilities, we would have ample time to consider with our friends what alternative arrangements might be desirable; (e) we felt Iran had been clear in its desire that COMIDEASTFOR presence be continued (Tehran 249) and that it felt as we do that it is a stabilizing force in area where fragile, newly independent states just coming into being, and where soviets can be expected to try and take advantage of any weaknesses they can uncover'."

(NSC Files, Box 1282, Iran 1/1/72-5/31/72).

When MacArthur had a showdown with the Shah on 20th January (along with Assistant Secretary Chafee) and intimated USG policy towards Bahrain, the Shah's own explanation of the regional security as a littoral states' responsibility emphatically underlined his sensitivity to Soviet entry into the region and determination to set a regional security agenda over Bahrain's independent action. it was same Bahrain for whose neutrality in the Persian Gulf had been directly achieved through US efforts which to US polyp lanners now seemed incomprehensible in Shah opposition acting on behalf of the Persian Gulf Security Community.

Although the Shah stated his private agreement to US presence in Bahrain, he still rejected MacArthur's protests by reminding him of the 'public stand to a policy since he believed in it':

'he wanted to say most confidentially—" and he hoped he would not read about it in the newspapers"—that is [if?] USG is "really serious about remaining in Gulf and shows it by its actions," he would not object to our presence there. At same time he wanted US frankly to know he would still feel obliged to criticize publicly our agreement with Bahrain'.

The fact that MacArthur again sought to manipulate Shah's sense of isolation in the region just after Iran's action on Gulf islands was most evident he again led him on regional security issues which centred on Soviet encirclement around its three flanks:

'…. discussion was wide-ranging covering (a) his desire to build up Iranian navy and develop Chah-Bahar as air-naval base; (b) his well-known view previously reported re deterioration of situation on his eastern and western frontiers and his concern re substantial Soviet gains in Mid-east/South Asian area in past eight months with possibility Iran might find itself increasingly isolated'.

MacArthur's briefing to the Shah on MIDEASTFOR was again nothing short of underestimating the political value of the force for regional powers when he misled the Shah about its non-military nature:

> 'there is nothing new in our presence in Bahrain; that MIDEASTFOR had been there for years and was not in any sense replacing British; and that facilities we use there are largely commercial and communications facilities and facilities for recreation and dependents in which we use only a small portion of old British base'.

MacArthur's further arguments to dissuade Shah for opposing US policy amounted to no less intimidating to the Shah by hyper-boling Soviet threat which no US policy-planning institution had concurred to this date:

> 'Would not moderate Gulf Arab states … gain impression that us was abandoning area to soviet-radical Arab take-over? And if they had such impression, would not this cause them to feel Soviets are wave of future and therefore they must reach accommodation with Soviets and radical Arabs and this in turn could result in their being eventually swallowed up. If this happened, Iran would have a very unfriendly environment on Arab side of Gulf'.

MacArthur however refused to concern himself with the very interests of the Gulf Security Community in reaching accommodation with the Soviets through a regional "neutralism", which Nixon, Wilson and Heath themselves had been desperately trying to reach over Europe and East Asia at that very moment.

MacArthur's report however brought home the very dichotomy of Iranian interests with the US global interests, in not giving offence to its Arab or Soviet neighbours. In other words, the US policy of not ascertaining major regional powers' agreement which had been fostered under the rubric of Nixon Doctrine had now come full circle to reject its central premises. An explanation of MacArthur's rejection of the Shah's security dilemma and unsolicited advocacy on behalf of Gulf "moderates" interests in protecting themselves from the superpower competition, and as a background for the Shah's deference to Soviet security after Nixon-Brezhnev Summit deserve verbatim quotation:

> '[shah said] […] but he could not change his basic policy and public stance, with which he understood we agreed, that peace and security in Gulf should be maintained by close cooperation of littoral states without interference of outside powers. We said USG agreed littoral states should cooperate to maintain stability and security in Gulf

but pointed out that home porting of MIDEASTFOR in Bahrain could not be construed as interference and that we had neither a base in Bahrain nor any military or political commitments. Ruler of Bahrain, whom Secretary Chafee had just seen, had indicated that while he wanted US there, he is deeply concerned by Iran's criticism of recent agreement re-MIDEASTFOR. If Iranian criticism continued, it might cause Bahrain ruler and other moderate Arab Gulf regimes which did not wish US to abandon Gulf to take position similar to Iran's and request US to leave. While this was what Soviets wanted, it would not seem to serve interests of Iran'.

It was further clear that USG would have none of Iranian opposition after Iran's isolation was a foregone conclusion, despite the Shah reminding MacArthur of Bahrain not taking public position on Jufair Agreement. MacArthur and Secretary Chaffee however continued to interpret Bahrain's public stance as a continuation of British Treaty since 1933, to discourage Soviet counter-requests for 'treaty-type' arrangements in Iraq or PDRY:

In addition, MacArthur now turned the very Soviet threat against Iran, which Shah had theorized since 1969 to receive American blessings against a militant policy against Iraq as a regional proxy to Soviet diplomacy or rationalize Iran's military build-up:

'we pointed out that as practical matter soviets are already in Gulf as they are building a port and naval facilities for Iraq, at Umm Qasr which obviously destined for use by Soviet vessels visiting gulf. we referred to earlier statement by Shah that Soviets had not only many army and air but also naval personnel in Iraq, including number in civilian clothes at Umm Qasr, which would support Soviet naval activities in Gulf'.

MacArthur's last-ditch effort was to stall Shah's public collusion with other regional powers (and Soviets) until Nixon's imminent visit to Moscow. Despite Shah's clear opposition to US stay, whether Bahrain agreed or otherwise, MacArthur effectively put the Shah on notice about US intentions:

'final US decision regarding continuing presence of MIDEASTFOR in Bahrain can only be made by US, but as close friend, Shah wants US to know that unless we are "serious" and by that he means our matching Soviet Gulf visits, Shah feels continuing MIDEASTFOR presence in Bahrain risks doing more harm than good.'

When therefore MacArthur concluded his report to Rogers, another aspect of a hard-bargaining US policy of supporting Iranian claims previously had been challenged by MacArthur, the case against its reversion to the sheikhs being pending in the UNSC:

‘could not Iran remain silent for period to see whether initial propaganda assault launched by Soviets and radical Arabs who wished to see all vestiges of American presence and influence eliminated from area would die down as had furore over islands?

Nevertheless, MacArthur pointed out Shah’s security dilemma in Soviet ability to challenge Iran’s pro-West foreign policy in the direct knowledge of Nixon’s willingness to reach out to Brezhnev but seek Indian Ocean’s denial to the Red navy and leave Iran vulnerable to Soviet pressure now being applied through Iraq and on Pakistan after latter’s dismemberment:

‘Position Shah took in above meeting is substantially more critical than position he took `forty-eight hours before with ambassador. We believe it reflects his increasing preoccupation over possibility Iran may find itself largely isolated by future Soviet gains in area and also corresponding doubts as to whether US has determination, will and ability to remain in area. In this connection when we said our determination to remain in this vital area is firm, he commented that while he had great confidence in president Nixon and would like to see him re-elected, he wondered whether Congress and American people in their present mood would permit president to follow the policies he had laid out’.

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, POL IRAN-US.)

Chapter 8:

The pre-1972 threat perceptions: retrenchment and Soviet influences

While the 17th October 1971 Persepolis Celebrations occasioned a pomp and show to extol Persia's historical grandeur, with Mohammad Reza Shah as the true heir to Cyrus, the Great, the background diplomacy between Iran and the US did not receive much media scrutiny as to what the Shah had to contribute towards the security of weaker oil producers, threatened by Western industrial powers. Effectively setting the tone of Iran's relations with the West for the rest of his career, the visit by Vice President Agnew Spiro, was one of the most important diplomatic mission before Nixon and the Shah formalized their most tangible security relations during 1972 whose implications continue to haunt Iran-Iraq relations to this day. As a strategic background, the Persepolis visit occurring before the formalization of Soviet-Iraq Treaty (February 1972) laid down the strategic perimeters of Shah's deference to regional security and acting as buffer to Soviet security by discouraging Western action against OPEC.

In point of fact, it was not the Shah-Nixon's May 1972 meetings which formalized even more sensitive cooperative relationship against Iraq and in Pakistan's favour, but as this section demonstrates, it was the October 1971 meeting which rendered obsolete Iran's broader strategic vision of the Indian Ocean and a retrenchment to modest regional defence through even modest arms acquisitions. The following section shows how the Shah instead sought to extricate Iran from the "unachievables" of trans-Indian Ocean security responsibilities. Nevertheless, NSC record also uncovers the first official version of Nixon Administration's interests which were tasked by Kissinger to Spiro in getting Shah's agreement over global issues where the US relied on the Shah's loyalty and was able to deliver again, until the Iraq-Soviet Treaty became a strategic reality for Iran's encirclement.

The Shah-Spiro meeting, is a masterful act of diplomacy from the Shah to warn Western powers' pretentions against the Persian Gulf as sole preserve of economic autonomy whose interests remained in keeping the region free from Western aggressive designs against oil producing countries, at the very moment when OPEC considered embargoing its oil for the West should it tried to militarily interfere on behalf of their oil companies.

This section also demonstrates that as a matter of diplomatic pressure Kissinger briefed Spiro to urge upon the Shah that 'Iranian seizure of the islands could have a destabilizing effect on the Gulf and prevent cooperation between Iran and its Arab neighbours'. Nevertheless, Kissinger actually wanted Spiro to request Shah's restraint on voting against US vote for retention of Chinese Republic of Formosa's permanent seat in the UN as well as on the Dual Representation vote:

> '…. [tell the Shah] even if we cannot agree on the substance of the Chinese Representation issue, we cannot understand why Iran should oppose US on the procedural aspects. Specifically, we believe Iran should be able to vote with US to give the "Important Question" resolution priority over the Albanian Resolution, to vote with US on the Important Question resolution, and to at least abstain [on] the Dual Representation vote'.
>
> (NSC Files, Box 1268, Iran 6/1/71-12/31/71).

The Shah readily obliged Kissinger's request, in return for longer-term weapons requests when confronted by Spiro's reasoning of Congressional over-sight to arms sales, and political implications of its veto on US policy towards Chinese membership:

> 'A defeat for the USG on the ChiRep issue would add to our difficulties. Shah said Iran is not asking for grant assistance but for cooperation, especially in the field of credit for the purchase of American military equipment and for assistance (ARMISH-MAAG) in training the Iranian forces'.
>
> (NSC Files, Box 1268, Iran 6/1/71-12/31/71).

In order to keep Nixon from another intractable issue in a direct case of Soviet interference, Kissinger requested Spiro to seek Shah's assistance over restraining Pakistani reaction 'in the face of continuing Indian trouble-making'. He therefore suggested the Shah exercising his personal influence on President Yahya Khan, while MacArthur:

> 'has informed HIM that we are calling on both Yahya and Mrs. GANDHI to withdraw their military forces from the immediate border areas and cautioning them both about cross-border operations that could provide the spark for a wider conflict'.
>
> (NSC Files, Box 1268, Iran 6/1/71-12/31/71).

Spiro's crucial visit of October 1971 took place in the direct background of MacArthur's confronting Shah with a laissez-faire decision by the US retention of Bahrain for its Indian Ocean Fleet during late 1970. During April 1971 MacArthur also apprised Nixon of his personal impressions about Iran's inability to hold on to a regional role without substantial US military support. The implications of Soviet naval visits to Iran and Iraq since March 1969, and US decisions on Bahrain were reflected in Shah's new strategic assessments he presented to Spiro and about further developments on Iran's both flanks.

Coming on the heels of Kosygin's August 1971 visit following a previous visit on April 1970, no other US document before May 1972, captures the subtlety of a trans-*Arabian quid pro quo*, between Iran and the USG, while Nixon was reaching out to the Soviets and China for a global strategic bargain, without much input from Gulf powers. The Shah is on-record shown to have enunciated his new strategic vision for a Persian Gulf-Arabian-Red Sea Security Community through acquiring long-range aerial capability, but emphatically rejecting development of a Carrier-based navy, in the prospect of finally becoming the full-owner of its oil industry by April 1972:

> 'He also needed some aerial tankers because in the next five years Iran must develop an "Indian Ocean" policy in the light of the Soviet Union's increasing activity in that Ocean and adjacent waters. To give Iran the necessary capability beyond the Gulf of Oman and into the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean, the Shah had contemplated acquiring an Aircraft Carrier for Iran. However, this would require Cruiser and Destroyer escorts, etc., and would be hideously expensive both in terms of financial resources and trained personnel. Therefore the Shah had opted for obtaining aerial tankers from the US to refuel F-4's which could reach out toward the Indian Ocean if his F-4s had in-flight refuelling capability'.

The visit was also another empirical vindication of the Shah ambitions to dominate the Persian Gulf or develop Iran's military capability to confront Soviet Union, but fight-off a ground assault if its mainland was threatened:

> 'he has also let the Soviet Union know that if any great power, and this means Russia, attacks Iran, the Iranian army will fight to the end and the government will follow a scorched-earth policy so that there will be nothing left for the invading Russians that is worth anything'.

In the light of further renditions of Shah's perceptions about the Western strategic posture as threatening to the oil-producing Gulf OPEC, it is difficult to argue that he was willing to offer unconditional protection to Western energy interests if they threatened regional powers' implied interest in keeping the Gulf free of Great power rivalries. In the direct context of Soviet Defence minister Grechko and East German Defence minister's visit to Iraq in July 1971, the Shah cannot possibly be attributed as encouraging Western aggression against Arab oil-producers or countenance actions against Soviet security. The following is just another case of Nixon-era policy-planning which chose to overlook the following posture the Shah would have adopted in the understated scenario:

> 'He said he would like to point out that if the Gulf falls into unfriendly hands that wish to use oil as a weapon of political coercion against the West, then the countries of Western Europe would only have the alternative of (a) acceding to such pressure or (b) seeing their industries shut down and their economies deteriorate, or (c) using force against the unfriendly power or powers that had seized the Gulf'.

Spiro's de-briefing to Nixon pointed out this very Iranian determination and his demand for Western restraint to secure their strategic interests, when the Soviet Union was asserting itself in southern Arabia:

> 'He was quite clear in his own mind that the Western nations would be obliged to resort to force rather than to see their economies grind to a halt. However, a militarily strong Iran could safeguard the vital interests of the West in the Gulf without the Western powers having to intervene'.

Nevertheless, the visit was also a conscious effort by the Shah to develop long term defence relations to pre-empt Iraq's rise before it posed a challenge to the Iran-Saudi condominium in the Gulf. In this very context Spiro reported Nixon about the Shah's demand for 30 Vietnam-experienced military advisors to train Iranian ground-forces through ARMISH-MAAG.

In point of fact, the Shah's intention to acquire a new generation fighter after 1975 to counter Soviet MiG-25 supplies to Iraq drives the central issue of Iran's basic need for an air defence system which was only granted under the specific Iranian support for Israeli security through Kurdish rebellion during 1972-75. In addition, a decision to await new weapon developments demonstrates Iran's confidence to militarily deter Iraqi threat without bomber

forces, or obsolete F-4s, and no haste for a military build-up so wrongly argued-for by revisionist analyses of Iran-Arab relations during the First Gulf War (1980-88):

> 'the Shah concluded by again stressing the importance he attaches to military cooperation by the USG and his hope that we would be responsive to his requests, particularly since, with the British leaving the Gulf, the whole burden of protecting the free world's vital petroleum interests in the Gulf will fall on Iran's shoulders'.

Overall, and in spite of his stated intentions to fight-off the Soviets to death, the Shah's implied intentions of not allowing any regional threat to develop inside the Gulf to invite Western intervention and Soviet counter-action was inhered as a core security agenda. As a matter of historical retrospection, the Shah's stated intentions to keep his military ambitions to deter Iraq's radical threat were to prove reasonably modest and directly supportive of US strategy to prevent Iraqi posing threat to Jordan and Israel during 1973 War:

> 'he then went on to say that Iran must be militarily strong and have adequate deterrent strength to discourage any adventures by neighbours such as the radical Iraq regime. […].if Sadat succeeded in getting the Soviets out of Egypt, Saudi Arabia was ripe for subversive activity, implying that Saudi Arabia would be the Soviet's next target'.

The Shah's basic contradiction however as a way of getting unquestioned US support for a regionally militant policy against Iraq or south Yemen, but deterring Western action to break OPEC's unity, was to be seen in the direct context of Iran closing ranks with OPEC and with "radical" Iraq, Libya and Algeria, to question the entire global geo-economic relationship since the discovery of oil. The immediate flurry of Tehran Embassy and the NSC to convince Nixon to visit Iran on urgent basis and Kissinger's observation on Spiro's de-briefing similarly gives new interpretations to the claims that Nixon did not visit Iran to save himself from the world-wide embarrassment of identifying with Shah's regime and attending Persepolis Celebrations.

Despite the fact that whereas Spiro's visit gave Shah an opportunity to sound out his regional "defensive" plans, a clear case of Kissinger manipulating his psychological vulnerability against Soviet interference was delivered by preventing Nixon's visit to Iran. Even the Embassy correspondence and Kissinger's initial efforts to convince Nixon to visit Iran afterwards proves that point that the Shah was himself not interested in visiting Washington but was keenly aware of Nixon's preferences to prioritize relations with China before visiting Moscow.

Another issues identified in the historical section about Shah's interest in CENTO's revival as motivated by the Soviet threat can now be contradicted if seen in the nature of threats the Shah was to identify during late 1971.

During December 1971, in line with his demands to Spiro for military planning beyond 1976, the Shah apprised new MAAG Chief General Burchinal and MacArthur of his interest in reviving CENTO to address pilot training problems by taking advantage of 'Vietnam war ending in near future'. Doubling his demand for pilot training in USAF establishments to 150, the Shah's politically most embarrassing demand to-date now centred on insisting that CENTO should be working on NATO operational systems.

Apart from the minor irritants to date for the Defence Department having to adjust its training and procurement policies according to Iran-MAAG's planning, the Shah's new desire for USAF pilots to fly Iranian F-4s alongside Iranian pilots was most radical by the standards of Iran-US relations and presented the biggest diplomatic challenge for Nixon to match Soviet support to Iraq after Meyer's refusal in May 1969. Nevertheless, the Shah who is known for his provocative Soviet-threatmongery since Johnson days seemed to have altered his own strategic vision which had shifted away from its Soviet-centric premises or putting a heavier price on Nixon's refusal for more weapons. MacArthur's debriefing on MAAG Chief's meeting with the Shah explained this need arising from Iran not able to spare its pilots for training due to new strategic threats arising on its western and eastern borders.

What however became another clear contradiction of a threat to Iran's North-western periphery before Iraq-Soviet Treaty (1972) was addressed by MacArthur in a 22nd December 1971 memorandum to Rogers which intimated the Shah pointing out threats on western borders "since the last 7 months".

The notion to pre-empt these threats was underpinned by the Shah's new strategic purview that Spiro had not reported to Nixon in October 1971, but now viewed Middle East joining South Asia as a result of Soviet treaties with Egypt and India through Security Pacts:

> 'he pointed out that not only had Soviet Union substantially increased its presence and influence, in Mid-East -South Asia area as result of Soviet- Egyptian and Soviet-Indian pacts, but that parallel with this disturbing expansion of Soviet influence, Iraq had received visit of East German defence minister and most recently Soviet defence minister Grechko, who had stated publicly not only that Soviets and Iraq had total identity of views on all subjects but also that Soviets would assist Iraq in further

strengthening its armed forces. "Who are they strengthening them against?" he asked, mentioning the weakness of some of the moderate Gulf states and the vital importance to Japan and the West of Gulf oil. Similarly, earlier visit of East German defence minister had also obviously been designed to further assist Iraqi armed forces since East Germany has military training mission in Iraq'.

The fact however remained that the Shah having exclusively missing out on northern border security after Kosygin's recent visit now anticipated a tans-regional Soviet encirclement of the Persian Gulf. The indirect Soviet threat as conditioning the Shah's position on global security however should be seen in the direct context of Pakistan's dismemberment on 26th December 1971 and the US Task Force deployment in the Bay of Bengal to deter further Indian threat to the West Pakistan. The Shah's security challenges before December 1971 however pointed out a regional threat whether or not it posed a direct threat to US security interest until Nixon was to reach a global modus-vivendi with Moscow on his own:

'Shah said this situation, coupled with *Afghanistan's* utter weakness and *Pakistan* defeat which might result in very unstable and dangerous situation on Iran's eastern frontier, in addition to *Iraqi* threat on west, made it imperative that Iran go ahead with further build-up of its forces since Iran's greatest deterrent was to have forces of such strength that any unfriendly neighbours that might be encouraged to undertake adventure against Iran would know beforehand that they could be smashed'.

Another fact which McArthur reported was Shah's intention to develop Iranian forces beyond 1975 as another clear testament of the Shah's interests not to develop military forces to provoke direct Soviet military supplies to Iraq. Warning previously to develop Iranian air force by seeking other Western vendors after 1975, MacArthur's report can be seen to set the framework of Nixon's explicit undertakings to the Shah during May 1972 which Kissinger too corroborates were intended to address Iraq's militarization by Soviets (Kissinger 1999:582). During late 1971 therefore the Shah had demanded a broader re-structuring of Iranian air forces (short of naval capability) by joint production to cut development costs:

'as to long term future, he wanted to let US know confidentially that in post-1975 period, IIAF fighter aircraft force structure is tentatively being projected as follows:8 sqdns of F-4 D/E aircraft;2 sqdns of F-5E aircraft;6 sqdns of P-530 type aircraft or F-5E (if P-5J30 type not developed); ***3 sqdns of F-15 aircraft'***.

Another fact which substantiates Iranian intentions not to develop a deterrent force to confront Soviet naval emergence in the region was reported by MacArthur himself:

> 'As contrasted with air force, which is virtually entirely US equipped, his army and navy have mix of equipment from different sources…. his navy will have some capability in Gulf of Oman and Arabian sea, as well as Persian Gulf, and will re-equipped with surface- to surface missiles. (He mentioned Indian navy had destroyed Paki vessels with naval missiles)'.
>
> (NA RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 6-3 IRAN).

Nixon's need to assure Iran with only minimal US help to deliver on the Shah's new vulnerability(centred on Iraq) was underlined in the haste with which the State Department acted, while Spiro had not even left Iran. Spiro was instantly authorized to inform the Shah of an immediate despatch of technology and tactical experts on anti-SAM Defence Capability Study (Shrikes, electronic counter measures and radar Homing equipment) with 'intimate knowledge of Shrike programme in Israel'.

Another immediate help towards developing a long-range airborne operational capability probably based in USG's own interests in discouraging Shah's Ocean-going capability through a Carrier navy was Nixon's immediate authorization of sales of air–refuelling Boeing 707 through commercial sources, despite their non-availability in US inventory.

(NRC, OASD/ISA Files, FRC 330-74-083, Iran 452.1, 1971, 74-083).

The US interests in taking advantage of Shah's another vulnerability from continued US presence in Bahrain therefore were attested by late December 1971, when the State Department and Tehran Embassy raised alarms at the Shah's scare at the spectre of Soviet penetration in the Gulf and South Asia immediately after Pakistan was dismembered by India through the Soviet defence Pact.

On 28th December 1971 Rogers and MacArthur strongly advised Nixon to pay an immediate visit to the Shah upon his return from Moscow and Peking, or arrange another way to meet the Shah. Roger therefore noted:

> 'On the substantive side, he has overriding concerns about long-range Soviet objectives in the area, including the Gulf and Indian subcontinent…..While I had my

doubts previously I now believe that with the momentous developments in South Asia and the potential in the Mid-East, a visit to Iran is a serious proposition'.

MacArthur posted another serious warning which implied a probable strategic arrangement; the Shah would have been compelled to reach with the Soviet Union:

'I believe we are headed for serious trouble if you do not also visit Iran or make some other arrangement to meet the Shah soon. The Shah remains apprehensive of Soviet Union long-range designs upon Iran and the Persian Gulf. He feels encircled by the Soviet penetration of the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent'.

The lack of urgency on the part of Saunders, Kissinger and Nixon on the other hand to extend tangible assurances to the Shah on a personal basis, before Nixon delivered another *coup de grace* to the Shah, after his Summit with Brezhnev and an earlier one with Zhu En Lai was his following reply to Rogers:

'H + K—I agree [that a visit to Iran is a serious proposition.] Right after Democratic Convention?'[44].

(NSC Files, Box 481, Presidential Trip Files, Iran Visit, Part 1).

Nixon's reluctance to visit Iran on an urgent basis was further evident in a 5th January 1972 cable by State Department informing the Shah of Nixon not being able to visit Iran on his return from Moscow and Peking. It was however upon a strong representation from MacArthur, that Sisco was able to prevent this refusal communicated to the Shah. Informing Nixon of his imminent retirement and 'not being there to pick the pieces', MacArthur warned against the Shah interpreting this refusal as:

'US was building bridges to new friends (china) and tearing down bridges to old friends'.

Citing very 'recent developments having direct bearings on this refusal' but not elaborating, MacArthur suggested the visit as a mere psychological device than based on concrete assurances:

[44] On his May 30th 1972 visit to Tehran, Nixon's public address to explain his reason for visiting the Soviet Union in May and earlier Mach 1972 was at worst his self-vindication or duplicity of reaching deals with Brezhnev first and rationalizing to the Shah by failing to visit Iran before Moscow:
'His advice and counsel have been invaluable through the years, and it was for that reason that, after my visit to the Soviet Union, I was glad that the opportunity was provided, through Your Majesty's invitation, to come here, "*to consult with you"*[my emphasis], and to get the benefit of your wisdom in terms of the future policies of the USA'.
(Parstimes.com/history/Nixon_toast_tehran.html)

‘Shah replied stonily that he had visited US great many times and he thought it was perhaps time for someone from over there to visit Iran’,

The following also implied Iran’s relatively stronger position to reach some regional arrangement with Soviets and disrupting a broader strategic arrangement for Nixon’s diplomacy, before he openly opposed US presence in Bahrain during 1972:

> ‘And Iran, as we all know, is the one really stable, dependable and at same time friendly building block we have to work with between Japan and NATO Europe. It is a keystone for US in an area where not only we and our allies have most vital interest, but in which Soviets, Iran’s great neighbor to north, have been making serious inroads about which Shah is much concerned and wishes to discuss with President’.
>
> (NARG 59, CF 1970-73, POL US/NIXON, Box 2697).

8.2. The post-1972 Iran-US relations: strategic divergence and virtues of regional integration

In the aftermath of MacArthur and Spiro’s meetings with the Shah to clarify Iranian position on the retention of Bahrain, and before Nixon paid the overly-sold visit, a clear division of responsibility had come to separate Iran’s regional interests as a minimal *quid pro quo* from US global interests. The available record however proves that the Shah was actually deceived into delivering on those key US interests in Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan where Nixon-Kissinger could not afford to be openly seen as pre-empting on Soviet clients (Iraq, Afghanistan and India) and protect Pakistan, Israel and Jordan. As the section on Nixon-Shah’s May 1972 meeting demonstrates, these core issues were frankly talked through by Kissinger with the Shah in front of Nixon and rationalized in his 1999 memoirs.

While MacArthur informed the State Department of his own arrangement with the Shah to tone down public criticism of US presence in Bahrain, Iran’s new strategic orientation had already captured State Department’s (Intelligence and Research Bureau) imagination by 28th January 1972.

Taking October 1971 Persepolis Celebrations as a reference point, the context of ‘Independent nationalism’ was for the first time the centre of attention under Nixon administration when a new appraisal was considered ‘ a timely exercise’:

‘to examine Iran's current strategic posture and concomitant military needs, and to attempt to relate U.S. interests to possible future developments in the Shah's “independent national” policy’.

Of all the pre-1972 strategic assessments about the Iraq-Soviet threat to the region and US ability to restrain the Shah‘s aggressive posture towards Iraq and smaller Arab states, the 28th January 1972 assessment was most holistic and nuanced of the policy dilemmas facing the Nixon Doctrine.

It was therefore noted that the Shah’s intentions to keep the Gulf free from superpower interference and assert Iran’s military preponderance against Iraq and other radical Arab regimes(Syria and Egypt), deviated from the central US interest: the resolution of Arab-Israel conflict. It was therefore observed that Iran’s confrontation with Iraq undermined Saudi deference:

‘to the cause of Arab solidarity, [while]the U.S. effort to preserve a meaningful dialogue with Egypt would become even more difficult than it is today’.

One of the clearest allusions to US interests in the Gulf was the suggestion that Iran’s regional posture was to complicate US-Iran relations in view of the increased Soviet penetration in the region and could be its own unravelling:

‘…. While no sharp estrangement is likely between the U.S. and Iran, the ties between the two countries may eventually become looser. The possibility of Iran-Iraq hostilities and of growing political tension in Iran are factors which could also complicate U.S. policy in the Gulf.’

The report was also one of the clearest renditions of Iraq-Iran’s military ability to deter each other as well as Iran’s ability to threat Iraqi egress into the Gulf, itself a direct product of Soviet restraint to trigger an arms race:

‘The Iraqi navy has no combat capability. The Soviet Union has failed to deliver Komar missile boats promised under an old contract. In contrast, the Iranian navy has one newly-refitted ex-UK Destroyer, twelve Patrol craft, and eight British-built Hovercraft. Four more new British-built Frigates are now being delivered, and by late 1972 two more reconditioned ex-USN Destroyers should arrive in Iran’.[45]

[45] Iran’s ability to match Iraqi ground and air force was stark even by early 1972 standards which were estimated as: On the ground, the Iraqi army boasts an inventory of good Soviet equipment, including 784 tanks (700 of them T-54/55), 1,080 APC's, and 705 artillery pieces. However, the low morale and poor standard of training of its 90,000 men, compounded by a weak logistics system, limit severely the army's offensive capabilities. The Iranian army's present equipment inventory is not markedly superior to Iraq's, with 862 tanks (402 M-47, 460 M-

The report even then envisaged the possibility of Iran's enjoying a comparative advantage in this balance before Iraq emerged as a credible challenge to Iran:

> 'The bulk of the Iranian army and air force and all of the navy are disposed along or within reach of the border with Iraq or in the Gulf. As there are no reserves, this force in being constitutes the entire existing deterrent capability of Iran. The Shah's future plans, to the extent they are known, are designed to add formidable dimensions to this deterrent'.

In fact, citing the Shah's personal belief about the Soviet due deference to Iranian security by not openly siding with Iraq and that "a direct Soviet military move against Iran unlikely", the report also identified his ambitions for a credible force on the eastern periphery. While the balance of power on the Iran's western frontiers was already in its favour, the following observation left the US arms policy a mere function of Nixon's political judgment to allow Iran's taking on Iraq, if it complemented Nixon's central strategic interest in the Arab-Israel conflict:

> 'He is more concerned about Soviet support of radical Arab regimes such as those in Iraq and South Yemen or those that might emerge in the Gulf. His fears of "Soviet encirclement," most recently expressed in connection with the USSR's support for India in the Indo-Pakistani
>
> War, are very real and intensify his sense of need for continued U.S. support.'

The estimate however was de-facto recognition of Iran's strategic orientations shifting from Iraq towards the Arabian Peninsula–Red Sea axis, to confront the possible Soviet-Chinese supported threats for which the Shah had given personal assurances to King Faisal:

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60), 881 APC's, and 1,254 artillery pieces, but the training, organization, morale, and technical effectiveness of Iran's 152,000 troops are clearly superior. Since 1967 the mobility of Iran's ground forces has been enhanced by large purchases of Soviet military trucks and APC's, and by the acquisition of U.S.-built C-130's (34 on hand, with a total of 50 planned).

The 8,500-man Iraqi air force, which Iran views as its most immediate threat, has in its inventory 91 MIG-21 aircraft, of which perhaps two-thirds are operational. In addition, it has 33 MIG-17's, 46 Hawker Hunters, and 62 SU-7 Fitters, virtually all operationally assigned. It has some potential strategic capability, with 9 TU-16 bombers. In 1971, 150 of the 260 Iraqi pilots were jet-qualified, and 90 were listed as combat-ready. Additional pilots are being trained, primarily in the Soviet Union. The air force suffers from a generally low level of education, training, morale, and discipline, and has been further reduced in effectiveness by repeated political purges. The Iranian air force inventory now includes 56 F-4 Phantom jet fighters and 109 F-5's. Present plans call for Iran's F-4 strength to be increased to 128 or more by 1975. The 26,000-man Iranian air force in 1971 included 312 pilots, of whom 220 were jet-qualified and 115 were listed as combat-ready. Ongoing pilot training, in Iran and the United States, is constantly adding to that total. While qualitative comparisons are risky, the Iranian air force is clearly superior to the Iraqi in motivation, training, organization, and mastery of technical maintenance, although Iran still depends on U.S. personnel for some aspects of advanced maintenance of its F-4 aircraft.

‘In addition to wanting more sophisticated aircraft, the Shah has indicated for some time that he desires an aerial refuelling capability to extend the range of his F-4's across the Gulf and out into the Indian Ocean. (He thought about an aircraft carrier but decided it would be too expensive.) He has considered the idea of a major new Iranian naval base at Chahbahar on the Gulf of Oman near the Pakistan border. Should this idea be carried out, Iran would have a base well beyond the Strait of Hormuz. The Shah would also like a deepwater navy for Indian Ocean operations, which would require bigger ships than he now has’.

In addition, the assessment effectively contradicted any territorial hegemonistic or expansionists ambitions nurtured by the Shah. It was suggested that the Shah’s clear objective to develop the Gulf-South Asian security architecture comprised of regional powers and to the complete exclusion of superpowers from the Indian Ocean:

“For the long term, however, he envisages the development of regional power centres (Iran, Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan) capable of excluding undue great-power influence from the Gulf and the Indian Ocean without reliance on any foreign alliance.”

One of the most crucial observations about Iran’s future utility in the US global security matrix, and where US-Iran interests completely diverged in the longer term were observed as:

‘In a more relaxed international security environment the overall strategic value of Iran to the U.S. may become debatable. However, the United States retains facilities in Iran which are considered vital to U.S. national security interests. Substitutes may be available by about 1975, but as long as they remain of major importance to the U.S., the Shah can utilize this U.S. need in bargaining for arms supplies’.

It was also clear that US policy towards the region was heavily conditioned by the in-built regional balance of power, where US held substantial leverages on Iran’s military posture or decided to compromise its national security through direct Soviet threat:

‘In the shorter term, the greatest challenge to the harmony of the US-Iranian relationship lies in the three-way rivalry among Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia for influence in the Gulf area. As the friend of both Iran and Saudi Arabia, the U.S. would obviously be embarrassed by any dispute that arose between them. It is probable that U.S.-Iranian relations would also be complicated by open hostilities between Iraq and Iran’.

In one of the most tangible observations about US ability to restrain the Shah's adventures against Iraq, the report endorsed Iran's continued dependence on US diplomatic and security support, while labouring under Soviet intimidation:

> 'Strains thus could develop which over time may contribute to a loosening of the close ties between the two countries without, however, leading to a serious estrangement. It is most unlikely that Iran will decide that it can dispense with U.S. support, no matter how much it may stress an independent foreign policy and an independent role in the Gulf'.

Nevertheless, the conditions under which Iran pre-empted the rise of regional challengers (despite its cooperative ventures with moderate Arabs), while the main Middle East conflict being resolved between US and the Soviets, was also a matter of political judgment for Nixon to have made:

> 'The Shah would undoubtedly seek to project the image of close American support for Iran against Iraq, but he might not be very responsive to U.S. counsels of moderation. However, U.S. success in dealing with the problems postulated here would be fundamentally conditioned by the status of the international effort to promote a political settlement of the Arab-Israel dispute'.

In other words, the core of US policy towards the Gulf still remained subservient to global interests where Iran could deal with anti-Western regimes only through an radical extension of Nixon Doctrine, as utilized by Nixon and Kissinger forthwith:

> 'There can be no doubt that the Shah will exploit this opportunity as energetically as he can. He will wish to assert Iranian influence in the small Amirates on the newly independent Arabian side of the Gulf. He will seek to exclude, or at least to limit, the influence of Iraq or other radical Arab regimes. ***In broad outline such a policy is likely to coincide with U.S. goals, but in specifics there will probably be divergences***.

Bahrain only figured out in a small section of the report as one of US-Iran differences and viewed as a public discourse, not to stand isolated.

The report however was unlike other estimates submitted to Rogers in the past, since it was directly attached as a background paper for Nixon's briefing on Iran:

> 'An attached note wondered whether the summary would be useful in connection with the Presidential trip to Iran. Kissinger responded, "Yes—that is why I have included for file!

(NSC Files, Box 1282, Iran Military 1/1/72-12/31/72).

Chapter 9:

Revisiting 'Nixon Doctrine' in the post-1972 Gulf: local vulnerabilities-US interests

In the run-up for Nixon's visit to Tehran, Kissinger briefed him on 18th May 1972 in Moscow. Pointing-out similar Iranian vulnerabilities and Shah's main concerns with Soviet encirclement of the Persian Gulf through military pacts with Egypt, Iraq, and India and maintaining direct relations with the Trucial Federation, he argued these developments:

> 'were most disturbing to HIM as evidence that the Soviets now plan to pursue their interests in the Persian Gulf actively. He was deeply shaken by what happened to Pakistan in December'

In addition to the spill-over effects from separatist Pakistani Baluchistan to Iranian east, and Soviet activities in South-western Asia, Kissinger's report seemed to accept the reality of Shah's vulnerability in Eastern periphery more than the Western front:

> 'Further disintegration in Pakistan could spill over into Iranian Baluchistan. He is worried about substantial Soviet capabilities in Afghanistan, which is vulnerable to the same kind of disintegration. The SHAH has been impressed with President Bhutto's efforts to hold Pakistan together ….Nevertheless, the situation on his eastern borders is a cause of concern as never in the recent past'.

Kissinger's briefing to Nixon however one of the most controversial advices ever, given to Nixon when he dispensed-with his previously elaborate analysis on the validity of regional threats to Iran and restricted himself to simplistic conclusions. Not only he prevented Defence Department's advice from reaching Nixon against selling F-14/F-15s to Iran, lacking any threat to warrant such sophisticated deliveries, he remained equally duplicitous about the merits of Nixon Doctrine that now sought to provide Shah with the incentives for an aggressive posture against Iraq as the only "rejectionists" power against negotiations with Israel. Neglecting the very strategic vulnerability of Iran from Soviet intimidation by insisting on US presence in Bahrain, as early as 1970 through a new version of direct US engagement, Kissinger now informed Nixon of Shah's following expectation from Nixon Doctrine in the milieu of Détente:

> 'You will be describing to the Shah the strategy lying behind your trips to Peking and to Moscow and the purpose behind your recent decisions on Southeast Asia. The

SHAH will understand your efforts to establish a framework of relationships between the nuclear powers that will permit regional powers like Iran to play the principal role in contributing to stability in their areas. The SHAH has long understood the principles of the Nixon Doctrine—the necessity for great-power relationships that will permit countries like Iran, as the world changes, to develop the capacity to do what the US can no longer do around the world in providing the principal ingredients of regional security and stability'.

Kissinger's appraisal of Iraqi threat lacked an equal amount of analytical depth for Nixon's decision-making ; was indifferent to the merits of Shah's continuous to support Kurdish rebellion and uncovered one of the most bizarre and embarrassing aspects of pan-Arabism. No other rendition of the US declassified accounts deserve more verbatim reading then the following for which the entire Nixon-era politics of arms build-up to support Kissinger's policy towards the Middle East was contrived with Iran doing the dirty work, only to retract during 1973-75.

'Israel has long shared an interest with Iran in cutting Iraq and Egypt down to size, and Iran has provided a reliable source of Israeli oil despite Arab objections.

But his [Shah] principal vehicle has been a series of informal and clandestine relationships with Israel and Turkey on the one hand and with Saudi Arabia and Jordan on the other…. One of the principal channels for maintaining these relationships is Kamal Adham, King Feisal's brother-in-law and chief of Saudi intelligence. He has made a series of stops in Cairo, Amman and Tehran in recent weeks, and it is he who has talked with King Hussein about Jordan's role in the Persian Gulf'.

'While Iraq is inherently unstable, the Shah is concerned about the subversive efforts of which Iraq is capable, especially in Kuwait, in the Persian Gulf sheikdoms, in Saudi Arabia and in Jordan. These conditions lead him to the conclusion that Iran must be as strong as possible militarily to serve as a deterrent at least to the regional manifestations of Soviet encroachment. In this connection, he may mention his plans for further modernizing his air force or possibly his new scheme to develop a combination air and naval base at Chah Bahar on the southern coast of Iran outside the Persian Gulf.'

The following is the closest ever official acknowledgment of the fact that by 1972 the Shah had consciously sought to reduce Iran's Ocean going-capability by re-configuring a

combination of strong air force, backed by a Frigate-Destroyer Navy operating from the same bases where he refused to allow US Carrier Task Force Hancock during the 1973 Arab Israel War to prevent Iran becoming a base for anti-Soviet activities. Where however Kissinger contradicts himself in later accounts was acknowledging USG's covert role in Kurdish rebellion by dating its start to November 1971 when he insists that the Shah made a direct appeal to Nixon 'to cooperate with him in assisting Kurds', while on 28th March 1972, King Hussein 'acted as intermediary for a direct appeal from Barazani to Nixon'.

Another fact which puts the cardinal Nixon-Kissinger objective of a voiding direct confrontation with Brezhnev over supporting subversive movements close to Soviet borders at the centre of US policy and hence manipulating Shah's vulnerability for Soviet intimidation on both flanks was Kissinger's explanation.

In 1999, Kissinger was to vindicate himself out of the charge of ultimate betrayal to Kurds and levelling blame on the Shah when he acknowledged only a reluctant and post-facto support to Kurdish separatism as a matter of leverage on Soviet southern border security which laid at the centre of Brezhnev's demilitarization proposals as Indian Ocean Zone of Peace (IOZP) since March 1971. Kissinger defended Nixon's previous policy of non assistance to Kurds 'because we did not want to provoke a direct influx of Soviet arms and influence'. Nevertheless, after Kosygin's April 1972 visit to Baghdad, and signing a Friendship Treaty 'caused us to reconsider our hands-off policy'.

Kissinger was to delineate chapter-length motives for Nixon's support for Iran's massive armament in his 1979 memoirs(without delineating his personal role) against the background of 1972 Iraq-Soviet treaty which elicited Nixon's direct strategic assurance to 'an ally' in line with successive 7 Presidencies since the 2nd World War'. Explaining that a string of Soviet treaties with Egypt, Iraq and military deliveries to Syria which posed a strategic threat to the Middle East, Kissinger rationalized Nixon's policy in response to the power vacuum created from British withdrawal from the region in 1971 at 'the precise moment when radical Iraq was being put into a position by the Soviet arms to assert traditional hegemonic aims. Our friends-Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the Emirates were being encircled'.

Kissinger further explained that "restoring the 'regional balance of power' as imperative to our interests and those of the Western world" was likely to be threatened by hostile hands to control the economic life-line for Europe and Japan. Hence:

'we could either provide the balancing forces ourselves or enable a regional power to do so'(Kissinger 1979:1264).

Kissinger's 1999 explanation for US participation in instigating Kurdish rebellion is similarly neither borne by his own record of conversation with the Shah during his 21-22nd May 1972 visit, nor his briefing to Nixon before his visit to Moscow and Tehran:

'On 9th April, he signed a Friendship Treaty that, even in the absence of American intervention on the side of Kurds, included provisions for large-scale supply of Soviet arms'.

In addition, no record of Tehran Ambassador Joseph Farland's emphatic advice against direct US part in Kurdish conflict exist to corroborate Kissinger further explanation, he had attributed to Farland:

'[before Kosygin's visit] Farland, weighed in with a warning that, once launched, a Kurdish covert operation would risk becoming open-ended, and if stopped, would be vulnerable to "unfortunate misinterpretations'.

(Kissinger 1999:581).

The above analysis conclusively proves that Kissinger effectively contrived a strategy to manipulate Shah's fear against Soviet-Iraqi collusion by instigating Kurdish rebellion Farland's and State Department's (28th January 1972) advice, well before Kosygin signed the Treaty of Friendship.

One of the most embarrassing revelations of Nixon-era diplomacy in encouraging Shah's regionally aggressive posture towards Iraq was Kissinger's advice, which Kissinger defended in his 1999 memoirs as to the transparency of policy-making and conduct of US diplomacy:

"In your private conversations with the SHAH you can let him know that we are aware of the special relationship which he has developed through his own private channels and that we shall support it….. You might even wish to comment on the special effectiveness of the kind of special channels which the SHAH is using to build this relationship since those channels save the partners the political embarrassment of publicity.[46]"

[46] "the process[inside the NSC] was neither as secretive nor as solitary as the caricatures drawn by Nixon's detractors describe it…And negotiations--including secret ones-- were , in the overwhelming number of cases, documented by verbatim records and long analytical memoranda. Since the advent of the Freedom of Information Act and of the culture of unrestrained leaking, no succeeding administration has dared to keep such a full record of its internal deliberations and international negotiations"(Kissinger 1999:73)

In the similar memorandum, Kissinger repeated his suggestions for Nixon to back Shah's support to Kurdish rebellion:

> 'While the US wishes to leave this a regional initiative, you want the SHAH to know that we encourage it and support it wholeheartedly. — You fully understand the private manner in which the SHAH has conducted these relationships. It permits the partners to relate to each other as their real interests dictate without the inhibitions that publicity poses'.

In one of the core areas of Iran-US relations to have compromised Iranian security against the Soviet Union and prompting likewise Soviet demands upon Iraq and south Yemen for naval bases, they way it was tackled by Kissinger under the flexibility of Nixon Doctrine in the implied regional "grand-bargain" with Iran and Brezhnev was self-explanatory. While informing Shah in person about US determination to stay in the region, as part of its direct security commitment to the region, Nixon was provided a large room for mutual bargaining over Détente with Brezhnev and keeping easier options to quite Bahrain if Shah could be led into Kurdish insurgency and Pakistan's defence:

> 'For the moment we are keeping our small naval force in the Gulf. The Shah has some reservations about this, and you may wish him to discuss them frankly with you. [He has recently said he fears that the present US force of three ships is too small to do any good and yet just large enough to provoke the Soviets to seek a presence of their own. He has suggested that perhaps the US should either withdraw or increase its force.] We have maintained what we have there on the grounds that our withdrawal now would give the wrong kind of signals. It is a tangible symbol of the US's interest in the area's security and stability. We plan to beef it up qualitatively. Iran's strength and this visible US support are the best guarantee of regional deterrence'.

Nixon is known to have endorsed Kissinger's advice on Bahrain as:

> 'In the margin of page 3, tab A, next to a paragraph on the U.S. naval force in the Persian Gulf, the President wrote, "K – increase it'.
>
> (NSC Files, Box 481, Presidential Trip Files, Iran Visit).

9.2. Détente and Gulf security (post-1972): vindicating Persian 'lessons of history'

Nixon's well-anticipatory visit on 30th May 1972 was a vindication of all historical lessons that the Shah had long rehearsed since his first memoir (1960), and repeated in interviews to Bayne(1968) and Khursidjee R. Karanjia(1977) about great powers bargaining weaker powers' security on their own terms. With Kissinger, taking notes, most of which details he then miss-quoted to his own NSC staff during June 1972, the meeting was nothing but Nixon's presentation of his *'fait-accompli'* he had reached with Brezhnev, leaving the Shah with nothing to oppose US stay in Bahrain as a bargain and arms not serious enough to change the regional arms balance. The record only proves the contention that the Shah was still fooled into acting as a conduit for arms supplies to Pakistan and unwittingly provided the key diplomatic leverage to Kissinger to get Jordan and Saudi Arabia around his "linkage" diplomacy to recognize Israel's post-July 1967 borders.

Even in latter expositions of Nixon's support to Kurds during the 21st May's secret meeting, Kissinger accredited this policy playing a central role during the 1973 War. Most of its implications and immediate effects combined were to disprove Nixon's own exposés to CENTO members during 1974 Conference, as a pro-Israel policy affecting US relations with the Arab and not in American interests vis-a-vis Soviet engagements with the Arabs:

> 'given the tense state of Kurdish war and Iraqi relations with Syria-the sole front, Iraq was geographically in a position to affect-only one Iraqi brigade was dispatched to fight Israel which took 10 days to reach the front only to end-up fighting with a Saudi division during the closing days of the war.
>
> (Kissinger 1999:586)

Although Nixon agreed with the Shah on basic Soviet ambitions in the region, his rendition of restrained Soviet behaviour during the December South Asian crisis(Pakistan-India),and placing security considerations above the Communist dogma, presented Shah with a global strategic matrix of future Great power relations where Iran's manoeuvrability(in its immediate periphery) was heavily dependent on Soviet good-will:

> 'What was on their mind was Europe and almost certainly China; they were trying to outflank the Middle East.
>
> The President had told BREZHNEV we would see Indochina through, but he had told him a *confrontation with the US was more likely in the Middle East*. The Politburo wanted better relations with us. We, *for our part, wanted better relations with them*. *But we wanted to make sure no small crises would blow into big ones'.*

The Shah-Nixon-Kissinger meeting is one of the most empathic renditions of superpower ability to reach selective restraint regimes at the cost of Persian Gulf security, and Shah's proud stand against this policy. The conversation proves that Kissinger was the actual theorist of "selective Détente" whose centre of gravity was in Europe when he was asked by Nixon to apprise Shah about US policy after Moscow Summit.

The Shah on record confronted Nixon and Kissinger when he was told [by Kissinger]:

> 'They would make settlements on some matters with some adversaries in order to isolate others, particularly the Chinese. We had to be careful. *It was important to establish the principle of great-power restraint*. We had sought to bring this home to the Soviets'

A very clear set of US priorities was evident when Nixon apprised the Shah of his global interests as 'Going to China(March 1972) made the Russian trip possible'[47].

It is difficult to interpret Shah's response as either one from a proud monarch or a hapless nationalist ally of the West left to fend for the Persian Gulf security when confronted with a superpower fait-accompli of leaving Persian Gulf to Soviet mischief without due security guarantees:

> 'The SHAH expressed his agreement that a *policy of confrontation was impossible*. There were key areas, he stressed, which could not be neglected — such as Europe and the Middle East… Last year, two months after signing the treaty with the Soviets the Indians attacked, the SHAH said. He didn't want to be told that the Soviets were restraining their clients. 'We will not hand over our country. We will pursue a scorched earth policy. They will have to shoot their way in'.

While the 20th May meeting centred on the basic aspects of US offers to the Shah to reduce its presence in Bahrain, it was at best a Machiavellian deference to Shah's interests in

[47] A verbatim reading as to what Nixon tried to publically apprised the Shah to his commitemtns made to Brezhnev- and the twin dailgogues he was seeking with China and the Soviet Unoin at the same time-was more more ominous of the US-Iran rift over dialogue with the Soviet adeversary than admitted by the likes of Ramazani(384):'…HIM is one who has an understanding not only of the bialterla problems that our two coutnires soemtiems have—fortuntaly relatively small ones—but beyond that , an understanding of the area in which HE lives and of the international problems…… But we also recognize that as we beign a dialogue with some natioans which which we have had no dialogue at all—I refer to the visit that we paid earlier this year to the Peple's Repblic of China—and when we begin conversations that can, and we ttrust will, develop a beter realtisonhip with a nation that from tiem to time sicne the great World War II has been an adversary on occasion—that as we do "both"[my emphasis] of these things, we have not overlooked a very fundamental fact of itneratаioal lie, and that is that it is vital that we build our policy on th eallaicnes and the friendships that we have had in the past, that we have now, and that we hope to have in the future'(Parstimes.com/history/Nixon_toast_tehran.html)

preventing Iraqi rise in the region. In fact an explicit US interest in Iran acting as a conduit of arms supplies to Pakistan, was explicitly requested by Kissinger himself while acknowledging Nixon's decision to resuming economic aid to India. Nevertheless a closer scrutiny of Shah's making a voluntary offer (after sounding out US arms embargoes in future confrontations) suggests that its strategically self-serving premise came from Kissinger, in exactly the same manner it were made by MacArthur when the Shah got lured into assessing regional security in terms of Soviet threat during September 1970.

Nevertheless, keeping in view Kissinger's 1999 rationalization for arms supplies motivated by the Iraq-Soviet 1972 agreement, as well as Shah's presentation of Soviet interests in establishing a direct Soviet clients to endanger direct US interests should interpret Nixon's agreement on Kurdish support in preventing Kurds becoming pawns of Soviet policy towards Iraq, hence efforts to retaining Kurdish good-will:

> 'We could not have a situation where the US cut off arms to any client of the Soviet Union. He was afraid the Soviets would establish a coalition of the Kurds, the Ba'athists, and the Communists; the Kurdish problem instead of being a thorn in the side could become an asset to the Communists'.

It was there, when Kissinger tied-up Shah to the last option, when he asked Shah's views on helping Turkey against Kurds:

"the SHAH replied. Iran can help with the Kurds."

The archivist however had obliged himself to note the similar contradiction of Kissinger's explanation, to support the Shah to pre-empt Iraq's rise and motivated by any tangible use of Kurdish struggle except using it to protect Jordan and Israel from Iraq:

> 'According to Henry Kissinger's memoirs, the President during this visit also agreed that, *"without American support, the existing Kurdish uprising against the Baghdad Government would collapse. American participation [in the effort to aid the Kurdish insurgency] in some form was needed to maintain the morale of such key allies as Iran and Jordan*…"
>
> (Years of Renewal, pp.582-3)'.

The archivist however remained too modest in his own observation about Kissinger's motives, by missing the remaining sentence […] "disparate as their motives were, and as a contribution to the regional balance of power".

(Kissinger, 1999: 582-3.)

It seemed that the Shah had also changed his views on Chinese threat to the region since Johnson-era when he liberally projected Chinese presence in Pakistan after the 1965 War as a way of Ayub's drift towards Communists. After seeing two previously antagonistic powers coming to global deals to off-set Soviet threat and with Kissinger fresh from his covert visit to China in July 1971, the Shah was apprising Nixon of what he already set in motion towards opening to the Communist China the first beneficiaries to which was not Iran but Omanis labouring under the Dhofari rebellion:

> 'even thought Mao wanted a strong Iran; he had the impression that the PRC preferred to have good ties with Iran. The Chinese were reliable friends, as they proved in Pakistan'.

In a similar set of limited options left for the Shah to prevent West Pakistan's fragmentation, and Afghanistan's slide towards the Soviet Union, the following too vindicates his entertaining predatory designs on fragmenting polities when he offered to acts as a conduit for US arms. The following again proves the point of Nixon and Kissinger trying to remain in the background of major initiatives to expose Nixon's "selective Détente" to unnecessary Soviet demands in other regions:

> 'But the main problem was to save West Pakistan. …. Iran could be a proxy for Pakistan, the SHAH suggested. Dr. Kissinger noted that we then had to re-establish Pakistan's arms program to make Pakistan eligible for third-country transfers from Iran. That we must do, the President agreed. Otherwise Pakistan will be jumped. The SHAH pointed out that he was offering Afghanistan everything'.

Kissinger's order of conversation suggests that he and Nixon had pre-positioned their deals with Iran by presenting Shah with decisions on global Détente, without latter's input. In effect Nixon's requesting Iranian cooperation to deliver on key US interests seemed Shah's last options to seek US restraint in the region. Nixon's offer to reduce US presence from Bahrain was therefore a masterful conduct of linkage diplomacy by Kissinger, despite the original merits of a case previously contested by the Shah:

> "The President then said that the US was willing to reconsider the question of the US naval deployment in the Persian Gulf. The SHAH stated that he had wanted to exclude the other major powers from the Gulf after the British left and had therefore expressed concern about the small US naval force. But after the Soviet-Indian treaty there was

something to be said for showing the flag there. Iran nevertheless was the only country capable of dealing with any situation without any outside help. He would study it."

Nixon's second meeting with the Shah did not even touch upon Bahrain, but discussed general matters of Iran's offers to Oman in Dhofar, joint naval manoeuvres, or exchange of views on Saudi inability to withstand domestic dissension without reforms.

Kissinger however miss-quoted the core aspect of US-Iran diplomatic squabbling since 1969, when he replied to Saunders' questionnaire 12th June 1972 as "no discussion":

'—Was there any discussion of our Persian Gulf naval force and did the President promise to re-study it? enlarge it? reduce it? OR withdraw it? '

Nevertheless, the most striking part of Nixon-Shah conversation to have appeared in the de-classified domains was Nixon's pleading the Shah not to further oppose US policy of compromise with the Soviets, which projected an altogether new definition to Nixon Doctrine:

'He asked the SHAH to understand the purpose of American policy. "Protect me," he said. "Don't look at detente as something that weakens you but as a way for the United States to gain influence." The Nixon Doctrine was a way for the U. S. to build a new long-term policy on support of allies. The American intellectual community didn't reflect U. S. policy'.[48]

(Kissinger Papers, Box TS-28, Iran, Memcons, Notebook 30 May 72 – 15 September 73, Box TS – 28.).

Nevertheless, when Kissinger briefed Connelly on 29th June 1972, for a special covert mission to sort out the modalities of arms supplies to Kurdish rebels, he dealt with Shah's perceptions about regional security as an appendage of Nixon Doctrine. The following explanation was totally contradictory to what he had sold to Shah and Nixon since 1969:

'It is still worth repeating the fact, which the SHAH will understand, that the US wants to establish a framework of relationships between the nuclear powers which will permit regional powers like Iran to play the principal role in contributing to stability in their areas. Contrary to the view sometimes put forward by the uninformed, the Nixon Doctrine is not a formula for US withdrawal from the world. It is just the opposite. It is designed to assure a strong and positive American role. We are seeking to establish a

[48] Keeping-in with his xenophobic views on other races, American students and Heads of State (Argentinean President Peron being a 'son of a Bitch' or African leaders recently getting off the trees, Nixon deposed similar views about American intellectual community as: the American intellectual community didn't reflect U. S. policy. Who is bad, who is good, among intellectuals? The President asked rhetorically. It was hard to tell. *The majority were failures."(Nixon Tapes, April 1974, meeting with US Ambassador to Tehran Douglas MacArthur, the 3rd).*

framework for greater cooperation with our allies in meeting our mutual security interests'.

(NSC Files, Box 425, Backchannel Messages, Middle East, 1972).

Kissinger persevered in his practice of withholding vital information from both State and Defence Department when in a 15th June 1972 debriefing memorandum to Rogers and Laird, Kissinger only issued notices of Nixon's intentions to furnish a large number of US military advisors (Blue-suites) and unspecified number of F-14s and F-15s([1]Kissinger Papers, Box CL-152, Iran).

Whether or not Kissinger reported further discussions with Shah on Bahrain, the Shah did at least conveyed the agreement he had reached with Nixon on a fairly reduced US presence in Bahrain despite the possibility of Iraq-Soviet joint presence in the Persian Gulf . When Saunders informed Kissinger of MAAG's Chief General Williamson's conversation with the Shah on 5th June 1972, it suggested the Shah being very clear of this arrangement that effectively reflected a compromise on Iran's direct policy towards Iraq, and Nixon reducing his exposure as openly propping up Pakistan and Afghanistan against Soviet Union and India:

'Regarding Iraq, HIM stated that the recent USSR/Iraqi agreement has forced him to change his views with respect to the Middle East area. He stated that his initial objective was to get the British out and to insist that no other major power come in. since the signing of the USSR/Iraqi Pact, HIM says that he is completely willing for the US to come into this area if it will do so with quality. He repeated that he was thinking of 'quality and not quantity', stating that a few corvettes are not appropriate. He would like for US to put on display, in this area, the most modern pieces of equipment that we can. He did not go into further detail'.

In the same vein the Shah informed Williamson about his new strategic orientations that effectively sough to shift Iran's entire air assets on Pak-Afghan border through construction of airbases and naval facilities at Chahbahar and Zahedan:

'…. HIM once again covered the importance of having adequate ground forces strategically positioned to assist in maintaining stability and the development of his country. At this time he was specifically referring to Chah-Bahar and Zahedan. … as him deploys his armed forces in the eastern part of the country, he stated that he would probably organize another armored division to cover the extreme east to include the

Zahedan-Chah Bahar area and that utilizing the additional fighter squadrons that he has in mind and reducing his concentration at Vahdati, he can place aircraft at Chah-Bahar and Kerman. HIM stated that his refuelling capability would permit him to cover Zahedan with aircraft coming out of Kerman, Bandar-Abbas, and Chah-Bahar'.

(Kissinger Papers, Box CL-152, Iran)

Nowhere in the above conversation, is the Shah seen to allude to develop an Ocean – going navy or anti-ship missile capability which burdened Iran with excessive manpower problems or expenditures at the cost of mainland security

In another follow-up on Bahrain controversy, Iran's reaction to US Senate's efforts to convert the hitherto secret US-Bahrain deal from "Executive Agreement" to a Treaty (along with Azores Agreement), made Shah's intentions about bilateral relations and sensitivity to Soviet reactions in Iraq far clearer. On 23rd June 1972 therefore Saunders informed Kissinger (for onwards submission to Nixon) about Iranian position:

'The Iranian Foreign Minister told Ambassador Farland that Iran is concerned that if the Bahrain executive agreement ever gets transformed into a bilateral treaty between the US and Bahrain this would provide justification for the Soviets to formalize a similar naval presence in Iraq. The Foreign Minister expressed the hope we are taking the right tack with Congress in making clear the Bahraini arrangement is not a new one. He added that Iran values the MIDEASTFOR presence and hopes it will continue as long as it can do so under present arrangements.'

(NSC Files, Box 1282, Iran 6/1/72 – 9/30/72.).

Kissinger's efforts for Nixon not to be identified with an agreement with the Shah on Bahrain was evident in his opening a covert operations' channel through ex-Treasury Secretary Connolly whom he apprised in detail Shah-Nixon discussions on every aspect of regional security, expect agreement over Bahrain.

In a 'Backchannel' message of 29th June 1972 (singed by Alexander Haig on behalf of Kissinger), Connolly was apprised about Nixon handing another task to Jordan's King Hussein for coordinating further covert activities in the region with Iran, and Saudi Arabia:

'Within the framework of discussing regional cooperation, you may wish to tell him the President in his conversations with King Hussein in Washington in April

encouraged King Hussein to play a constructive role in helping provide the basis for stability in the Persian Gulf in cooperation with Saudi Arabia and Iran'.

In addition, Kissinger on-record asked Connolly to take up the issue of Kurdish support with the Shah to which Nixon had given personal assurances of US support.

(NSC Files, Box 425, Backchannel, Middle East, 1972).

Farland was prevented from giving further details of Connolly's discussion with Shah, upon latter's refusal to clear Embassy's report.

(NSC Files, Box 1282, Iran 6/1/72-9/30/72)[49].

In 1999, Kissinger had the following to say to a relatively ill-informed reader as a comparative case of Nixon-Ford diplomacy from Clinton's"

'[…] the Shah and king Hussein had met […] from July 31 to August 2,1972. … welcomed American aid and sought to lay down the ground rules for common effort. They warned Barazani to avoid dramatic moves that might trigger an all-out Iraqi assault, such as declaring a separate Kurdish state. Their emphasis was on strengthening Kurdish defensive capabilities to preserve the greatest measure of autonomy'.

(Kissinger 1999:585)

Kissinger's contradictions to shift blame for Kurdish fiasco on the Shah as soon as the basic tenets of Nixon's pro-Israel policy were achieved were manifest in further explanations of domestic and Iran's specific interests. Wilfully ignoring US domestic sentiments, during the entire covert Kurdish campaign, towards support wars of self-determination, due to Vietnam, Kissinger was to contradict himself 27 years later when finally accepted that during early 1975, the US inability to support Barazani through the Shah and a financial and military package for a "separate" state was a direct function of domestic politics, despite Shah's putting the major share in this operation: 'And the Iranians needed only to glance at our media on Indochina to know that there was no domestic support whatsoever for such a policy'.

In fact Kissinger accepts that even under CIA's advice for more aid to Kurds during early 1974 to have revealed the secrecy about direct US arms supplies, 'But if we did so, we

[49] (National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 1282, Saunders Files, Middle East Negotiations, Iran 6/1/72-9/30/72. Secret.)

would find ourselves in a hopeless Congressional battle', while 'it was at this point, with Iraq making slow but steady progress, that the Shah, without warning, suddenly decided to throw in his hand'. Although Kissinger seems to take credit for encouraging Barazani to continue to fight Iraqi troops during early 1975,and persuading the Shah not to drop the timely support, he accepts that 'only overt Iranian intervention could now save the Kurds, the costs of which would surely exceed the $360 million Barazani had requested in 1974'. Although Kissinger tries to put the blame on the Shah reaching agreement with Saddam during 1975 without consulting him: 'in March 1975, he stunned us with the announcement that he had reached an agreement with Saddam in which he in effect abandoned the Kurds', his explanations of US engagements in Indochina and considering Shah's 'actions [as] brutal and indefensible', bares down the nature of Soviet-US relations which had first provided the Shah all the disincentives to detach Iran from the anti-Arab policies endangering Iran's own national security:

> 'But in terms of a cold-blooded assessment of Iran's security, the Shah's decision was understandable as it was painful'. […] I did not care for the Shah's actions and even less for his deceptive methods[when] I send a frosty telegram in which I stopped well short of endorsing his actions and implied that I had doubts about the benefits the Shah seemed to hold in store for himself".[50]
>
> (Kissinger 1999:593-94).

A Top-Secret meeting between Kissinger and the Shah, with Helms, Zahedi and Saunders in attendance on 27th July 1973 however puts Kissinger's entire thesis to serious contradictions about his actual aims and the Shah's objectives towards Kurdish insurgency deposed in the memoirs. The meeting uncovers the fact that the Shah's motivations laid in using Kurdish pressure to prevent Iraq from intimidating Jordan, and no where finds mention about his sympathy for Israel's security, while it was Kissinger who emphatically toyed with

[50] Kissinger's letter effectively endorse the nature of US-Soviet agreement over reducing global tensions under the post-1972 Détente and Kissinger's personal interest in leveraging the Iraq-Iraq conflict to provide additional security to Israel through neutralizing Iraq. On their own, therefore Iran and Iraq could be well advised to come to their own separate agreements (Iranian veto over Barazani's replacement in exchange of fore example siding with Iraqi demand for higher prices during OPEC's Algiers round in March 1975) when the US was unable to determinedly affect a decision Kissinger himself had reached with the Shah and reported to Ford and Rabin on 18th February and 9th March. Nevertheless, more instructive is Kissinger's above stated telegram he send to the Shah on 19th March 1975, that fell far from what he professes to have driven to the Shah as "frosty":
'with respect to the Kurdish question, there is little I can add to what I have already said to you personally during our recent meeting. This is obviously a matter for Your Majesty to decide in the best interests of your nation. Our policy remains as always to support Iran as a close and staunch friend of the US. I will of course follow with great interests the evolution of Iraqi-Iranian relations and of Iraqi policy in your area generally and toward the Soviet Union in particular'(Kissinger 1999:592-94)

the possibility of Shah committing Iranian forces. A verbatim reading of what Kissinger had the Shah doing and to what extent he wanted Iraq to be tied away from Israeli front is self-explanatory:

> Kissinger: If Jordan is attacked, we would again encourage Israel to mobilize and cover them. ….If we could have some senses that there would be some mobilization of Iranian forces or even some Iranian military activity that would be important for us.
>
> The Shah: Yes. We also have the Kurds. On the Kurds, we both could show a little more direct support….I have told the Kurds not absolutely not to participate in a coalition government, I told them to stop receiving Soviet representatives or the Baath's […] but if we are going to ask that of them, we will have to give them some more money.
>
> Helms: Yes, perhaps we should give them some more.
>
> Kissinger: you can count on it in principle.

Kissinger persevered in getting the Shah to commit to a contingency which made Iran a direct participant in a conflict involving Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Israel, under the cover of Jordan's safety, to which the Shah was committed to through King Hussein's own initiative with Barazani, hence not seen to commit whole-heatedly, expect supporting Jordan only when the Americans and Arabs took the initiative:

> Kissinger: …Would it be possible for Your Majesty to order some contingency planning for a situation in which Jordan was attacked by Syria and Iraq?
>
> The Shah: perhaps I should contact Hussein. We could play the Kurdish card and encourage them to begin skirmishing. That would drag Iraqi troops to the north of Iraq away from Jordan. We could also reinforce our borders.
>
> Kissinger: that sort of thing would be good for us to know…the trick in a crisis like this is not to piddle away your commitment of forces.
>
> The Shah: No, it cannot be done piecemeal….Jordan needs additional money. You should put what pressure you can on the Saudis and the Kuwaitis.
>
> Kissinger: I was going to urge Your Majesty to do the same. When we get our new ambassador in Saudi Arabia, we will be in a better position. We will press the Saudis for more aid for Jordan….we had been holding it up in order to increase the pressures on others to help Jordan more.'

For a detailed understanding of the nature of the Shah's objectives towards support for Jordan through Kurdish uprisings and the nature of Iran-Pakistan-US defence relations against India, please see attached Appendix-IV.

(White House, MemCon: 11652,56(1,3)27 July 1973,Top Secret)

9.3. The "arrival" of Indian Ocean and the "end" of Bahrain!

US records after 1973 suggest a new strategic shift in Nixon administration's need for keeping Bahrain as a base for MIDEASTFOR under some covert arrangement between Kissinger, Nixon and the Shah, and hence fairly muted references to Bahrain afterwards. US records however variously address the Soviet threat of intervention during the November 1973 Arab-Israel War as the turning point when the US Indian Ocean Fleet had to deploy in the Arabian Sea, an action receiving reluctant Iranian support for refuelling and aerial reconnaissance missions from Shiraz Base.

This section concludes debate on US interests in Bahrain after 1973 War by discussing the broader Indian Ocean-wide controversies in US-Soviet confronting further opposition from India and Sri Lanka and even from US allies in Britain, and Australia against militarization of the Indian Ocean. The debates on the Indian Ocean diplomacy by the US field staff and Kissinger himself are interesting to note the convenience underlying previous US determination to use its presence in Bahrain as a bargaining tactic against Soviet interests in India. One a similar plain, this section also re-focuses USG interests in the Indian Ocean and of India as a key Indian Ocean naval power which Nixon had threatened during 1971 Indo-Pakistan War and used Shah to channel weapons to the latter after May 1972 to balance India's relations with Soviet to prevent Soviet acquisition of its bases

US records on the deliberations to start works on Diego Garcia during mid-1973 through building a consensus among British and other Indian Ocean and Pacific allies also make clear that Nixon Administration had already decided to reduce its dependence upon Bahrain or other bases in Ethiopia and Gann in direct deference to Brezhnev-Dobrynin's June 1971 idea of making Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace (IOZP).at the face of it, India and Sri Lanka were also converts to this idea and led opposition against US presence in Mauritius and Diego Garcia after 1972. A mere historical analysis of the events leading up to US deployments during 1973 War under Soviet threat is enough to understand the nature of

Brezhnev's opposition for which the Shah of Iran faced serious threats from Brezhnev during his March 1974 visit to Moscow.

This fact is finds comprehensive mention in Shah's Court Minister Assadollah Alam' account, which also addresses Brezhnev threatening the Shah during October 1974 of dire consequences against CENTO's revival and supporting Kurdish rebellion (Alam, 1991: 21-24th November 1974 Entries)

A NSSM-199 dated 14th March 1974 from Kissinger also revealed the actual context of Indian Ocean policy supported by detailed studies on US interests conditioned by US-Soviet relations. Observing the events leading to deployment of the US Hancock Carrier Taskforce after 1973 War, the study was still based on pre-emptive deployment doctrines and denies Soviets carry initiative close to Arabian Sea. Kissinger's explanation of the Nixon-Brezhnev Summitry during 1972-74 directly impinged on whatever transpired under the Indian Ocean strategy despite its dangerous compromises:

> 'Whatever the status of Détente reducing Soviet influence was a central objective of our strategy. Indeed, we viewed Detente as a means for hedging the risks of that strategy'. (Kissinger 1999:580).

Despite the study's classified nature and the urgency in its completion (within 4 weeks) the study enjoyed its broadest remit of Indian Ocean which only retrospectively proved that Iran and Saudi Arabia had good reasons to have opposed US presence in Bahrain or Oman at various times:

> 'The earlier studies should be updated to reflect the policy implications of political and military developments in the area, including: a) the prospective reopening of the Suez Canal; b) Soviet naval deployments in the Indian Ocean; c) the developments of the past two years in US-Soviet relations as they may affect Indian Ocean policy and strategy; d) political developments in the Middle East; e) the Subcontinent, and the other littoral areas of the Indian Ocean; f) arms limitation proposals affecting the Indian Ocean area'.
>
> (NSC Files, Box 365, NSSM 104-206, November 1970-July 1974).

As a matter of retrospective judgment about Iran's strategic shift towards non-alignment or the Indian Ocean Security Community by inviting South Africa and Australia

and not getting involved in superpower rivalries, with a pro-West tilt, points (c) and (f) are highly instructive to absolve Iran of opportunistic shifts on Bahrain during 1968-72

A 13th February 1974 document captured US interests in Diego Garcia more aptly than theoretical possibilities of reducing US overseas commitments under the post-Vietnam domestic milieu. Chaired by President Ford and Kissinger, the meeting was evident of the US inability to maintain long distance and long term deployments in the sea without an aircraft carrier harbour that Bahrain could not provide after deployment of the Persian Gulf Task Force(after 1 year). It was however still revealed that the US navy was still conducted naval exercises with Iran until November 1974. Kissinger therefore noted Chinese support for Indian Ocean strategy and Diego Garcia's importance:

'Kissinger: This Indian Ocean deployment is crucial for our foreign policy.'

Even the financial aspects were considered very much secured by Senator Stennis which modest sums of $14.8 million were enough to get Diego Garcia running.

(Ford Library, National Security Adviser, Memoranda, Box 4, August.).

US documents detailing the nature of Nixon's Indian Ocean policy drive home the understanding that by mid-1973, the US Defence Department had actually planned massive reductions of naval deployments presence as part of global restructuring. The first areas to receive the benefits of US-Soviet brinkmanship before 1973 War were Persian Gulf and Red Sea by evacuating Ethiopian base at Kagnew. An 18th July 1973 State Department cable to London Embassy therefore ordered its staff taking up the case with the British government to concur with US interests to start works on Diego Garcia for which Congress was being approached for their funding for year 1974. The choice of US interests in reducing further commitments to allies under direct Soviet threat to Horn of Africa could not be starker:

> 'in conjunction with this reduction, and based on continuing budget restrictions, us navy has reassessed its communications requirements throughout Indian ocean/red sea area in order to determine possibilities and desirability of consolidating navy communications in that area. Navy studies indicated that most practical solution would be to consolidate navy's tactical communications at Diego Garcia and to phase out its communications facility at Kagnew'.

The case that the Defence Department seemed interested in making the naval base operational by 1976 was evident when it sought immediate appropriations for Diego Garcia:

'Diego Garcia expansion would restore communications coverage in gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, and western Indian Ocean, where Kagnew phase out would have caused temporary degradation. Move to Diego Garcia would involve considerable annual dollar savings, and would move important communications links to far less politically vulnerable location.'

Deliberations over US Indian Ocean policy also contradict US intention to make Iran a vital part of its Indian Ocean strategy such as taking advantage of its naval base at Chah-Bahar. This was obvious in neither Shah's response nor encouraging its construction of Chah-Bahar base which Kissinger had informed Nixon was under construction without much success since 1968. In addition, a USG narrow focus on costs as a way of de-emphasizing East-West competition in the Indian Ocean also suggested the previously instrumental nature of Bahrain's retention or assuring Persian Gulf's smaller states of US commitments. Rogers therefore did not deem necessary to communicate this policy shift to the Shah or COMIDEASTFOR in Bahrain. the notion of 'Dollar-savings' for of merely $25 million for major reduction in however the Arabian Sea could not be justified on grounds of extensive security assurances to regional partners, unless there existed real potent threat to the Persian Gulf. The military significance of Indian Ocean in the immediate context of Détente, despite the irritant of Arab-Israel War (1973) was also suggested in the UK contributing only 10% of the additional 226 personnel needed to get the base operating by 1976.

(NA, RG 59, CF 1970-73, DEF 15 India-United States Relations).

US records also suggest a likewise shift in Iranian strategic perspectives on the Indian Ocean security immediately after the flurry of reducing US commitments and Shah confronted by Brezhnev's threat in 1974, hence efforts to revitalize CENTO to deter subversive threats from Iraq. This section therefore contradict Ramazani's explanations about Iran's interests in the "reappraisal" of CENTO as a result of Iraq-Soviet Treaty(1972) to confront the "Soviet-Iraqi Pincer" around its Western and southern peripheries.

A 31st May 1974 CENTO Ministerial Conference report therefore identified new currents in Iranian thinking about CENTO, despite when Iran stood accused of signing up to the Soviet-sponsored Asiatic Pact by Pakistan. Although foreign minister Abbas Khalatbary categorically rejected the charge, he still 'emphasized that Iran had only agreed to study the idea and on the understanding the PRC would be included in the system.'

The 1974 CENTO meeting is a vivid expose of Iran and Turkey, and even US and the UK's non committal to confront Indian testing of nuclear weapons despite Pakistan's scathing criticism of CENTO's utility to regional members:

> "Iran and Turkey, as well as UK and US, reiterated importance of cento but avoided getting into debate with Aziz Ahmed on either political guidance or CENTO itself."

The fact that Iran's support of Kurdish insurgency also occurred in the wake of Iraq-Indian diplomatic exchanges, was also at the core of Iran's making specific references to Iraqi subversive activities through the region and demanding CENTO taking notice to deter this threat. Being alarmed by Indian foreign Minster taking up Indian Ocean security with Saddam Hussein during 1973, and Indira Gandhi refusing to visit Iran upon Shah's threat to deter Indian interference in Pakistani Baluchistan at the same time, Iraqi threat and by means Soviet threats remained Iran's sole agenda point at CENTO's 21st session:

> 'Iranian rep made lengthy statement on Iraq as base for subversion against Iran and gulf states. US and UK reps confirmed plans to sponsor anti terrorism-training for nationals of regional members'.
>
> (NA RG 84, New Delhi Embassy Files: Lot 78 F 45, DEF 4, 1974).

The record of another CENTO meeting (22nd May 1974) chaired by Nixon, James Callaghan and CENTO ministers(curiously missed by Ramazani), made emphatically clear that Nixon had moved from his life-long ideological aversion to Communist dogma to a functional opposition to Communist regimes, which did not prevent him to engage with China to off-set Soviet preponderance in the Indian Ocean. Despite clear assurances to Pakistan's integrity after 1971 war, Nixon sounded out his global philosophy of American commitments towards global peace from a position of strength still centred on Soviets. Despite Nixon's various personality contradictions, utter disrespect to democratic potential of Asian States, sheer racism against African leaders and knack for covert diplomacy, the 1974 meeting demonstrates that Nixon held a very objective and realistic view of global politics which was equally sensitive to the Arab point of view. Rejecting any pretensions to unquestioned support to Israel which he suggested had cost America Arab ire and strategic initiative in the Arab world; he acknowledged that the US policy had also facilitated Soviet involvements with the Arabs. No public ally available document (expect Shah's own stated ambivalence with Jewish lobby's manipulation of US foreign policy during 1975 or Alam's quoting form Agnew Spiro

about Nixon's eventual fall due to Jewish-dominated media's hostility to his pro-Arab stance) has been more patent an admission of Nixon's personal views on US global interests.

As another lesson for Iran never to have to trust its security to one remote power, its traditional pro-Israel policy now being compromised by Israel's biggest supporter and its own ally by reaching out to the Soviet Union could not be instructive to usher a drastic shift to deliver o Soviet security whenever it could:

> 'In the Middle East, despite our different interests and vital as it is for the Soviet Union-- they see the resources and geographic position and their game is understandable-- the U.S. has a special tie with Israel which has hurt us with the Arabs. This tie doesn't serve the United States. Looking down the road, the U.S., Israel and Arab interests will be served by the U.S. playing a constructive role and not tied just to Israel. As I told Prime Minister WILSON, there can't be permanent peace unless we are for it, to influence Israel. It can't be done if the Soviet Union is against it, because of their power'.

What Nixon therefore presented to Iran was a clear-cut option to engage with Soviets or Chinese to which US or the British themselves not averse to even after the 1973 crisis in the Arabian Sea:

> 'For the U.S. — each of them(China and the Soviets) has better relations with the United States than with each other — right now the basic threat to survival is the US-Soviet conflict. But one fourth of the world is Chinese, and they have nuclear weapons. They are smart and energetic. In 20 years they will be a major nuclear power. Should we let them sit there in isolation? Or should we develop a dialogue? Now they need us; later they might not. We will try to play a constructive role in China's relations with its neighbours…… We will maintain our strength so that no one thinks he can bluff us or go to war with us without cost'.
>
> (National Security Adviser, Memoranda of Conversations, Box 4, May 22, 1974)

A 25th February 1974 CIA report on Soviet propaganda activities also captured US interests policy towards Diego Garcia, despite the merits of Soviet objectives to make Indian Ocean a zone free of nuclear weapons and non-Asian navies. The report carried out a detailed analysis of Soviet inability to acquire naval bases in the Indian Ocean, for which it agreed that IOZP idea was floated by Brezhnev and Dobrynin(March 1971)to garner regional support

against US naval preponderance in the region before Suez Canal opened. the CIA argued that soviet interests in preventing US acquisition of Diego Garcia was specifically due to its vulnerability against Aircraft Carriers and SLBM-capable submarines, despite Soviet Union had refrained from voting in favour of limiting Indian Ocean for Asian navies in the UN:

> 'In March 1973, another journal [besides Pravda and Izvestia] offered Brezhnev's proposal as an alternative to US plans for Trident and Poseidon'.

The crux of CIA report similarly suggested a clear Chinese preference for US presence in the Indian Ocean and Soviet effort to reduce its own exposure to criticisms against on its presence in littoral bases. An explicit demonstrated US ability to operate from Diego Garcia during 1973-79 and bring Soviet Union to negotiating table on Indian Ocean security notwithstanding, the strategic shift across the Indian Ocean under the East-Western disengagement was too provocative for Iran to ignore. Hence CIA laid bare the true nature of Indian Ocean based Détente which Kissinger and Nixon had refused to spell-out to the Shah during 1972-74:

> 'Soviet support for the IOZP, however, does not resolve Moscow's problem of how to forestall an anticipated increase in US naval activity in the area. The Soviets will do what they can militarily to counter US deployments, but they cannot match the US without drawing down forces now allocated to higher priority tasks elsewhere. If the Soviets are really interested in limiting Indian Ocean deployments, therefore, they may go beyond the IOZP and raise again in the bilateral context the BREZHNEV-Dobrynin concept of 1971.'
>
> (CIA, Office of Current Intelligence Job 79-T00863A, Box 31).

Kissinger's chairing another British –American meeting on 26th April 1974 with British Embassy Staff (ex-Iran ambassador Peter Ramsbotham, John Hunt and Richard Sykes) with General Brent Scowcroft, suggested the very ambivalence Kissinger himself entertained about the utility to Diego Garcia for US Indian Ocean interests but on-record acknowledged to have carried along under the Navy and JCS pressures. The fact that by 1974 the Great Western powers (including Australia) had come to perceive Soviet threat shifting away from Europe and US mainlands despite focusing on Indian Ocean was evident in the British approach. When therefore Kissinger was informed by the British Cabinet Secretary of Heath

government's inability to develop a consensus within the Cabinet, and asking the urgency of US decision, Kissinger replied:

> 'It is silly to put a $35 million item into the supplemental aid bill. But I must tell you, the Navy and Defense Department are so eager for this that something that looks like foot-dragging will cause ill will. The first problem is to get the money. That is our domestic problem.'

Kissinger and British therefore conceded to keep the matter out of Congressional and House of Common's scrutiny of the Indian Ocean Base diplomacy, so as not to give the impression of "dissension" among the British and the US governments. It was however also recognized by the British that there were clear rebels among Indian Ocean countries to Diego Garcia, for which Sir Alec-Douglas Home proposed(communicated by John Hunt) to convene an Indian Ocean Conference under British auspices to garner a trans-Indian Ocean consensus for Western presence, which Kissinger "mused" as 'this is not a good idea'. Nevertheless, Kissinger's observation about Indian opposition to US decision over Diego Garcia also implied Indians coming around the virtues of a Western presence for their own regional hegemonic ambitions:

> 'My experience is the Indians will calm down very quickly, that we are paying no lasting price with them, and the time will come when they will be grateful.
>
> General Scowcroft:
>
> But they can't say something publicly.
>
> Ambassador Ramsbotham: The Australians too.'

(Kissinger Papers, Box CL 145, Great Britain, March-April 1974).

Chapter 10:

Conclusion

This project posed certain fundamental anomalies about the security and political discourse of Iran and Saudi Arabia during 1950-75: how they tried to achieve their exclusive national interests; responded to external stimuli and affected political development of the region by contriving a specific security agenda with external and internal actions. Occurring as a deviation from systematically dominant powers' interests in stability of the bipolar system and efforts to maintain their economic /resource hegemony upon the region, these were analysed as regional responses to external stimuli through survey of contemporary literature and tested through first-hand documentary evidence for their validity. Various research questions developed through applying different theoretical assumptions were tested to determine the nature of the international system during 1950-75: its structure, ordering principles; the extent of systemic –regional interdependence; and the possibilities for systemic change through structural transformation in the security, economic or ideological domains during 1968-75.

The aim of both primary and secondary data analyses was also to determine the nature of external Systemic Powers interests in the stability or transformation of the Persian Gulf system, whereas the "bottom-up" approach determined the regional response to systemic constraints and through contriving alternative balances of power or a regional security community.

10.1. The systemic stability problematique and client ambitions

The initial premise of this project was that during 1950-68 the Persian Gulf acted with considerable autonomy from the externally imposed international systemic order due to its specific post-World War-II structure, where the pre-War era systemic great Western powers acted either independently in concert or at times with restraint to retain their status in the US-Soviet contrived global security architecture. As a generalization on the global principles of independent action, British efforts to militarily challenge Iran's oil nationalization during 1950-53 and against Nasser during 1956 War(in collusion with France), were thwarted by the US itself due to interests in threat of superpower confrontations and preventing the broader

Middle East from falling under Soviet influence, a restraint acting to further weaken European imperial powers.

The general survey indicated that the systemic-regional interaction over resource hegemony, Imperial interests and regional resistance to external "over-lay" created different security dynamics for both regional –international systems and passed strategic initiative to the due to US inability to assure its neutrality in the Arab-Israel conflict or Iranian nationalist struggle.

In the "bottom-up" inter-dependent reaction to outside influence, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Levantine Iraq retained sufficient autonomy for regional action in the Persian Gulf until 1968 hence US inability to prevent Iran-Saudi hegemonic reaction against British or Nasserite efforts to retain the region under Imperial protection or through the Arab League. As a matter for more region-specific generalization however the Johnson Administration's efforts to prevent further British evacuations from East of Suez after 1968 due to its pre-occupations in Vietnam and leaving the Persian Gulf to Soviet hegemonic control were moderated by Iran-Saudi ability to prevent the region falling under radical Arab or Marxist influences. In fact, global power calculations by the US , priorities of European security and State-Department, NSC and Pentagon's lack of interest in extending security assurance to the NLF regime passed regional control a quasi-aligned Iran and Saudi Arabia which was favourable to Soviet interests in the demilitarization of northern Indian Ocean. Nevertheless, we further identified these very structural interests as moderating US response to Nasser's emergence in North Yemen since 1962-63 when Kennedy and Johnson Administrations refused to commit forces on behalf of Saudi Arabia and were unable to prevent Soviet engaging both Yemens due to Nasser's ability to deliver on Israeli security after 1967 War.

A general analysis of contemporary literature also suggested various structural constraints impinging on regional powers' ability to challenge the regional status-quo due global players' ability to balance their rogue clients' interests through a combination of arms supplies and embargoes. In case of external powers' interests therefore, the pre-1968 relations of Imperial Britain and the United States with conservative /republican regimes in the Persian Gulf were managed through careful security and trade balances such as Britain's confronting Iraqi and Saudi challenge to imperial interests in Kuwait, the Trucial Coast and Southern Arabia but US turning a blind eye to the resource and territorial hegemony exerted by Iran and Saudi Arabia to prevent allies "jumping off the fence" to non-Aligned or Communist blocs.

The research also pointed out various instances of systemic powers' reaction to the regional stimuli by adjusting their policies should their clients endanger the global balance of power through alternative "suitors", hence Soviet diplomacy to nurture Iran and Turkey's neutralism during 1956-68 by reducing ideological hostility, de-escalation along borders and development support, and a likewise US interest in regaining Nasser's good-will, hence turning a blind eye to his depredations in Yemen, Biafra and the PDRY during 1963-70 despite Gulf conservatives' vulnerability from radical pan-Arabism. Notwithstanding the military weakness of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq during 1950-72 therefore, this project showed that most regional conflicts generated their own structural dynamics and were relatively autonomous from systemic influence or actively supported by their external patrons.

10.2. The case of regional autonomy under bipolar stability

Before explaining the external/internal powers' struggle for system stability or re-negotiation during 1968-75 periods, triggered by another sub-systemic shift due to British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf, we set about defining the systemic order in the Middle East animated by Soviet pursuit of mainland security during 1956-75. Relations with Arabs in Mediterranean and the Levant were therefore demonstrated as contrived to weaken NATO along the western Soviet flank, while seeking demilitarization of the Persian Gulf sub-complex to protect its southern borders during 1968-75.

In addition, we demonstrated how the British policymakers were unable to confront Saudi interference in Southern Arabia and Oman during 1958-70, nor able to achieve its relinquishment of Buraimi. This compared to the convenience with which Iran and Saudi Arabia reached a regional modus-vivendi over a regional security and economic agenda during 1968-75 by taking independent action against radical Arab movements and Iraq. The virtues of bipolar stability to pass independence to clients to reform the global structure was finally evident in its most tangible transformation when Western powers were unable to deter OPEC's challenge to the post-Industrial revolutionary economic during the same period.

Another neorealist assumption falsified through primary data was identifying those systemic dynamics under which the international system during 1968-75 permitted sub-systemic transformations through new "security" structures facilitated by availability of Soviet Union and China as new "suitors" after Nixon showed his indifference to Persian Gulf's security under "selective Détente" which left Iran and Saudi Arabia vulnerable to Soviet

intimidation directly or through its proxies. Archival data provided fresh insights into the security, economic, resource and ideological discourses in the region to suggest probability of "regional systemic" transformations, short of Iran and Saudi Arabia disrupting security along the southern Soviet soft-belly through a conventional war with Iraq and Yemen to mandate a US counter-action such as Carter's despatch of the RDF during 1969 in response to turmoil in Iran, PDRY and Saudi Arabia. An astute Soviet diplomacy to countenance the rise of relatively stable Iran and Saudi Arabia after 1968 to impose order was therefore configured to purge Persian Gulf of Western powers and a case of clients exchanging their patrons when the post- 1971 Detente endangered their national survival through selective applications.

In order to define the global hegemonic system within which regional powers struggled to secure their basic national objectives: against their externally-supported regional rivals, we developed concepts for a permissive international system under its "structural modifiers" which countenanced regional hegemonic struggle. Persian Gulf Security Complex therefore offered a number of testable case-studies when Iran and Saudi Arabia are seen to undertake expansionist, resource extractive and hegemonic strategies during 1968-75, while the US and Britain were unable offer reliable assurance to local allies due to priorities in garnering Soviet restrain in Europe and Vietnam. We also demonstrated that under the same power vacuum ,both regional powers exercised restraint against the rise of alternative regional challengers like Iraq and Yemen, which in former's case was vulnerable to an all-out Iranian attack during 1972-75 while Soviet Union courted Iran to retain its goodwill and kept opposing US presence along its southern borders through British-vacated bases.

10.3. Regional hegemony as precursor to integration

Another objective of this project was to demonstrate Saudi hegemonic interests in the Arabian Peninsula as a comparative case of non-Iranian threat based sub Security Complex which affected region's political development more deleteriously than monarchical Iran's claims on Bahrain and smaller Islands.

The substantive questions raised in the Introductory chapter took issues with the academic assumptions about Persian Gulf relations by pointing out anomaly about Iran's rise as a hegemonic power but acting with extreme restraint against Iraq during 1969 and during 1972-75, while we demonstrated that its military capability made options for a hegemonic war

highly credible. Other instances of a well-coordinated community action was evident in Iran's acting in support of conservative Oman on the Arabian Peninsula, getting China's withdrawing support for the PFLOAG, while Iraq also closed its offices in Baghdad, a diplomacy receiving support from the Soviets and wider Arab community to prevent US interference on behalf of Saudi Arabia.

The reaction thereto against Western presence in the Arabian Peninsula during 1956-75 was another testable case for the pre-GCC security community, followed by Iran and Iraq, competing for regional pre-eminence but united in a common cause against Western political and economic hegemony within or outside OPEC. The Saud-Nasser entente against British presence in Aden as a reaction to Machiavellian subterfuges to cannibalize Saudi patrimony during 1956-62, and afterwards by the Iran-Saudi-Yemen collaboration against Marxist PDRY as complimentary to Saudi regional leadership was followed up against another British "over-lay" in the Trucial Coast. In both cases, Nasser's efforts to engage the oil-less sheikhdoms through the Arab League or direct Saudi-Iran hostility affected British loss of initiative due to nurturing an Abu Dhabi-dominated UAE which was incompatible with Saudi interests, hence efforts to contrive Bahrain's leadership over the oil-less Sheikhdoms. Archival analyses demonstrated Iran acting as a rather "hands-offish" actor in the Arabian Peninsula affairs after relinquishing claims on Bahrain, but extended direct security assurance to King Faisal and other regimes against non-states actors. Our historical analysis also suggested its active diplomatic role since 1958 by playing a highly duplicitous role for Arab interests in preventing access of Western maritime powers through the Red Sea in the UN Conferences on the Laws of the Seas in 1958 and 1960. Apparently an exercise in pursuit of Iran's interests in restricting Nasser and Iraqi access through Hormuz Straits and Shatt al-Arab, its opposition to US presence in Bahrain and by Saudi Arabia in Oman remained common security interests that disparate Persian Gulf powers shared with the Soviets during 1968-79. Whereas security literature argued about the post-1968 Saudi opposition to foreign presence in Bahrain and Oman, first-hand record instead suggested its security imperatives to prevent Iran-Abu Dhabi's domination of the eastern flank. An all round view of Saudi security interests also suggested Saudi policy-makers pursuing a highly proactive policy during 1956-67 against British presence in southern Arabia making Faustian deals over its Hadrawmi Highlands in return for North Yemen's acquiescence into absorbing Aden as a Crown Colony and permit the North-South unification under Imamate or Republican Yemen.

As a crucial manifestation of "Pax-Saudica", sufficient data was cited on Saudi interference and claims on the Trucial Coast sheikhdoms to discourage its melding with Greater Yemen sponsored by Egypt, Libya and Soviet Union, hence interest in "mini-Federations" along the Trucial Coast after 1969 under Bahraini leadership. The empirical evidence also dealt with Saudi interests in preventing Trucial Coast's dominion by Abu Dhabi or Iran closer to its eastern Shi'a provinces by staking claims on Buraimi. Although contemporary academia views Arab sentiments to have prevented their becoming party to an Iran-Iraq rivalry and hence failure of the Persian Gulf Defence Pact vindicated, this project safely Iran-Arab ability to co-act over the internal security agenda, hence Saudi, Jordanian complicity with Iran, Israel and Turkey over Kurdish option. The case of smaller powers' ability to throw their weight behind a weaker Saudi Arabia to prevent Iran or Iraq's regional hegemony therefore was not so straightforward to qualify their security behaviour as band-wagoning against stronger power's unquestioned hegemony.

10.4. Détente and American priorities

The documentary evidence supports the contention that it was not the Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf- rejected by the CIA and NSC since 1969- but Nixon's strategic calculations to preserve trans-Atlantic unity (after Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in October 1968) and push Europe to improve its conventional and tactical nuclear capability, which set in motion the new forces for a structural reform in Europe and the Persian Gulf. Autobiographical account of most US policy-planners in the Johnson and Nixon Administrations and those served under British Prime ministers Harold Wilson and Edward Heath detail a similar systemic calculations underpinning the trans-Atlantic "rift" with Britain leading the efforts to prevent removal of US conventional forces from NATO to prevent German re-armament against the French and Soviet threat and developing NATO's capability by placing British and French deterrents under the Multilateral Nuclear Force (MLF or MLNF).

The Soviet threat to the Persian Gulf during 1968-79 was also treated as a function of systemic permissiveness under Détente whereby Nixon policy was wedded to the reduction of superpower rivalry with implied possibility that Soviet Union will receive a free-hand in western Asia along the Arabian Peninsula-Persian Gulf axis through a reduced US presence in Bahrain. As a clear academic finding, Johnson and Nixon Administrations countenanced Iran-

Saudi rise to regional predominance through military build-up and endangering economic vitality of Western alliance through higher oil prices, as long as they did not subvert the de-escalatory objectives of Détente whose epicentre was Europe. As a systemic judgment therefore Iran and OPEC's challenge remained a case of US diplomatic failure and led to Western alliance's economic destruction and withdrawal from southern Soviet borders.

Empirical evidence however conclusively shows the limited freedom Iran and Saudi Arabia enjoyed over global bipolar system even before the collapse of global oil prices in 1977 with the US retaining key leverage over the region and arbitrate security balance through diverting Soviet threat to non-conforming Iran and Gulf Arabs. Richard Nixon effectively arm-twisted Iran-Saudi cooperation to keep checks on Yemen and Iraq and supporting Pakistan and Afghanistan without acknowledging after reaching agreement with Brezhnev over guarantees to Western Europe and the US mainland.

Historical evidence further shows that Iran and Saudi Arabia had to conform to the ordering principles of international relations enunciated by the Western industrial powers since "Pax-Britannica". In fact, the collapse of world oil prices in 1977 not only re-balanced the global economic order but failed Shah's efforts to renegotiate the entire geo-economic structure between the raw material producing South and industrial exporting North which was followed by two decades of low oil prices; destruction of two global producers through Western supported wars and Iraq's virtual annihilation in 2003.

Contemporary debate failed to explain the geopolitical dynamics of Détente as the case of Iran and Saudi Arabia opposed to US presence in Bahrain and preference to live under Saudi threat while the US remained committed in East Asia and failed to deliver a peace settlement in the Arab-Israel conflict after 1967 War, Soviet emergence in the Persian Gulf through a powerful Red Navy and a putative Iraq-Soviet threat should have required Iran and Saudi Arabia to demand US stay(and later in Oman) as a security guarantee.

First-hand documentary analysis helped exposing various other structural dynamics of international system which motivated regional powers to react to their security being sold down by Nixon and seek security through counter-coalition and new suitors, hence Iran, China and India agreed to keep Indian Ocean out of Soviet-radical hands. In fact Nixon's acquiescence into Iran's sponsorship of China to the Asiatic Pact (after 1973 War) and Pakistan's re-armament through covert Third Party transfers were designed to keep Soviets from dominating the Indian Ocean as a post-Détente hegemon.

10.5. US-Iran relations: the case of arms race in the Persian Gulf

US policy records during 1966-72 emphatically underline the US role in affecting the post-1965 fragmentation of CENTO by embargoing arms supplies to Pakistan's after its war with a non-aligned but American-leaning India and Shah's changed perceptions about US credibility for Iranian security. Archival evidence further evinced Shah's pent-up frustrations at US inability to prevent British abandonment of southern Arabia in 1967 under Nasser's pressure, while himself threatened with US arms embargo over conflict with Iraq on Shatt al-Arab in March 1969, which he reminded Nixon during May 1972.

This project also demonstrated that a substantial albeit sub-systemic structural power transition in the Middle East occurred well before 1968 when Iran and Saudi Arabia were engaged in a broader power struggle with Egypt, Britain and Iraq since 1956.Neverhtelss, the Shah's citing the Arab peace process leaving their demobilized forces to threaten the Persian Gulf or the pan-Arab UAR to be joined by Iraq, Syria, Sudan and Djibouti after 1967, US policy planners rejected these threats warranting Iran's acquiring more sophisticated weapons until 1972. In fact, the Nixon-era intra-mural debates showed persuasively that during 1969-72, US arms supplies had nothing to do with the Soviet threat while Iran was argued as capable of confronting Iraq or even a combination of radical Arab forces at one time. Instead we successfully showed that Nixon's policy-advisors only leveraged Shah's convenient threat-rationalizations about the direct Soviet threat or presence in Iraq and south Yemen to force his agreement on US stay in Bahrain under the plausible deniability of administrative functions for US Fleets. US records from 1966 through to 1972 are replete with advocacies by US ambassadors, the State Department and NSC officials to leverage arms supplies as a way of controlling Iran's regional posture and decelerate its wholesale strategic drift towards the Communist Bloc. Moreover, both Administrations' strategists are shown to view arms supplies as contributing to a positive trade balance; keeping Western arms vendors at bay but most importantly retaining valuable intelligence gathering facilities to monitor Soviet anti-ballistic Missiles and Satellite tests in Central Asia until the CIA acquire spy satellite technology.

In fact we demonstrated that Iran was obliged to diversify its dependence from US to other arms vendors after Congressional refusal to sanction Johnson's military credits allocations without regard to its role as the only reliable supplier of oil to the West after 1967 War and providing vital intelligence facilities denied by Pakistan. One of the most crucial

findings of the research is that consequent in Iran's hostilities against Iraq during March 1969 in Shah's absence to Morocco, Nixon and Kissinger both carefully manipulated Shah's sense of vulnerability through delays for the first 2 years and encouraging his 'oil for arms' policy through indirect route, which compelled or motivated Shah's desperate measures against Major oil companies; takeover of the oil-rich Abu Musa Island; as well as threaten Saudi Arabia over Arabi Island to finance his obsolete arms orders which the US army had refused to buy. In the same vein, Nixon was unable to break Congressional control over his foreign policy often conducted through covert channels by Kissinger, Nat Samuels, William Richardson, MacArthur and Richard Connolly. In essence this project provided valuable insights of the pre-cursors of the post-1972 arms relations until the Shah was able to buy arms through cash payments and came to realize the untrustworthiness of Nixon and Kissinger during 1972-76.

Contemporary debates only raised questions about the probable objectives of US policy-planners to shore-up regional security through acquisition of key naval bases in the northern Indian Ocean besides developing Iran's military deterrent but were not supported by credible evidence of government-to-government undertakings. Declassified records however suggested that US arms policy never envisaged Iran's ability to stop a direct Soviet assault for which Nixon government re-invoked the Executive Security Agreement 1959 for the first time in 1970 against Soviet counter-action against British threat to Iran's sovereign claims in the Persian Gulf. Nevertheless, the CIA and the NSC conclusively analysed the plausibility of Soviet threat to Iran during 1969-72 and rejected it even after the 1972 Iraq-Soviet Treaty and provided vital clues about Iran's own security objectives in opposing Détente and US presence in the region, hence Shah's focus on developing a self-defensive capability for which he was ready to await new weapons development until 1975-76. New evidence therefore puts the entire Persian Gulf security debate since 1968 to new interpretations where Iran's role as a "hegemonic" surrogate to Western interests is contradicted and instead shows a clear break between Iran and US relations over major regional security issues during Détente.

We are able to show that Iran's actions against Arabs over Bahrain and other militarily insignificant Islands were effectively supported by Nixon Administration, while Nixon, Kissinger and Rogers ignored stark warnings by the CIA and Defence Department that such support will only isolate Iran in the region; coalesce anti-US coalitions among the conservative-radical Arabs and trigger an arms race through Soviet sources. Arms diplomacy

played a crucial role in facilitating Iran's irredentist claims as well as aggravating its isolation in the region but failed to bring about tangible security benefits until it came to see the virtues of unity with the Arab OPEC after 1973 War.

In return however, Iran and Saudi Arabia were presented with a fait-accompli on Bahrain's retention by the US which Iran had sought to use in trust of the Gulf Security Pact. This project raises serious questions about the US faith in helping the region attain its security and economic autonomy while the Shah has been shown to be serious to act as a trustee of Gulf Security initiatives in collusion with Arabs. This project therefore is one of the first path-breaking studies on Bahrain's importance as a quasi-independent polity whose position under the Soviet soft-belly was manipulated not by Iran, but by Saudi Arabia and the US to keep regional powers in check and wager Détente from a position of strength in the Indian Ocean.

10.6. The paradoxes of the Nixon "Doctrine"

One of the outstanding findings of this project relates to the most ill-informed aspect of Iran-US relations as Shah's personal relations with Nixon and Johnson and stoking Shah's ambitions to act as an American Deputy in the Persian Gulf. Not only we pointed out CIA and Defence Department's various warnings about Iran's potential to be a "heavy-handed" peacemaker in the region and pursuing aggressive policies against Iraq, we also elaborated on the politics of Kissinger's NSC, Ambassador Douglas MacArthur and the State Department's which gave authenticity to this narrative of "ambitions" without ever quoting directly from the Shah to have entertained otherwise. In fact, we have successfully shown that far from a policy of deputizing Shah for a specific regional role under Nixon Doctrine, Nixon was more than ambivalent about Iran's ability to act under eh aegis of CENTO much less on its own until September 1969. Instead it was Kissinger who played a masterly manipulative role to provide Nixon with the strategic flexibility under Nixon Doctrine to leverage Shah's readiness to act as a conduit for US arms to Pakistan and foster Afghanistan's stability along eastern frontiers, without Nixon been seen to violate the rules of engagement reached with Brezhnev over Indian Ocean. It was for this reason that Nixon rejected Shah's protestations about US presence in Bahrain since late 1970 with Kissinger arguing Nixon's Doctrine's inapplicability to grant a certain role to Iran for regional security. Kissinger's various interpretations of the Guam Doctrine after CIA's Special Estimate of September 1970 shows that he interpreted this

by validating the Soviet acquiring of the Umm' Qasr base which was rejected by the CIA and even by himself on record, Kissinger further conveniently leveraged it as a diplomatic tool to tie the Shah publically to regional responsibilities which Nixon found too dangerous to own up to whenever the Shah threatened to diversify his arms supplies to Soviet Union. After 1970 again, Kissinger advised Nixon in the wisdom of keeping Bahrain after 1971 when the Shah sought to prevent Nixon from reaching arrangements with the Soviets over his head.

10.7. The Shah's "ambitions", retrenchment and defence through "consensus"

Our empirical forensics also showed Iran's retrenchment to periphery and mainland defence and reducing its strategic ambit away from the Indian Ocean after the warming-up of Soviet defence relations with Egypt, India and Iraq since early 1971. The project's findings challenged Iraq-Soviet relations undergirding a revamping of Iran-US relations after Nixon's 1972 visit to Tehran, but based in defensive realist and cooperative defensive interests as the best response to Western powers' potential use of force to revoke OPEC's demands during October 1971. Contradicting most assumptions about Shah's interests to project power beyond the Persian Gulf in the direct context of British withdrawal and Soviet presence in Iraq and South Yemen, empirical evidence suggests the Shah seeing regional vulnerability under Western action and not from any Soviet or radical threat in the oft-cited Iraq-Soviet Treaty(1972).

The study makes radical adjustments to academic undertakings about Soviet threat or Shah's motives to revitalise CENTO after 1972 and suggests that the Shah had sought to forfeit exclusive security responsibilities that exposed Iran to accusations of imposing a security/political order on Gulf Arabs but was sincere in defending Arabs against Western and Japanese powers' action. As a matter of credit or obsession with Iraqi threat the Shah was instead willing to act under a regional consensual security framework, the most tangible expression of which was in developing Iran's military capability "to deter" adventurist regimes and forsaking Ocean-going capability in favour of airborne/mechanized capability to respond to non-amphibious threats and awaiting development of 3rd Generation fighters which he received only after 1974 after achieving oil prices under OPEC's auspices. The US failure to prevent Pakistan's dismemberment at the hands of a Soviet-armed India during December 1971 and the start of a new Indo-Afghan supported insurgency in the Baluchi-Pashtun belt,

posed the very strategic threat to Iran's eastern periphery against which the Shah raised his first fire-bells through Vice President Agnew Spiro, MacArthur and Kissinger. Evidence instead showed Iran consolidating its defence closer to both eastern and western peripheries in the wake of US decision to take over the regional protective role from the British since late 1970. No subsequent US record, especially the 27th July 1973 Top-Secret meeting between the Shah and Kissinger demonstrates Shah's interests in buying bomber forces or aircraft carriers but preference for deployment on eastern frontiers closer to Pak-Afghan border. No contemporary record details reasons why the Shah effectively put off his defence modernization plans by 1975-75which Iraq was pursuing through its treaty with Soviet Union and started buying from France and China after 1975 through hard-cash. Suffice it to point-out that Shah's Court Minister Assadollah Alam's diary makes specific mentions of Brezhnev's serious warnings to the Shah during early 1974 for hosting US Task Force Hancock in the Arabian Sea during the Arab-Israel War; revival of CENTO and support to Kurdish insurgency which could trigger a world war, leading to abrupt ending of Kurdish conflict as soon as Iran's interests were secured under Algiers Accords.

10.8. The Kurdish factor in the US Middle Eastern policy: A contradictions of objectives!

A key structural transformational interest of the US in the broader Middle East has been shown to prevent Israel's annihilation through a triple threat by Kissinger, Nixon and Ford, and required Iraqi containment away from former's border. This was achieved through supporting Kurdish separatism during 1972-75, albeit diverging completely from Shah's intentions of providing security to Turkey. Evidence contradicted Kissinger's rationale for Iran's military development after Iraq-Soviet Treaty (1972) and prevent Kurdish state become a Soviet satellite, which he himself sought to discourage by rejecting Barazani's requests for $360 million. Nevertheless, expecting the Shah not to have withdrawn support after successful delaying Iraqi participation in the 1973 War casts serious doubts on his entire thesis. Interestingly Kissinger makes no mention of the Saudi connections in his memoirs while in 1972 he was informing Nixon of Kamal Adham's covert liaisons with Jordan and Iran. The Shah is never quoted even by Kissinger to volunteer his support to take Iraq out of the Arab-Israeli equation.

In fact Kissinger's various arguments in the recently declassified records and explanations in his memoirs suggest US interests in keeping the Soviets out of the Arab-Israel conflict whereas Iraq's neutralization fitted well with Israel's security interests for not having to fight on three fronts, a fact he triumphantly acknowledges as achieved through the Kurdish surge during the 1973 War but subverted by the Shah as a death knell to Kurdish struggle!

10.9. The future of IR Theory and the International relations of the Middle East

This project makes no value judgments about Iran's hegemonic ambitions over smaller neighbours; on the morality of the Shah's supporting Kurdish separatism or non-support to the Arab oil embargoes during the 1956, 1967 and 1973 Wars. As a case of academic pursuit, the purpose was to raise certain questions about the Shah's anomalous behaviour in the region and towards a superpower patron in the short window of 1968-75 and define the constraints and opportunities for independent action in pursuit of Iran's national interests, at times through hegemonic polices and at times in cohorts with the Arabs-non Arabs of all stripes.

Insuring regional security through hegemonic stability and usurping weaker powers' rights is a norm of the international system of which Iran has been the prime example of hegemonic temptations during the 16th to 18th centuries as trans-Gulf and western Asian Imperial power; a perpetrator on its turf against the weaker powers after its decline during the 19th century and finally falling prey to Imperial "over-stretch" which befalls all expansionist powers whom all the Iranian monarchs during the last three centuries collaborated against to off-set the Ottoman, the Portuguese, the British or the Tsarist control of secessionist regions across the four fronts .

Hegemonic, predatory or revanchist "Intentions" are notional, psycho-analytical and even relative to the vanquished and the weak, but above all else, too difficult for social scientists to "prove" through narrative-based accounts; the religio-ideological or cultural biases; singular case-studies and due to their quasi-scientific nature, as being inferential and established through historical narratives. Iran's case as one of an aggressive and antithetical to the Sunni-Arab virtuous expansionism since the 7th century A.D has been the most over-rated academic pursuit of such revisionist studies, until the repositories of the actual US-Iran-Soviet and the Iran-regional undertakings remained closed to a positivist researcher Words preserved for the sake of posterity and despite recorded according to the organizational traditions- this

empirical study being no exception- and despite conscious perversion of the "facts" by its recorders however still remain the safest repositories of evidence which can ensure validity and allows replication to disprove stated facts by the autobiographer. This project brought to light the Realpolitik of Iran's dilemmas of interaction with the regional and global environments under the "Pax-Britannica and then the 'Pax-Sovietica" during 1967-75. Making room for a new academic term was my coining the term: "Pax-Saudica", which competed far more aggressively for relative self-preservation and ideological hegemony than for regional expansionism as attributed to the Shah or for disposing-off industrial surpluses in the case of the two European Imperial powers.

The project successfully elaborated the Shah's ability to overcome Iran's security dilemma to extend his cooperation with the otherwise staunch hegemonic opponents in Iraq and the conservative Arabian Peninsular powers alike- having far more bigger territorial or ideological ambitions than Iran's- in the trust of making the Gulf waterbody free from the superpower competition, when he was confronted with the traditional US policy of acting as a self-interested Patron: willing to sacrifice its clients and even staunch allies, when it came to highly ambitious Presidents like Nixon or advisors, willing to leave their mark on the world events such as the Nobel Peace Prize laureate Kissinger.

As a footnote with fonts bigger than the main textual narrative of the "Gendarme of the Gulf", this project successfully demonstrated the theoretical possibilities of a state-actor's ability to transform the international system through cooperative-security under the epistemologies of a Security Community whose notional possibility was evident in the Shah's efforts to regain Bahrain and prevent its acquisition by the US simultaneously ; action against Dhofar, the PFLOAG and support to the otherwise Soviet-proxy Kurdish struggle and above all seeking to mend fences with the Soviet overlord to deliver on its mainland security from the MIDEASTFOR. In the case of the Soviet global hegemon, re-positioning itself as a central power of the Gulf-Arabian- western Asian Regional Security Complex, this project challenges the basic tenets of the Regional Security Complexes theory but accept the enduring applicability of the Neorealist theory of the "systemic" balance of power, as postulated by Waltz in 1979. According to the latter, the Shah and the House of Saud were never able to challenge the overwhelming systemic imperatives obliging the US having to confront the Soviet threat and vice-versa, a conscious Soviet strategy not confront eh US naval power in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, but contriving pliable sub-security systems of the

Arab-non Arab conflicts during 1956-69 under their resource, territorial or ideological struggles. We demonstrated that most of the deliberate Soviet restraint in the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula, the Levantine and the Mediterranean politics was a conscious move in anticipation of the final British withdrawal from the Soviet southern borders after the Sudan's independence in 1965, and after Nasser's emergence in the Arabian Peninsula against the British presence in southern Arabia after 1956 against which it extended direct support to the Sana'a during 1964 onwards and countenanced the consolidation of the "Pax-Saudica" during 1956-79 around its traditional patrimony.

The lessons for the polar powers' ability to divide the spoils of the system and prevent new contenders rise to the power league by containing he expansionism by Iran and Saudi Arabia through controlled escalations through clients, under the "freedom of the irresponsible" however were still intrinsic to the polar powers' capability to restrain their clients' ambitions, in itself motivated by their regional interests and not gearing them to the sole superpowers' interests in the systemic stability. This systemic imperative has remained equally imperative to the British imperial interests, wherein its economic viability became its own motive to seek a settlement with both Iran and Saudi Arabia during 1967-71, after having successfully defending its oil-rich possessions in the Gulf and arranging lucrative arms contracts with the Shah et al, while leavings the non-oil monarchies on the whims of the regional power brokers.

Nevertheless, this project also posed serious possibilities of an anti-US counter coalition by the regional powers due to the availability of the Communist China "suitor" and Soviet self-interests to prop-up the Shah in his claims on the contested islands and against the Western oil companies during 1968-74 which given the US acquiescence into China's rise in the Gulf-Peninsula and western Asia after 1972 by openly sponsoring its membership of the Asiatic Pact; develop Bahrain or Aden as Diego Garcia-like bases after 1973 War; extending direct security guarantees to the Shah and to the House of Saud's against the "non-Soviet" threats; not endangering Iran's or regional security through supporting covert operations against Iraq and decisive jumpstarting Pakistan's arms aid immediately after the Indo-Soviet Defence Treaty(March 1971) would never have been possible for Iran and other US allies to have to acquiesce into a pro-Soviet diplomacy during 1968-71. After Nixon refused to deliver on the regional security as detailed above, both the Iran-Saudi "Paxs" were hereby condemned to Nixon's arbitrariness to live under the Soviet hegemony which given the Soviet ambitions under since 1964 gave ample strategic vacuum for its to support communist activities across

the northern Indian Ocean ,especially in the North Yemen, the PDRY, Iraq and Afghanistan to de-link the US allies from the Western pacts seen in the dissolution of the CENTO on the eve of the Iranian revolution.

The practical manifestations of the theoretical possibility of the Persian Gulf acting as a Security Community in the pre-GCC phase under the Iran-Saudi or Iraqi leadership, therefore remained as ephemeral as the global power position of its local actors, bound to follow the power logics of the US-Soviet arrangements under Détente and priorities for their mainlands and European security. Nevertheless, by my suggesting that Iran's claims on Bahrain, Arabi, Abu Musa and the Tunbs Islands were not aimed at satisfying the Shah's irredentist nationalism as so traditionally blamed on his megalomania or the Aryan racial superiority, I have tried to use the documentary evidence to prove that it were undertaken in the vital interests of using their location and natural resources for Iran to develop a minimum deterrent for national security; in the trust for regional security and even as deference to the Soviet interests that Brezhnev was able to achieve through Nixon during 1972 Summit through Bahrain's "qualitative" reinforcement. In the case of his attachment to the regional security, this project suggested that the Shah struggled to achieve this under the radical Arabs' hostility; the innate Saudi and conservative Arab Camps' pragmatism not to annoy the radical Arabs and sometimes outright perfidy to shift the blame on Iran, but above all on Nixon's deliberate attempts to manipulate the Shah's sense of insecurity by refusing to sanction necessary credits for Iran's military build-up.

As instructional to the systemic dominance by the patron and ability to leverage the clients' dependence to transform a regional balance of power, itself a case of the US-Soviet restraint well before the Shah's acquiring the relatively lesser superior F-4s and ground forces under Nixon in late 1969, the assumptions of Defensive Realism were self-evident after the Shah's failure to voluntary acquire the necessary "fire-breaks" to concentrate on Iran's economic development through the "credits" aid for arms and instead taking a short-term approach to prevent Iraqi emergence after 1971.

Two lessons are most instructive for the theory and practice for the international relations of the Middle East.

Theoretically, this project has found all necessary ingredients for the continuous operation of a Security Community in the Gulf, even if the region had to remain under the hegemonic power of the Shah by imposing a regional behavioural order on the delinquents

like Iraq, the PDRY or Bahrain in their regional and external relations. Despite a far more successful enterprise by the Cold War standards, its practical manifestations through two actions against Iraq and Dhofari rebels at the same time have proven that it failed neither because of the Soviet presence as its central Regional Security Complex power, nor due to the overwhelming Saudi or Iranian hegemonic claims on the Trucial Coast or southern Arabian littoral, but decidedly under the deliberate Nixonian ambitions to deliver the Middle East to the Israeli-Egyptian peace; preserve the Atlantic Alliance through its tactical nuclear-conventional deterrence; and achieve the strategic nuclear disarmament, which he could not achieve without delivering a strategic quid-pro quo to Brezhnev whose global security imperatives needed no less than the Indian Ocean's demilitarization through the MIDEASTFOR and sponsoring the Asiatic Pact, without US interference in its affairs or Chinese membership. Nevertheless, the project has shown convincingly that Nixon and Kissinger's policy to contain the Soviet threat through Bahrain and Kurdish option was intrinsically deleterious to the Gulf and Arabian Peninsular security, since its centre of gravity existed in delivering the security for Israel, despite Kissinger's pretension , in which pursuit his entire pro-Shah arms diplomacy and diplomatic support for the non-significant islands during 1969-72 was contrived for the Shah to take-up a voluntary role of providing arms and support to both Kurdish guerrillas and threatened India and Afghanistan to protect Pakistan, actually beknownst to the Shah. This is where the Soviet expansionism or reaction to the US threat to its southern borders was itself contrived by Kissinger's "containment-through-Détente", even if Kissinger's words are taken at face value, hence Bahrain becoming the centre of regional-global controversy under the Shah's professions for a Gulf Security Community.

Under this superpower "condominium", and both Iran and Saudi Kingdom fearing a Soviet-inspired encirclement immediately after the Nixon-Brezhnev's Moscow Summit(1972), effectively compelled both to wage a covert struggle against Iraq through Kuwait , Jordan, Israel and Turkey, and although little alluded-to in Afghanistan after the 1973 revolution through supporting the Afghan "Mujahideen".

As the non-littoral members of a broader Security Community in the eastern Middle East along the Levant, the Gulf and the southern Soviet underbelly, and as a validation for a regional Balance of Power theory of middle-ranking powers, we proved that none of the members' individualistic interests in the Kurdish option transcended beyond their national

security interests to prevent the Iraqi or radical Arab coalitionary threat endangering their specific national security interests be it the Israel, Turkey, the Hashemite Jordan or even Kuwait, and thus contained the seeds of unravelling of a broader Security Community as soon as each was able to reach some modus-vivendi with Saddam, Saddat or Assad, after Kissinger launched his own "shuttle" diplomacy, without any follow-up on the Gulf security after Nixon's action in the Arabian Sea during the 1973 War.

For theory's sake therefore, this project can therefore claim that, had it been for the Shah's continuous presence on the scene and Kissinger not having played-up on the Shah's vulnerability from the Soviet-Arab threat before the Soviet-Iraq Treaty(1972) or misleading him on the Kurdish threat as a Soviet "proxy", to deliver on Israel's security, Saddam would have moderated his stance against Iran, Israel and Kuwait after the Algiers Accord(1975) after which the oil wealth had already made possible the optimum strategic deterrence in the region while Iraq was already able to deter Syria from threatening Jordan since 1970.

In this instance, Nixon's promising to sell the Shah whatever he wanted in May 1972 is also proven as "too-late-too-expensive" by the pre-1973 oil-price standards; was self-serving to protect himself form Congressional scrutiny on arms-credits policy; and refusal to perceive the Iran-Pakistani sense of encirclement by the Soviet-Afghanistan and Indian threat emerging in the Pashtun-Baluchi belt after 1973.

For the empirical validation of the IR theory then , this project can acknowledge that the independent drivers for a regional Security Community were at best intrinsic to the global balance of power interests by the systemic powers; due to relative Chinese weakens during the 1970s to deliver on the regional vulnerabilities of Iran, Saudi Kingdom and Pakistan under the superpower modus-vivendi to delegate northern Indian Ocean to the exclusive Soviet hegemony, in return for some de-escalation on the NATO-Warsaw Pact borders and the Egypt-Israel-Syrian Axis while the Soviets took maximum advantages in the ambiguities of the strategic arms reduction regime through the SALT-II and the MIRV Treaty(1974), as acknowledged by Kissinger himself. In short, in order for the US to (re)claim its leadership of the Free World after the Vietnam fiasco and for Nixon to be seen as an honest security provider to the Atlantic allies, some regions, held coterminous to the Soviet security or ideological interests had to be sacrificed, which under the optimum security assurances to militarily stronger Iran as capable of delivering on the Saudi, Pakistani or Afghanistan's security, was decidedly the Persian Gulf, Arabian Peninsula and western Asia. In this regional

balance of power, a mere historical scrutiny can drive home the message how the Soviets supported Iraq, and other communist clients with impunity and expanded further into the Red Sea-Horn of Africa and Southern Asia during the late 1970s, until the demise of the Soviet Empire itself in 1991.

On the practicalities of the international relations of the Gulf-Peninsular-southern Asian politics and the case why these regions exert their independent as well as highly inter-linked strategic pulls on each other, to demand a hegemonic security community on the Shah's model, the evidence also pointed towards Nixon-Kissinger's deliberate contrivance of the Iran-Saudi hegemonic staying-power only after the Soviet-Iraq Treaty(1972),albeit only against the communist proxies such as Iraq, the PDRY or the trans-regional Marxist movements, while since 1969 were covertly keeping an optimum deterrence against regional expansionism through Bahrain and refusal to the Shah's arms credits, to prevent the Iran-Saudi piece-meal of the oil-rich western clients in the Trucial Coast and their threatening oil embargoes against the West and East Asia , which presence was used in case of the Iranian revolution and the siege of the Grand Mecca Mosque in 1979 through the RDF, itself a key Soviet demand for withdrawal in return for withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The realties as evident from the declassified accounts makes amply clear that the major feuds in the region after 1972 were mediated not by any concerted US diplomacy of conflict prevention or crisis deployment in Iran's disputes with even the Soviet-leaning Iraq or against its own Arab allies during the Iran-Saudi clash in 1968 over Arabi Island or the Shah's acting against the UAE in late 1971. For all practical purposes, this project has demonstrated directly through the US diplomatic records of the 1968 onwards that it were for nothing else but through the Soviet ability to restrain both Iraq and the PDRY against Iran, Saudi Kingdom, Kuwait and Oman during 1969-73 after China was able to snatch Soviet clients , due mainly to the Soviet failure to deliver on their internecine conflicts with the moderating North Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Iran after 1973. The Soviet deference to the Western clients with the capability to deliver on the Soviet security during the early 60s-late 70s was therefore a "reward" to their opposition to the US presence in the region and due to the crucial US failure to assure its allies security, who faithfully supported the US in every foreign adventure and even hopelessly trusted Nixon and Kissinger to deliver on a just settlement of the Palestinian rights.

This project has therefore successfully demonstrated that, while the US remained paralyzed in the domestic imbroglios of the Watergate scandal; in the post-Vietnam isolationism; and military cost-cutting on foreign bases well until 1975, by keeping the Shah to wage a covert diplomacy against the Iraqo-Indian and Afghan threat to the Levant, the Gulf and Pakistan, the emergence of another Great power China on the regional scene was at best an unintended consequence of the global balance of power , again due mainly to the US failure to perceive the core Soviet interest in preventing China's rise on its eastern borders after 1971.

For all practical purposes , the international relations of the northern Indian Ocean were effectively mediated by the Soviet-Chinese ability to deliver on the US allies after 1969, who aspired to impose a regional diplomatic policy of non-alignment; economic development and resource autonomy, in their relations with the West, all of which were became threatened after Nixon-Kissinger's manipulation of the Iranian threat against the Gulf Arabs and in the case of the Shah, playing successfully on his isolation and failure to finance his arms purchases. In this case, the evidence clearly suggested their deliberately encouraging the Shah's takeover of the Abu Musa Island for its oil resources; direct dealings with the US arms manufacturers to prevent the Western vendors out of the lucrative arms trade; and deliberately triggering the high-tech arms race in the region against the CIA's warnings, which elicited the Soviet reaction in the form of new arms supplies to Iraq, the PDRY and North Yemen after 1971.

Even on the macroeconomic scale, the US arms policy under Nixon and Ford implies that having to live in an hostile environment of the Soviet hegemony, where the US kept minimal deterrence under Détente; the need for national security must have direct implications for the Shah to finally throw caution to the wind and lot behind the OPEC after the 1973 War ,whose windfall profits gave Iran the financial autonomy, the Shah had craved in his diplomatic remonstrance with Johnson's interlocutors since 1966.

On a more Third Worldist ideological sentimentalism, and how the Shah negotiated Iran's relations with the periphery during 1950-68 after painful lessons of Great power politics during the post-1941 phase, one wonders, whether if perhaps Reza Shah Kabir's failed diplomacy to steer Iran through the European politics during 1921-41, had not left those Hobbesian scars on Iranian memory never to entrust national security to foreign powers; bestow faith in the international law or upon Wilsonian pretensions of the American manifest destiny .

It remains the contention of the author that another replication project is a must to give strength to this project's findings through analysis of the Shah's 6 (auto) biographical accounts-- preserved for posterity and accumulating dust by neglect-- and make informed replications of this project's findings. In addition, previously recorded impressions of the key Iranian policy executives are too numerous and available in the public domain.

Until then, these findings remain robust enough for the US policy planners to contradict their own words, which may be open to different contextual interpretations but are too frank to admit the twist and turns of US priorities.

I would conclude by a value-judgment made by the theorist of "Independent Nationalism" himself, to gauge his actions against what his domestic or Arab critics would have him do, in the face of overwhelming odds:

> "The lesson of the wickedness and immorality of international power politics was burnt into my heart and mind. Moreover so, because I was weak and really powerless to do anything. The main lesson, I learnt, was that when you are weak, you have got to be very patient. You have got to accept the humiliation. You have got to take the worst kind of insults. But in your heart, you have got to love your country…..save whatever little you can of your land and its inheritance. This is the key to human survival amidst overwhelming difficulties, my own survival, Iran's survival, during Allied occupation and the subsequent years of their 'Divide and Rule' policy".
>
> (R.K.Karanjia,1977: 90)

Appendices

Appendix- I:

a). The Soviet-Iraqi relations: Arms, development, the Communist influence and the Kurdish factor

The central assumptions of this section deals with the limited Soviet objectives in the Indian Ocean and are deemed as moderate; based on tactical diplomacy during crisis periods to thwart Western presence close to its southern borders; and achievable through moderate regional powers like Iran and Saudi Kingdom enjoying greater diplomatic clout around the Arabian Peninsula and across western Asia. This understanding is conditioned by McConnell's argument that Soviet diplomacy [after 1967] of "protecting" progressive regimes in a "defensive" manner, thwarting external aggression by other states as well as non-supporting the overthrow of "established" regimes were new instruments to engage with the traditional areas of British and American influence'.

Nevertheless, McConnell warned that this new strategy was conditioned by the sensitivity attached by conservative regimes to Soviet support of radical regimes, 'which could be counter-productive, alienate opposition against Soviets and lead perhaps to hostile combinations under Western influence' (McConnell 1971: 11-12).

As a theoretical problematique of the patron-client relations and despite superpower engagements with the regional clients under their global balance of power objectives, Iraq drew its political and strategic leverage from both the Soviet and Western connections until 1967 War to serve its multifaceted interests in economic development, military security and ideological leadership of the pan-Arab (and pan-Ba'athist) movement. Until a clear-cut break from its Western linkages after nationalizing the British-owned oil industry in 1972, Iraq received weapons from both the British and the Soviets alike, while kept selling oil to the West.

Although beyond the scope of this study, it is clear that Iraq's confrontation with Iran over Shatt al-Arab(1959) or claims on Kuwait in 1961, actually paved the way for initial Soviet support to Qasim through arms supplies, technical support, and industrial development, a far more aggressive Soviet policy of influence-seeking the Saudi neighbourhood was followed through further tempering with the Arabian Peninsular politics by directly supporting the Republican Yemen in 1964, amidst the Nasser-Faisal rivalry after 1962. The initial

contours of Soviet interests inside Iraq for comprehensive strategic and economic influence were already evident when the Soviets showed their interests in development of the Rumeilah oil fields during 1959, after Iraq was able to retrieve some unexploited concession areas from the British IPC. Despite the antimonarchical revolution in 1958 owing to an extent the King Faisal Ghazi and Nuri al-Said's accession to the Baghdad Pact in 1956, and Republican Iraq's withdrawal from the Pact in August 1959, the key British and American interests in the country's trade and port development in the deeper waters of the Gulf, along the Kuwaiti coast, continued full steam ahead. In its continued economic linkage with the West by Iraq, economic data shows that by 1961, she had effectively overtaken Iran in most development indictors through competitive trade and resource development policies through the American, the British and other Western European support. Various economic reforms and astute trade policies such as import controls, domestic production of consumer goods and guaranteeing safety of foreign investments under the Qasim regime ensured that Japan, India, Western Europe and the US remained as Iraq's top trading partners before she started to develop further industrial developmental and export-oriented relationships with the Communist bloc. Economic data on the Iran-Iraq and Saudi trade in the Gulf and with Western partners also project that Iraq was on the verge of emerging as a full-fledged Gulf's trading and industrial power by 1961 which owed mainly due to its financially sound industrial development and non-consumerist trade policies which were free from external borrowing as in Iran's case. In fact its trade with both the Western and Eastern bloc partners notwithstanding, its deep sea port developments in southern Iraq after 1958, to prevent its interdictions of the Mediterranean pipelines through Syria, Lebanon or Turkey, suggested that Iraq could have become the region's industrial, resource and political power house, only if its leaders had not made crucial strategic mistakes vis-à-vis Iran, Kuwait and other Gulf powers well before 1968 (Middle East Economic Digest,1957-61: Various Issues).

Before Qasim's breaking away with the Communists by 1963 however, Iraq was able to nurture wide-scale economic, trade and industrial relations with North Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and even the Communist China, while the Soviet aid of tanks and aircrafts also amounted to $100 million during July 1959-September 1961. One of the most tangible indicators of Iraqi intentions to transfer its energy and trade surplus to the outer world and making its an Arab Gulf power challenging both the British and local hegemonic aspirants afterwards was its accepting as early as 1959, initial

Soviet offers to develop its deep sea port at Umm'Qasr for birthing 100,000 tons crude-carrying super tankers, which by 1969 was construed by Nixon's policy-planners and Iran as motivated by desire to providing naval base facilities for the Soviet Red Navy(Eilts 1980:82). Dismayed earlier by the Johnson Administration however, and a competition over naval bases in the region during the British withdrawal from the East of Suez; the Iraqi-Soviet relations became a clarion call from other Gulf Arab, Middle Eastern and southern Asian powers' demanding the removal of the US navy from Bahrain and Oman (Eilts 1980:95)

Paradoxically however Iraq-Soviet relations did not fare well, when it came to the treatment of local Communists inside Iraq starting with Qasim (1958-63) whom the Communists gave ample support against the Nasserists and against the Ba'ath. A trend set by Iran after the 1954 crack-down on the Communist Tudeh, the repression of Iraqi Communists under the monarchical Iraq was followed-up without mitigation during Qasim after the Communists took advantage of the Shawwaf rebellion during 1961, to seek their reprisals upon Nasserite and Ba'athists. Becoming conscious of the Communist brutality and effects on his own legitimacy, bestowed by his nationalist collaborators, with the Ba'ath then only as recent up starters, Qasim is known to have turned against all his collaborators including the Nasserites, whom had joined him in anticipation of Iraq's accession to the UAR. Unwilling to join the Nasser-dominated Arab Union, against which he was persuaded by the British during 1959 and although Qasim took Iraq out of the Baghdad Pact in August 1959, his sense of vulnerability from his Nasserite supporters and penetration of the Communists in his regime prevented him from further collaboration with the both.

His repression of the Communists after 1961 and exiling most Ba'athists (including Saddam and Abdul Salam Arif) combined with his other political mistake of making claims on Kuwait during 1961, which made him a virtual pariah in the Gulf (Lenzcwoski 1971:130-32; Golan 1990:163-64; Ramazani,1972:35). According to Golan however, 'while relations with Qasim became strained, the Soviets continued to support Iraq regionally in such things as the Iraqi dispute with Iran in 1960 and the dispute with Kuwait in 1961'(Golan 1990:164).

Qasim's further collaboration on oil exploration, deep port developments, Steel and Chemicals plants, irrigation and dam projects on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and the Baghdad- Basra railway continued apace before 1961, which on a comparative basis was far lesser than what the Shah was able to conclude with the Soviets during 1962-65 (Lenzcwoski 1971:128-29; Ramazani 1975:331-33).

Nevertheless, Iraq's inability during 1957-68 to prevent the Iranian, Kuwaiti and Saudi dividing the Persian Gulf's subterranean oil resources and Islands among themselves along its un-demarcated territory in the northern Gulf, may be construed as a direct function of its political instability and military weakness which Iran effectively tempered with by sustaining Kurdish rebellion during 1961-66, and henceforth more effectively during 1972-75 through Nixon, Ford and Kissinger's support.

Abdul Salam Arif's (November 1963- April 1966) treatment of the Communists did not either differ markedly from the brief Ba'athist interregnum(February-November 1963), which on its own was a retributive phase against the Communists' massacres in Kirkuk and Mosul and in response to a counter-coup in July 1963 near Baghdad(Lenczowski,1972:137). The Soviet response under Khrushchev was famously meted out to Arif by his refusal to hand-shake with him in Cairo in May 1964, as well as suspension of arms, economic relations and technical aid, just when Iraq confronted Iran and Kuwait over opening the contested off-shore areas for bidding to the Western oil Independents during 1964(Chubin 1982: 84).

Nevertheless, despite a "sooner-than-later" resumption of the Soviet arms and economic support and following Nasser's example of remodelling of the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), and by nationalizing the Iraqi domestic economy in 1964, Abdul Salam Arif followed up on the Ba'athist practice of repression and sentencing the key Communist ministers and high-ranking Communists due to the 'popular revulsion of the Communist misdeeds in Qasim era'(Lenzcwoski Ibid:138). Arif's defence of the pan-Arab unity and interests, and emphasizing the Islamic and sovereign Republican character of Iraq against the Soviet ideology of supporting anti-Colonial struggles, also rendered any ideological congruity between the socialist-secular Iraq and the Communist dogma impossible, and was carried forward by his successors afterwards.

The breakdown of military supplies during the First Arif's rule however did not break the generally cooperative nature of the Iraq-Soviet economic diplomacy, when after Arif's nationalization of domestic industries and Banks, Khrushchev was obliged to endorse that 'Iraq had entered upon a "path of non-Capitalist development"'(Lencwoski:138). Lenzcwoski also claims that, 'apparently both governments were interested in cultivating good mutual relations and not allowing the treatment of the Iraqi Communists stand in the way'. In fact, 'not even the outbreak of a Kurdish uprising in September 1961 caused any significant deterioration in official Soviet-Iraqi relations, although the Communist Party favoured

Kurdish autonomy with the Iraqi state and maintained links with the KDP'. (Lenzcwoski, 1971:136).

In fact, Chubin observes that when the 'Iraqi regime resumed its offensive against the Kurds in 1965, Moscow did not resort to the manipulation of arms relationship to induce restraint. Indeed Soviet appeals to Baghdad for tolerance towards the Communist Party were being muffled'(Chubin, 1982:84-85). In Chubin's analysis, 'even by mid-1965, any Soviet reluctance, to arm a regime engaged in a full-scale operation against its Kurdish population had evaporated' (Chubin,1982:79).

Although the 2nd Arif (Abdul Rehman Arif)era was punctuated by his failure to revive the ASU as a political power base, the political continuity generated by his Premier Abdul Rahman Bazzaz favouring parliamentary democracy, rule of law and encouraging the private sector, sought to still exclude the Communist participation in the domestic legislatures or even ideological proselytizing. They were likewise rounded-up, sentenced, exiled and still ex-communicated form the National Front of 1966.

b). The Kurdish factor and external power interests in Iraq's political development

The fact remained that Iraq despite being a part of the anti-Israeli coalition but practically detached from the actual theatre of War had its own usage of its Soviet connections to blunt the Kurdish separatism during 1961-73. In the Kurdish case however, the dichotomy of Kurdish self-interest with the local Communist party's objective of achieving political parity with Ba'athist and Kurdish parties suggested that the post-Qasim regimes (1964-68) were unable to fully transcend their relations with the Soviet patron to restrain the Communist Kurds, until the July 1968 coup. On their own, although most Iraqi Kurds retained their membership in the ICP to garner Kremlin's support for the Kurdish self-autonomy "within the Iraqi state", the Communists were more willing to engage with the Ba'athists and the Talabani's KDP, mainly to join Saddam's Progressive National Front (Eilts, 1980:94).

Golan therefore summed up the central dichotomy between the Kurdish self-interest and the Soviet strategic interests across the Northern Tier, to discourage Kurdish aspirations since Mustafa Barazani's return from the Soviet Azerbaijan in 1961:

> ‘in Iraq this problem was further complicated by the issue of the Kurdish minority, for many, if not most of members of the ICP were themselves Kurds. They strongly supported Kurdish rebellion even to the point of splitting-off from the Party when Soviet policies dictated the abandonment of the Kurdish cause….the ideological character of the movement was of only marginal importance for the Kurds. ….in fact the Communist Party was an alternative, not a substitute, for the Kurdish national movement. And the national movement itself was not Marxist’.
>
> (Golan 1990:159-60; Chubin 1982:86).

The central Kurdish objective of engagements with the Soviets and containing the seeds of its unravelling during 1970s is argued persuasively by Golan, who argues that in keeping with their own self-interest, the Kurds utilized their Communist identity as a vehicle for pressures on Iraq: ‘but not as a substitute for Kurdish nationalism, for which they found more support from Iran and Turkey than from the Soviet Union’ (Golan 1990:160). During the late 1990s, Kissinger observed a similar caution in the Iran-Turkish policy towards the Kurdish separatism, in which, ‘Barazani’s version of Kurdish autonomy would never have been supported by the Shah, or by Turkey for that matter’:

> ‘[after 1974] it would have been reckless to induce the Shah, whose country shared a long frontier with the Soviet Union, to intervene overtly on the soil of a Soviet near-ally’….(Kissinger, 1999:588-89).

Any notion of the US-supported Kurdish drive for the Kurdish self-autonomy, through Iran and Turkey, however had to await the Shah reaching a direct agreement with Nixon and Kissinger during 1972. until then a previously Iran-supported Kurdish rebellion during 1966 under the covert Hoveyda- Barazani and Israeli agreement, therefore posed a direct political threat to the new Ba’athist regime, which compelled them to launch the Winter Offensive during December 1969- March 1970(Chubin and Zabih 1974:181-82;Chubin 1982:86; Ramazani1975:418;). A tentative consolidation of the Eastern front after 1970, however was already a direct consequence of the Iraqi vulnerability from the Iranian ability to engage itself on two vital fronts, with the other in the Shatt al-Arab(March-1969). Domestically weaker and engaged on the Arab-Israeli front , Iraq was unable to challenge Iran due to its major forces tied-up on the Jordan-Lebanon front against the Syrian-Black September threat. Hence, ‘with 3 out of her 5 infantry divisions and the bulk of air force engaged elsewhere, Iraq was compelled to come to terms with the Kurds’(Ramazani 1975:418-19).

Nevertheless Chubin and Zabih argue that not only the domestic vulnerability of the regime but the serious nature of the conflict had necessitated such agreement, while an historical opportunity presented itself in the Gulf during the British withdrawal from the region and prospects of substantial Soviet aid:

> 'a settlement with the Kurds held forth the promise not only of a breathing-spell for the Iraqi army and the opportunity for a freer hand in the south, but also the possibility of turning the Kurdish sword back against Iran'.
>
> (Chubin and Zabih 1974;181-82;Chubin 1982:79).

In 1975, Chubin and Zabih explained the Soviet objectives in manipulating arms supplies to prevent Saddam's attacks on the Kurds: 'it enables the Soviet Union to pressure Ba'athists into the National Front coalition with the Communist Party'. In July 1980, Saddam Hussein was to publicly accuse the Soviets of pressuring him to conclude the 1975 Algiers Accord with the Shah, by embargoing military supplies in direct deference to the latter, just when Iraqi military was to overcome the Kurdish strongholds (Golan, 1990 170; [51]Eilts 1980:90).

Nevertheless, the Soviet leverages on Iraq's political evolution in the region had already become 'less effective in 1974 when denial of arms contributed to the Ba'athist decision to settle their differences with Iran…' (Chubin 1982:106). Golan however forwards another explanation about the Soviet restraint during the 1972-75, which was evident in the onset of Iraq's new problems with Iran after the British evacuation, and making more demands on Kuwait allowing the stationing of its troops on the Werbah and Bubiyan Islands along the strategic Fao peninsula:

> [the] 'Soviets not only sided with Iraq against Iran but actually welcomed these conflicts as opportunities for creating Iraqi dependence upon Soviet aid. Yet there were clear signs that Moscow sought to avoid the prospects of Iran-Iraq War'.
>
> (Golan 1990:168; Chubin 1982:85-86; Eilts 1980:100).

Kissinger's narration of events leading up to Nixon's official support to the Kurdish insurgency during 1972-75, is silent on his perceptions of the Soviet reaction and in

[51] Eilts observed that Iraq ' has not forgotten that it was virtually compelled in 1975, admittedly through Algerian mediation, to agree to a mediation , to agree to a revision of the Shatt al-Arab boundary in favour of Iran', which despite its implications for Iraqi egress into the Gulf as a quasi-non Gulf power, also recognized his demands for the "stoppage of Iranian support to Iraq's dissident Kurdish minority"(Eilts 1980:90,95)

supporting Saddam, except as a case of arms supplies under the 1972 Agreement.. Still eschewing any rationale as to how he or Nixon would have the Shah face the Soviet counter-reaction under the US-Soviet agreement to prevent local conflicts from escalating into great power confrontations, Kissinger develops tedious reasonings for Nixon's personal decision to supply Iran with a large number of high-tech weapons(F-14s and F-15s) to 'counter Kosygin-Saddam arms deal', when:

> 'the Shah expressed his worry[with Nixon during 30th May 1972] that "the Soviets would establish a coalition of the Kurds, the Ba'athists, and the communists, the Kurdish problem ,instead of being a thorn in their side, could become an asset to the Communists"'
>
> (Kissinger 1999:582)

Kissinger's own impressions demonstrate that during early 1975, President Ford's inability to support General Barazani through the Shah, and the former's demanding a hefty financial-military package for a "separate" state, was itself a direct function of the US domestic politics, notwithstanding which, he still preferred the Shah to face the gauntlet in the three flanks on his mainland, without the Nixon or Ford ever had to be openly identified with subverting Iraqi stability along its southern borders, just like Bhutto's propping-up the Afghan Mujahedeen after the 1973 coup:

'And the Iranians needed only to glance at our media on Indochina, to know that there was no domestic support whatsoever for such a policy'.

In fact, Kissinger accepts that even under CIA's advice against more aid to the Kurds during early 1974- to prevent revealing the secrecy of direct US arms supplies- he still favoured continuance of the aid, albeit the Shah taking blame for militarization along the Soviet southern borders:

> 'But if we did so, we would find ourselves in a hopeless congressional battle, while it was at this point, with Iraq making slow but steady progress, that the Shah, without warning, suddenly decided to throw in his hand'.

Although Kissinger seems to take credit for personally encouraging Mustafa Barazani to continue to fight the Iraqi troops during early 1975, while persuading the Shah not to drop

support through Israeli foreign minister Abba Eban, he nonetheless acknowledges the limitation of this strategy as a lever to trump Iraq's position against Jordan and Israel[52]:

Despite Nasser's departure from the scene in 1970 and Sadat's expulsion of the 20,000 Soviet advisors in June 1972, the tense state of affairs on the Suez Canal region , however had direct bearings on Kissinger's diplomacy to deliver on the Israeli security, for which he was able to manipulate the Shah through a putative Soviet-Iraqi-Kurdish "pincer", then converging on the Gulf after the Communist coup in Afghanistan(July 1973). The fact that Kissinger has to date maintained, that his main objective in the Gulf during 1969-74 was aimed at rooting-out the Soviets from the Middle East, his pro-Shah policy under Nixon and Ford through arms diplomacy in response to the Iraq-Soviet Agreement(1972) casts serious doubts on his attachment to the Kurdish sufferings[53]. Devoting long narratives on his shuttle diplomacy to the Arab world after the 1973 War, with Syria remaining the toughest "rejectionist" to be delivered upon, after losing the Golan Heights, Kissinger's utility for the Kurdish option remains merely one of keeping the other "rejectionist" Iraq away from the Israeli-Jordanian borders in anticipation of another Arab-Israeli War, and hence a strategic opportunity which he belatedly acknowledged only in 1999:

> 'given the tense state of Kurdish war and Iraqi relations with Syria--the sole front Iraq was geographically in a position to affect--only one Iraqi brigade was dispatched to fight Israel, which took 10 days to reach the front only to end-up fighting with a Saudi division during the closing days of the war'.
>
> (Kissinger 1999:586)

In fact Kissinger's *apologetica* for Nixon's (and later under Ford) refusal to heed to the Shah's request for urgent financial support for Kurdish movement during early 1974 is a potent observation for the Iraq-Soviet relations that transcended Soviet support for the Kurdish self-autonomy for its own sake, since its strategic implication was its continuity and the fissiparous dynamics which threatened to divide the pro-Kurdish alliance between Iran, Jordan, Israel, Turkey and the US. Not only they could have freed Iraq to threaten Jordan or

---

[52] 'only overt Iranian intervention could now save the Kurds, the costs of which would surely exceed the $360 million Barazani had requested in 1974'. (Kissinger 1988:593-94).

[53] Saud who himself interviewed Kissinger during 2001-03 observes:
'NSC Gulf policy, many believe, was largely influenced by Kissinger. This view seems to be inaccurate as when Kissinger himself was asked about his conception of the Gulf in 1969 he answered: "I did not have one", and expressed his personal lack of knowledge about details of the Gulf issues, stating, 'I did not know how Saudi-Iranian relations worked, *my priority was to get the Soviets out of the Middle East*'.
(Saud 2003: 65,122)

Israel, but they could affect the Soviet security interests along its softer southern borders due to continuous proxy wars:

> 'above all, we should have understood better that the Kurds might prove to be volatile partners, difficult to fit in any overall strategy. Whatever the professions of their leaders, their principal goal was bound to be "independence"[my emphasis] or at least complete autonomy, and they would always resist attempts to calibrate their priorities in relations to outside powers' conception of geopolitical equilibrium'.
>
> (Kissinger Ibid: 584).

Saud argues that after 1972, Nixon 'began to think of keeping Iraq, the USSR's chief ally in the Gulf, in check by helping Iran build its military capability', which most pertinently fits this diplomatic strategy of "linkages" through which Kissinger managed to engage the Shah in a confrontation with Saddam after 1972, without concomitant assurances should the Shah found himself threatened by the Soviet or Communist reprisals at home. In Saunders' words, this was 'to show other Middle Eastern states that it does not pay to be a Soviet ally', in other words, Saud agrees that "this was Nixon's main addition to the question".(Saud: 66).

Saddam's reaching a comprehensive regional modus-vivendi with the Shah in 1975--the core of which was preventing non-littoral powers intervention in regional conflicts-- and getting the Shah's agreement to stop support of the anti-Ba'ath groups in southern Iraq, the former also 'opposed Soviet activities in the Horn of Africa after 1977 and objected to Moscow's assistance to the Mengistu regime against [Sunni] Eritreans and Somalis whom Baghdad continued to support'. (Golan, 1990: 170; Chubin 1982:93-94)

c). An appraisal of the Communist "influence" in the Ba'athist Iraq (1968-75)

Contrary to the commonly attributed Soviet interest in a rapprochement under both Arifs and the post-1968 Ba'ath, the Communist pre-eminence over the latter, manifested the standard Khrushchevian dilemma for the official Soviet policy of support to the revolutionary Republics in the inability of he "uniformed bourgeoisie" to transform their 'progressive regimes into a Communist socio-economic template; hand over power to their civilian counter-parts; and be brought under the Soviet influence', ergo a wholesale failure of the Communist International in Egypt, Libya, Algeria, Iraq and Syria during 1954-70 (Chubin,1982:85). The Ba'athists on their own followed a nuanced policy of restrained

harassment of the ICP Central Committee but 'avoiding an all-out persecution or its physical liquidation to avoid any Soviet ill-will, whenever it stood in any special need for Soviet help' (Dann 1973:386; Golan,1990:159; Lenzcwoski, 1971:161).

In keeping with Brezhnev's policy of State-to-State relations with the clients, at the cost of ideological loyalty towards the local Communist parties, the Ba'athists continued with their predecessors' policy of repression of the Communists and their denial into domestic political activities, which became the central feature of the Iraq-Soviet relations during 1968-80. In fact, Golan would argue that not only the Communists received the most brutal treatment in Iraq, throughout the Middle East during 1958-69, but Iraqi resistance to the encroaching Soviet influence (through the ICP) remained equally contradictory to its key regional interests, as seen in the Soviet interests in appeasing the Shah during the 1969 conflict (Golan Ibid: 166-67).According to Golan, 'the Soviets had to face what was to be a common dilemma' all over the Socialist Middle East:

> 'to support the local Communists under persecution, if not by terminating relations with the regime, then by taking some drastic steps, such as suspension of arms supplies, or, rather, to stop, for favourable relations with the regime and ignore the plight of the Communists'.
>
> (Golan, 1990: 165; Chubin 1982:85-86,91-92).

Nevertheless, despite the Communist International's wholesale failure inside Iraq as a political force, the aftermath of the 1967 War did hold serious promise for the Soviet extension of influences in the region and ushered in a new era of intensive direct Soviet contacts with the radical Arab Camp throughout the Middle East, typified as "rejectionists". In this case, Iraq received substantial support for recovering from its war loses; agreed to the Soviet participation into the North Rumeilah oil project and also managed to secure financing for the Euphrates Dam project.(Golan 1990:165; Lenzcwoski 1971:93-96; Chubin, 1982:80; Eilts 1980:83,87).

Here Eilts argues that:

> 'the Soviets have had little to do with the past cataclysmic changes in Iraq and Iran. These convulsions have not appreciably furthered their interests in the Gulf, except insofar as the Soviets are latent beneficiaries of the elimination of American political influence in its northern and eastern sectors. Nor contrary to Soviet hopes, have large Soviet arms sales to Iraq translated into significant political influences in the country'.

(Eilts :82[54])

It seemed that the key domestic vulnerability to Ba'athist consolidation stemmed not from the Communist threat after their voluntary exiles under the 2nd Arif, nor can it be argued that Iraq's foreign policy gravitated in any way towards the Soviet global interests in threatening the Gulf on the Soviet terms, despite Iraq's overtly anti-Israeli posture in the Arab League and against Nasser's acceptance of US mediation under the Rogers' Plan. By opposing the Soviet interest in bringing Nasser to the mediation table, as based in their own global interests, it was the Kurdish secessionism which set the tone for the Iran-Iraq and Soviet interactions during 1969-75 where the Soviets 'loyally supported Iraq'(Golan 1990:165-66).

Despite the burgeoning Iraq-Soviet relations for the advanced Soviet weaponry and with Iraq becoming the first country to recognize East Germany (in November 1969); approving the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia (August 1968); supported the Communist coup in the Sudan(summer 1971); and accepted Soviet offers to develop its Rumeilah oilfields(June 1969), such entente did nothing to reduce Iraq's freedom of action against local communists (Golan Ibid:166).

In the post-1968 Ba'athist Iraq (1968-2003), the Moscow-aligned Central Committee (Al Lajna al-Markaziyya) under Zaki Khairi and Amir Abdullah was itself split within over the central question of support to the Kurdish separatism. (Lenczowski,1972:140; Golan 1990: 166; Dann 1973:387). In addition, despite the rouge faction of the ICP (Al Qiyadah al Markaziyya) using the Palestinian card during 1969 and condemned the (Kremlin-aligned) Central Committee's accepting the UNSC Resolution 242(recognizing Israel's statehood), the latter's price for following Baghdad's line was its inclusion into the Progressive National Front(and in the Cabinet) through the Arab Socialist Movement. (Golan 1990:166; Chubin, 1982:86,91). According to Uriel Dann therefore, when in the run-up for the second Ba'athist takeover under Bakr, the Soviet-aligned Central Committee held talks to support Bakr anticipating some participation in the future government, the latter rejected their offer because, 'he did not want to be indebted to the Communists, for the success, he owed to a military coup anyway'(Dann 1973:382).

[54] Predicating the overwhelming strategic threat to the Western economies and subverting the American's staying power in the Gulf, as a result of the highly favourable US diplomacy towards Israel under the Camp David (1978), while Eilts did not discount the future Iraqi use of oil as a "political weapon" , as well as motives for her moderation towards the US: 'Arab public opinion will overwhelmingly demand it….Iraq, though its proclaimed devotion to the Arab embargo, quietly continued in 1973 to sell oil to regular customers. Whether it would do so again will doubtless depend upon the then prevailing circumstances'…(Eilts 1980:86)

Nevertheless, these efforts came to a naught due to the ICP's making demands upon Saddam for re-instating the dismissed Communist officers in the Ministry of Defence; reopening the ICP newspaper; and be treated as equals in the National Front (Dann 1973:389-91;).

With the restarting of Kurdish conflict in the late 1971, due to differences over implementation of the 15 point formula reached in March 1970 between Saddam and Barazani (and changing the Kurdish capital from oil-rich Kirkuk to Mosul), Saddam used this front to seek the Soviet endorsement of the Ba'athist pre-eminence, while gradually reducing the Kremlin-supported Central Committee 'to a mere ideological appendage of Soviet official policy'(Dann, 1973: 383).

In fact, despite his desperation to forge a moderate all-inclusive National Front to broaden the Sunni-Ba'ath's narrow political base, Saddam still took effective steps to keep the Communists at bay, and even warned them unequivocally in 1969 of their fighting against the Iraqi forces,' alongside General Barazani's KDP as violating the cardinal Iraqi national security objective'. (Lenzcowski, 1971: 140-42; Golan 1990:386-87). In fact, despite the ICP's split in 1967, its breakaway faction *Al-Qiyadah al-Markaziyya* under its leaders Alhaj Ramzi Walid(who waged an insurgency in southern Iraq in collaboration with an ex-Ba'ath Fouad al-Arkabi's Arab Socialist Movement since July 1968) remained ineffective as a communist party due to the Ba'athist crackdown in southern Iraq(Lenzcowski, 1971:140-41)

Extolling the virtues of the post-Shah pre-eminence of the Ba'athist Iraq in the region for the US to make a common cause with Saddam Hussein, to counter the Soviet threat, whom he baptized as 'a Gulf leader to be reckoned with in the future', Eilts observed that 'in terms of the superpower competition in the Gulf, any such development is helpful to American interests, but the long established mutuality of Iraq-Soviet dependence is likely to constrain total estrangement between the two'. Nevertheless, whether the US policymakers themselves considered Iraq as a threat to the Gulf under the same Soviet-Iraqi collaboration remained questionable well until 1980:

> 'paradoxically while Iraq purchases modern military equipment from the Soviets, [the latter's] political influence on Iraqi policies is sharply limited. Despite its "Progressive Front" policy, nominally extolling Ba'athist-Communist political cooperation, the Ba'ath leadership has not hesitated to jail or even execute Iraqi communists. Soviet

protests have been unavailing and Iraqi relations with the Soviets are becoming increasingly strained'.

(Eilts, 1980:94)

The communists under the watchful eye of Saddam were thus only allowed to operate through the "non-existent" National Front's organ edited by Makram Talabani, who followed the official Soviet line inside Iraq (Chubin, 1982:86). Makram was today's President Jalal Talabani's(KDP) collaborator, who had previously cooperated with Abdul Rahman Arif in dereference to the Iraqi foreign policy and against Barazani's separatism. The party newspaper 'encouraged the Iraqi policy of recognizing East Germany; contacts with the Soviet Union; and reconciliation with Barazani, while confining criticism of government's repression only against individual communists'. (Golan 1990:384-85).

By 1971 therefore, the Central Committee had clearly acquiesced into the regime policy against the Barazani Kurds -similar to the ICP under the two Arifs- in clear opposition to the underground ICP demanding the Kurdish self-determination, a demand never made by Barazani himself (during 1947) or accepted by the US, Iran or Turkey during 1969-75 (Kissinger 1999:578; Dann: 390-91; Lenzcowski: 141; Roosevelt 1988:286).

Chubin argues that despite international concerns with the proximity of the Iraqi-Soviet relations under the Ba'ath during 1968-79, the latter were themselves suspicious of the Kremlin-aligned ICP's external connections with the Iranian Tudeh and the Syrian regime, which implied that the Soviet 'proclivity for domestic interference was sufficient [for Ba'athists] to make any other issue secondary':

'…it was clear that the Iraqi regime was prepared to risk its military relationship with the USSR, if its political control was at stake'.

(Chubin 1982:91-92).

Golan further proposes that until 1970, Iraq was in a "rejectionists Camp" of opposing Resolution 242 and 338; opposed the Geneva Conference with Israel; or accepting Israeli withdrawal to the 4th June boundaries, which ' imply that Iraqi interests diverged completely with the Soviets' (Golan Ibid 161-62;Chubin,1982:89) .

Nevertheless, despite the outward appearances of the Iraqi-Soviet common diplomatic discourse against any US-led initiative to resolve the Arab-Israel conflict after the 1973 War,

Saddamite Iraq was emphatically remained opposed to the 'Soviet-American efforts to reconvene the Geneva and the joint-statement of 1977':

> 'it shared Moscow's objection to Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, but walked out of the founding meeting of the Steadfastness Front in December 1977, obstructing a unified front against Israel; and engaging in factional activities with the PLO as well as the Arab World at large'.
>
> (Golan: 170; Chubin, 1982:88-89).

Eilts further adduced that Iraqi efforts to fill the power gap after the removal of the Shah was further manifest in Saddam's proclamation of Arab National Charter demanding 'total neutrality and non-alignment' towards any foreign party in the event of war, so long as Arab territorial integrity is not violated'[55].(Eitls,1980:95,97)

d). Conclusion

In the final analysis of the benefits accrued to the four Iraqi regimes since the 1958 revolution, through the Soviet "clientele" and even after destroying the Communist influence inside Iraq, the central Iraqi objective of restraining Kurdish separatism was effectively achieved through the self-serving Soviet support to Baghdad's official policy on the Kurdish issue, as the basis for bilateral cooperation; even under the desperate financial troubles of the nationalisation of the British IPC in 1972; against the Shah-US support to the Kurdish guerrilla warfare; and isolation in the Gulf after attacking Kuwait in March 1973(Dann:391;Golan 1990:169).

On the Soviet tally of the regional balance of power, as well, the strategy of "dual" pressure on the Ba'athists through the Communist Kurds and at times supporting the Kurdish rebellion (through suspension of arms supplies), whenever it needed Ba'ath's' respect for domestic Communists or not antagonizing the Shah, to wholesale shift his moderate stance towards the Soviet polices, ensured that Iraq continued to desist from following the global Soviet policy positions (Chubin, 1982:87,98).

[55] Nevertheless, more directly applicable for the post-British Gulf remained the observation that 'despite correct relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, it was an indirect challenge to Saudi influence in the Gulf' at time when Crown Prince Fahd 'retained confidence in President Carter's determination to strive for an equitable, comprehensive Middle East peace settlement, one which will give the Palestinians their legitimate national rights(Eitls,1980:95,97)

Even in the arms and trade relations, after 1976, any Soviet leverage on Iraq's foreign policy had substantially declined when Iraq recognized the Communist China and sought to diversify its dependence on the Soviet trade and arms supplies through France and China: Trade with the Soviets as its top partner, declined from the 1968 mark, after which Iraq enjoyed only the 3rd place of trade after Iran, and the 5th recipient of economic and military aid(Golan,1990: 165-66;Chubin 1982:82).

In addition, the cardinal Soviet interest in securing a naval base in the Umm'Qasr for its forward deployments in the Indian Ocean (after acquiring some "staging" facilities in Aden after 1977) which despite Western security circles 'pointing as evidence of Iraq-Soviet collaboration against the West, "was not again shared by Iraq"'(Chubin 1982:86).

Even in the context of some potential strategic alliance under the 1972 Treaty, Golan and Chubin both argued:

> 'it was as vague, as the treaty with Egypt, on the question of Soviet commitments. But it may have been seen by the Soviets as a framework for securing its military interests in the port of Umm'Qasr. From the Iraqi point of view, the Treaty may have became a precondition for nationalization of the Western oil companies, for it provided some backing should Iraq come under pressures from the companies' countries.
>
> (Golan, 1990: 167; Chubin 1982:80).

Not one interest therefore stood in common between the Republican Iraq after 1958 and the Soviets, to have forged a strategic relationship as deleterious to other regional powers' interests and upsetting the regional security agenda during the pre-eminent days of the Shah. As previously pointed out in the context of Soviet diplomacy during the 1973 Iraqi capture of Kuwait border posts, Iran's making conditional any military support to Kuwait (while the Soviets tried to restrain Saddam) was contingent upon the traditional Soviet policy of restraining its clients to prevent third party intervention and by implication direct US intervention. Although animating popular fantasies as seen during the 2nd Gulf War(1991) but for historical correctness, American threat to the Soviet southern borders was still a possibility even during 1961, when Kennedy in concurrence with Dean Rusk despatched a small naval flotilla "*Solantimity",* to augment British forces during the Iraq-Kuwaiti stand-off, but returned upon the British Cabinet's declining the offer(Eilts:108)

Appendix-II

Iran's strategic posture in the Gulf after: US presence and the dilemmas of Soviet vulnerability:

a). Introduction

Having established a tentative security framework to deter future Iraqi expansionism in the Gulf through the Shah's voluntary collusion with the Saudis during 1968-71 in order to achieve the Soviet goodwill, the Iranian policymakers set about getting an explicit understanding about the long term US objectives in the Gulf under Détente and demilitarize Western Europe through the strategic nuclear disarmaments. This is where Chubin and Zabih point out:

> 'Iranian government for its part has been extremely sensitive to Moscow's wishes and careful, not to annoy its northern neighbour. This condition was evident in its opposing both to US retention of the Bahrain facilities and to the prolongation of Britain's presence in the Gulf after 1971'.
>
> (Chubin and Zabih,1974: 263)

Kissinger himself was to note his impression of the post-1972 Iraq-Soviet relations in the run-up for Nixon's May 1972 visit, which mandated a pro-active US policy against Iraq, albeit with a centre of gravity somewhere else:

> 'Britain at the end of 1971 had just completed the historical withdrawal of its forces and military protection from the Persian Gulf, at the precise moment when radical Iraq was being put into a position by Soviet arms to assert regional hegemonic aims. Our friends-Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the Emirates-were being encircled'.
>
> (Kissinger, 1999:1264).

This section delineates the nature of Iran and other Gulf powers' opposition to the US stay in the Gulf as a central security threat during and after the British withdrawal and Iran's changed security discourse to counter the Soviet threat after the Iraq-Soviet Treaty(April 1972). Iran scholarship is replete with highly subjective value judgments by prominent Iran scholars. One of them is Rouhullah K. Ramazani writing an award-winning but highly subjective pro-Iranian account(albeit to an extent critical of the pre-1941 policies) during the Shah's rule and seem to reflect his own patriotism towards the Azerbaijan crisis during 1946; the Western great powers' denial to "neutralism" specially the Soviets; the British exploitation

of its natural resources since 1872, political interference and cannibalizing its historical territories in the Gulf; the Shah's continued attachment towards the Western alliance especially with the US as the ultimate security provider against both the British and the Soviets as a "distant-disinterested " third power. Never having allowed to conduct any interview with a prominent Iranian personality for any of his 3 books during the times of the Shah and eschewing criticism of the Shah's domestic reforms well until his departure, Ramazani draws upon the Soviet threat emerging on the two Iranian flanks after the British withdrawal, for which he rationalizes the Shah's threat perception condemning Iran to seek security through continued accession to the US security umbrella and uncritically reifies a similar American attachment to the Iranian security holding equal priorities as the Western alliance.. In the context of the Iraq-Soviet Treaty, he judges this as 'Russia had sided with Iran's number one "enemy" in the Persian Gulf' (Ramazani, 1975:350). He likewise quotes directly from the Shah as late as 1973 who reacted to the Soviet emergence in Afghanistan as: 'there exists what I call the "USSR's pincer movement"'. (Ramazani,1975:440). These ideological discourses against both Western and the Communist presence in the region, without or without its physical military expressions alluded to the Shah comes at the price of ignoring the strategic background which was the basis for the Shah's own reaction to the "fait-accompli" of the US stay in Bahrain when the August 1971 Jufair Agreement became public news and a source of great US-Iran controversy. Effectively explained to the Gulf powers as making Bahrain a base for disembarkation and servicing of the US Pacific and the Indian Ocean Fleets plying between the South China Sea and the Gann Islands in the Western Africa, the base politics had come to dominate the Iran-US relations which posing a direct security threat to the Soviet security along its southern borders could only be mitigated by the local powers refusal to host such presence and in the Shah's own words giving pretext to the Soviet Union demanding similar facilities in its own clients' bases. The succeeding sections would show that Iran's refusal to toe the US security interests as attributed to him even by his own protagonists were effectively based in this very sense of encirclement by the Soviets after 1972; refused to be perceived by Nixon and Kissinger in the similar spirit and even manipulated the Iraqi-Soviet threat after the 1972 Treaty to indulge him into a superpower-specific "Great game" through taking part in the Kurdish-Afghan rebellion during 1972-75 and in the case of the latter right until his death. In this section however we will focus on such US interests in using the Shah as a "surrogate" security provider to the Gulf region(Eilts

1980:89,93), without actually honouring his protestations to the US acquisition of the Gulf and even the Arabian Sea bases; Kissinger's own interests in engaging the Shah in the Kurdish-Iraqi conflict; the politics of the Gulf Arab's refusal to abide by the Shah's offers of retaining Bahrain in the trust of the Gulf security but most importantly the Soviet interests under the Détente which the Shah and Hoveyda took issues with Nixon after 1972-73 which left Iran to the mercy of the Soviet hegemony through physical presence in the Gulf, and indirect support to Iraq and Afghanistan during 1972-75 period.

Chubin and Zabih, alongside Ramazani and Ahmedi, variously quote this very US decision as meeting the Shah's opposition as early as March 1969, which effectively expected the US to vacate, not only the Persian Gulf, but also the Arabian and the Red Seas, contrary to the restrictive interpretations of the Shah's demands for making the Gulf a "semi-enclosed"[56]:

> 'US bases in the area would only encourage Soviet counter measures, perhaps in Iraq: Do as the Russian do; show your flag; cruise in the Persian Gulf. But base your ships on those islands in the Indian Ocean-the Seychelles or Diego Garcia'.
>
> (Chubin and Zabih,1974:260-63;Ahmedi,2008:79).

In addition, Iran's discourse in CENTO during 1972-73, and a shared sentiment with the Soviets- against continued foreign presence in the border Indian Ocean rim-during three key visits between the Shah, Kosygin and Podgorny during 1968-73, pose a serious problem to the theory of Iran's quest for a distant US security relationship which because a serious liability for Iran under the context of Détente itself when Nixon was desperate to reach an agreement with Brezhnev over security in Europe and reducing superpower tensions through a treaty on the strategic nuclear weapons, in return for which the Gulf allies were to face the Soviet intimidation on everyday basis. In other words the counter-argument could be that even when the so-called "Soviet pincer" through Iraq and PDRY after 1971, combined with the Soviet emergence in Afghanistan after July 1973,and the Red Navy's appearance after 1969 was so overwhelming, the Shah did not perceive the presence of foreign military presence in Bahrain as delivering on Iran's or even the Gulf security which was otherwise an effective

[56] Eilts' interpretation of the Shah's objective as hegemonic , if complimentary to the US security objectives to thwart Soviet influence- seeking the region has been quoted likewise by Chubin and Zabih, without recourse to exploring that such assurance was sought against the US presence in the region, which was already semi-institutionalized since its usage of local British bases since the 1933 Jufair Treaty between the British and the Bahrain Government which continued even after the Saudi refusal to renew the Dhahran base facilities to the US after 1961. Eilts thus argue that the 'Shah's abortive idea of proclaiming the Gulf a regulated semi-enclosed sea likewise found little support among Gulf leaders. They saw it as an Iranian effort to control ingress and egress tot eh Gulf, which would adversely affect them'(Eilts 1980:90).

security guarantee to the Shah or the vulnerable Gulf monarchies themselves. Could the revisionist historian provide counter-explanations to this opposition which occurred in the wake of the Shah's failure to take Bahrain in the trust of the Gulf security; Nixon's refusal to deliver on the Shah's legitimate security interests well until 1972 which eventuated in the Iraq-Soviet Treaty(1972) or there might have been a complete break between the Shah and Nixon actually well during 1969-74 at the same time when Iran struggled to buy the needed military hardware to cover a largely unmanned Iranian border along front fronts. In addition, what have the revisionist scholars to explain about the Soviet restraint and the US inability to enter forces in the Arabian Peninsula after 1969 to counter the Soviet-PDRY predations without a "Treaty" per say, and how could the Shah's action- supported by a broader Arab coalition in Dhofar could be achieved in case the Soviets were bent of spreading the Communist influence through the PFLOAG after 1973? Did the Soviets then withdraw their commitments to the PDRY-PDRY "pincer" under the tacit Iranian-Gulf commitments to prevent further US stay in the region, already seen in the US emergence in the Arabian Sea during the Arab-Israel War (1973) to call bluff to the Soviet efforts to intervene on behalf of the Arabs?

If Eilts' rationalizations about the way Nixon policy planners tried to put together an Iran-Saudi hegemonic security architecture on the region during 1968-71 and afterward are credible, then this project's initial premises of the Shah's half-hearted support to a US-sponsored defensive relationship , which was designed to deliver more on the Western and the US interests to insulate itself from the responsibilities of the Gulf security and effectively exploiting its energy providers is hereby indicated. Writing in a non-official capacity but endorsing his personal views however still implied that his observations remained one of highly authentic, as well as sensitive to the true aspirations of the Gulf Arabs' sentiments against the US deliverance on the Israeli security. Eilts observes:

> 'Responding to the new requirements [to the formulation of a Gulf policy during 1969-71] the Nixon Administration gradually fused several disparate, but related elements into a kind of Gulf policy. Its key stone was encouraging the Shah to assume the primary security role for the Gulf by providing Iran ,through extensive sales, with the military hardware and training to do so… A major functional component to the newly devised Gulf policy involved seeking Saudi support—and through Saudi Arabi, hopefully that of the small Gulf oil producing states—in OPEC counsels in order to limit oil price rise and keep production levels high….Oil prices were spearheaded by

the Shah late in 1973, following the Arab oil embargo, making it increasingly difficult or Saudi Arabia to hold together its Gulf Arab neighbours in OPEC counsels'.

(Eilts 1980:103-04)

Any notion of the US interests underpinning the oft-cited Nixon Doctrine which enshrined a security-diplomatic role for Iran and the Saudi Kingdom similarly needs to be seen through what the Johnson administration would have the Shah doing in the wake of his desperation to bring home the US forces from Vietnam; deliver on the Israeli security and may re-elect himself in 1969, all of which precariously based in keeping the Soviet goodwill in restraining Nasser, the North Vietnamese and his Jewish voters(Nadlemann:1982:445-48,50)

Under the prospect of the British refusal to change its decision to extend its stay in the Gulf region after the humiliating retreat from Aden 1967, Johnson himself wrote to the Shah in January 1968 which henceforth set the tone of American foreign policy towards the Gulf:

'The US interests in the security of the area does not, however envisage that we would wish either to replace the British military presence or participate in any new regional security arrangement. The US looks to the countries in the area to ensure the area's security'.

(Ahmedi,2008: 81).

Nadlemann persuasively points out a closer-than-acknowledged Nasser-Johnson relationship pending the 1967 War which could have been avoided had the latter prevailed upon both his Congress to agree to the continued economic aid to Nasser who remained receptive to the five core US interests well until 1966. These were: the continued flow of oil to the West; keeping the Suez Canal open; reducing the spread of Communism and Soviet expansionism; the dangers of the US-Soviet confrontation and above all Israel's security, which in the last case still depended heavily on Nasser's own willingness to challenge the status-quo. Nevertheless, Nadlemann's analysis of the US-Egypt relations point out a similar priority for the US interests that casts serious doubts in the minds of the Gulf leaders s to how much the US global interests- deliverable through Nasser's restraints towards Israel- actually affected their own security which wad itself endangered by this appeasement to Nasser, despite his depredations in the Yemen[57]. In this pursuit Nadlemann argues that 'by 1966, as

[57] In Nadelmann's assessments, Kennedy and Johnson's conscious interests in certain "status-quo" objectives(maintaining the regional balance of power between the Arabs and Israel through increased arms to Israel and preventing a future overt war) in favor of the actual "positive" objectives(the Arab-Israel peace, regional arms control and greater alignment on the superpowers' ledger) implies the divergence between the US obsession with

Nasser's potential for disrupting American interests dwindled, the administration no longer posses sufficient will or incentives to persuade Congress yet again that aid [to Nasser] should be continued[after 1966].' As a background however to this lacklustre in the Johnson-Nasser relationship after 1964, such relationship was for the Gulf powers' seeing the inevitable of their continued perceptiveness to the US interests. Hence although by 1965 Nasser's time in the intra-Arab struggles was already up, after his military's ineptness in the Yemen, but the diminished threat to the Saudi-Jordanian monarchies after Hussein's withdrawal and recognition of the YAR and the relative stability in the Saudi Kingdom itself after the deposition of King Saud by the 'far more capable Faisal' were to be tested only after the 1967 War through the US-Soviet competition in the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, despite the United Arab Command's failure (to standardize Arab weaponry) and Hussein's refusal to turn to the Soviets, were one thing as much as 'the Soviets not eager to invoke themselves in a confrontation with the US, were exercising a constraining influence any Nasserite predilection for rashness', the US-Gulf relations crystallized again in the central US interests in reducing further superpower polarizations (Nadlemann:448)

As I shall demonstrate later, Nixon's own focus on the individual state's responsibility for its "self-defence" and a communal responsibility for "regional defence", while not intended for the Shah's taking up the burdens of regional defence, but was still based in honouring the general principles of avoiding confrontation in the same regional affairs reached between Nixon with Brezhnev during the Moscow Summit(May 1972)[58]. This very perfidy by Nixon may be construed as a de facto US-Soviet division of the world into the separate "spheres" of influence, where the Gulf and northern Indian Ocean took the brunt of Nixon's ambitions to be seen as delivering on the European and the mainland US security through global arms reduction, but make the Gulf-Arabian Sea and western Asia a battle ground for covert operations through the Shah.

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her global interests, but still delivering on the "special relationship" with Israel, due mainly to her domestic politics(Nadelmann: 449-50).

[58] In fact a verbatim reading of the NSSM-238's recommendations drives home the nature of actual Nixon-Brezhnev understanding reached well after the Kissinger- trumpeted Iraq-Soviet Treaty, with Nixon serving a "carte-blanche" to the Shah to buy any number of non-nuclear weapons from the US inventory. The August 1972 contents of the NSSM therefore set the strategic context for the Gulf-Arabian Peninsular political community whose security or interests were to be straitjacketed under the principles of Détente and US-Soviet restraint in the Indian Ocean through 'encouragement for the principles enunciated in the Moscow Summit for avoiding confrontations'(Noyes1982: 54).

b). The Politics of US emergence in the Gulf post-1972, Iranian reasons and the Soviet "option":

Noyes' understanding of the core US interests in maintaining a global strategic balance with the Soviet Union and commitments towards Iranian security implies a strategic anomaly as to how the US policy planners after 1968 had envisaged Western interests better secured through a physical US security role around the northern Indian Ocean. Noyes was therefore at pains to point out the following scenarios as a vindication of the Shah's long-held views about Iran's omniscience to the global balance of power, which the Carter Administration so haplessly let pass into the Soviet hands in line with the seven President's desperation(by Kissinger's' estimate) not to give offence to the Soviet sensibilities to physical presence intervention into Iran to save the Shah, well after the Détente had become meaningless by early 1976:

> 'Paradoxically, the least likely scenario-a major Soviet thrust by ground forces though Iran-is one for which serious US preparations must persist. The threat of punitive responses against Soviet military targets in other areas, while useful as a measure of US resolve, remains unconvincing without clear evidence of US preparedness to commit major combat elements directly to the Gulf in support to its interests…[nevertheless] were the US to concentrate solely on the more likely need for quick deployment of far smaller and more specialized units, Soviet power could exploit the void by intimidation of Gulf states friendly to the US'.
>
> (Noyes, 1982:133).

The manifestations of regional security which underlined the objectives of non-interference to further avoid the "Vietnam-like" scenarios was already discernable in Congressional hearings-debated under the NSSM-238(1971)- much before the actual British withdrawal took place and emphatically suggested the State Department officials were relatively content with the status-quo in the Persian Gulf which current US naval presence sufficient to thwart any Soviet adventurism in the region(Nakleh,1993:99-100).

Chubin and Zabih therefore quote directly from the director of the bureau of politico-military affairs at the State Department, Ronald Spiers who testified to the Joint Subcommittee on international security in July 1971 suggesting the official attitude towards the Gulf security as: 'we consider that on balance our preset interests are served by normal commercial, political and military access' (Chubin and Zabih,1974: 270).

In any case, Chubin and Zabih observe that with the opening of physical diplomatic presence in the Gulf and the YAR in July 1972, 'Washington's decision on the Bahrain facilities was clearly a compromise between a complete withdrawal and a large military build-up', thereby endorsing a completely different variant of the Nixon Doctrine contrary to its historical interpretations theorised by the revisionists:

> 'if the US had no desire to augment its presence in the region, lest it appear keen to assume Britain's mantle, it equally had no intention of signalling its lack of interests in the region…..the decision was not provocative, for it envisaged no quantitative build-up of the MIDEAST Force. The force was upgraded *"qualitatively*"…'.
>
> (Chubin and Zabih, 1974:262)

Nevertheless, Ahmedi's further explanation of the Soviet diplomatic posture during 1968-71 that 'Moscow pursued its goals by conventional diplomacy too, such as by improving relations with Iran, North Yemen and Kuwait', therefore poses serious challenge to traditional understanding about Iran's true motives to oppose US presence, with or without the Shah's presence on the scene (Ahmedi 2008:80-81)

Ahmedi postulate another explanation which might explain the Shah's ambivalence with US stay in Bahrain when he explains his opposition to other powers' supplanting the British protective role after 1968. Although ignoring the continued US interests in the retention of Bahrain and explaining this away as the US reluctance due to commitments in Vietnam or more diplomatic energy needed for the Arab-Israel conflict and on the European defence, Ahmedi's observation is directly referent to the Shah's logic that 'a stronger US presence […] could have been a prelude to more serious efforts on the part of the Soviet Union to achieve the same. The Soviets were already, more or less and in different forms, present in Iraq and South Yemen'.

As late as January 1972, the Shah was repeating similar arguments to Keyhan International in January 1972, curiously missed out by the empiricist academia explaining the Shah's un-questioned subservience to the US, which has animated the Iran-Arab relations to this day, where contradicting this theory amounts to denying a Gospel Truth. When asked of his thoughts about US presence well after the British withdrawal and with Iran facing a hearing in the UNSC over its threatening international security by its occupation of the three militarily insignificant Islands- tabled by nobody else but the Shah's fair-weather friends in

Kuwait and the UAE, the following is the most emphatic endorsement of a policy he upheld well after the Iran-Soviet Treaty (April 1972):

> "we should not like to see a foreign power in the Persian Gulf. Whether that power be Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union or China, our policy has not changed'.

In fact, the Shah's subdued reaction to the presence of Soviet ships in Iraq and the prospect of Iraq granting bases (Umm' Qasr) to the Soviets similarly suggests his continued preference for the US to stay out of the Gulf, but not confront the Soviet presence which he had supposedly tried hard to discourage:

> 'if you are referring to the creation of bases, then that would create new problems. But if you are talking about visits, then one cannot prevent military vessels of another country from paying visits anywhere in international waters….'
>
> (Ramazani, 1975:348).

The above confession is one of the most curious postures adopted by the Shah ever who had made a virtue out of this very Soviet threat during the 1950-early 60s, and was likewise sold to eh world by the British and even by retrograde diplomats like Herman Eilts(1980:93,97,104). So what must have changed overnight for the Shah to transform himself from an "American Shah" to its sworn antagonist? Was it the Soviet threat which intimidated the Shah to tone down his anti-Communist mantras made in his 1960, 67 and 1977 memoirs or did the Nixon Administration failed to provide similar strategic assurances to the Iranian security that Kissinger granted the Shah under the seven US Presidencies since the World War-II?

Coming from a position of restricting non-littoral power's access to the Gulf, as determined by the Red Arabian Sea-Gulf littoral powers since 1958-60, it is obvious that Iran had still maintained that position which did not restrict its diplomatic manoeuvrability against either the US or the Soviet presence in the Arab countries with a considerable free hand against Iraq or in Oman, short of Iran overplaying its hands to endanger the Soviet security, a caveat not lost even on the post-Shah strategists before the Iran-Iraq War[59](Eilts 1980:84). It

[59] Eilts observes that after the ouster of the Shah 'Assuming a Soviet desire to obtain some position of influence "on" the Gulf, Iran would seem a closer and more promising prospect…Khomeini's actuarial demise, whenever it comes, will doubtless see a new scramble for power in Iran, one in which Soviet supported elements such as Tudeh and the Islamic Marxist, will attempt to seize authority. In such an internal power play, the Soviets can and, judging from past history, probably will provide help in the form of weapons and money to their Iranian supporters…[in addition] a pro-Soviet regime in Tabriz, the capital of Azerbaijan, were one to develop after Khomeini, would give the Soviets a position of considerable leverage in Tehran and could give them much of what they want, and probably without requiring direct military intervention'(Eilts:84)

was under this very strategic context, added to which was the spectre of Iran's putative encirclement through the Soviet-Iraq Treaty, when the Shah paid an historical visit to the Soviet Union in October 1972. Hitherto constrained by the uncertainties of the Iran-US relations even after Nixon's historical visit in May 1972 and likewise assurances, the Shah signed a 15 year Economic and Technical Treaty with a familiar appendix to the US presence:

> 'the Soviet Union and Iran expressed the firm conviction that the questions relating to the Persian Gulf zone should be resolved, in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter, by the states of this region themselves without outside interference'.
>
> (Ram,1975:348-49)

Alluding to the Soviet actions in Dhofar through the PFLOAG or an Indo-Iraqi collusion in the Pak-Iran Baluchi belt (during the Bhutto's crackdown on Baluchi insurgency during 1972) and even Communist revolution in Afghanistan, Ramazani conveniently ignores the central context of the East-West Détente as a case for Iran's effective break with its unquestioned dependence upon the US security guarantees since 1959. in fact with the Shah demanding explanations from Nixon during his visit to Iran in May 1972 as well as during CENTO's 19th and 20th Conferences, this is where this is where this projects' central hypothesis becomes vindicated ,which will be empirically tested in Chapter 6-9.

In fact by 1973, the Shah, receiving Podgorny to inaugurate the Aryamehr Steel mills had most emphatically demanded which implied his tacit demand for Iran to deliver on the Soviet security that Nixon had been hard-selling to Brezhnev, while keeping a naval force in Bahrain which could be reinforced whenever the moment arose:

> 'if Moscow wants real Détente with Europe, it will have to play the game here too. European security is sheer mockery without stability and security in the Persian Gulf'.
>
> (Ramazani 1975:350-51)

As a background to the Iraq-Soviet relations after the 1972 Treaty, with the Soviets' extending a $300 million credit (in August 1972) for the Aryamehr Steel, the Shah reciprocated his sentiments in the following eulogy for bilateral relations:

> 'our border has become a border of peace, friendship and cooperation….the most important thing is that the leaders of our countries understand the necessity of developing cooperation and have worked out a plan for its development over the next 15 years'.

(Ramazani, 1975:335).

Even a comparative analysis of Iran-Iraq competing for more favourable relations with the Soviet Union bears out the stakes in peaceful relations for Iran after the Shah's actions to his naiveté about the American loyalty to the Iranian cause and sacrifices of violating the Arab embargoes. Becker pointed out in 1973 that Iran remained the largest recipient of Soviet economic aid after India and Egypt 'in the under-developed world', whereas it became the 2nd largest recipient of the Soviet industrial goods and the biggest exporter of non-oil products to the Soviet Union, as conscious diversification strategy. In Iraq's case however, after the June 1972 nationalization, Iraq only received up to $500 in the economic and an equal amount of military assistance (Becker, 1973: 199-200).

Pointing out a similar tension in the Iran-US relations in Premier Hoveyda's June 1973 Tehran ministerial address to the CENTO, Ramazani explains:

> 'with an eye on the forthcoming summit conference in Washington between the Soviet Union and the United States, and the progress of the Détente movement in Europe, and with Iran's increasing concern with the Soviet-supported "subversion" in the Persian Gulf area', Hoveyda challenged the geopolitics of Détente in Europe'.

Nevertheless, it would be a giant academic fiat even by any revisionist historian to construe Hoveyda's warning meant for the Soviet Union, but effectively pointing out Western handing over the region to the Soviet spheres of influence which was being contrived under the cover of Détente, at least by Nixon and Kissinger:

> 'Détente is a commodity as much in demand in Europe and the Far East, as it is in Asia and the Middle East. For we believe that peace can only prove durable when it's indivisible. Accord and accommodation in one part of the world should not be achieved at the cost of a free hand for disruption and subversion in other parts'.

Ramazani similarly quotes from the semi-official Keyhan's editorial which was a direct insinuation of Iran's changed perceptions about US interests in protecting Iran at the cost of good relations with the Soviets:

> 'Iran has made it clear that its membership of CENTO will in no way prevent it from pursuing the wise and far sighted policy it defined in the early'60s…meaning that its membership[…] would be no impediment to its cooperation with the Soviet Union as in the past'.

(Ramazani,1972:32)

In fact, Iranian opposition to the Western security analysts' rationalizations during 1972-73 still beg clarifications if seen through the Shah demanding direct explanations of Nixon's motives about the US priorities towards Europe, with more focus on the 'anti-subversive' capability of CENTO. Here Ramazani provides the explanation which remains rooted in his thesis about the Shah's continue d quest for "re-alignment" with the US after 1972: 'In assuaging Iran's fear of superpower agreement at the expense of Iran, the President explained the meaning of his visit to the Soviet Union by stating to the Shah:

> '[Speaking now of what these visits mean, and what the future is] I think it is important for us to bear in mind that while we have been at what is called the summit, there has been no intention on the part of the two governments represented at that summit conference, that to divide the world into two spheres of influence, no intention to set up a condominium…[60].'.
>
> (Ramazani:1975:370; Parstimes.com:30th May 1972).

Nakhleh however argues that before 1973, Nixon's reference to the Persian Gulf were not clearly directed towards the "cooperative security' among the Gulf states but instead emphasized upon a direct or tacit US-Soviet understanding to help preserve peace in the region by discouraging arms races. Nevertheless, as an added insurance against the superpowers obliging to interfere as a reality of the Hobbesian World, Nixon still emphasized on the Iran-Saudi understanding and 'greater responsibility for helping to enhance the stability of the region' (Nakhleh1993:99-100).

Ramazani's study of the post-1972 Soviet threat to Iran however insists on Iran's exclusive focus on receiving US assurances towards the CENTO's continued vitality to counter "subversive" threats, but still not demanding from the US to confront Soviet presence

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[6060] In his haste to prove the point and an omission of serious proportions for any student no to overlook was Nixon's further explanation, which Ramazani has chosen to overlook, when Nixon insisted on not singling out the US relations with Iran as impediment to his seeking separate modus-vivendi with Brezhnev. Here is the verbatim account of Nixon's speech made on 30th May 1972 at the State Dinner hosted by the Shah: 'Certainly on our part—and I express here the policy of the US in the past and the present, and I know what will be the policy in the future—we consider it important and vital that as a great nation and a powerful nation, that we seek good relations with all nations in the world'…we are proud of the fact that we have some bonds between us[Iran and the US]—bonds that have been formalized by treaty. But I would point out to this audience, those who are here, that bonds that are formalized by treaty can be one thing; what is more important are those bonds that are further underscored by a personal relationship, a personal respect, a personal esteem, between the leaders of the countries involved'

in Iraq or Aden through accession to some regional security pact, as insisted during the 50s(Ramazani1975:359).

Ramazani therefore details the Shah challenging the entire basis of the CENTO (after the Iraq-Soviet Treaty) as unable to deter a Soviet-Iraqi threat and draws parallel with Nixon's assurance to Iranian security through the Tehran communiqué. While acknowledging Iran's deliberately avoiding to name the Soviets as posing a threat to the Gulf in the CENTO, Ramazani errs by likening Nixon's assurance to the Shah(above) by pointing out the former's agreement over the Gulf security as one of "littoral states' responsibility', an assurance, strongly similar to what he had received from Kosygin and Podgorny during 1968-71:

> 'the two leaders also agreed that the security and stability of the Persian Gulf was of "vital importance to the littoral stases" and took the view that 'the "littoral states" bore the primary responsibility for the security of the Persian Gulf''.
>
> (Ramazani: 1975:370).

In fact, Ramazani's explanation about Nixon's assurances to the Shah is at best a case of the Shah pro-US "reductionism" he tired to prove without access to the US or Iranian policy records when he determines that 'by 1973 Iran was closer to the United States and further from the Soviet Union than at any time since its missile bases pledge of 1962'(Ramazani Ibid: 339-44,368).

Nevertheless, Ramazani still point out Iran's concern with the Iraq-Soviet relations he terms as "alliance" and 'uppermost in the mind of Iran' during the CENTO's 1972 session:

> 'the council's reference to subversive activities in its communiqué was most probably included at the insistence of Iran. The US concern with Détente [for Iran] must have been disconcerting insofar as the Soviet rapprochement with Iraq was not welcomed in Tehran, where it was considered out of tune with the Soviet Union's own expanding economic ties and "good neighbourly" relations with Iran'.
>
> (Ramazani 1975:356).

Ramazani's attribution to the 1973 CENTO communiqué as "unparalleled" by any before it during the 1960s, in its over-riding concerns with security matters', and

'overshadowed by the increasing Détente with the Soviet Union', however a self-contradiction of Iran wagging the Soviet or American tail" [61] (Ramazani 1975:357).

Most assumptions of a Soviet threat as to have motivated Nixon's subsequent support for Iran's military build-up, with the Shah demanding CENTO's reform even after one year, however become extremely contradictory, as to have been motivated by the Shah's intentions to confront the Soviets through CENTO. To the contrary and Ramazani in the possession of the facts of the deployment so the US Task Force Hancock in the Arabian Sea during the October War as an implied endorsement of challenging any Soviet adventurism, the Soviet threat to march across the Hormuz Straits through Pakistani Baluchistan should also be measured against the Shah's consciously supporting a direct Soviet-ally in Iraq during the similar period. At best a stop-gap measure to seek both Soviet and the US restraint in the local conflicts, the following seem bizarre when Ramazani construes Iranian initiative in the CENTO under the following security risks:

> 'Iran and Pakistan were worried about Soviet intentions, because the creation of an independent Baluchi state, with the aid of Iraqi arms, "might provide the Soviet Union with access to the Persian Gulf", a point raised by Iran during the July 1973 CENTO Council of Ministers, when the Shah called for " a reappraisal of the organization in the light of the changing regional, as well as world conditions' ….as well as 'our cooperation within the alliance in order to see how best it can meet new challenges and adapt itself to new conditions'.

Ramazani's quoting from the Shah's speech therefore effectively puts Iran's new strategic vista into its regional context, which despite reflected in the CENTO Communiqué was a reluctant endorsement of Nixon reaching a separate deal with Brezhnev over the head of the Shah:

> 'This message spoke of "significant progress" towards "accommodation and détente between East and West", adding that Iran welcomes measures at reducing dangers of the arms races.

[61] The July 11, 1973 communiqué therefore read '……considering the "continuing subversive threats in the region, the Ministers expressed determination of their Governments to meet such threats with all the means at their disposal"(Ramazani 1975:357).

"…[alongside expressing his shock at Pakistan's dismemberment] It has also been demonstrated how quickly local conflicts can turn into major world crises, leaving weaker elements at the mercy of their stronger adversaries'.

(Ramazani 1975:357).

c). Soviet Threat, the US Defensive Imperatives and Iranian Strategic Calculations

Arguing in the direct context of Soviet-mandated activities in the Dhofari Oman and South Yemen after1972, Noyes observes the profundity of Iran-Soviet relations despite the threat posed by the Iraqo-Soviet Agreement, wherein the imperial Iran,' threatened beyond the point of acceptance', by an Arab axis, 'would assuredly invoke longstanding US expression of support for Iran's security. In extremis, it was certainly not out of the question that Iran, too might precipitously expand ties with the Soviets or even with the Israelis…'(Noyes1982:28).

In fact Noyes disagrees with the common Arab perceptions about the Iran-US strategic commonality in keeping the Gulf Arabs under check, but in fact substantive reluctance by the Nixon policy planners to deputizing regional policing to Iran under the Nixon Doctrine. Effectively contradicting Eilts' rendition[62] of the Nixon Doctrinal application as 'fitted neatly into the concept of the post-Vietnam' policy, Noyes insists that Iran's role was 'viewed as limited', while Iran was:

'Never considered by the US as capable of sustained intervention or control of the area and certainly not in direct confrontation with the Soviet forces. Iran was never considered as a substitute for US power in the context of direct applications of the Soviet military force. In fact the "initiative" for ever-larger and more sophisticated military capability, came from the Shah, whom the US accommodated, and ultimately over-accommodated, within a regional effort to build mature political relations'.

Noyes therefore expounds another interpretation of the Nixon Doctrine as 'allusion to the regional security as a responsibility of regional members where threats from internal subversion or radical regimes had been envisioned'. Not only this observation was made in the background of the post-1972 Détente, but military build-up at Iran's level stands in stark contrast to explicit US security commitments where a direct Soviet nuclear threat was

[62] Eilts rationalizes the consolidation of the US Gulf policy after 1968 as: ' the Shah, with American encouragement […]in 1971,envisaged Iran as the linchpin of Gulf security and beyond this, had begun to aspire to a broader Indian Ocean security role….arrogant and opinionated the Shah might have been, but he was strong , well disposed towards the US, and ready and able to assume areas security responsibilities against a putative Communist threat'(Eilts 1980:93)

involved (Noyes1982: 54,121; Nakhleh1993:99; Eilts 1980:93). Here Nixon's address at Guam on 25th July 1969 renders rationalization of delegating regional security to the exclusive domain of the militarily strong powers very problematic, a fact acknowledged by Kissinger himself[63].

Although such guarantees were enunciated by Nixon himself in his annual address to the Congress in 1971, the foregoing suggests a clear dichotomy of US-Iran interests where a conventional to indirect Soviet threat was (either discarded) or considered not too over-whelming for the US to become part of the Persian Gulf security pact. In this context Eilts' explanations about the nature of the US guarantees, itself highly dubious, and based in the Presidential and Congressional prerogatives, brings the central factor of the Gulf Arab's ambivalence to keep faith in the US guarantees to the fore, if faced with the non-Soviet threats then emerging on the Saudi doorsteps, which the US did not confront well until 1979. A crucial endorsement of the Nixon or Carter's impotence or deliberate willingness to let the Gulf slip into the Soviet folds ,despite what Eilts tried to dispel in 1980, was enshrined in the Eisenhower Doctrine, which he suggests was reinforced by the War Powers Act(November 1973) and the Carter Doctrine. Giving every incentives to the Shah never to trust Iran's security having violated throughout the 20th century and was so prophetically violated under the Islamic Republic by Saddam's Iraq, the following was a de facto endorsement for the local allies not to trust on what Nixon had promised to the Shah[64]. According to Eilts Carter was 'simply refining and reaffirming a long standing American determination not to permit Soviet domination of the area'.

Impotent even by the 1979 standards, the technical nature of the US guarantees remained more valid for the 1972 milieus:

'The Middle East resolution [the Carter-Eisenhower Doctrines] remains in effect for those who might wish to solicit American help against a Communist threat'.

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[63] '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 defence, except for the threat of a major power involving nuclear weapons, that the United States is going to encourage and had a right to expect that this problem will be increasingly handled by , and the responsibility for it taken by the Asian nations themselves'(Kissinger,1979:224) .

[64] 'Granted, there was no automaticity in the resolution(and therefore also not in the bilateral agreements) and any American response is subject to presidential judgement and constitutional procedures…Carter , in his State of the Union warning, may not have realized he was doing so…'.

(Eilts 1980:107-08[65])

Nevertheless, the anomaly of the Shah's rejection of US presence in Bahrain and Nixon's own approach towards American guarantees against a nuclear threat , raises serious possibilities of a carefully orchestrated systemic power shift in the Soviet favour, commonly attributed as "appeasement through Détente", if the core test of US refusal to abandon the Gulf-Arabian Peninsula and the Red Sea may be established which strategic prize was the US ability to preserve the Atlantic Alliance then threatened by Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik and Edward Heath-Douglas Home's overtures towards Gromyko during the similar period.

Noyes however insists on the basic assumption underlying the delegation of regional security to Iran against the non-Soviet threats which Iranian interlocutors were able to impress upon Nixon under the auspices of CENTO during 1972-73 to which more empirical evidence is presented in Chapter 9:

'Defence modernization for the Gulf states was designed to improve internal stability and the capacity to resist Soviet-supported external threat'.

(Noyes1982;121).

Having seen the gestation of Nixon's defence policy towards Iran immediately after the Iraq-Soviet Treaty (1972), Noyes' recommendations for the US security strategy towards the post-1979 Iran and Afghanistan suggests Iran's continued strategic importance in the US global priorities, which the Shah tried to draw Nixon's attentions to. Despite ambivalence with the US ability to deliver on regional security, it is not clear however why he remained opposed to the US presence on the "quantitative basis", despite evidence of the Soviet presence in the Arabian Peninsula-Gulf- and the South-western Asia. One can therefore certainly raise the question whether Nixon or Kissinger had something to hide from the Shah during May 1972 or it was an admission of arrogance by Nixon when he addressed the Shah in the Niavaran Palace on night 30th May 1972:

d). Détente, Soviet Threat to the Gulf and the politics of the US Defence priorities in the northern Indian Ocean during 1972-80

[65] Eilts appended further explanation about Eisenhower's own unwillingness to commit US forces under the oft-proclaimed Doctrine when point out that the sentence referred to above on the "vital" interests of the US in the independence and integrity of area states called the Humphrey- Mansfield Amendment, actually came from its Congressional sponsors. *It was not in the Administration proposed draft, but was added by the Congress'*(Eilts 1980:108)

Noyes' rationalizing the 'low-key role performed by the MIDEASTFOR 'based in Bahrain during the 1967 War for evacuation of US personnel', is not entirely convincing for the actual US policy pursued during the 70s when he suggests that 'to have expanded its role to include an intervention capability, for instance, would not have been acceptable to the Gulf states and would have falsely signalled a readiness to assume the former British role'.

What seemed like an emphatic controversy itself was the US determination to stay in the Gulf (through Bahrain and Oman) after the 1973 War which was still opposed to the Shah as well as to the Saudi Kingdom, which more than any other Gulf regime struggled so much without sufficient manpower and direct US security guarantees to prevent its territorial dismemberment by a direct Soviet-supported Sana'a and Aden throughout the 60s and well until the 80s. In the post-1973 War scenario of the US 8th Fleet deployments in the Arabian Sea (Oman) with Bahrain government serving notice upon the US to evacuate the Jufair Base, Noyes explains the controversy as follows, only to be aggravated by the new US demands upon Oman and its willingness to oblige the US:

> 'following an apparent reversal of this decision and long negotiations that revealed the ambivalent attitude of the Bahrainis as well as the US persistence, the status of the [Force] was finally clarified on July1, 1977.'
>
> (Noyes1982:59).

Noyes further argues about the political imperatives leading to the reduction of American exposure in the Gulf during 1973-77 but again with the deployment of the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) there during 1979-80 through operational and logistical collaboration with the West Germany by moving US troops from the NATO with an Australian Carrier Task Force to support Western position in the Indian Ocean, 'while plans were put together to enlarge substantial deployment and logistical facilities at Diego Garcia'.

The question arises that if the US was unable to develop a sufficient deterrent capability to assure the Gulf allies during early 70s, what interests then animated US and Iranian posturing towards the Soviet threat to the northern Indian Ocean littoral and specifically around the Gulf-Western Asia through new security relationships with Iraq, India and Afghanistan after 1971.

Even in the relaxed Détente scenario of the 1972-75, Noyes' rationalizations about the US defence planning along the Arabian Sea- Horn of Africa while noting local opposition to any US presence but it also on the one hand implies a US policy favouring CENTO to

undertake more regional tasks, but covertly seeking bases in the region, despite a concomitant reluctance to openly confront the Soviet threat.

> 'the image of rapid Soviet movement of major forces into Afghanistan tended to direct discussion and planning on the need for a US military posture in the region capable of resisting direct Soviet expansion. Inevitably, military logic pointed to a requirement for bases in the Gulf region itself …political logic on the other hand… dictated against the establishment of bases that would undermine the political leadership upon which stability [itself] depended. US policy therefore pursued the compromise course of negotiating for *facilities* [as opposed to bases…] in Kenya, Somalia and Oman, that could be improved to accommodate sizeable US forces in an emergency….'.
>
> (Noyes1982:128)

Delineating a similarly relaxed strategic landscape along the Iranian borders circa 1972-73, Chubin and Zabih delineates the Soviet intentions towards the Gulf through a benign naval diplomacy and emergence in Iraq:

'two aspects of the Soviet naval visits to the region are striking: the tapering off of visits to the Gulf, and the numerous visits in comparison to the Red Sea ports of Berbera, Hodeida, Aden and Massawa…..As a symbol of the Soviet's global interests and global reach, it will doubtless have a strong psychological effect on littoral states of the area….'.

Nevertheless, both agree on the Soviet navy's mission as primarily one of "strategic" [….] and orientated towards a "sea-denying" strategy, aimed at counteracting the Polaris submarine fleet', with the intrinsic limitation:

> 'Despite increased mobility[however], the Soviet navy appears to have *"insufficient*" spare capacity' to promote political adventuring as an end in itself'.
>
> (Chubin and Zabih1974: 268).

Nevertheless, both similarly argue that the Soviet 'presence enables it to participate as an interested party in any negotiations, which may take place concerning the Indian Ocean:

> 'With the construction of mobile seaborne air support, the opening of the Suez Canal, and the acquisition of genuine bases in the areas (both insisting not to have been acquired exclusively for the Red Navy in Iraq by 1973), its navy will be in a position to dominate many of the choke points, or key access points, such as the straits that guard entry and exist into the Indian Ocean'.

McConnell however argues that after mid-1971 the Soviet too starting talking 'ambiguously of the creation of a "zone of peace" in the area as it long [had] in the Mediterranean'.

Quoting from Brezhnev's 11th June 1971 address on the 24th Communist Congress, McConnell argues:

> 'The proposal may be [….] just another propaganda ploy. Strategically, the Soviets have probably long thought of naval limitation as an attractive proposition. Tactically too, the time is right given the de-escalation in the Middle East and the emerging climate of Détente since the 24th Party Congress'.
>
> (McConnell ,1971:14)

In addition, Chubin and Zabih's understanding of a change in Soviet priorities prophetically underlines future Soviet threats impinging on the Arabian Peninsula rather than close to the southern borders, hence, if proven empirically may turn the entire Nixon-Kissinger pretensions to Kurdish sufferings on its head and instead manipulating a Soviet-inspired proxy to deliver on Israel's security::

> 'the USSR retains here as elsewhere in the area the option of cashing in on its investments when the time is ripe. The Soviet's naval capability poses less of a threat to the upper Gulf and Iran, than it does to the Arabian Peninsula'.

In addition both insist that the 'scenarios where the USSR will assists Iraqi "grab" of Kuwait, while neutralizing regional opposition, appear "far-fetched" since they ignore the weakness of the Soviet client' and 'under-estimate the effectiveness of the deterrent provided by Iran's massive arms build-up(Chubin and Zabih,1974:270).

Chubin and Zabih's further argument about the US increasing its response capability in the Gulf through modest naval assets in Bahrain (which could be reinforced from the Pacific Fleet) as a 'signal of US interests in the region [that] balances that of the Soviets, but reassures the littoral states of American intentions', however is in stark contrast with a strategic priority of the Gulf for Soviet land security with all else secondary in the Indian Ocean or even in the broader Middle East, hence during the initial days of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan(December 1979), the withdrawal of the RDF became the moot point for Soviet bargaining with the US under Brezhnev:

> 'Comparisons between the USSR's role in the Arab-Israel zone and its implications for Soviet adventurism in the Gulf are, we believe irrelevant. Several major differences

exist between the two zones which make it likely [that] Soviet policy will be much more cautious in the Gulf: (1) the area borders on the Soviet Union, and there is little reason to assume that Moscow would welcome a prolonged disturbance in the area,(2) there is no comparable schism between Iran and the Arab states, or even Iran or Iraq, as there is between Israel and the Arabs'.

(Chubin and Zabih,1974: 270).

Becker too captured the motivation for the Soviet staying power in the Gulf to deter further Iran-Arab rivalry which necessitated implied US interference on behalf of Iran if the prolonged escalation led to a hegemonic war between Iran and the Arab axis, as Noyes argued above, hence the Soviet resort to a tentative Security treaty with Iraq (direct arms supplies to the PDRY, PFLOAG and even to the YAR after 1979) to beef-up its security through both clients and the quasi non-aligned Iran, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia:

'Iraq is not Egypt and no dispute in the Gulf region offers the USSR as comfortable a perch as the Arab-Israel conflict…..the Soviet client in the Gulf is chronically coup-ridden and universally distrusted; its fundamental conflict is with a state(Israel or Iran) that enjoys the patron's largesse to an almost equal degree….The dilemma inherent in backing regional rivals is undoubtedly one of the major weak points of a possible activist Soviet stance in the Persian Gulf region…In attempting to achieve a delicate balance among inconsistent and potentially dangerous alternatives, Moscow may unwittingly leave the door open to a regional equilibrium of forces'.

(Becker, 1973: 201).

Chubin and Zabih therefore problematizes the case for Iran's vulnerability in the face of Iraq-Soviet emerging entente after 1972 when observe that 'for the present Tehran does not appear to be unduly concerned about the Soviet naval build-up in the Indian Ocean….'.

Relating this Soviet threat elsewhere to Iran's strategic pre-eminence in the region however, Chubin and Zabih also concur:

'in the light of Iraq's domestic instability and its lack of personnel or resources compared to Iran, and particularly in the face of Iran's massive arms purchases, Soviet support to Iraq(after Iraqi-Soviet Treaty) does not at present, constitute a real threat to Iran. Nor it its clear that the USSR can translate its undoubted influence in that unstable country into control….the Treaty has not conclusively disproven the Shah's assumption that the USSR will remain neutral in regional disputes. The problem of

conflicting commitment to Iran and Iraq remains a considerable constraint on the Soviet activity in the Gulf--an incentive to avoid taking sides in disputes between the two states'.

Yet both warned in the similar vein that 'if the [Soviet] desire for good relations with Iran is a constraint on an activist or interventionist Gulf policy, it clearly need not remain so' (Chubin and Zabih1974:265-66).

d). Conclusion

It will be the academic pursuit of exploring whether the Shah had struck a grand bargain with Nixon and the Soviets for given a free hand in the Persian Gulf under the non-interference principles of Moscow Summitry, or US policy planners had something else to be leveraged from Iran despite Nixon's clearest undertakings at Guam in June 1969 for 'providing a shield if a nuclear power threatened the freedom of a nation allied with us or a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security'(Chubin and Zabih,1974:257-58).

In fact, the argument that during early 1968 both Iran and Iraq having agreed on the opposition to the Conservative Government's decision to delay its withdrawal from the Gulf had also concurred on the 'need for the establishment of an indigenous security system after the British departure', ignore the case of the Shah making a common cause with radical Iraq to prevent the Gulf becoming a battleground for superpowers'' convenient deals as during the World War-II(Chubin and Zabih 1974:184; Ramazani: 1975:409,412,418). By its very implications however, it will be argued that Nixon Doctrine was itself a security blueprint to deliver on key Soviet demands for evacuation of western forces from its southern borders, where Nixon and Kissinger had already staked claims for deploying the MIDEASTFOR. It will be further explored as to what importance did Bahrain actually retained for both superpowers and Iran and how the Shah's opposition was viewed by Nixon and Kissinger in the context of Détente during 1969-75. In fact, the politics of bases in the region immediately after 1968 and its security risks to the Soviet land borders during the Cold War implied that Nixon Administrations would have a central interest in the Shah's claims on the Islands which with the exception of the smaller islands(Abu Musa and the twin Tunbs) had a global strategic significance for Nixon's ability to aggravate the Soviet security dilemma under the latter's failure to acquire exclusive naval bases in the region, which on the one side the US enjoyed

,and on the other hand could relinquish only after securing the Soviet undertakings to reduce military deployments along the NATO borders and thereby save the Atlantic alliance.

As a matter of initial speculation, we will proceed with the hypothetical possibility of Iran having been condemned to live under the Soviet intimidation after Nixon's refusal to perceive Iran and the conservative Arabs' legitimate security interests and trying to bargain with the Soviet strategists in return for a grand bargain on European and the US mainland security under the auspices of nuclear disarmament and compelling Western Europe's increasing its conventional military capability to prevent superpower involvements. Fearing the inevitable of the Gulf exposed to this superpower bargains, we will proceed to explore the Shah's motives in opposing the US presence in the region, which by its obverse effects was his own pledge to deliver on Brezhnev's call for Indian Ocean's demilitarization in early 1971.

On a regional strategic calculus and in the over-arching US-Western interests in retaining a strategic presence in the region, this project will explore Nixon, Kissinger and the Shah's interests in supporting the Kurdish rebellion and Iran's acting as a direct security provider to both Pakistan and Afghanistan during 1972-79. In the former's case, the US interests in supporting a Soviet-ally against another Soviet ally Iraq remains an anomaly to which no comprehensive analysis exists except Kissinger's own explanations to support Kurdish struggle for self-determination to which Nixon and Ford Administrations remained committed without any ulterior motive to use the Kurds as pawns of the US policy to deliver on the Israeli security by tying-up Iraqi forces away from the Israeli-Saudi-Syrian borders.

In the case of the latter role, there still exists no empirical study as to why the Shah and Bhutto remained insistent on CENTO's revival after 1972 but did not seek US accession to it as they had under the Baghdad Pact and even during the British withdrawal from the region, to counter the non-Soviet threats? The empirical chapters details just these controversies about Nixon and Kissinger's interests in reducing superpower tensions during 1969-74 while the Shah remained suspicious of their actual motives towards the Gulf and western Asia after Nixon's historic visit to Moscow during May 1972 and opening towards the Communist China.

Appendix-III

Foreign and Common Wealth Office position on declassification of diplomatic records: Re-British relations with Iran and Ra'as al-Khaimah(1968-71)

Freedom of Information Request: Reference F0024339
foienquiry [foienquiry@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk]
To: RIAZ A.S.
Dear Mr. Riaz,
Thank you for your enquiry of 22nd February 2010 requesting a review of the following file: FCO 8/1776/1: Reactions by other countries to military occupation of Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunbs by Iran: Closed extract: Folio 99, 1971
The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives you two rights of access when you write to us asking for information. You have the right to know whether we hold the information that you are looking for, and you have the right to have the information given to you. These rights may only be overridden if the information you are looking for is covered by an exemption in the Act.
We would like to apologise for the extremely long delay in bringing your request to completion, and are very sorry for the inconvenience that this has caused.
We wrote to you on 7 April 2010 to inform you that some of the information in these extracts is covered by exemptions under the Freedom of Information Act. The exemption we have applied is at section 27 of the act.
Section 27(1) exempts information that, if it was released, could put at risk:

- relations between the United Kingdom and any other state, international organisation or international court;
- the interests of the United Kingdom abroad; or
- the United Kingdom's ability to promote or protect its interests.

The definition of 'state' includes the government of any state and any part of such a government.
When this exemption is applied, we are required to consider whether it is in the public interest to release the information you have requested and we regret to say, after very careful consideration, that we do not think there is a public interest in releasing the information you have requested.
This exemption applies because we considered that the factors in favour of release, the presumption of openness under Freedom of Information and the value in having a complete historical record, were outweighed by the fact that releasing this information into the public domain at this time could be detrimental to international relations in the Persian Gulf and have the potential to damage the UK's relations with countries in the region. The need to protect the UK's national interests must be balanced with the need to meet the key objectives set out under FOI, such as openness and transparency.
Relations between the UK and with Middle Eastern countries in general are of a sensitive nature. Disclosure of this information could potentially raise tensions and impact on the UK's international standing in the region. So although the UK's policy and consequently role in this

area remains a matter of interest to a significant proportion of the population, information in this file would be highly likely to prejudice relations between the UK and the Gulf states.
In conclusion; after considering the Public Interest in this case it has been determined that any increase in understanding which release might yield would be outweighed by the real and significant risk of prejudice to the UK's relations with, and interests in, the Gulf. Consequently the Foreign and Commonwealth Office consider that the balance of the Public Interest lies in non-disclosure and in upholding the exemption at section 27 (1) of the Act for the information held in these extracts, at this current time.
If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our response to your request for information and/or wish to appeal against information being withheld from you please send full details within two calendar months of the date of this letter to:

The Quality Manager
Public Services Development Unit
The National Archives
Kew, Richmond
Surrey TW9 4DU

You have the right to ask the Information Commissioner (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. Please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning his investigation.

I would like to thank you for your patience whilst this review was being completed and I am sorry to send you such a disappointing response.

If you have any questions relating to your FOI request, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Potter
Freedom of Information Manager
Information Management and Practice Department
The National Archives
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

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