

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

AMERICAN POLICY AND ACTIONS

SURROUNDING THE BAGHDAD PACT, 1955-1959

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Introduction

The creation of the Baghdad Pact (1955-1959), METO (Middle East Treaty Organization), or the Northern Tier Pact was a direct response to the creation of the NATO and SEATO organizations. The United States believed the Middle East was at risk of Soviet encroachment on the basis of geography. With the encouragement of the United States, pro-western, or at least Western-friendly nations in the region including Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, and Iran, joined with Great Britain and formed the Baghdad Pact. Each member pledged to support the other members and work to improve economic, political, and cultural organizations within the region. The Baghdad Pact would survive the Suez Crisis, coups, and a reduction in British colonialism before transitioning to CENTO after Iraq pulled out in 1959. The Baghdad Pact would live on as CENTO until 1979 when Iran pulled out during the Iranian Revolution. This thesis covers the organization's history while Iraq was still present, by focusing on American involvement from as far back before its inception in 1940 to the transition to CENTO in 1959.

While Great Britain was a member of the Baghdad Pact, the United States never officially joined. In the official record, it only observed. Off the record, President Dwight Eisenhower heavily supported its operating budget and worked to make it a viable component of its efforts to contain the Soviet Union through collective security programs. The pact was important to securing the Middle East from Soviet encroachment. Despite its ultimate dissolution, it achieved, at least in part, what Eisenhower wanted.

The Baghdad Pact is not a well-known organization, and most sources do not identify the role that it played in the Eisenhower administration's efforts to deter the Soviet Union. Even as a supposed "failure," the Baghdad Pact led to economic and educational developments, including new collegiate level institutions. Further, American aid through the pact facilitated infrastructure

improvements, including roads and bridges, in each of the member nations. Finally, the pact did offer some deterrence to the spread of communism in the region.

In addition to the historiography on this topic, the United States played an active role in the Baghdad Pact through its policies and funding. Major themes throughout this thesis are the American reasons for not officially joining the pact due to their relationship with Israel and the Eisenhower Doctrine. Due to problems associated with the Arab-Israeli divide, the United States had to protect its relationship with Israel, while also maintaining a relationship with Arab nations who were against the existence of Israel as a nation. Though the United States never officially joined the Baghdad Pact, American policymakers provided resources and strategic conditions, thus allowing the United States to take a very active role in the pact's development.

Chapter One focuses on the fifteen years (1940-1955) before the Baghdad Pact was signed. Fears of Soviet aggression did not begin with "Sputnik" or the "missile gap." Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Soviet Union revealed a pattern of dictatorial behavior during World War II. As early as 1940, the Soviets acted aggressively towards nations in what the United States called the "Northern Tier" including Iran, Iraq, and Turkey. The war also caused the Soviet Union and the West to realize the importance of oil in the Middle East. At the end of World War II, the Soviet Union showed its intentions for the Middle East when it refused to evacuate from Iran, thus breaking treaties in the process. While the Iran Crisis was resolved with the United Nation's assistance, questions still remained between the East and West over who would control the region.

One key theme of this chapter is the importance of unrest in different Middle Eastern countries as a pivotal factor in the ultimate creation of the Baghdad Pact. In 1953, Iran nationalized its oil industry under popularly elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh,

triggering widespread concern in the United States and Great Britain. Mossadegh would be ousted in a joint effort between the American CIA and Britain's MI6 in order to bolster Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, the pro-Western leader of Iran. This change in government helped set the stage for a new collective security arrangement for the region.

Both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations viewed Turkey and Pakistan as critical to preventing the influence of communism from infiltrating the Middle East. During World War II, Turkey faced pressure when the Soviets sought to strip Turkey of its control over the Dardanelle Straits as well as the Kars and Ardahan provinces.¹ Pakistan is an interesting case because it did not become its own nation until 1947, but quickly became part of the Cold War calculus in the region.

From its inception, the Eisenhower administration realized the importance of the Middle East and believed a collective security agreement modeled after NATO could help to secure the region from communist expansion.² The most logical method for supporting this was through financial aid to the region to bolster economies, militaries, and pro-Western leaders.

Eisenhower's desires, as well as the interests of Middle Eastern nations, led to the creation of the Baghdad Pact in February 1955.

Chapter Two focuses on the development of the Baghdad Pact from its inception through 1957. The United States continued its involvement with the pact in an informal sense, but troubles in the Middle East were not the only problems facing Eisenhower's administration. Civil Rights, the "missile gap," and "Sputnik" each posed their own set of issues at home and abroad.

¹ Lenore G. Martin, "Turkey and the US," in *Handbook of US-Middle East Relations: Formative Factors and Regional Perspectives*, ed. Robert E. Looney (New York: Routledge, 2009), 297.

² Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963), 574.

Adding to these issues, there was much skepticism and opposition to the Baghdad Pact from both Americans and world leaders.

Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who would remain as a thorn in the side of the West until his death in 1970, urged Arabs to oppose the Baghdad Pact, condemned Iraq for its friendship with the west, and even called for the removal of Iraq's leader, Nuri-Said.³ At home, *The Washington Post* was very skeptical of Eisenhower's dealings in regard to the supply of arms to Pakistan.⁴ These, among other issues, reveal some of the challenges faced by the Baghdad Pact shortly after its inception.

Nasser's focus on Arab nationalism would culminate in the largest issue to face the Baghdad Pact members: the 1956 Suez Crisis. Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, forbade foreign workers to leave, and sank ships in the entrance to the canal.⁵ The problem was further exacerbated when Great Britain, France, and Israel invaded Egypt. Eisenhower was furious.⁶ The Baghdad Pact members met together to decide on a consistent policy.⁷ When the crisis ended, Nasser's prestige in the world had greatly increased, while Britain's fell. The Baghdad Pact would survive the Suez Crisis due to member nations consulting with one another as opposed to taking their own course of action.

Shortly after the Suez Crisis, Eisenhower announced a new policy known as the Eisenhower Doctrine, which allowed for economic and military aid to be provided to countries to

³ Behçet Kemal Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact: Anglo-American Defence Policies in the Middle East, 1950-59* (London: Routledge, 2004), 91.

⁴ "Baghdad Pact," *The Washington Post and Times Herald*, January 16, 1956, 8.

⁵ Michael A. Guhin, *John Foster Dulles: A Statesman and His Times* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 277; and Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 490.

⁶ Richard V. Damms, "Dwight Eisenhower and American Foreign Policy," Unpublished essay in author's possession, 11.

⁷ Yergin, *The Prize*, 485.

combat Soviet pressures.⁸ It is the economic aid under the doctrine that truly shows one of the successes of the Baghdad Pact. The Eisenhower administration and the Baghdad Pact member nations selected the Development and Resources Corporation to complete public works programs across the region. One particular program was to reinvigorate the Khuzistan region of Iran to recreate its fertility using irrigation, electric power, crop improvement, and fertilizers. Other multi-national plans included the Iran-Turkey Railroad and the Dez Dam project.

Though much of the funding for the projects listed came from the United States, the Baghdad Pact nations wanted more direct U.S. involvement. By 1957, the U.S. had joined the Military, Economic, and Counter-Subversion Committees of the Baghdad Pact, but the member nations still wanted the U.S. to commit fully. Though this did not happen, from 1956-1957, stability was maintained.

Chapter Three focuses on 1958 and 1959 including the deteriorating situation in the Middle East and the ultimate dissolution of the Baghdad Pact. Internal unrest within the member nations characterized the last years of the pact. Further, the Soviet Union became bolder in its threats against nations who aligned with the west. U.S. foreign aid continued to be critical at this time, but it proved insufficient to stop internal uprisings in Iraq and Pakistan.

In 1958, the government of Iraq fell, and Nuri Said, its leader, was killed. The new regime under Abd al-Karim Qasim was seen as pro-Soviet by the West and thus, a disappointing choice.⁹ Qasim decided to pull Iraq out of the Baghdad Pact, ushering in the transition to CENTO. In Pakistan, the government was also overthrown; but the new government ultimately

⁸ Eisenhower Doctrine, January 5, 1957, University of Virginia, Miller Center, <https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-speeches/january-5-1957-eisenhower-doctrine>.

⁹ "Remarks of Dr. Polk," Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Folder 1, Volume XXXI, M-Z, MacArthur-Pramoj, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 1-2.

decided to remain in the Baghdad Pact. The internal unrest and Iraq's defection from the Baghdad Pact led it to transform itself into a new organization, the Central Treaty Organization.

Despite the Baghdad Pact's untimely end, its history includes some positive outcomes despite most sources claiming that it was a failure.¹⁰ A Nuclear Training Center in Baghdad was established to train member-nation students in the use of radioisotopes. In Iran, the Development and Resource Corporation partnered with Iran's Plan Organization to construct textile, food processing, milk pasteurizing, and cement plants as well as airports, water ports, roads, schools, hospitals, and further infrastructure. The Baghdad Pact also helped deter the spread of communism into the Northern Tier, the Eisenhower administration's most desired objective.

The historiography of the Baghdad Pact is small. CENTO has received much more coverage. *The Washington Post* and the *New York Times* provide some coverage of the Baghdad Pact, although limited in scope. The State Department's Foreign Relations of the United States files (FRUS), as well as Secretary of State John Foster Dulles Papers housed at the Mudd Manuscript Library at Princeton University are invaluable in following the Eisenhower Administration's diplomatic efforts.

Memoirs from Dwight Eisenhower, Winston Churchill, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and Mohammad Pahlavi also provide valuable insight. John Foster Dulles' *War or Peace* mostly focuses on his experiences with European and Asian nations; however, his work gives context to other problems occurring during the period of the Baghdad Pact. Peter Hahn's *Crisis and Crossfire: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* is a critical overview of U.S.

¹⁰ See Peter Hahn, *Caught in the Middle East: U.S. Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Ayesha Jalal, "Towards the Baghdad Pact: South Asia and Middle East Defence in the Cold War, 1947-1955," *The International History Review* 11, no. 3 (August 1989): 409-433; Richard L. Jasse, "The Baghdad Pact, Cold War or Colonialism?," *Middle Eastern Studies* 27, no. 1 (January 1991): 140-156; and Robert Wilson Stookey, *America and the Arab States: An Uneasy Encounter (America & the World)* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1975).

policies in the Middle East. While he spends little time on the Baghdad Pact, he does assert Eisenhower's role in financing one-sixth of its annual budget.¹¹ This source is critical for the context that it provides on American actions in the Middle East as a whole in the decade after World War II.

Steven Freiberger, in *Dawn over Suez: The Rise of American Power in the Middle East, 1953-1957*, argues that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden proposed the creation of the Baghdad Pact.¹² He argues that the American refusal to join left the members feeling deceived, which was a major reason as to why it was a failure.¹³

Michael Cohen's *Strategy and Politics in the Middle East, 1954-1960* approaches the Baghdad Pact from a focus on the Egypt-Iraq and Arab-Israeli feuds. His focus stresses the violence that rocked the region during this period than the diplomacy involved, but he includes several chapters on the Baghdad Pact from its formation to the transition to CENTO.

Raouf Abdel El Sayed's dissertation on "The Baghdad Pact in World Politics" similarly argues that it was the idea of continuing British colonialism that made Eisenhower refrain from joining the Baghdad Pact. He also provides insight into an individual Cold War among the Middle Eastern countries including those siding with Egypt and those siding with Iraq and Turkey.¹⁴ An interesting assertion that he makes is that for some American policymakers, Arab hostility to Israel was viewed as being more worrisome than Soviet expansion of communism.¹⁵ With this logic, the Baghdad Pact was more a glue that held the Middle East together than a

¹¹ Peter Hahn, *Crisis and Crossfire: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, 2005), 17.

¹² Steven Z. Freiberger, *Dawn over Suez: The Rise of American Power in the Middle East, 1953-1957* (Chicago: I.R. Dee, 1992), 83.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Raouf Abdel El Sayed, "The Baghdad Pact in World Politics" (PhD diss., Geneve, Ed. Medecine et Hygiene, 1971), 148.

¹⁵ Ibid.

defense against the Soviet Union. Sayed also argues that the pact was successful economically, though it never achieved its purpose because the Soviet Union was able to develop an amicable relationship with each member.¹⁶

Behçet Kemal Yesilbursa's *The Baghdad Pact: Anglo-American Defense Policies in the Middle East, 1950-1959* covers the Baghdad Pact's formation through the transition to CENTO from the perspective of defense policies and is the best overall source of the organization. Yesilbursa concludes that the purpose of the Baghdad Pact was to secure the defense of the Middle East against any aggression, not necessarily just from the Soviet Union and also to improve the economy of member nations by working together.¹⁷ He argues that the Soviet Union viewed the pact as an extension of the Cold War due to the Western expansion of bases along the Russian border.¹⁸

Yesilbursa's evaluation of the American role is different from that of other sources. He states that the Middle Eastern members saw strict adherence to the pact as a means of receiving further American aid.¹⁹ While this may have been the case, he cites American reluctance to join the pact as a reason why it failed. Also, Britain's decline in the region is another reason why the pact failed. The United States sought to resolve national disputes prior to seeing a mutual-defense pact as viable during the period.²⁰

Richard Ovendale, in *Britain, the United States and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East, 1945-1962*, provides one chapter on the Baghdad Pact. He concludes the American role in the Baghdad Pact was to, at first, increase Iranian aid so as to encourage its entrance into the

¹⁶ Ibid., 149.

¹⁷ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 216.

¹⁸ Ibid., 217.

¹⁹ Ibid., 218.

²⁰ Ibid., 220.

pact, but refrain from providing aid to any other nations in the region until they proved that their hostilities toward Israel were lessened.²¹ According to Owendale, the American State Department saw Egypt and Syria as the most strategic and volatile in the Middle East, yet neither joined the Baghdad Pact.²²

Elie Podeh's *The Quest for Hegemony in the Arab World: The Struggle over the Baghdad Pact*, is focused around Eisenhower's foreign policy. Podeh covers Eisenhower's policy shift away from trying to convince Egypt's Nasser to ease his anti-Israel campaign and instead, join the Baghdad Pact as an observer in the economic and counter-subversion committees.²³ Egypt had been too friendly with the Soviet Union to justify conceding to Nasser's demands.²⁴ Podeh also spends time covering the impact the Eisenhower Doctrine played on the Baghdad Pact, which is very important to this project.

Townsend Hoopes' *The Devil and John Foster Dulles* provides a detailed timeline of events which led to the creation of the Baghdad Pact, beginning with Iraq's desire to secure American arms through accepting American conditions, and Nasser's rejection of the same offer.²⁵ This work elaborates specifically on Dulles' mentality and other issues outside of the Middle East that influenced his decision making including the establishment of SEATO and the confrontation at Quemoy.²⁶ Hoopes focuses heavily on the diplomatic aspect of the creation of the Baghdad Pact, especially in regard to Nasser's reluctance and British demands. He also covers the Suez Crisis from a diplomatic perspective as well.

²¹ Ritchie Owendale, *Britain, the United States, and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East, 1945-1962* (New York: Leicester University Press, 1996), 122.

²² *Ibid.*, 123.

²³ Elie Podeh, *The Quest for Hegemony in the Arab World: The Struggle over the Baghdad Pact* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1995), 199.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1973), 320-321.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 321.

This thesis builds on these sources and adds to the historiography by arguing that the United States played a critical role in the Baghdad Pact and that it was not a complete failure due to the positive civil advancements that took place. It is evident that, while limited, the U.S. limited role in the Baghdad Pact still provided member nations with support to combat Soviet communism. Though policymakers and private-sector individuals maintained their differing opinions, the Eisenhower administration took an active role in the pact's development and history, resulting in some success, despite the negativity it typically receives.

Chapter 1

Origins of the Baghdad Pact: 1940-1955

The closest the Middle East has come to collective security was in 1955 with the acceptance of the Baghdad Pact agreement between Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and Great Britain. The security of the Middle East was shaky at best as the expansion of communism influenced every decision made by American policymakers after the end of World War II. After the 1946 Iran crisis when the Russians refused to evacuate troops from that country after the war, dreams of peace faded quickly. As the Cold War began to grow hotter, the United States realized that holding the “Northern Tier” was critical to not only national security, but world security. Melvyn Leffler argues that “the northern tier had become the new frontier of America’s vital security interests.”¹

Eisenhower’s Middle Eastern policy after his inauguration focused heavily on Egypt, which led the Arab League, but there were strains in Egypt’s relationship with the West.² In a meeting with Secretary of State Dulles, on May 11, 1953, Prime Minister Mohamed Naguib highlighted that the Egyptians were not confident and would not adhere to any form of a collective defense agreement because “no government in any Arab country can now go against the will of the people, who hate the British and feel bitter against the United States’. He told Dulles, ‘Free us from the British occupation and we can then negotiate in good faith.’”³ Dulles concluded at the end of his trip that the United States should abandon its longing “of making Egypt the key country in building the foundations for a military defense of the Middle East.”⁴ In

¹ Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 485.

² The Arab League was founded in 1945 as an agreement among Arab states to settle disputes and work on mutually beneficial programs.

³ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 15.

⁴ ‘Conclusions of the Trip’, John Foster Dulles Papers, Box 73 Seely G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

Dulles' eyes, MEDO (Middle East Defense Organization) was too complicated. MEDO was the precursor to the Baghdad Pact, but never fully came to fruition.

The United States faced the conundrum of which to value more, Middle Eastern security or positive relations with the British. The turning point in the Anglo-American relationship over the Middle East was in May 1953. The United States began to pursue an independent policy to encourage a collective security agreement focused on the Northern Tier.”⁵ From the summer of 1953 forward, the United States decided that bilateral agreements with each individual nation would be more beneficial than the NATO-styled MEDO.⁶

The main reason for American leadership in this traditionally allied Anglo-region was that the British were falling from their long reign as a colonial empire. The defense commitments became too much in the post-World War II world for the British, so ex-colonies in the Middle East had to support themselves. Bruce Kuniholm argues that the war had taken a distinctive toll on Britain's economy. Britain lost two-thirds of its exports, one-fourth of the merchant marine, half of overseas investments, and one-fourth of its financial reserves, and saw its unemployment reach 15.5%, and debt increase six-fold. In response, Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer asked for a reduction in British commitments overseas.⁷ This cocktail of perceived Soviet strength and British weakness left the United States to fill the potential vacuum of power in the fight against communism worldwide.⁸

In 1947, President Harry Truman announced the “Truman Doctrine,” in which he argued for an increase in economic aid to the Middle East to prevent the spread of communism. He stated, “I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are

⁵ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 20.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁷ Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*, 406-7.

⁸ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 1, 2.

resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures...I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.”⁹ In fact, seventy-five percent of Truman’s peacetime budget was designated for national security programs. The budget for the Korean conflict which took place during the last years of Truman’s presidency (1950-1953), was around \$5 billion while non-Korean expenditures increased from \$35 billion to \$51 billion.¹⁰ Bruce Kuniholm argues that collective security arrangements including the Baghdad Pact were not as much created due to the Korean War, but because of what occurred in 1946-1948.¹¹ American economic aid, however, “took on a more permanent, military orientation” after the Korean War began.¹²

Years before the Baghdad Pact agreement was signed, American policymakers debated its role in future collective security agreements. From 1953-1955, the U.S. government determined that a pact of some sort was necessary but was unsure of what role it would play in it. Prior to 1953, American leaders were reeling in the aftermath of World War II and the unforeseen consequences and fears it left behind. Government officials all had opinions on the situation making for a very confusing picture of the American role in the development of a pact. George Kennan, the Director of Policy Planning in the State Department, stated in July 1947, “The main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies.”¹³ The most

⁹ Harry S. Truman, “Truman Doctrine Speech,” March 12, 1947, The Avalon Project, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp.

¹⁰ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 451.

¹¹ Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 425.

¹² Burton I. Kaufman, *Trade and Aid: Eisenhower’s Foreign Economic Policy, 1953-1961* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 3.

¹³ George Kennan, “X,” *Foreign Affairs*, July 1, 1947, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1947-07-01/sources-soviet-conduct>.

logical method for securing a relationship with the Middle East was through economic aid. For the United States, its role in the Baghdad Pact would be a long-term process spanning years of debates and reports.

The official American policy was that it would just be an observer in the Baghdad Pact, but unofficially, Eisenhower heavily supported the pact's operating budget (one-sixth), furnished military supplies and Pentagon officers to be used at the members' disposal, and had diplomats attend meetings.¹⁴ According to S. Everett Gleason, "our foreign assistance programs were, in the President's opinion, 'the cheapest insurance in the world.'"¹⁵ According to Leffler, "By linking Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan to a regional alliance system, [Paul] Nitze and his planners were aiming to protect the oil fields of the Persian Gulf and the air bases at Suez and Dhahran with only a limited use of U.S. troops."¹⁶ The Truman administration had initially pursued the regional alliance, and the Eisenhower administration continued these effectively. Though the U.S. role would be limited in the pact, American decisions from 1953-1955, and as far back as 1940, played a key role in its inception.

Iran and Security in the Northern Tier

The Soviet Union's interest in Iran did not begin in the Cold War. Suleyman Erkan states that in Iran, "While Reza Shah had tendencies towards Germany on the eve of World War II, it was certain that he had no idea about the fact that Ribbentrop, German Minister of the Exterior told Molotov, Russian Minister of the Exterior on August 24, 1939, that Russia was free to attack

¹⁴ Ritchie Owendale, *Britain, the United States, and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East, 1945-1962* (New York: Leicester University Press, 1996), 124; and Peter Hahn, *Crisis and Crossfire: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, 2005), 17.

¹⁵ S. Everett Gleason, Memorandum of Discussion at the 267th Meeting of the National Security Council, Camp David, Maryland, November 21, 1955, 33-37, Eisenhower Administration. 1955-1957, "Foreign Aid and Economic Defense Policy, Volume X," <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v10/d9>.

¹⁶ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 485. Paul Nitze was the State Department Director of Policy Planning and primary author of NSC 68.

Iran.”¹⁷ Though they never took Ribbentrop up on this offer, the Soviets still worked to disrupt Western actions in the country. By December 1940, the Iranians had supposedly caught on to Russian aggression. The American Ambassador in the Soviet Union, Laurence Steinhardt, discovered that the Russians believed the Iranians had called up five reservist groups to be ready in case of Soviet invasion.¹⁸

The Soviet pattern of aggression in many areas fed the West’s fear even though Soviet attempts had always been thwarted. Leffler states “American anxieties about Turkey and the entire Middle Eastern region were accentuated by Soviet behavior in Iran.”¹⁹ The Soviet Union initiated a propaganda campaign and threatened the use of force within Iran in 1944 to gain influence in the country. After Iranian elections in March 1944, the Soviets called Prime Minister Said “a hidden fascist” and forced him to resign due to this pressure.²⁰ Suleyman Erkan argues that “such interventions in the governments...in Iran shows that in fact, the Cold War had already begun in 1944, when World War II had not finished yet.”²¹ Prime Minister Mohsen Sadr was elected in 1945 and took a harsh stance against anti-Western groups including the Soviet-backed Tudeh Party. After Sadr banned 48 pro-Soviet newspapers from being published, the Soviets backed separatist movements for Azerbaijan and Mahabad, both regions in Northern Iran which bordered the Soviet Union. This convinced Sadr to resign as the Iranian parliament worried that his stances would cause Iran to divide.²² Churchill, in response to Soviet action, would argue in his infamous “Sinews of Peace” speech that, “I do not believe that Soviet Russia

¹⁷ Suleyman Erkan, “The Invasion of Iran by the Allies during World War II, *Condruil Cosminului* 16, no. 2 (2010): 111.

¹⁸ Telegram from the Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Steinhardt) to the Secretary of State, December 30, 1940, *Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, 1940*, vol. I, United States Department of State, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1940v01/d573>.

¹⁹ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 79.

²⁰ Erkan, “The Invasion of Iran by the Allies during World War II,” 117-118.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 118.

²² *Ibid.*, 119.

desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines.”²³

In this atmosphere, Americans sought to “create a buffer zone between the Soviet Union and the rich oil fields of the Persian Gulf.” World War II established the importance of oil as a critical resource.²⁴ The movement of Soviet troops into Azerbaijan in 1945 proved that the Soviets were focused on dividing Iran. Azerbaijan was ethnically Shiite, but almost one-third of its population spoke Turkish. Pro-Soviet Seyh Khyabani declared the region autonomous, providing the Soviets with direct control over high-yielding oil fields.²⁵ The Soviets further exacerbated the situation when it blocked Iranian national soldiers from traveling to Kazvin to crush Khyabani’s uprising.²⁶ After the United States and Britain asked the Soviets to allow their passage, the Soviets informed Iran that only one battalion of troops could cross, most likely knowing that one battalion would be crushed by Soviet-armed Azerbaijan rebels. Iran opposed Soviet efforts to annex the northern part of its country, and thus, was an asset to the Western cause.²⁷

During the war, many Iranians moved to the Iranian capital of Tehran out of the fear that the Soviets would “both seize on and nationalize their property after the war.”²⁸ This belief was not unfounded. During the 1943 Tehran Conference of President Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin, the Soviet leader arrived the earliest, because he “wanted to show

²³ Winston Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace,” March 5, 1946, in *Churchill, the Power of Words: His Remarkable Life Recounted Through his Writings and Speeches*, by Martin Gilbert, ed., (Boston, MA: Da Capo Press, 2012), 372-3.

²⁴ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 79.

²⁵ Erkan, “The Invasion of Iran by the Allies during World War II,” 121-22.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 113.

that he thought of himself as the host.”²⁹ While a bystander of the conference, Iran was most focused on its own territorial integrity and what economic aid could be provided.³⁰

After World War II ended, Arthur Tandy, the First Secretary of the British Embassy in Washington, D.C., wrote to Loy Henderson, the American Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, that the allies, specifically the British and Americans, were determined to protect the independence of the Middle East. The promises made to the nations in the region, “shall be assured and respected...each Government affirms its intention of doing nothing to supplant the interests or responsibilities of the other in the Middle East having full regard to political status of the countries in question.”³¹ Tandy went on to state in 1945, almost ten years before the establishment of the Baghdad Pact and a month after the official end of World War II, that the United Nations would “examine any proposals submitted...on the subject of collective security.”³² This statement articulated the early interest in creating an organization that the Baghdad Pact would ultimately become.

At the end of World War II, Stalin had refused to uphold his agreement made at the 1943 Tehran Conference, which reaffirmed Atlantic Charter assertions of state-sovereignty.³³ At the end of the war, Iran requested that Allied occupation end within six months. Tehran cited the 1942 Tripartite Agreement as the basis for this, and, reluctantly, the United States and Great

²⁹ Ibid., 115.

³⁰ Ibid., 116.

³¹ The First Secretary of the British Embassy (Tandy) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson), December 13, 1945. *Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa* vol. VIII, United States Department of State, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v08/d1153>.

³² Ibid.

³³ The Tehran Conference, November 28-December 1, 1943, *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy*, Yale Law School: Lillian Goldman Law Library, <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/tehran.asp>. The Atlantic Charter was signed on August 14, 1941 by President Franklin Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill outlining their goals for the post-war world.

Britain completed their withdrawals by March 2, 1946.³⁴ Instead of withdrawing, “the Soviets tightened their hold on northern Iran,” thus ignoring the previous treaty agreements.³⁵ With Soviet funding, the “‘Democratic Party’ of Azerbaijan was established and then issued a call for the province’s autonomy.”³⁶ Stalin then encouraged separatist movements in the northern provinces of Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. The Russians, further, prevented the Iranian military from crushing these uprisings.³⁷

On March 5, 1946, the issue turned to crisis. American Vice-consul Robert Rossow informed Washington that the Russians were moving 450 trucks with supplies, 20 tanks, and 100 truck convoys of troops, along with “two regiments of cavalry with two attached batteries of artillery, equipped for full field operations,” from the Soviet border towards Tehran.³⁸ The American government strongly encouraged Iran to renew its complaint in the United Nations.³⁹ After doing so, Soviet Representative to the United Nations Andrei Gromyko asked that the issue be postponed from March to April 10, due to ongoing negotiations. Secretary of State James Byrnes rejected Gromyko’s request, causing Gromyko to walk out of the United Nations meeting in protest.⁴⁰

Gary Hess states, “as the United States was preparing for the Security Council showdown, the Iranian government again hesitated.” On March 22, Ahmad Qavam, Prime Minister of Iran, and Ambassador Ivan Sadchikov had come to a potential agreement. The

³⁴ Gary Hess, “The Iranian Crisis of 1945-46 and the Cold War,” *Political Science Quarterly* 89, no. 1 (March 1974): 124-5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 125.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 79.

³⁸ The Vice Consul at Tabris (Rossow) to the Secretary of State, March 5, 1946, *FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, The Near East and Africa, 1946*, vol. VII, <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=goto&id=FRUS.FRUS1946v07&isize=M&submit=Go+to+page&page=340,340-42>.

³⁹ Hess, “Iranian Crisis,” 136.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 138.

Soviets would withdraw troops in exchange for oil concessions in northern Iran. The Soviets would also drop their petitions for air transportation rights and a port on the Caspian Sea. American concerns were quieted, and Murray accepted this agreement due to Qavam's offer of similar oil concessions in Baluchistan to the United States.⁴¹

The Soviets had placed a disclaimer of sorts into the agreement with Iran. Troops would be withdrawing within six weeks "if nothing happens," which was very open to interpretation.⁴² Thus, the agreement had not been reached as the Soviets had claimed, but the Soviets had publicly announced their withdrawal, producing the need for Soviets to follow through.⁴³ Truman "made it clear today that Secretary of State James F. Byrnes had his full confidence and support in pressing for immediate consideration of the Iran dispute in the United Nations Security Council."⁴⁴ Though Truman was supportive of a resolution, months of disputes continued.

The Security Council voted on March 29, without Gromyko present, that Iran and the Soviet Union had to report on their negotiations by April 3.⁴⁵ On the same day, Qavam and Sadchikov agreed unconditionally to withdraw troops by May 6, create a joint Iranian-Soviet oil company pending the Majlis' (legislature) approval, and agree that the unrest in Azerbaijan was an internal affair over which Tehran had full authority.⁴⁶ This strong UN stance paid "important domestic political benefits... editorials consistently praised the American position as vindicating

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 139.

⁴⁴ Felix Belair, Jr., "Truman Supports Byrnes; Says Policy on UNO is His," *New York Times*, March 29, 1946, 1.

⁴⁵ "UNO Asks Soviet, Iran Reply by April 3 on Any Secret Accord on Troop Exit; Council is Adjourned until That Day," *New York Times*, March 30, 1946, 1.

⁴⁶ The Ambassador in Iran (Murray) to the Secretary of State, April 4, 1946, *FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, The Near East and Africa, 1946*, vol. VII, accessed November 27, 2017, <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=turn&entity=FRUS.FRUS1946v07.p0417&id=FRUS.FRUS1946v07&isize=M>, 407.

the United Nations.”⁴⁷ By April 11, however, this “American victory” had the potential to collapse, as Qavam also asked that the issue of Iran be removed from the Security Council agenda.⁴⁸ The United States maintained its stance on the issue, still insisting on leaving the issue on the table to be discussed, and was eventually secured, again, with Gromyko absent.⁴⁹

By May 6, most of the Soviet troops had been withdrawn with the exception of some forces in frontier towns. After months of negotiations and meetings in the United Nations, George V. Allen, the newly appointed U.S. Ambassador to Iran, asked that the issue be dropped, since the Soviet Union had mainly fulfilled its promises, thus ending the Iranian Crisis in May 1946.⁵⁰

While the “public phase of the Iranian crisis ended,” Hess explains that two developments occurred shortly after May 1946 that have drawn the legacy of the crisis into question.⁵¹ First, the Iranian government took over the Azerbaijan region, which left American policymakers concerned that Soviet influence was still being permitted to grow in the nation as a whole.⁵² However, with Azerbaijan under control, regional oil was considered safe. In July 1947, the Majlis voted against an agreement with the Soviet Union to provide oil concessions.⁵³ Prime Minister Muhammad Mossadegh would question this decision because the United States had a hand in lobbying against Soviet concessions.⁵⁴ He “insisted that Iran had the inalienable right to

⁴⁷ Hess, “Iranian Crisis,” 141.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 142.

⁵⁰ The Ambassador in Iran (Allen) to the Secretary of State, May 25, 1946, *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, vol. VII, <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=turn&entity=FRUS.FRUS1946v07.p0496&id=FRUS.FRUS1946v07&isize=M>, 484-486.

⁵¹ Hess, “Iranian Crisis,” 143.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Gene Currivan, “U.S. Bids Iran Resist Threats as Debate on Soviet Oil Nears,” *New York Times*, September 12, 1947, 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

have full control over the production, sale, and export of its own oil resources.”⁵⁵ Mossadegh worked over the next several years to convince the Majlis to nationalize the oil industry and thus, on April 26, 1951, the Majlis canceled the existing contracts held by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, which would further weaken British power in the world.⁵⁶

On May 10, 1951, Secretary of State Dean Acheson received word that Mossadegh’s government was beginning to flirt with Soviet ideas. Mossadegh had begun listening to the Soviet-backed Tudeh Party’s desire to remove the American military presence and aid, reduce the size of the Iranian army, and legalize the Tudeh Party.⁵⁷ The Americans feared that if these situations came to fruition, the Iranian army would not be able to suppress Tudeh uprisings and a coup d’état against Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi would be plausible. The National Security Council issued a policy statement on June 27, 1951, regarding the importance of Iran “because of its key strategic position, its petroleum resources, its vulnerability to intervention or armed attack by the USSR, and its vulnerability to political subversion, Iran must be regarded as a continuing objective of Soviet expansion.”⁵⁸

In the last months of the Truman administration, NSC 136/1 encouraged the United States to protect the Shah’s government in Iran against a coup. Truman’s Secretary of State Dean Acheson stated that Mossadegh was “not a liberal, not a reformer. He was a rich, old, Middle Eastern landowner inspired by nationalist impulses and determined to kick the British out of Iran.”⁵⁹ Eisenhower shared many of these views, and on August 14, 1953, the United States

⁵⁵ Ervand Abrahamian, *History of Modern Iran* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 114.

⁵⁶ Editorial Note, no. 15, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, vol. X, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v10/d15>.

⁵⁷ The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iran, May 10, 1951, *FRUS, 1952-1954 Iran, 1951-1954*, vol. X, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v10/d20>.

⁵⁸ Statement of Policy Proposed by the National Security Council, June 27, 1951, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, vol. X, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v10/d32>.

⁵⁹ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 478.

supported the overthrow of the Mossadegh government and decided to give \$45 million to Iran in emergency aid followed by \$23 million from the United States Technical Assistance Program.

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In March 1954, Iranian security was still at the forefront of American policies. In a report prepared by the State Department's Foreign Operations Administration, it advised the American military to bolster Iran's military capabilities so that it could "(1) maintain internal security, (2) provide some resistance to external aggression, (3) enhance the prestige of the monarchy, and (4) raise the morale of the Iranian Government" in order to resist the Soviet threat.⁶¹ Missile Defense Agency Programs in Iran were supported by fifteen Army Brigades, eight Navy Combat Vessels, three Maritime Aircraft, and five squadrons from the Air Force.⁶² Other State Department officials in 1954 advocated for a broader scope of American economic aid. The Chiefs of American Diplomatic Missions and representatives from the Department of Defense and State Department also believed that \$30 million appropriated by Congress should be given as military aid to Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel, and additional aid should be given to Egypt, Pakistan, and Iran.⁶³ Clearly Iran was not the only country that the United States deemed important in the region

Iraq, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan

According to Christopher O'Sullivan, as early as 1945, "Americans...began to see Iraq as an increasingly important country in U.S. conceptions of establishing a new order in the Middle

⁶⁰ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 484, and Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 85.

⁶¹ Report Prepared by the Foreign Operations Administration, March 11, 1954, 703, Eisenhower Administration. 1952-1954, "General: Economic and Political Matters, Volume I," <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v01p1/d196>.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ "The Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson), September 8, 1953, FRUS, 1952-4, Vol. IX, pp. 416-17, <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS-idx?type=goto&id=FRUS.FRUS195254v09p1&isize=M&submit=Go+to+page&page=416>.

East.”⁶⁴ As if foreshadowing, “Iraq had, in the eyes of American officials, demonstrated that it hoped to play an enhanced role in the region after the war.”⁶⁵ Arriving at the Baghdad Pact would prove a tough road. In 1944, the Americans faced criticism from Iraq for their support of the Zionism in Palestine, leaving many Iraqis disappointed in their new-found ally.⁶⁶ In the end, both the United States and Great Britain recognized that pan-Arab unity was “one of the cornerstones of the Iraqi nationalist movement, but was always viewed as unattainable.”⁶⁷ While complete pan-Arab unity has never been attainable, the features of it on a small-scale would be rooted in World War II and would come to fruition for the first time in the Baghdad Pact.

Similarly, to Iran, Turkey saw the Soviets as a threat to its territorial integrity. Mehran Kamrava states, “Turkey, while neutral, was forced to keep a standing army [during World War II] some five hundred thousand strong.”⁶⁸ A further concern of the Turks during World War II were Soviet intentions for the region. The German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 relieved some anxiety, but mistrust was still present.⁶⁹ In October 1941, almost fifteen years before the Baghdad Pact was signed, Wallace Murray, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Iran, stated, “The United States is regarded in Turkey and elsewhere in the Near East as not only being pre-eminent for technical...efficiency but also for having no imperialistic aims in that area. The modern Turkish Government is reluctant to invite any foreign military instructors, but...prefers to turn to us.”⁷⁰ The fear, though, was Soviet intrigue.

⁶⁴ Christopher O’Sullivan and Manaf Damluji, “The Origins of American Power in Iraq, 1941-1945,” *Peace & Change* 34, no. 3 (July 2009): 239.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 250.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 242.

⁶⁸ Mehran Kamrava, *The Modern Middle East: A Political History since the First World War* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), 260.

⁶⁹ Ayşegül Avcı, “Winning the War of Perception: American Attempts to Counter Germany’s Military Influence in Turkey during World War II,” *Turkish Studies* 17, no. 1 (March 2016): 209.

⁷⁰ “Wallace Murray to the Department of State,” October 13, 1941, National Archives and Records Administration [hereafter NARA], no. 867.20/123, roll 25, M 1224, Record Group 59.

Joseph Stalin was not innocent in his dealings with Turkey. He sought to renounce the 1925 Treaty of Friendship and to strip Turkey of its rights to open and close the Dardanelle Straits during a war, a reason for which Iran was invaded.⁷¹ The Montreux Convention protected these rights, but the Russians sought a revision.⁷² Stalin wanted a system similar to the Suez Canal which would disallow Turkey the right to permit or reject Russian ships from using the Straits. This directly questioned Turkish sovereignty; a right for which the future Baghdad Pact sought to protect.⁷³ Stalin also insisted on the return of the Kars and Ardahan provinces, which had been ceded to the Ottoman Empire in 1918 under the Treaty of Brest Litovsk during World War I.⁷⁴

While the Turks had been a long-standing ally with the West, the newest ally in the region was formed in 1947. The new nation of Pakistan split from India and included 175,000 square miles in territory with 88 million citizens. Pakistan was a culturally Arab ally outside of the traditional boundaries of the Middle East.⁷⁵ By 1942, the first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru's attitude toward communism changed because the Indian communist Party withdrew its support of the Indian nationalist movement after Germany attacked the Soviet Union.⁷⁶ This nationalist movement included first, Indians who were seeking complete independence from Great Britain as a colony, and second, Muslims who were determined to establish their own nation apart from Hindu India. As leader of both Indian Hindus and Muslims, Nehru's growing sentiment against the Soviet Union would also flow into what would become

⁷¹ Lenore G. Martin, "Turkey and the US," in *Handbook of US-Middle East Relations: Formative Factors and Regional Perspectives*, ed. Robert E. Looney (New York: Routledge, 2009), 297.

⁷² Özden, "The Diplomatic Maneuvers of Turkey in World War II," 106.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁷⁴ Martin, "Turkey and the US," 297.

⁷⁵ Anthony Read and David Fisher, *The Proudest Day: India's Long Road to Independence* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998), 482.

⁷⁶ Praveen K. Chaudhry and Marta Vanduzer-Snow, eds., *The United States and India: A History Through the Archives: The Formative Years* (New Delhi, India: Observer Research Foundation, 2008), 246.

future Pakistan. By 1947, a sovereign Pakistan became a reality, separating itself from India after Indian independence from Britain came. On October 28, 1948, Churchill stated, “Our Imperial mission in India is at an end: we must recognize that.”⁷⁷

Negotiations for Collective Security

By the 1950s, a collective security agreement in the Middle East was becoming more plausible, and Eisenhower’s Secretary of State John Foster Dulles recognized the importance of Turkey and Pakistan. According to Behçet Kemal Yesilbursa, by 1953, “Dulles realized that Turkey and Pakistan presented the best chance for a defence pact in the Middle East.”⁷⁸ He continues on to say that “on 24 December Dulles instructed the American Ambassador in Ankara to tell the Turkish government of the proposed military aid for Pakistan, and to suggest that the Turkish government should take the lead in approaching the Pakistani government to start military talks concerning a mutual defence arrangement.”⁷⁹ Dulles’ view on Turkey could have been influenced by the Turkish position that they were “not as belonging to the Middle East but as a Western country adjacent to it, with an important interest there in connection with the security of her own southern frontier.”⁸⁰ The American government sought a quick arrangement in which Turkey and Pakistan, and hopefully later, Iran and Iraq could join together to prevent the spread of communism.⁸¹

In a March 11, 1954 report, Eisenhower’s National Security Council saw oil and military strength as the greatest purposes in encouraging a pact among Middle Eastern nations. To secure

⁷⁷ Winston Churchill, “The Underlying Principles of Justice and Freedom,” October 28, 1948, in *Churchill, the Power of Words: His Remarkable Life Recounted Through his Writings and Speeches*, by Martin Gilbert, ed., (Boston, MA: Da Capo Press, 2012), 390.

⁷⁸Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 30.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 61

⁸¹ Ibid., 30, 80.

this, it recommended providing financial aid to Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan.⁸² A report prepared by the Foreign Operations Administration recommended that “the U.S. should build on the military strength of Turkey, Pakistan, and—to the extent possible—of Iran and Iraq; at the same time assisting in achieving stability in the region by political actions and by limited military, economic, and technical assistance to other countries.”⁸³ The overarching purpose of signing bilateral agreements was “to increase the military strength of the region and to provide a nucleus of military power which may be expanded later into a regional defense arrangement whose strongest members would be Turkey and Pakistan.”⁸⁴

According to David L. Snead, “Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles believed that one of the best ways to contain communism and enhance American security was through a series of defensive alliances following the basic structure of NATO.”⁸⁵ In this vein, on April 2, 1954, Turkey and Pakistan signed an “Agreement of Friendly Cooperation” which was the first of the individual collective security agreements which would be the foundation of the Baghdad Pact. It provided that both nations would consult one another on international matters and cooperate with each other. It also called for an “exchange of information for the purpose of deriving benefit jointly from technical experience and progress,” producing arms and ammunition if needed, and following Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations in the case of an outside attack. While the provisions included were seemingly in good will, the agreement did not include an obligation for mutual assistance, only consultation.⁸⁶

⁸² Report Prepared by the Foreign Operations Administration, March 11, 1954, 702.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ David L. Snead, “Eisenhower’s National Security Policies,” in Chester J. Pach, ed., *A Companion to Dwight D. Eisenhower* (West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017), 312.

⁸⁶ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 40-1.

On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Affairs presented data on the importance of the undiversified economies of Iraq and Pakistan. In Iraq, 80% of its income was derived from petroleum and 87% of Pakistan's income derived from cotton and jute.⁸⁷ Nigel John Ashton provides statistics on regional oil production which had the potential to greatly impact the developed world if production were to become inaccessible. In 1938, 19% of Western Europe's oil came from the Persian Gulf region. By 1955, 90% of the oil produced for Western Europe was found there.⁸⁸ The United States was self-sufficient on oil in the 1950s, so oil was not as great an issue for Americans as it was for Great Britain.⁸⁹

At this point, the State and Defense Departments had already discussed aid to Pakistan and a pact between Turkey and Pakistan.⁹⁰ The U.S. government had secured funds for both Pakistan and Iraq totaling \$20 million and \$10 million respectively while plans for fiscal year 1955 included an additional \$5 million to be earmarked for "special economic aid to help counteract inflationary pressure from higher defense expenditures."⁹¹ According to the Development and Resources Corporation Records, in a Report on a Mission to Pakistan, parts of Pakistan were in dire need of economic assistance.⁹² Since India and Pakistan divided in 1947, India had been diverting water to other regions of India which significantly reduced the amount of water making it into Pakistani territory.⁹³ After the division, the largest tributaries of irrigation

⁸⁷ Paper Prepared in the Bureau of Economic Affairs, May 17, 1954, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, General: Economic and Political Matters, Volume 1, Eisenhower Administration, 1952-1954. "General: Economic and Political Matters, Volume I," <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v01p1/d22>.

⁸⁸ Nigel John Ashton, "The Hijacking of a Pact: The Formation of the Baghdad Pact and Anglo-American Tensions in the Middle East, 1955-1958," *Review of International Studies* 19, no. 2 (April 1993): 131; and Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 124.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Report Prepared by the Foreign Operations Administration, March 11, 1954, 702.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² The Development and Resources Corporation was a company founded by David Lilienthal, director of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

⁹³ "Report on Mission to Pakistan, April 7-December 28, 1954," Development and Resources Corporation Records (MC014), Box 323, Folder 1, 1, Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library.

water were left in India and Kashmir.⁹⁴ The belief by the end of 1954 was that Western Pakistan was “under a very real danger of starvation.”⁹⁵ The Development and Resources Corporation would become pivotal in the following years as a way to promote economic development in the Middle East to advance the cause of the United States, even though it was from the private sector. This will be covered extensively in Chapter 2.

Like Pakistan, Iraq needed military aid which was to be used as “bait to get Iraq into the Turco-Pakistani Agreement.”⁹⁶ The result was positive as far as the United States was concerned. Iraq signed a military agreement with the United States on April 21, 1954 and promised it would only use the funds for internal self-defense, thus protecting Israel.⁹⁷ According to Gary Boutz and Kenneth Williams, “The United States agreed to provide ‘equipment, materials or services’ and advisory personnel to Iraq in exchange for ... ‘the defensive strength of the free world’ and, if the United States so needed, ‘raw and semi-unprocessed materials.’”⁹⁸

Carl Hermann Voss argued in *The Palestine Problem Today: Israel and its Neighbors*, that “it would be a serious blow to the USSR if the Arabs were to abandon their anti-Israel campaign and agree to make peace. For this would substantially advance what the Soviet Union fears most—a Middle East defense organization encompassing all the states of the region.”⁹⁹ A resolution to the Arab-Israeli problem plagued American policymakers in an attempt to secure the Middle East. In 1954, finding an end to the Arab-Israeli hostilities was futile. That July, the National Security Council determined that a collective security agreement that included the

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 11.

⁹⁶ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 49.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Gary M. Boutz and Kenneth H. Williams, *U.S. Relations with Iraq: From the Mandate to Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 2015), 25.

⁹⁹ Carl Hermann Voss, *The Palestine Problem Today: Israel and its Neighbors* (Boston, MA: The Beacon Press, 1953), 54.

Northern Tier could not come to fruition without a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It further emphasized the importance of promoting peace between Israel and the Arab states.¹⁰⁰ As a result, the United States and Great Britain began to work on Project Alpha to reduce Arab-Israeli tensions in the hope that regional stability would, in turn, reduce the risk of Soviet interference and Arab nations could focus on collective security.¹⁰¹

The British concern was realistic as they recovered from World War II because they needed oil and cotton revenues as they rebuilt.¹⁰² Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, called for “a regional defence pact” to promote mutual assistance and secure British aims in the region.¹⁰³ The British estimated that Arab states would be ineffective in resistance against communism without Western support. Great Britain therefore perceived a regional defence pact as a way to share the burden of her defence commitments in the Middle East with her allies, primarily the United States. Obtaining United States support for the British position in the Middle East was the main goal of British policy after the Second World War.”¹⁰⁴ Churchill, in a speech on January 20, 1940, shared his views of the dangers of communism as an ideology, which he would hold until his death in 1965. He argued that, “everyone can see how Communism rots the soul of a nation; how it makes it ajeet and hungry in peace, and proves it base and abominable in war.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ ‘Statement of policy by the National Security Council, NSC-5428, 23 July 1954,’ United States Objectives and Policies with Respect to the Near East, Foreign Relations of the United States 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East, vol. IX, Part I, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v09p1/d219>. FRUS, 1952-4, Vol. IX, pp. 525-36.

¹⁰¹ Ashton, “The Hijacking of a Pact,” 122.

¹⁰² Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 2.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁰⁵ Winston Churchill, “The Storm will not Pass. It will Rage and it will Roar,” January 20, 1940, in *Churchill, the Power of Words*, 235.

Without the backbone of Western support, it was believed that this “vacuum” of power ran the risk of a chain reaction. If one nation were to fall, others would follow suit. In a news conference on April 7, 1954, Eisenhower stated,

Finally, you have broader considerations that might follow what you would call the “falling domino” principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences.¹⁰⁶

The Baghdad Pact was essential to prevent this “domino effect” from happening. If the member nations stood together in solidarity, the risk of falling would be reduced.

Foundations of the Baghdad Pact

To help secure itself and make a stand against the spread of communism, Iraq signed a bilateral agreement with Turkey in February 1954. State Department officials strongly supported the Turco-Iraqi pact but debated whether or not to join as a founding signatory or wait. The United States and Great Britain were concerned that taking any action could be interpreted as if the pact was formulated outside of the Middle East, and then forced upon it. Yet, American policy sought to make the Middle East aware of the outside Soviet threat to it.¹⁰⁷

In January 1955, both Turkey and Iraq submitted drafts to each other for a collective security agreement. Article 1 of the Turkish draft insisted that article 1 of the United Nations Charter be followed in that parties would “cooperate for the security and defence,” and form “special agreements with each other” to ensure this cooperation took place.¹⁰⁸ The Iraqi draft only allowed for military cooperation for defense plans in Article 1. The British required an

¹⁰⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, “President Eisenhower’s News Conference, April 7, 1954, *Public Papers of the Presidents, 1954*, 382.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁰⁸ “The Baghdad Pact,” February 24, 1955, *Inside the Cold War*, <http://insidethecoldwar.org/sites/default/files/documents/Central%20and%20Near%20East%20Treaty%20Organization%20CENTO%20Baghdad%20Pact%20February%2024%2C%201955.pdf>.

arrangement which was satisfactory to replace the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, for which the stipulations provided in the Iraqi draft were insufficient.¹⁰⁹ The Turkish draft contained the larger “umbrella” of defense the British sought, so it was selected. The Turkish Grand National Assembly voted unanimously on February 26, 1955, to ratify the pact, while the Iraqi Chamber of Deputies and Senate overwhelmingly supported it.¹¹⁰

The United Nations Charter was consulted in the provisions of the Baghdad Pact as drafts were written, specifically Article 51. Yesilbursa states,

The stated aim of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation between Iraq and Turkey was the further improvement of good relations between the two countries in order to contribute to world peace and security, particularly in the Middle East. Specifically, the parties pledged themselves to ‘cooperate for their security and defence consistent with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter’ (Article 1). In order to ensure the realization and effective application of the cooperation provided for in Article 1, the parties would determine the measures to be taken as soon as the pact entered into force (Article 2). A permanent council at the ministerial level was to be set up to implement the pact when at least four powers had become parties to it (Article 6). The pact was open for accession to any member of the Arab League or any other state actively concerned with security and peace in the Middle East. Acceding states could conclude special agreements, in accordance with Article 1, with other states parties to the pact (Article 5).¹¹¹

This agreement was a goodwill gesture to show the willingness for cooperation between Turkey and Iraq, but it did allow both nations to begin coordinating defense plans with Great Britain, as relations had improved by 1955. The pact also allowed for the future establishment of a ministerial council to help implement the member’s plans.¹¹² Geographically, according to the State Department, Pakistan would benefit greatly from becoming a member of the pact, though the United States was not ready to purchase its admission into the pact, as it had worked to do in

¹⁰⁹ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 82.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² “The Baghdad Pact,” February 24, 1955.

other Arab nations through economic support. Pakistan was “the only non-Arab country to immediately consider joining the Turco-Iraqi pact.”¹¹³

Pakistan joined the Baghdad Pact in February 1955, one year after they had signed a bilateral agreement with Turkey. According to Ayub Khan, Pakistan joined the Baghdad Pact because of the Middle East’s geographic vulnerabilities. Natural resources, specifically cotton, would be protected by the Western powers, but also fought for by the Soviets. Ayub Khan believed that if a conflict broke out, it would quickly spread to Pakistan. Because of this, Pakistan was very concerned with the defense of the Middle East. It also sought a collective understanding and protection against India.¹¹⁴ Turkey and Iraq worked diligently to incorporate Pakistan into the pact, “though they had nothing to offer to Pakistan apart from a warm welcome.” The State Department hoped that Pakistani accession to the pact, with the potential of Iran’s adherence as well, would work to complete the northern tier concept as early as September 1955 or early 1956.¹¹⁵

At first, the Shah in Iran was hesitant to become a member of the Baghdad Pact as he feared that his forces would not be equal to the other participants in the pact. An equal concern was over Soviet reactions as Iran shared its northern border with the Soviet Union.¹¹⁶ President Eisenhower worked to assure “the Shah that the United States was committed to Iran’s security and saw the Zagros Mountains in Iran as the ‘first line of defense in the Middle East’ against Soviet aggression.”¹¹⁷ The United States had concerns as well, but instead, its concerns revolved around Iran’s adherence to the Baghdad Pact. State Department officials believed that “Iran was

¹¹³ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 89, 106, and 103.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 105 and 109-110.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 110.

¹¹⁷ Abbas Milani, *The Shah* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 200.

the only country in the Middle East besides Turkey and Afghanistan that had a common frontier with the Soviet Union...the northern tier concept could not materialize until Iran became a participant...the most suitable defence line in the Middle East lay in Iran... [and] the availability of Iranian oil...was very important.”¹¹⁸ Iran would officially join in October 1955, and once Iran and Pakistan joined the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation, the agreement would become known as the Baghdad Pact.¹¹⁹

Nearly fifteen years prior to the acceptance of the Baghdad Pact, the United States and Great Britain were working to promote stability in the region through collective security agreements. The events that unfolded during World War II and shortly after had a direct impact on who would become the Baghdad Pact signatories. The American government favored the provision of economic support in exchange for positive relations and an agreement to combat communism should the need arise. The Soviet Union had established a pattern of aggression starting in World War II. With the growth of oil production and Europe’s reliance on it, a very real fear existed that if the Middle East could not band together to protect themselves, the free world was at risk.

¹¹⁸ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 113.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 89.

Chapter 2

Development of the Pact: 1956-1957

After the Baghdad Pact was signed in 1955, the United States continued its involvement, though not in a formal sense. While U.S. officials debated full membership in the pact, the Eisenhower administration and private sector organizations continued to offer financial support for member nations throughout 1956-1957. The 1956 Suez Crisis, though detrimental to Britain, would provide the Baghdad Pact members the chance to prove their viability together. The fear of communist expansion was still a real concern as it seemed that Egypt's President Nasser still was courting the Soviets, and oil was still an at-risk commodity in the region. In all, American foreign policy continued to be pivotal in the region in 1956-1957, especially through economic development and financial aid.

Eisenhower faced many pressures outside of the Middle East in 1956 and 1957. To place his decisions in context, he faced reelection in 1956. In 1957, fears of the supposed "missile gap" increased when the Soviet Union successfully launched "Sputnik," the first man-made satellite, into space. Furthering tensions at home, the economy had taken a turn downward, and the Little Rock Crisis occurred over desegregation, and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 was contentious. David Lilienthal mentioned in his journal the woes of Little Rock and "Sputnik" by explaining "the Eisenhower Administration is in a tizzy, showing little sign of the boldness of concept which could turn the tide, or at least, keep this from becoming a period of utter gloom and discouragement."¹ Lilienthal was not the only critic of Eisenhower and his policies, however.

¹ David Lilienthal, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal: The Road to Change, 1955-1959*, vol. 4 (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 226.

Skepticism and Opposition

When the Baghdad Pact was signed, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser began a propaganda campaign against Iraq using the “Voice of the Arabs” radio. He encouraged the Arab people to directly oppose the Baghdad Pact and implore their governments to do the same. He challenged Iraqis to riot against the Turco-Iraqi pact and call for Nuri Said’s removal.² Despite his efforts, Nasser was unable to convince the Arab League to condemn Iraq or create opposition within the Iraqi government against Nuri Said. Nasser’s fear of isolation was not against the communist threat, instead, it was the fear that “Egypt would be left to face Israel alone.”³

Nasser’s opposition to a collective security agreement did not begin in 1956. In 1951, Egypt denied the transport of British supplies on rail lines, held up British goods en route to British bases, and refused to work for British supervisors.⁴ Nasser felt that the pact strengthened Nuri Said of Iraq, who he viewed as a rival, and thus was working to isolate Egypt and divide the Arab League which Egypt dominated. Yesilbursa argues that “it seems that the real reason behind Nasser’s opposition was his drive for leadership of the Arab world and domination of the Arab League to serve Egypt’s interests.”⁵

Of course, the Soviet Union was opposed to the Baghdad Pact. It saw the pact as blatantly anti-communist. The Soviets encouraged Egypt to use its power in the Arab League to prevent other Arab states like Iran from joining. As the Soviets worked to befriend Nasser further, the Soviets changed from an apathetic attitude toward Israel to the full support of Arab neighbors in their hostility toward Israel.⁶

² Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 91.

³ *Ibid.*, 91, 92.

⁴ Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*, 476-77.

⁵ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 91.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

The Washington Post was also skeptical of the Baghdad Pact from its inception. It argued, “All that we [the United States] have done, however, is to sit in on meetings as observers and supply arms to the signatories, particularly Pakistan.”⁷ The *Post* was particularly upset that supplying arms to Pakistan upset India and drove Egypt into the arms of the Soviets. The problems with Israel, it argued, should have been resolved first. It stated, “The British and the Americans ought to develop without delay a common policy on Israel’s borders...and then proceed to pledge a security treaty in conformity with the tripartite declaration of 1950. After that we can think about the Baghdad Pact.”⁸

According to Hanson Baldwin, there was “considerable, though usually inarticulate opposition to the Baghdad Pact in Iraq, the only Arab member. Pakistan, divided geographically and with major political and economic problems is in none too stable a condition.”⁹ In a telephone call on December 19, 1956, Eisenhower stated, “the Pakistan newspapers have one slogan—fight India.”¹⁰ This shows that Pakistan had its own agenda outside of the pact. In a letter, Zahiruddin Ahmed, who would become Alternate Governor for Pakistan in the International Monetary Fund, in May 1956, explained that U.S. foreign aid strengthened the effort of the Pakistani people in their first nine years of existence as a nation.¹¹

Eisenhower’s oil policies also created opposition. In order to guarantee the flow of oil into Western Europe, Eisenhower sent Herbert Hoover, Jr. to Iran as his personal representative to work with British Petroleum and the Tehran government to create an international oil

⁷ “Baghdad Pact,” *The Washington Post and Times Herald*, January 16, 1956, 8.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Hanson W. Baldwin, “Role in Baghdad Pact: An Opinion that U.S. Decision to Join Military Panel is Cautious Compromise,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1957, 4.

¹⁰ Telephone Call from the President, December 19, 1956, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 16, Folder 7, Telephone Conversations Series, White House, White House Telephone Conversations, Sept 4, 1956-Dec 31, 1956 (1).

¹¹ Letter from Zahiruddin Ahmed to Senator Smith, May 12, 1956, H. Alexander Smith Papers (MC120), Box 399, Folder 15, Pakistan, 1957, Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library.

consortium. Both groups agreed that they would enter into an agreement if it protected American interests against communism in the region and if they could be granted anti-trust immunity.¹² This anti-trust immunity created dissension among oil companies who were also involved in other countries.¹³ Burton Kaufman argues that this consortium “undercut much of the Justice Department’s case against the majors of the Mideast.”¹⁴

The Suez Crisis

On January 11, 1956, Eisenhower and Dulles encouraged Robert Anderson, the future envoy to the United Arab Republic, to exploit the ongoing Egyptian suspicions about the Baghdad Pact. Nasser was focused on maintaining his power in the Arab League but the West was focused on providing concessions in exchange for reduced pressure on other nations in the region to join. The Anderson Mission also worked to convince the Israelis to reduce their use of force toward their unfriendly neighbors.¹⁵ Problems in the region did not begin in 1956, however. According to Steven Freiberger, Truman and Churchill, instead of aligning the Arab states with the West, “bequeathed a growing anti-Western and neutralist movement which invited Soviet penetration.”¹⁶ The British had a treaty with Egypt which expired in 1956, though Egypt was very dissatisfied with the British prior to that.¹⁷ Nasser “claimed as Egypt’s mission the riddance of Western imperialism from the Middle East.”¹⁸ The Eisenhower Administration

¹² Burton I. Kaufman, *Trade and Aid: Eisenhower’s Foreign Economic Policy, 1953-1961* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 85.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ David A. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956: The President’s Year of Crisis, Suez and the Brink of War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 57.

¹⁶ Steven Z. Freiberger, *Dawn over Suez: The Rise of American Power in the Middle East, 1953-1957* (Chicago: I.R. Dee, 1992), 32-3.

¹⁷ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 3.

¹⁸ Peter Hahn, “National Security Concerns in US Policy Toward Egypt, 1949-1956,” in David W. Lesch and Mark L. Haas, eds, *The Middle East and the United States: History, Politics, and Ideologies* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2016), 84.

had concluded in March 1956 that Nasser “had emerged as a threat to their national security interests in the Middle East.”¹⁹ The Americans decided to partner with the British Omega policy, which was designed to “undercut Nasser’s prestige among Arab peoples and possibly to remove him from power.”²⁰ John Foster Dulles stated that “Omega would ‘let Colonel Nasser realize...that he cannot cooperate as he is doing with the Soviet Union and at the same time enjoy most-favored-nation treatment from the United States.’”²¹

In what Eisenhower called “‘a keg of dynamite,’” Nasser would act against the West through the Suez Canal.²² Michael A. Guhin states that “while denouncing British and American policies, the Baghdad Pact and ‘imperialism’ generally, on July 26, 1956, Nasser announced the nationalization and occupation of the properties of the Suez Canal Company.” He enacted martial law and disallowed foreign workers to abandon their positions.²³ The British were convinced that allowing Nasser to succeed in the Suez Crisis would cause a snowball effect of uprisings in other nations in the Middle East.²⁴ According to Burton Kaufman, the Suez Crisis began due to a drop in oil shipments from the Middle East to Europe after the Arab-Israel war in 1956. Nasser had cut the Iraqi pipeline to the eastern Mediterranean and closed the Suez Canal. Nasser scuttled ships filled with cement to block the canal entrance as well.²⁵ This issue became a crisis when the oil companies in Europe believed they were “faced with imminent disaster during the winter and spring of 1956-57.”²⁶ British Prime Minister Anthony Eden stated that

¹⁹ Ibid., 85.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Piers Brendon, *Ike: His Life & Times* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), 325.

²³ Michael A. Guhin, *John Foster Dulles: A Statesman and His Times* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 277.

²⁴ Ibid., 287.

²⁵ Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 490.

²⁶ Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 87.

Nasser was “‘effectively in Russian hands, just as Mussolini was in Hitler’s.’”²⁷ A further observer stated, “the ‘immediate consequence of the [creation of the] Baghdad Pact was to inflame everybody against everybody,’ most particularly the Egyptians against the British and the Iraqis.”²⁸

Building on this, James Callanan argues that there were three main actions which Nasser took that led to Eisenhower withholding funding for the Aswan Dam project, and thus helping to trigger the Suez Crisis: “Cairo’s purchase of arms from Czechoslovakia in 1955, its repudiation of the Baghdad Pact in 1956, and its recognition of Communist China during the same year eroded Washington’s confidence in Nasser.”²⁹ Steven Freiburger attributes the Suez Crisis to five main reasons: the failure to resolve Arab-Israeli hostilities, fear of Soviet influence in the Middle East, British imperialism in the region, the desire to protect oil resources, and nationalist uprisings.³⁰ After Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal in July 1956, he continued to encourage open rebellion in Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey to undermine membership in the Baghdad Pact. Over 300,000 protestors actually did meet in Lahore and called for Pakistan to withdraw from the Baghdad Pact among other collective security organizations including SEATO and the British Commonwealth.³¹

In response to Nasser’s nationalization of the canal, Great Britain, Israel, and France invaded the canal zone to take over the Canal and oust the Egyptians by force in November 1956. According to Daniel Yergin, this surprised Eisenhower, leaving him furious.³² He did not

²⁷ Guhin, *John Foster Dulles*, 287.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 267.

²⁹ James Callanan, “Eisenhower, the CIA, and Covert Action,” in Chester J. Pach, ed., *A Companion to Dwight D. Eisenhower* (West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2017), 361.

³⁰ Freiburger, *Dawn over Suez*, 9.

³¹ Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 208.

³² Yergin, *The Prize*, 490.

support this policy as he believed that it would “foment Anglophobia around the world, inflame Arab nationalism...and result in a long and costly British occupation of the Suez Canal Zone.”³³ According to Kaufman, Eisenhower sought to rely on the oil companies themselves to develop policy during the Suez Crisis, because it was their oil that was not being transported through the Canal.³⁴ Great Britain, France, and Israel’s intervention thwarted these efforts.

Outside of the United States, the Baghdad Pact members met in Tehran in November 1956 to determine a joint resolution regarding the Suez Crisis. According to Yesilbursa,

Nuri had arrived with a proposal for which he had received Cabinet approval before leaving Baghdad. The proposal was to the effect that the four powers should recommend...the early restoration of the independence and territorial integrity of Egypt...the immediate release of Egyptian prisoners held by Israeli or Anglo-French forces...early withdrawal of Israeli forces to behind the 1948 armistice line and...agreement to work for a definitive solution of the problem of Palestine.³⁵

The British viewed the Tehran meeting as the savior of the Baghdad Pact because the meeting caused the members to work together on a grave issue where they decided on one consistent policy.³⁶ Without a collective meeting, it was very possible that each member would have acted independently and aggravated the situation as no major issues on this scale had arisen since 1955. The Turks supported the British through the crisis, and because the British maintained a positive attitude as the member nations debated, the British government was able to salvage their relationship with the countries in the pact.³⁷

With U.S. and Soviet pressure, the crisis ended; but, it badly damaged British standing in the region while strengthening Nasser. According to Daniel Yergin, “prestige mattered greatly

³³ Hahn, “National Security Concerns,” 85; Robert W. Griffith, ed., *Ike’s Letters to a Friend, 1941-1958* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 174.

³⁴ Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 87.

³⁵ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 168.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 170-71.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

when the British already felt they were losing ground everywhere.”³⁸ Eisenhower stated “The Mid East thing is a terrible mess...It does not seem to me that there is present in the case anything that justifies the action that Britain, France and Israel apparently concerted among themselves and have initiated.”³⁹ The Suez Crisis greatly influenced American policies toward the Middle East. Freiburger states that “following the Suez crisis, the United States replaced the British as the dominant Western power in the Middle East.”⁴⁰ Anthony Eden and the State Department were concerned that the Soviets would be able to move in and capitalize on the vacuum that the British left behind.⁴¹

Americans stationed in the region as well as “some of the Departments of the United States government in Washington” believed that the United States should show greater support for the Baghdad Pact nations by joining, but the State Department maintained its doubts.⁴² The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), on the other hand, believed that joining the pact would not increase the amount of work or funds the United States had already been putting into the region. However, if the United States did not join the pact, the results could be costly. The JCS argued that Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan could request more financial support in capitalizing on the fear of further uprisings. The JCS officially joining the pact would allow for a legal, American military presence in the region in which Nasser’s power could be checked.⁴³ In the end, the United States decided to continue its observer status.

The New York Times published an article on June 1, 1957, outlining a statement by Awni Khalidi, the Secretary-General of the Baghdad Pact. He argued that the Suez Crisis allowed the

³⁸ Yergin, *The Prize*, 485.

³⁹ Griffith, *Ike’s Letters to a Friend*, 174.

⁴⁰ Freiburger, *Dawn over Suez*, 13.

⁴¹ Yergin, *The Prize*, 485-86.

⁴² Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 175.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 179.

Baghdad Pact members to see “Communist subversion and the threat of international communism.”⁴⁴ He continued, “the increasing cooperation of the United States with the pact had opened new vistas. He added that the Eisenhower Doctrine to combat Communist inroads in the Middle East afforded new opportunities and assistance.”⁴⁵

The Eisenhower Doctrine, which Khalidy identified, was articulated by the president on January 5, 1957. The purpose of the doctrine was to allow countries in the Middle East to ask for American economic aid or military force if they believed they were at risk of armed aggression, specifically by the Soviet Union. According to Randall Fowler, “More than anything, the Eisenhower Doctrine was a regionally specific articulation of the larger policy of ‘containment’...the immutability of Soviet hostility and the prohibitive cost of overthrowing the Soviet Union combined to make limiting further Communist expansion the most prudent strategic policy option.”⁴⁶ Yesilbursa offers a different assessment by arguing that the Eisenhower Doctrine “was adopted as an alternative to deflect the pressure for United States accession to the Baghdad Pact.”⁴⁷

Economic Aid and Development

Prior to the official start of the Eisenhower Doctrine, by 1956, foreign aid seemed to be even more necessary than before. In a memorandum covering the discussion between Eisenhower’s Citizen Advisors (Benjamin Fairless, Colgate Darden, Richard Deupree, John Lewis, Whitelaw Reid, Walter Bedell Smith, and Jesse Tapp) and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the fear of communism was as strong, if not stronger than it appeared to be in years prior.

⁴⁴ “Baghdad Pact Hailed: Secretary Says Suez Crisis Strengthened Organization,” *New York Times*, June 1, 1957, 2.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Randall Fowler, *More than a Doctrine: The Eisenhower Era in the Middle East* (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, 2018), 14.

⁴⁷ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 220.

Dulles “stated that the problem of foreign aid was far and away the most important single aspect of our foreign policy.”⁴⁸ He explained that “our so-called foreign aid program, which is really not foreign aid because it isn’t aid to foreigners but aid to us, is an indispensable factor in carrying out our foreign policy.”⁴⁹ He believed that foreign aid would save the United States from a war with the Soviet Union. Dulles stated, “the Soviet rulers...hoped to gain such a great power advantage that it would enable them to defeat the United States in battle, if necessary, or, far more desirable, cause the United States to surrender without a struggle because a struggle appeared to be futile.”⁵⁰ The aid Dulles describes was critical to the Baghdad Pact.

Also, a plan was established by the Baghdad Pact members in 1956 at the Karachi Conference to use the money provided by the United States with grants from Great Britain and Pakistan to survey a comprehensive railway and road system which would link Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Iraq by rail. At this point, the company had not been selected to complete the work. This promoted “the planning of closer regional association, the promotion of advantageous trade and the constant interchange or sharing of technical information in all related fields.”⁵¹ Furthermore, Abolhassan Ebtehaj, Director of the Plan Organization, stated that Iran and Iraq had looked at possible partnerships in the petrochemical and steel industries. The efforts were separate from the Khuzistan plan that the Development and Resources Corporation was involved in.⁵² The Plan Organization was established in 1949 as an entity to govern developmental plans

⁴⁸ Memorandum of Discussion Between the President’s Citizen Advisers on the Mutual Security Program and the Secretary of State, Washington, October 25, 1956, Eisenhower Administration, 1955-1957, “Foreign Aid and Economic Defense Policy, Volume X,” <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v10/d255>.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ “Behind the Baghdad Pact,” *New York Times*, June 4, 1957: 33.

⁵² “Letter from A.H. Ebtehaj to Gordon Clapp, May 2, 1956, Development and Resources Corporation Records, MC014, Box 485, Folder 6, Baghdad Pact, 1956-1957, Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library.

and logistics for project construction in Iran.⁵³ Ebtehaj was granted an uncharacteristic amount of independence from the bureaucracy of the government to ensure efficiency in development.⁵⁴

David Lilienthal, Chairman of the Development and Resources Corporation, a private construction company in New York, developed an economic plan for Iran in 1956 and was to head development projects in Iran and the other Baghdad Pact countries. Lilienthal had met with Ebtehaj on March 1, 1956, to present his proposal for what could be done in the Khuzistan region. In his journal, Lilienthal stated, “these were received with intense excitement; we were asked to accept responsibility for the engineering studies that we said were necessary, and for providing the operating organization as it gets beyond the study stage.”⁵⁵ In a statement released on March 7, 1956, Lilienthal claimed a distinction between his public and private dealings, “we are here solely as private individuals, with no connection of an official character with the government of the United States.”⁵⁶ Regardless of this claim, the role he played would intertwine with the Eisenhower Administration, specifically through capitalizing on the U.S. economic aid provided to the Middle East. Lilienthal had been the Director of the Tennessee Valley Authority prior to his work at the Development and Resources Corporation, and thus, had many ties to the U.S. government, though not the Eisenhower Administration.⁵⁷

⁵³ “Barnāma-Rīzī,” Encyclopedia Iranica, December 15, 1988, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/barnama-rizi-planning>.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Lilienthal, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal*, 79.

⁵⁶ “Statement, by David E. Lilienthal Chairman, and Gordon R. Clapp, President of Development and Resources Corporation, New York City at Tehran, Iran March 7, 1956, *The Sunday Tehran Journal*, March 11, 1956.

⁵⁷ “The Father of Public Power,” Tennessee Valley Authority, <https://www.tva.gov/About-TVA/Our-History/The-Father-of-Public-Power>; According to Christopher T. Fisher, Eisenhower “had deep reservations about Lilienthal himself...Lilienthal’s celebrity and idealism undermined any chance for meaningful collaboration or support.” Christopher T. Fisher, “‘Moral Purpose is the Important Thing’: David Lilienthal, Iran, and the Meaning of Development in the US, 1956-63,” *The International History Review* 33, no. 3 (2011), 442.

For example, in January 1957, Senator J. William Fulbright, a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, met with Lilienthal to discuss plans the administration had for the Middle East. Lilienthal explained, “He [Fulbright] told us that the Administration, i.e., Dulles, wants \$400 million for the Middle East for ‘impact’ programs, something that will show results quickly; ‘quickies,’ the Senator calls them.”⁵⁸ Fulbright then asked Lilienthal to provide him a write-up on his work in Khuzistan that he could pitch to the Foreign Relations Committee.⁵⁹

Lilienthal stated, “we have been deeply impressed with the exceptional technical and economic possibilities for the Khuzistan Region in south-western Iran. This vast and diverse area embraces the basins of two considerable rivers, the Karkheh and the Karun and their many tributaries.”⁶⁰ The Plan Organization submitted a report on the “region’s possibilities and how those potential benefits may be transformed into realities for Khuzistan and the whole of Iran and her people, in the earliest feasible time and with a minimum waste of those resources.”⁶¹ Lilienthal was sure that using water, power, different crops, and chemical fertilizers could make “the Khuzistan area a land of abundance and good living for many Iranians.”⁶² Using his connections, the Tennessee Valley Authority leadership would handle this project.⁶³ Lilienthal went further and worked to provide more economic aid to the region outside of the U.S. government’s budget.

The Iranians were pleased with Lilienthal’s efforts. In April 1956, Dr. Abolbasha Farmanfarmaian, a contributor to the Iranian journal *The Danneshjoo*, explained that Iran was very impressed with Lilienthal as he mixed what he had done while working in the T.V.A. with

⁵⁸ Lilienthal, *The Journals of David E. Lilienthal*, 152.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ “Statement, by David E. Lilienthal Chairman, and Gordon R. Clapp,” March 7, 1956.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

what industries were doing in Texas, a place very similar to Khuzistan in climate and geography.⁶⁴ Studies were underway in March 1957 to construct a 300-mile railroad to link Iran to Turkey. A 2,300-mile highway connecting Pakistan to Turkey through Iran was also under survey. The railway would take three years and \$105 million to complete. Robert Doty stated, “if this plan were carried through, the four Middle Eastern Baghdad Pact members, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan, would have dependable communications by land for the first time in history.”⁶⁵ Again, the line between the private-sector work of the Development and Resources Corporation and the United States government was blurred. According to *The New York Times*, “both projects, and particularly the highway, which was apparently of United States inspiration, are seen here as fitting outlets for the bold new regional approach enunciated in the Eisenhower Doctrine for the Middle East.”⁶⁶

Lilienthal’s projects would provide more than structural development in the region. He was initially worried about finding an adequate workforce to complete his work in Iran but was pleasantly surprised. In a letter to Ebtehaj, Lilienthal praised the “quality of these top-notch men employed by us since that time is, I believe, one evidence that the estimate the Shah gave us of the relative stability and strength of present-day Iran is widely shared.”⁶⁷

By June 1957, three projects for Baghdad Pact members were taken on by the Development and Resources Corporation. The Iran-Turkey Railroad connected the Tehran-Tabriz railway line through Iran with lines through Turkey, linking Iran to the Mediterranean. Two million dollars was allocated by the Plan Organization for this project. Second, the Turkey-

⁶⁴ Abolbashar Farmanfarmaian, “Mr. T.V.A. In Iran,” *The Danneshjoo* 3, no. 3, (April 1956): 1 and 9.

⁶⁵ Robert C. Doty, “Strategic Road and Rail Links for Baghdad Pact Area Studied,” *New York Times*, March 23, 1957, 2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ David E. Lilienthal Letter to A. H. Ebtehaj, February 28, 1957, David E. Lilienthal Papers, 1957 Correspondence, I-K, Box 406, “Iran,” 2, Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library.

Iran Highway was to connect the Turkish and Iranian highway systems as well as money to improve roadways in both nations. For this project, roughly \$1.3 million was allocated. Last, the Regional Tele-Communications System was to connect the capital cities of Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Iraq through a telecommunications network. Other projects included a \$10 million fertilizer plant in Pakistan from the Regional Development Fund, and an improvement of the road system from Afghanistan to Karachi, as per State Department requests.⁶⁸

A full listing of projects in Iran was finalized on September 16, 1957 by Lilienthal and Ebtehaj, and included the Dez Dam project which was estimated at a cost of \$59.3 million.⁶⁹ The dam would be 460 feet tall (one of the highest in the Middle East) and would be used for electric power, water storage, and flood control. Work was planned to begin in March 1958 and take four years to complete. The dam would house four 40,000 kilowatt generators and could irrigate 250,000 acres. The proposal for the dam included plans for expansion if deemed necessary. For example, the dam height could be increased by 50 meters later on, which could help irrigate an additional 125,000 acres. Additional generators could be added to increase generator capacity to 65,000 kilowatts each to total the kilowatts at 520,000.⁷⁰ The environment created by the Baghdad Pact allowed for projects like this to develop.

The Plan Organization had released \$6 million to begin work and authorized the use of \$32 million for four other agricultural and industrial projects in the region including an eighty-mile electric power transmission line linking Abadan with Ahwaz, a plastic plant in Ahwaz, and a gas pipeline from the Agha Jari oil fields to Ahwaz. The plastic plant could produce over nine

⁶⁸ Memorandum to Mr. Gordon R. Clapp, June 6, 1957, Development and Resources Corporation Records, MC014, Box 485, Folder 6, Baghdad Pact, 1956-1957.

⁶⁹ Plan Organization, September 16, 1957, David E. Lilienthal Papers, 1957 Correspondence, I-K, Box 406, "Iran," Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library, and "Big Dam Planned in Iran Project: T.V.A.-Type Development Task of a U.S. Company Working for Teheran," *New York Times*, October 8, 1957, 6.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 3, 4, 5.

million pounds of plastic each year using the gas pipeline from Agha Jari to Ahwaz to provide the oil for the plant. An irrigation project in Karkeh was also considered.⁷¹ This dam, along with the other economic developments put forth by Lilienthal and his private sector organization aided the U.S. government in its mission to provide financial aid to Middle Eastern countries to help maintain positive relations with the Middle East.

Lastly, to further increase the economic development in Iran, a sugar mill and refinery, and plantation would restore sugar cane production to its past levels. Due to poor irrigation, Khuzestan had previously lost its ability to grow sugar. The revived plantation would span 15,000 acres which could produce 28,000 tons of sugar each year with harvest beginning after four years. The cost would be \$22,168,000 of which \$12,075,000 would be for the mill and the refinery.⁷² These developments were to continue the bond between the governments of Iran and the United States, aligning with the Eisenhower Doctrine.

Aside from private ventures, by 1957, Secretary of State Dulles estimated that the U.S. government would spend \$700 million in the Middle East alone. Turkey and Pakistan would receive military and defense aid. Dulles stated, “in both Turkey and Pakistan, however, there are economic problems to be solved which result partially from the fact that our military experts believe it is necessary for both countries to have military establishments considerably larger than their economies can support.”⁷³ He believed that through the relationships built within the Baghdad Pact, Iraq and Iran would be strong allies and even though the United States “rescued [Iran] from the Communist Tudeh party [they] will not be a permanent burden to us.”⁷⁴

⁷¹ Ibid., 5, 6, 8.

⁷² Ibid., 7, 8.

⁷³ Memorandum of Discussion Between the President’s Citizen Advisers on the Mutual Security Program and the Secretary of State, Washington, October 25, 1956, Eisenhower Administration, 1955-1957, “Foreign Aid and Economic Defense Policy, Volume X,” <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v10/d26>.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Debates over American Membership in the Baghdad Pact and Reduction of Aid

The State Department bounced around the idea of full membership in the Baghdad Pact for years, but the United States could only join under specific circumstances. Eisenhower sided with Dulles in refusing to join the Baghdad Pact in 1956. Dulles believed that the British ““have taken it over...and run it as their instrument.””⁷⁵ The British were still not favored by the Baghdad Pact members, so Eisenhower stated on November 21, 1956, in the weeks following the Suez Crisis, that “if the British get us into the Baghdad Pact—as the matter would appear to the Arabs—we would lose our influence with the Arabs.”⁷⁶

Undersecretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr. preferred a course of action in the Middle East which authorized President Eisenhower “to make arrangements for military cooperation, appropriations for expenditure...which would give both military and economic bait.” He continued to argue that “this would show, particularly with Congressional adherence, our determination to make our presence known...[and] maneuverability in the area, which would not exist through the Baghdad Pact or a new pact.”⁷⁷ A further issue posed by Eisenhower was that as members of the pact, the United States could do nothing to ensure the safety of Israel if a fellow member attacked the Jewish state. The pact members had not outwardly shown hostility toward Israel, and stressed it was “only a defense against Communism.”⁷⁸ This was refuted by Dulles who argued that the pact could be “perverted to an instrument of Arab politics.”⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Elie Podeh, “The Perils of Ambiguity: The United States and the Baghdad Pact,” in David W. Lesch and Mark L. Haas, eds, *The Middle East and the United States: History, Politics, and Ideologies* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2016), 100.

⁷⁶ Conference with the President, 11/21/56, Eisenhower Papers, John Foster Dulles, White House Memoranda Series, Box 4, Meetings with the President, 8/56-12/56, Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library.

⁷⁷ Telephone Call from President, December 8, 1956, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 16, Folder 7, Telephone Conversations Series, White House, White House Telephone Conversations, Sept 4, 1956-Dec 31, 1956 (1), Princeton University Mudd Manuscript Library.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Eisenhower believed that adhering to the Baghdad Pact would require a bilateral agreement with Israel, though the Baghdad Pact nations did not want that to come to fruition.⁸⁰ When asked in December 1956 about the prospect of the United States being unable to get a 2/3 vote through Congress without a bilateral agreement with Israel, the ambassadors of the Baghdad Pact members recognized the dilemma.⁸¹

In a presentation on the Middle East for Secretary of State Dulles in January 1957, the status of the Middle East seemed to be unaltered since the formation of the Baghdad Pact. The authors begin by explaining the importance of the region and need for American action due to “Russia’s historic ambitions in the Middle East” and the reduction of British colonial power there.⁸² They proposed large levels of economic cooperation, additional military assistance for Iran and Iraq, and the creation of military forces within the Baghdad Pact to ensure UN enforcement to protect against Communist aggression.⁸³

This type of proposal faced an uphill struggle because of an economic downturn. In fact, in 1957, Eisenhower considered a National Security Council Budget Bureau proposal to reduce the amount of aid provided by the U.S. government. According to Robert McMahon, this would have helped relieve the strain on government funds for the region and provide a more reasonable amount of money to the Pakistani government.⁸⁴ Pakistan at this point was taking in more financial aid than it could actually use, so the results were poor and the economy was not improving.⁸⁵ However, Eisenhower “did not know quite what to do about the program for

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Telephone Call from President, December 6, 1956, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 16, Folder 7, Telephone Conversations Series, White House, White House Telephone Conversations, Sept 4, 1956-Dec 31, 1956 (1).

⁸² Middle East Presentation, January 1, 1957, Box 113, Reel 44, John Foster Dulles Papers, MC016, Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library, 1.

⁸³ Ibid., 2.

⁸⁴ McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 208.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 206-7.

Pakistan. He worried that acceptance of the Budget Bureau proposal ‘might have severe repercussions on our relations with Pakistan, and might even destroy the Baghdad Pact.’”⁸⁶ Horace Augustus Hildreth, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, believed that a reduction of American support for the Pakistani military financially could alter the pro-U.S. policymakers in the country which Eisenhower had come to rely on.⁸⁷ In May 1957, Eisenhower articulated the importance of maintaining economic aid in the region. He stated, “‘if we make mistakes, [it] is in the terms of dollars not lives.’”⁸⁸

Throughout the majority of the pact’s existence, the United States was represented on its council by an observer who was typically the Ambassador to Iraq, Waldemar J. Gallman, and joined as full members of the economic and counter-subversion committees.⁸⁹ In March 1957 the “Bermuda Meeting,” took place resulting in the “willingness of the United States under authority of the recent Middle East joint resolution to participate actively in the work of the Military Committee of the Baghdad Pact.”⁹⁰ Hanson Baldwin of *The New York Times* questioned this arrangement. He stated that “Washington contributes to the expenses of the pact.”⁹¹ With the American investment in the pact, representatives within it desired a full-American membership. Baldwin explained that “various representatives to the Baghdad Pact told the writer that ‘anything less than full membership in the pact’ by the United States would be ‘unsatisfactory’ to most members.”⁹² By June 1957, the United States joined the Military Committee of the Baghdad Pact, adding to its involvement in the Economic and Counter-Subversion

⁸⁶ Ibid., 208.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Brendon, *Ike*, 336.

⁸⁹ Baldwin, “Role in Baghdad Pact,” 4.

⁹⁰ Bermuda Meeting, March 24, 1957, Box 113, Reel 44, John Foster Dulles Papers, MC016, Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

⁹¹ Baldwin, “Role in Baghdad Pact,” 4.

⁹² Ibid.

Committees.⁹³ Nigel John Ashton argues that “by joining the Military Committee and refusing to accede to the pact itself, the US government stressed that it was only prepared to associate itself with the military goals of the organization.”⁹⁴

The Crown Prince in Iraq also saw partial American membership as insufficient. He presented four points to the United States. First, he believed that the Eisenhower Doctrine was not enough and adherence to the Baghdad Pact was critical. Second, he wanted the Eisenhower Doctrine to be used in the context of the Baghdad Pact. Third, he did not want any aid to be provided to Egypt or Syria. Last, he recommended the Americans should invest heavily in an anti-propaganda campaign against Egypt to protect the Baghdad Pact members.⁹⁵ Whether the Crown Prince viewed the Eisenhower Doctrine as sufficient or not, Dulles assured William Manning Rountree, Jr., the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs that if Iraq “were attacked then of course we would be prepared to apply the Eisenhower Doctrine at their request.”⁹⁶

Further American Goals

The State Department finalized a document outlining “Middle East Problems Bearing Upon the Supply of Oil to the Free World,” on May 10, 1957. Officials argued that “more effective measures” were needed to protect the free world’s, and specifically NATO members’ access to oil in the Middle East.⁹⁷ In order to secure this, the West had to maintain positive relationships with the region’s nations and be able to partner with them to protect their resources

⁹³ “Behind the Baghdad Pact,” *New York Times*, June 4, 1957, 33.

⁹⁴ Nigel John Ashton, “The Hijacking of a Pact: The Formation of the Baghdad Pact and Anglo-American Tensions in the Middle East, 1955-1958,” *Review of International Studies* 19, no. 2 (April 1993): 136.

⁹⁵ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 186.

⁹⁶ Telephone Call to Mr. Rountree, August 26, 1957, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 12, Folder 1, Telephone Memoranda, July 1, 1957-August 31, 1957 (1).

⁹⁷ Review of the Middle East Problems Bearing Upon the Supply of Oil to the Free World, May 10, 1957, Eisenhower Administration, 1955-1957, “Foreign Aid and Economic Defense Policy, Volume X,” <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v10/d255>.

if production or transportation were to be disrupted.⁹⁸ Yergin argues that both the United States and Great Britain had anxiety about the security of oil. He states, “there was also the thrust to support stable pro-Western governments in the Middle East as a bulwark against Soviet expansionism...their differences were over means, not ends.”⁹⁹

The State Department stated that in order to do this “the United States and the United Kingdom are assisted substantially by elements of strength resulting from the Baghdad Pact, [and] the application of the American Doctrine to the area.” The State Department was pursuing several policies at the time that were included in this report. Point one of the “Policies at Present Being Pursued” includes “giving full support of the Baghdad Pact” in order to “preserve and strengthen...relationships with the oil producing states and to protect access to Middle East oil transport facilities.”¹⁰⁰

In 1957, the United States had bi- and multi-lateral treaties with forty-four countries, including the members of the Baghdad Pact. Dulles did not believe that those pledges were enough to guarantee the safety of the free world. To Dulles, for those living in other countries, “it is not enough to have liberated them; it is necessary that we give them protection. To do this we must have forces in being sufficient to deter or at least hold back an attack. NATO is that type of force. We must also have forces to ensure internal stability and make costly outside attack.”¹⁰¹ Dulles outlined three points around which the State Department developed its foreign policy: to deter attacks from atomic weapons, to prevent the Soviet Union from expanding its sphere of influence, and to reduce the size of the Soviet bloc.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Yergin, *The Prize*, 497.

¹⁰⁰ Review of the Middle East Problems Bearing Upon the Supply of Oil to the Free World, May 10, 1957.

¹⁰¹ Memorandum of Discussion Between the President’s Citizen Advisers on the Mutual Security Program and the Secretary of State.

¹⁰² Ibid.

The American policies created and continued in 1956-1957 were crucial to maintaining stability in the region. The Suez Crisis especially proved the viability of the Baghdad Pact members and their willingness to make decisions collectively. The economic aid provided to each nation in the pact from both the federal government and private corporations secured friendly relations with the West, regardless of Soviet or Egyptian propaganda campaigns. Though this relative stability would be tested again, from 1956-1957, it was maintained.

Chapter 3

1958-1959 and the Conclusion of the Baghdad Pact

In 1958 and 1959, the Baghdad Pact would see turmoil in nearly every member nation as the United States continued to debate over full membership. The pressure from the Soviet Union seemed to increase within Nasser's version of Arab nationalism. Uprisings in Pakistan, Iraq, and Turkey, and the threat of it in Iran, further led the Baghdad Pact to transition to the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). From 1958-1959, the United States would be forced to quickly develop policies in response to national coups and uprisings in order to salvage the pact. Though the pact would fall apart in 1959, less than a year after Iraq's government fell to a coup, the pact's aspiration to combat communism collectively was a success, despite inner turmoil among the member nations.

1958 for the Baghdad Pact and the United States began inauspiciously. In January 1958, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles arrived in Ankara, Turkey for a Baghdad Pact meeting only hours after two bombs were detonated in the American Publications Bureau and the warehouse wall of the American Embassy there. Foreign agents were blamed for the bombings on both sites.¹ The meeting had been called by the member nations in an attempt once again to gain American membership in the pact and to gain greater aid from the United States. While the meeting resulted in the Americans pledging \$10 million for a communications network and a greater move toward a more unified command of military forces, it did not lend to the United States joining the Baghdad Pact.² Regardless of American involvement, several internal issues within the region remained.

¹ "Baghdad Pact. Unified Military Command Seen," Universal Studios, Newsreel, January 30, 1958, https://archive.org/details/1958-01-30_Baghdad_pact.

² Ibid.

Regarding Middle Eastern concerns, including violence and potential uprisings in 1958, Churchill, who had retired as Prime Minister but was active in British Parliament, considered addressing a group of American troops who had landed in Beirut, Lebanon.³ He decided against speaking to them, but in his notes he stated, “America & Britain must work together, [to] reach Unity of purpose.”⁴ He continued to explain his view of the regional problems. “The Middle East is all one. One problem...”⁵ Churchill’s view may have been overly simplistic, but similarities did exist in each nation, thus binding the region together. Though there were similarities among the countries in the Middle East and the Baghdad Pact, each would experience Soviet aggression and expect U.S. financial aid in different ways.

Growing fears of the Soviet threat were rampant going into 1958. The Soviets had claimed that they had successfully tested an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), as well as launched *Sputnik* and *Sputnik II*, the world’s first satellites launched successfully into space. According to David Snead, “for the first time, the Soviet Union had made a significant technological advancement ahead of the United States.”⁶ The Gaither committee, a top-secret organization at Eisenhower’s disposal, believed that “in the case of a surprise Soviet nuclear attack, the United States would be unable to defend itself with any degree of success,” and thus, Eisenhower should immediately begin growing U.S. nuclear capabilities among other programs.⁷

The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended that in response to the Soviet advances anti-missile defenses should be added at Strategic Air Command (SAC) bases and forces should be

³ Winston Churchill, “United Forces and Common Principles Speech,” July 15, 1958, in *Churchill, the Power of Words: His Remarkable Life Recounted Through his Writings and Speeches*, by Martin Gilbert, ed., (Boston, MA: Da Capo Press, 2012), 421-2.

⁴ Ibid., 422.

⁵ Ibid., 423.

⁶ David L. Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1999), 1.

⁷ Ibid., 2.

dispersed to other bases.⁸ Weaponry at SAC bases could also be transferred to international bases in Turkey and North Africa. Defense Secretary Neil H. McElroy recommended that SAC should be able to launch 157 bombers with only 30-120 minutes notice.⁹ These programs sparked concern within the Soviet Union, especially regarding the fact that the United States shared positive relationships with the Baghdad Pact countries.¹⁰

The Soviet Foreign Ministry on the Middle East reported that NATO was attempting to use the Baghdad Pact Council “to draw the Middle Eastern countries’ members of this military alignment into their plans imperiling the cause of peace.”¹¹ According to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, NATO members opposed the U.S. request for the deployment of nuclear weapons and rocket launching ramps in NATO member countries. The Soviet Union also opposed this and proposed a summit to discuss the relaxation of tensions in the Middle East over the issue. The Soviets continued, “The facts show that as soon as the peoples achieve a certain easing of international tension, these quarters [specifically the United States and Great Britain] make fresh attempts to aggravate the situation, cost what it may.”¹²

The Soviet Foreign Ministry continued to argue, “It is not concealed in Washington that Dulles’ trip [in January 1958 to Tehran, Iran] has the purpose of stepping up the activity of the Baghdad military alignment, whose actual leadership is now assumed by the United States Government.”¹³ It also claimed,

The NATO Council Paris session has shown that the present line of the United States foreign policy is alien to the interests of safeguarding peace and that its true purpose is to continue the cold war, the unbridled arms race, the inflation of

⁸ Ibid., 134.

⁹ Ibid., 135.

¹⁰ Zubok, *Failed Empire*, 129; Under Khrushchev’s “New Look,” anti-Communist alliances, including the Baghdad Pact were to be undermined by creating “the appearance of a nuclear stalemate.” By arming SAC bases, the appearance of a stalemate was impossible.

¹¹ “Text of Soviet Statement Opposing Mideast Missile Sites,” *New York Times*, January 22, 1958, 4.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

military budgets, the subjugation of economically weaker States and the exploitation of their natural resources, and consequently the further aggravation of the international situation and the provocative propaganda of war and enmity among peoples which is conducted day in and day out in some countries, particularly the United States. Today, very few doubt that the Baghdad Pact was signed to establish a military organization pursuing aggressive and expansionist ends, among others with regard to the Middle Eastern countries which have taken the road of independent development.¹⁴

The Soviet Union also argued that the United States and Britain had banded together to divide the countries in the Middle East and pit them against each other. In a step further, the Soviets claimed that the United States, Great Britain, and Turkey were preparing the Baghdad Pact nations for atomic war. They countered that the Middle East should become a “zone of peace” without nuclear capabilities.¹⁵ This belief was not unfounded. According to Vladislav Zubok, “the Pentagon built bases for strategic bombers and missiles not only on American territory but also on the territories of allies, namely Great Britain, West Germany, Italy, and Turkey.”¹⁶ Because Turkey and Great Britain were members of the Baghdad Pact, this alliance helped members use nuclear deterrence as a means of protecting the region from Soviet expansion.

Further, Soviet concerns with Iran grew in 1958. That October, the Soviets sent a strongly worded letter to Iran, expressing their displeasure at a potential Iranian-American agreement. They believed that in signing an agreement with the United States, Iran would allow the Americans to build a military base in Iran, which would defy a 1921 agreement between the Soviets and Iran. They followed that “the ‘might and capability’ of the Soviet Union is far superior to Iran and that if the Soviets are made to ‘feel uneasiness about elements of Soviet-Iran

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 123.

relations' then they will use their superior might to make Iran feel equal 'inconvenience.'"¹⁷ This growing Soviet pressure made the Baghdad Pact even more significant.

Continued Importance of Foreign Aid

In this atmosphere of growing communist pressure, William Henry Draper, Jr., U.S. Special Representative to Europe and the North Atlantic Council, argued for the importance of foreign aid, especially in relation to countries at risk of Soviet encroachment. He stated, "Military aid must take precedence over economic aid because without it there would be no free world countries to which to grant economic aid."¹⁸ He continued to explain that the withdrawal of U.S. aid would have dire consequences as "the US strategy is based on the concept of the shield and sword. A shield to protect the areas contiguous with the communist states and a sword, the threat of nuclear warfare. This strategy is the least expensive one, but military aid is an integral part of it."¹⁹ Preventing the spread of communism was at the forefront of policymakers' minds, and the Baghdad Pact represented the kind of collective security arrangement that supported Draper's emphasis on foreign aid.

On top of international pressures, Eisenhower was facing problems at home. With the country facing an economic downturn, in 1958, Congress was determined to significantly reduce foreign aid spending. The recession began because of a rise of inflation and unemployment.²⁰ John Sloan attributes Eisenhower's failure to remedy the recession due to his "commitment to a balanced budget, his fear of inflation, and his growing contempt for demagogues in Congress."²¹ To take measures into their own hands, the House Appropriations Committee sent a bill through

¹⁷ Milani, *The Shah*, 226.

¹⁸ "Summary of Remarks by General Draper," Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 3, Folder 3, A-F Dean-Figueras Ferrar, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

²⁰ John W. Sloan, *Eisenhower and the Management of Prosperity* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 133.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 151.

Congress in May 1958 reducing international spending by \$872 billion less than Eisenhower asked for including cuts of \$325 million from the Development Loan Fund and \$45 million from the President's Contingency Fund.²² Because Eisenhower viewed the American role in the Baghdad Pact as imperative, a reduction of funds could significantly alter the pact's dynamic.

Nations Falling

In this volatile atmosphere, the Baghdad Pact began to unravel. Just three days prior to a coup, Iraqi leader Nuri was confident in the "security of his army and of the police."²³ However, three days later, on July 14, 1958, Nuri was dead; mobs were looting homes and the British embassy; and American Marines had landed in Beirut to prevent the conflict from spilling into Jordan and Lebanon.²⁴ Within the new Iraqi government, only two cabinet members had any political experience.²⁵ The new regime that replaced Nuri's Hashemite, pro-Western government put military and civil leaders on trial and worked to discredit the United States by charging it with "having attempted to induce Iraq to intervene militarily in Syria to counter that country's Egyptian leanings," and "having given arms to Iraq with the proviso that they not be used against Israel."²⁶

The American reaction to the coup was to reassure Israel, as the members of the pact, especially Iraq, were in staunch opposition to Israel's state sovereignty, and the United States had worked closely with it in the Baghdad Pact. In an undated draft letter, Dulles intended to relay to Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion that, "You can be confident of the United States

²² Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 139.

²³ "Recent Developments in Iraq," Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Folder 4, Volume XXX, G-L, Galbraith-Hemdsdorf, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 1.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, and Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 139.

²⁵ "Recent Developments in Iraq," 1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

interest in the integrity and independence of Israel.”²⁷ Abba Eban, Israeli ambassador to the United States, stated that “Israel is not the cause of the problems in the Middle East. Nasser is the cause.”²⁸ There was an immense and violent divide between the Arabs and the Israelis over Palestine. Nasser, as the leader of the Arab League, fought for Arab nationalism and a complete rejection of Israeli sovereignty. The Iraq coup put the pact in jeopardy and challenged American interests.

A further issue was that the new regime in Iraq sought friendly with the Soviet Union. The Soviets were the first nation to recognize the new regime, leading Iraq to reopen its embassy in Moscow.²⁹ The new Iraqi regime sought a policy based on four points: Iraqi independence, friendliness to nations who would reciprocate, strong ties with other Arab nations, and a continuation of the positive relationship with the oil market in the West.³⁰

In the months prior to Iraq’s change in government, the Eisenhower administration feared that if Iraq withdrew from the Baghdad Pact, the Middle East would be at risk of Soviet encroachment. To combat this, Eisenhower estimated that the United States needed to provide \$350 million in additional economic and military aid.³¹ Senate leaders agreed that in wake of the coup, \$440 million could be restored to the defense budget for foreign aid. Though this was a small victory for the White House, according to Burton Kaufman, the foreign aid budget was still severely reduced, leaving Eisenhower feeling “that his greatest disappointment in foreign affairs...was the reduction it had made in his mutual security program.”³² Despite the agreement

²⁷ Draft Letter to Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 24, Folder 6, White House Memoranda Series, Chronological, White House Correspondence-General, 1958, 2.

²⁸ “Summary of Remarks of Ambassador Eban,” Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Folder 3, A-F, Dean-Figueras Ferrar, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 1.

²⁹ “Recent Developments in Iraq,” 2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

³¹ Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 140-1.

³² *Ibid.*

for additional funding, Eisenhower still saw “the growing power of the Communists in Iraq...groups that were...responsive to direction from the Kremlin.”³³

The United States was particularly concerned that the Russians would partner with the Iraqis to create joint oil companies in place of the western ones. The fears were well-founded. Ultimately, Iraq did force Western oil companies to leave and seventy Russian oil workers were present in the country. The people’s militia, a communist-backed group created by the new Iraqi leader Abd al-Karim Qasim, “as a counterweight to the army,” was also an unstable entity.³⁴ Qasim’s communist leanings were frightening to the members of the Baghdad Pact and the United States. Roby Barrett argues “the namesake of the Baghdad Pact alliance literally disappeared overnight, and Iraq fell under the sway of a group of radical, nationalist, leftist army officers whose best organized support came from the powerful Iraqi Communist Party (CPI).”³⁵

The United States Reevaluates its Position

As far back as immediately after the overthrow of Nuri Said’s government in July 1958, Eisenhower and Dulles agreed that economic and military support should be increased for Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan.³⁶ Dulles was particularly concerned with Iraq because of the amount of U.S. oil investments there.³⁷ On July 18, 1958, the Baghdad Pact members again requested that the United States join. While the United States again refused, it began to search for other approaches to address the changing system in the Middle East.³⁸ J.N. Greene, Jr., Special

³³ Dwight Eisenhower, *Waging Peace, 1956-1961* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), 288.

³⁴ Barrett, “Intervention in Iraq, 1958-1959,” 8.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁶ Telephone Call to the President, July 16, 1958, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 17, Folder 10, Telephone Conversations Series, White House, White House Telephone Conversations, April 1, 1958-July 31, 1958, 1.

³⁷ Telephone Call to the President, July 15, 1958, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 17, Folder 10, Telephone Conversations Series, White House, White House Telephone Conversations, April 1, 1958-July 31, 1958, 1.

³⁸ Telephone Call to the President, July 18, 1958, 1.

Assistant to Secretary Dulles, argued that instead of joining the pact, a new pact was needed. He stated, “the Baghdad Pact does not lend itself to adherence by us even if the Iraqis should denounce it. The new pact would comprehend the present Moslem [sic] members of the Baghdad Pact and it would be for decision what the US and UK would do about participation in or adherence to a new treaty.”³⁹

Similarly, John W. Hanes, Jr., Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs, stated that “it seemed basic that the United States must make its presence more strongly felt in the area.” He provided three choices: join the Baghdad Pact, organize a different organization, or “deal on a bilateral basis with some maneuverability.” If the third option was chosen, Hanes stated that he “suggested [that option] should be on the basis of a Congressional resolution authorizing the President to use the Armed Forces and to spend certain sums to bolster the military defense abilities and economies of countries whose governments showed a determination to combat Communist infiltration.”⁴⁰ He believed that the third option was best due to liabilities within the Baghdad Pact and the time it would take to create a new organization.⁴¹

Even non-government officials weighed in on how the United States should act in the region. O. Preston Robinson, the editor of the *Deseret News* in Salt Lake City, Utah, submitted his “personal convictions regarding problems in the Middle East” to Eisenhower.⁴² He observed that nationalism and suspicion of the West were both rising. Further, many people in nations

³⁹ S/S-, July 24, 1958, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 61, Folder 10, Special Assistants Chronological Series, Greene-Boster, July 1958, 2.

⁴⁰ Memorandum for G-Mr. Murphy, December 14, 1958, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library files Relating to John Foster Dulles, Box 59, Folder 3, Special Assistants Chronological Series, Chronological-Macomber & Hanes, Dec. 1956, 2.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Letter from O. Preston Robinson to President Eisenhower, July 23, 1958, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 24, Folder 6, White House Memoranda Series, Chronological, White House Correspondence-General, 1958, 1.

outside of Egypt were beginning to believe that the West was “driving them into Communists’ hands, viewed Nasser in a very positive light.”⁴³ To combat these issues, Robinson recommended that the United States work to persuade Nasser that the Soviets did not have to be his only ally, convince the Arab nations that nationalism and pro-Westernism could operate in tandem, ensure Arab independence through promoting both the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Baghdad Pact, and find an agreeable solution to the Arab-Israeli problem.⁴⁴

Robinson encouraged a meeting to be held with Nasser to explain the American perspective and desires for the region, and to crush Russian relations with Egypt. Robinson also asked that leaders develop a “sympathetic attitude toward Arab Nationalism and unity” so as to promote relationships with the Middle East. He pointed out an interesting perspective that the Baghdad Pact was actually a point of contention within the Middle East and should be avoided at all costs. He encouraged sympathy toward Arab agreements, but not participation.⁴⁵ In closing, he encouraged further guarantees of the Arab and Israeli borders, the commissioning of a study for Arab-Israeli relations, and to widen trade deals, provide loans, and re-introduce the Aswan Dam Project in Egypt.⁴⁶ Richard H. Nolte, Ambassador to the United Arab Republic, went further than Robinson and argued that the United States should align itself with nationalist objectives, not specific Middle Eastern leaders.⁴⁷

King Hussein bin Talal of Jordan held similar convictions about Arab nationalism. He argued that Arab nationalism was a positive force in the region, though it had been harnessed by

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 3.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 4.

⁴⁷ “Remarks of Mr. Nolte,” Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Box 449, Volume XXVII, J-Q, Manglapus-Prain, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 4.

leaders who used “nationalism for their own purposes.”⁴⁸ As for communism, Hussein argued that the Soviets hoped to gain control of the region, and at the very least, take away Western influence. He also believed that the Soviets were seeking to restrict the West’s access to oil.⁴⁹ Additionally, he argued that the Middle East was “a stepping stone” in the Soviet’s quest toward Africa.⁵⁰ Hussein’s feelings regarding Arab nationalism were important, as Jordan was an Arab country that maintained positive relations with the West.

Elie Salem, a Johns Hopkins University professor and later Lebanese foreign minister, took a harsher stance against the Baghdad Pact. He argued that “To attain their goals the Arabs will, like Churchill, rally with the devil, if he promises support.”⁵¹ He continued on to say, that Middle East nations “like Russia when it supports their political ambitions. The terms pro and anti do not apply to the Arabs. They are neither pro-western or pro-Russian. Their chief interest is the Arab problem.”⁵² In closing, he argued that “All economic aid is in vain until the political issues have been treated,” i.e. the Israel problem.⁵³ Salem’s analysis aptly captures the difficulties the Eisenhower administration faced in developing its Middle Eastern policies.

In the midst of these conflicting recommendations, the United States considered joining the Baghdad Pact. John Foster Dulles explained in a draft message, “Article I of the Baghdad Pact provides that the parties will cooperate for their security and defense and that such measures as they agree to take to give effect to this cooperation may form the subject of special agreement.” The United States, “agrees to cooperate with the nations making this declaration for

⁴⁸ “Remarks of King Hussein,” Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Folder 5, Volume XXX, G-L, Humphrey-Louw, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 3.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵¹ Letter from Elie Salem to Ezra Taft Benson, July 23, 1958, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 24, Folder 6, White House Memoranda Series, Chronological, White House Correspondence-General, 1958, 1.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 2.

their security and defense, and will promptly enter into agreement designed to give effect to this undertaking.”⁵⁴ The following day, Dulles and William B. Macomber, Jr., the Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs, discussed changes membership in the Baghdad Pact would bring. Macomber stated that membership would not commit the United States to anything new, only to continue the status quo. However, if the organization of the pact were to change, the United States would continue to work with the new organization as it had done previously.⁵⁵ This draft was never sent and the United States never joined the Baghdad Pact, but it indicated the deliberations in the Eisenhower administration.

Pakistan Uprising

Problems in Iraq only magnified American difficulties in the Middle East in 1958 and they did not improve because of a deteriorating situation in Pakistan. As early as 1956, the U.S. government predicted that Pakistan would experience an uprising. According to Robert McMahon, in November 1956, “an interdepartmental intelligence estimate” predicted Pakistan’s instability. It argued that Pakistan would continue to be “plagued by serious differences of interest and outlook between the two parts of the country, by a dearth of responsible leaders, by weak political institutions, and by widespread frustration and discontent, particularly in East Pakistan.”⁵⁶ In October 1958, Iskander Mirza overthrew the Pakistani government challenging

⁵⁴ “Article 1 of the Baghdad Pact...”, July 28, 1958, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 13, Folder 9, Telephone Memoranda, June 2, 1958-July 31, 1958, 1.

⁵⁵ Telephone Call to Mr. Macomber, July 29, 1958, Dwight Eisenhower Library Files Relating to John Foster Dulles, MC018, Box 13, Folder 9, Telephone Memoranda, June 2, 1958-July 31, 1958, 1.

⁵⁶ Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 209.

its ineffectiveness in dealing with civil problems.⁵⁷ He enacted martial law, dismissed the prime minister, dissolved political parties, and removed its parliamentary government.⁵⁸

After four days, the new government worked to move forward. Freedom of the press and habeas corpus were restored. Aziz Ahmed, the Pakistani Ambassador to the United States, believed the government failed in part because United States was catering to India and not giving enough attention to Pakistan. He stated, “The U.S. will not give Pakistan assurances against aggression by India but is willing to do the reverse for India...influential American circles talk of massive aid programs to India without giving Pakistan the same consideration.”⁵⁹ He explained that preventing further problems without U.S. aid was going to be highly difficult.⁶⁰ McMahon confirms that “most U.S. specialists concurred that any reduction in the U.S. military commitment might serve only to feed the flames of discontent and resentment.”⁶¹ Despite the political turmoil, Pakistan did not see major foreign policy changes after the coup. It remained in the Baghdad Pact and maintained its positive relationship with the West; however, the coup did highlight the continued instability in the region.

A key theme throughout 1958 was the importance of foreign aid. Fear of Soviet power and expansion due to the launching of *Sputnik*, coupled with inflation and unemployment at home created a shaky year for the Eisenhower administration. The unrest that pervaded Iraq and Pakistan in 1958 incited fear in the Baghdad Pact nations that the status quo would soon change. Further, Qasim’s leadership in Iraq spawned a political vacuum which seemed to open Iraq to

⁵⁷ “Recent Political Developments in Pakistan,” Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Folder 1, Volume XXXI, M-Z, MacArthur-Pramoj, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 1.

⁵⁸ “Summary of Remarks by Mr. Ahmed,” Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Folder 1, Adams-Bunker, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁰ “Recent Political Developments in Pakistan,” 1.

⁶¹ McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 209.

communism. The coup in Pakistan did not have as large of ramifications but still characterized 1958 as a year of turmoil. Unbeknownst to the West, 1959 would prove to be no easier.

1959

The Council of Ministers of the Baghdad Pact met in Karachi, Pakistan in January 1959. The majority of the meeting was focused on “the determination of their countries to protect their sovereignty and independence and emphasized the value of the pact in providing not only for defensive military cooperation but also for economic and technical cooperation in raising the standard of living of their peoples.”⁶² The council stated that the solidarity of the pact’s members increased Middle Eastern stability, but the threat of aggression still remained. In its coverage of the meeting, the *New York Times* stated that “International communism continued its efforts to dominate the pact area.”⁶³ The council discussed a reduction of press telegraph rates between members of the pact and the creation of a technical cooperation fund for expanding technical facilities, “as a new and promising initiative.”⁶⁴ Great Britain also offered Iran equipment at the meeting for a nuclear center to be established in Tehran for training technicians to use nuclear energy for non-military purposes.⁶⁵ While positive technological and economic improvements to the region were developed, they could not overshadow the problems which still persisted.

J.C. Hurewitz of Columbia University argued that Iran was at risk of revolution due to “the incapacity of her Shah”⁶⁶ who struggled consistently to gain the respect of his people.⁶⁷ Hurewitz predicted that this dissatisfaction would eventually lead to a military coup, similar to Iraq. To prevent a military coup, the Shah had instituted anti-espionage measures, but when

⁶² “Baghdad Pact Statement,” *New York Times*, January 29, 1959, 4.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ “American Vulnerabilities in the Middle East,” Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Folder 5, A-H, Harmstone-Harewitz, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 1.

comparing them to the measures of the recently ousted Nuri al-Said, his measures were no better.⁶⁸ These measures caused problems for American diplomats who were not able to form relationships with the military officers who could eventually advance in the government because the Shah had isolated all military officers and foreigners. This was further exacerbated when the Shah himself ended talks with the Soviet Union when it became apparent that he could not have alliances with both the United States and the Soviet Union.⁶⁹

A further problem in Iran was that the Shah had invested heavily in imported goods, which few people in Iran could afford. This was displayed in the airport in Tehran, which was the most modern in the Middle East, and was decorated with “Persian” rugs from Great Britain, “Persian” artifacts from Sweden, and Italian tile. Goods sold in Tehran were over three times more expensive than outside of the country, making it difficult for the middle-class to thrive.⁷⁰ Additionally, Iran permitted up to 80% of oil revenues to be earmarked for use by the Plan Organization, which had partnered with Lilienthal’s Development and Resources Corporation to construct a series of public works projects. In 1959, however, only 60% of funds were being used for this due to financial and other difficulties.⁷¹

Turkey was also experiencing internal issues in 1959. For example, according to Hurewitz, in December 1959, Turkey was working to cut inflation by reducing credits. This became an issue as importers were refusing to move their products out of the Istanbul harbor, blocking the harbor completely for all traffic.⁷² At one point, the port was backlogged with over 60,000 tons of goods. Furthermore, civil liberties in Turkey were reduced significantly. Because

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 1, 3, 5.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁷¹ “Council on Foreign Relations, Special Meeting on Iran, Held January 12th, 1959,” Council of Foreign Relations Records, MC104, Series 4, Folder 5, Volume XXX, G-L, Galbraith-Hemsdorf, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, 1.

⁷² “American Vulnerabilities in the Middle East,” 2.

the Eisenhower administration did not denounce the actions of Prime Minister Adnan Menderes' regime, the United States was also perceived as only caring about "buying military allies" not protecting democratic principles.⁷³

By 1959, Hurewitz argues, countries were "moved more by the power struggle within the Middle East, among the Moslem [sic] countries themselves, than by a fear of Russian invasion."⁷⁴ Hurewitz believed that the instability found in the Middle East was a result of the military aid the United States provided that had no stipulations. By providing aid to any nation that asked with no requirements, there were no checks on how the funding was used.⁷⁵ Hurewitz argues that Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan began to regret forming alliances with the United States, and believed they should have followed Nasser's line of neutrality.⁷⁶ Neutralism was indeed a worry within the U.S. government. Prior to John Foster Dulles' death in May 1959, he and Eisenhower had discussed the dangers of neutralism. Richard Damms argues that both men "worried that...avowed neutralism in the Cold War could open the door to Soviet influence in the region."⁷⁷ McMahon also states that State Department regional specialists agreed that U.S. policy in the Middle East needed to be bolstered, "less the forces of revolutionary nationalism and neutralism gain ascendancy."⁷⁸

Transition to CENTO

The changing situation in the Middle East made the Baghdad Pact almost untenable; therefore, its termination came as no surprise to the Eisenhower administration or the member nations. In August 1958, before Iraq pulled out of the pact, the British were determined to

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 5.

⁷⁷ Richard V. Damms, "Dwight D. Eisenhower and American Foreign Policy," Unpublished essay in author's possession, 11.

⁷⁸ McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 144.

“reconstitute the Baghdad Pact as a Northern Tier without Iraqi participation.”⁷⁹ Iraq did not disappoint. After a formal rejection of Baghdad Pact defensive policies and Qasim’s accusation that the United States, Great Britain, and Turkey were seeking “imperialist designs in the Persian Gulf region,” Iraq officially withdrew on March 24, 1959. Following this, the Baghdad Pact Council of Deputies met several times through the summer of 1959 to determine the organizations future. Finally creating a new alliance, the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), because it would encapsulate the region between NATO and SEATO and would more closely mirror those organizations.⁸⁰ On August 19, 1959, the Baghdad Pact officially became CENTO.⁸¹

The United States fully supported the creation of CENTO. In a telegram to the American Embassy in Turkey, new Secretary of State Christian Herter, stated that it was his goal “to persuade CENTO members...of our continuing strong support of CENTO and its objectives.”⁸² As with the Baghdad Pact, fear of its disbanding was believed to be “so grave as to mean that we [the United States] must take every reasonable action to remove the risk of such a development.”⁸³ The Baghdad Pact would live on as CENTO until 1979 when Iran withdrew.

⁷⁹ Barrett, “Intervention in Iraq, 1958-1959,” 4.

⁸⁰ Cihat Göktepe, “The ‘Forgotten Alliance’? Anglo-Turkish Relations and CENTO, 1959-65,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 35, no. 4 (October 1999), 111, 106-108.

⁸¹ “Central Treaty Organization,” Encyclopaedia Iranica, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/central-treaty-organization-cento-a-mutual-defense-and-economic-cooperation-pact-among-persia-turkey-and-pakistan-wi>. Some sources note the official redesignation of the Baghdad Pact to CENTO on August 21, 1959. See “Letter from Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Knight) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Murphy), August 31, 1959, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Near East Region; Iraq; Iran; Arabian Peninsula, Vol. XII, note 1, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v12/d73>.

⁸² “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey,” September 29, 1959, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958-1960, Near East Region; Iraq; Iran; Arabian Peninsula, Vol. XII, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v12/d75>.

⁸³ “Letter from Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Knight) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Murphy).”

Conclusion

The Middle East would come closest to collective security with the West in 1955 when Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, and Great Britain agreed to create the Baghdad Pact. This new alliance reflected the U.S. desire to use collective security arrangements to contain the Soviet threat. In the decade after World War II, the U.S. and Great Britain sought ways to resist the spread of communism. Both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations made decisions in the context of this fear. As far back as 1939, but certainly after the 1946 Iran crisis when the Soviet Union refused to evacuate troops from that country, the birth-pains of the Cold War began. The United States viewed holding the “Northern Tier” as critical to national and world security.

Nearly fifteen years before the Baghdad Pact was signed, forming collective security agreements was a priority of the West, specifically the United States. Collective security agreements could only be successful if the countries involved were stable and the United States believed offering economic and military aid would play a major role in increasing stability. World War II and the following years had an immense influence on the signatories of the Baghdad Pact. The Truman and Eisenhower administrations offered economic support to Middle Eastern nations in exchange for positive relationships and an agreement to reject communistic ideas and Soviet motives to control oil in the region. The Iran Crisis in 1946 indicated the dangers posed by the Soviet Union. Oil had become such a lucrative and powerful asset that the West was determined that it must be protected. Europe’s complete reliance on oil sparked a genuine fear that should the Soviets have sole access to the fields of the Middle East, the western world would be at risk. In this atmosphere, the United States believed the Middle Eastern nations needed to band together to protect themselves from this fate.

When the pact was signed in 1955, the United States deliberately did not join. While it supported the new organization, it feared joining might undermine its relationship with Israel.

Despite this, it worked closely with the new organization. The Eisenhower administration and private sector organizations like Lilienthal's Development and Resources Corporation continued to offer tangible financial, consulting, and diplomatic support for member nations throughout the pact's existence.

Most historians agree that the 1956 Suez Crisis provided the Baghdad Pact members the chance to prove that the agreement was working.⁸⁴ While the British partnered with the French and Israelis to seize the canal from Egyptian forces led by Gamal Abdel Nasser, the members of the pact worked collectively to develop a plan of action. Their collaboration prevented each nation from rashly determining different plans, which could have potentially been in opposition to another member.

The Suez Crisis was only the first of many problems linked to Nasser in the late 1950s. For example, Nasser utilized Voice of the Arabs radio to broadcast a propaganda campaign against Iraq, called for Nuri Said's removal, and encouraged rebellion in the Baghdad Pact nations. Throughout this time, Nasser also courted the Soviets further. Oil-rich nations in the region constantly feared uprisings and the effective closing off of the means of shipping their at-risk commodity to the rest of the world. This hit home when Nasser had nationalized the Suez Canal and scuttled ships in the canal entrance. In all, it was American foreign policy and aid which continued to be pivotal in the region in 1956-1957. Economic aid secured positive relationships with the West regardless of Egyptian or Soviet pressures.

In 1958 and 1959, the Baghdad Pact was shaken as nearly every member began to see varying levels of internal unrest. The United States continued to debate joining the pact as a full member as the pressure from the Soviet Union increased and Nasser's Arab nationalism spread.

⁸⁴ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 168.

Uprisings in Pakistan, Iraq, and Turkey, and the threat of it in Iran, led the Baghdad Pact into a new era of Middle Eastern collective security. Nine months after the Iraqi coup which toppled the pro-western Nuri government, Iraq pulled out of the Baghdad Pact in March 1959. Its remaining members renamed the organization the Central Treaty Organization and moved the headquarters to Ankara, Turkey. CENTO would continue until 1979 when Iran withdrew.

The fear of communism was pervasive in American politics. According to Burton Kaufman, “The president’s concern with the Communist menace led to a dangerously expanded and ill-defined concept of national security that was also apparent in the formulation of foreign economic policy.”⁸⁵ This harsher view of Eisenhower’s policies is common within the historiography of the Baghdad Pact.

Though the historiography of the Baghdad Pact itself is limited, several sources detail its four-year existence. Steven Freiburger’s *Dawn over Suez: The Rise of American Power in the Middle East, 1953-1957*, Behçet Kemal Yesilbursa’s *The Baghdad Pact: Anglo-American Defense Policies in the Middle East, 1950-1959*, and Richard Ovendale’s *Britain, the United States and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East, 1945-1962* each argue that Eisenhower’s decision to avoid full-membership in the pact caused it to fail.⁸⁶ This thesis calls for a more nuanced assessment of the pact.

This thesis adds to the historiography by asserting that the Baghdad Pact was not a complete failure. There are clear examples where the Baghdad Pact fell short. However, this interpretation overlooks significant benefits from the pact. In retrospect, the Baghdad Pact helped prevent the spread of communism to the Middle East while also protecting the oil resources

⁸⁵ Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 9.

⁸⁶ Freiburger, *Dawn over Suez*, 106; Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, 220; and Ovendale, *Britain, the United States and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East*, 22.

there. It also created some positive outcomes for the member nations. In that, it certainly was not a failure. The largest weakness of the pact and of U.S. policy within it, was that they could not prevent the internal unrest with the member nations.

Despite the struggles of the Baghdad Pact, several positive developments did occur. A Nuclear Training Center was created as a joint effort among the Baghdad Pact countries in Baghdad in 1956 with the goal of teaching practical applications of radioisotopes for Middle Eastern problems to students in member nations.⁸⁷ The center also worked to create courses to teach on uses for these materials.⁸⁸ Each member nation donated equipment and staffed the facility to supervise and teach within the center until local staffing could be trained.⁸⁹

Iran also sought to continue its economic expansion. Dams at Dez, Sefid Roud, and Karaj were planned. Outside of Khuzistan, textile plants, food processing plants, milk pasteurizing plants, two cement plants, four airports, four Persian Gulf ports and an 800-mile road along the Caspian Sea were planned. Also, schools, hospitals, electric and water plants, street paving, and the provision of farm equipment were all part of the seven-year plan.⁹⁰ Amir Asadollah Alam, former Minister of the Interior to Iran, also advocated for was the campaign to eradicate malaria which was successful.⁹¹ For the most part, the Iranian people saw the United States as a helper due to the projects endeavored by David Lilienthal and continued American foreign aid. These feelings would be shared among the other member nations within the pact, as they too received foreign aid through the involvement of Lilienthal and funding.

⁸⁷ "Baghdad Pact Nuclear Training Center," *Science* 127 no. 3302 (April 11, 1958), 806-7.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 807.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Jay Walz, "Iran is Impatient for Development" Newspaper Clipping, David E. Lilienthal Papers, 1958 Correspondence, H-Mi, Box 409, "Iran," Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

The legacy of the pact is far from perfect, but it certainly was not a failure. Despite Soviet aggression, the largest enemy of each nation would prove to be internal unrest. It is questionable how much more Eisenhower could have done to prevent internal uprisings within the Baghdad Pact nations, but his administration did work through the pact to increase economic development in the Northern Tier, block communist intrigue in the region, and pursue its efforts to keep oil flowing to Europe. For these reasons alone, American involvement can be called at least a limited success.

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