

**BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES IN THE GULF:
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, 1892-1979**

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Wales

BY

Faisal Ali Al-Otaibi

March/1996

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The generous assistance of many people and institutions assisted in making this research effort possible. First and foremost is my adviser Vice-Chancellor: Professor Keith Robbins. Without his teaching, guidance, and numerous suggestions and helpful criticism throughout the planning and writing of this dissertation, it would never have been written. I am immensely indebted to my parents and all my family and friends. Their determined assistance and confidence in me have secured me from depressive moments and for that I will always be thankful. Especial gratitude is owed to my wife, Eman. Her patience and support was of immeasurable value. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the University of Kuwait for granting me a scholarship and the University of Wales for providing me the opportunity to do this study.

ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses Britain's and the United States' policies in the Gulf as an external factor of instability in an extremely volatile region. It begins with the 1892 British 'Exclusive Agreements' with the former Trucial emirates and Bahrain and ends with the 1979 fall of Shah Muhammad Reza of Iran.

To illustrate the roles and responsibilities of the two Western powers in Gulf instability the study examines and evaluates Britain's attitude towards internal border disputes and the question of a 'United Arab State' in the region, and the United States' arms policy (Nixon Doctrine) as a response to the supposed Russian threat to the Gulf after the 1971 British departure.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		I
ABSTRACT		II
TABLE OF CONTENTS		III
LIST OF TABLES		V
INTRODUCTION		I
PART I: INSTABILITY IN THE GULF REGION: THE BRITISH LEGACY ----9		
CHAPTER I	BRITAIN'S VICTORY OVER OTHER IMPERIAL POWERS IN THE GULF REGION: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	11
	1.1 THE BEGINNING OF EUROPEAN COLONIALISM	13
	1.2 THE BRITISH ERA	19
CHAPTER II	A 'BRITISH LAKE' BY TREATIES: THE TECHNIQUES OF BRITISH DOMINATION OVER THE GULF REGION	28
	2.1 PROHIBITING WAR AT SEA, PIRACY, SLAVERY, AND ARMS AND AMMUNITION TRADE	29
	2.2 SECURING THE RIGHT OF ARBITRATION BETWEEN THE LOCAL SHAIKHS	37
	2.3 CONTROLLING THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE LOCAL SHAIKHS	39
	2.4 WINNING ALL CONCESSIONS FROM THE SHAIKHS	42
	2.4.1 <i>The Communication Concessions</i>	43
	2.4.2 <i>The Pearling Concessions</i>	45
	2.4.3 <i>The Oil Concessions</i>	46
	CONCLUSION	48
CHAPTER III	BRITAIN AND THE EMERGENCE AND POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF THE UAE, BAHRAIN, QATAR AND KUWAIT	50
	3.1 BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE BRITISH	50
	3.2 THE BRITISH ROLE IN THE EMERGENCE AND POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF THE FOUR GULF EMIRATES	58
	3.2.1 <i>The United Arab Emirates</i>	59
	3.2.2 <i>Bahrain</i>	65
	3.2.3 <i>Qatar</i>	70
	3.2.4 <i>Kuwait</i>	74
	CONCLUSION	80
CHAPTER IV	BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS A 'UNITED ARAB STATE IN THE GULF	82
	CONCLUSION	100
CHAPTER V	BRITAIN'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN KUWAIT'S BORDER DISPUTES WITH NAJD AND IRAQ	102
	5.1 THE BOUNDARY PROBLEMS	103
	5.2 THE ANGLO-OTTOMAN DRAFT CONVENTION OF 1913	105
	5.3 BRITAIN AND THE KUWAIT-NAJD BORDER DISPUTE	114
	5.3.1 <i>The Arguments of the Two Parties</i>	116
	5.3.2 <i>The 1922 Borders Settlement of al-Uqair</i>	117
	5.4 BRITAIN AND THE KUWAIT-IRAQ BORDER DISPUTE	124

	5.4.1 Britain and the Definition of the Kuwait-Iraq Border -----	125
	5.4.2 Britain and Iraq's Major Attempts to Absorb Kuwait -----	132
	5.4.3 Iraq's Arguments and the Responses to them -----	135
CHAPTER VI	BRITAIN'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE BAHRAIN-QATAR AND THE IRAN-UAE DISPUTES -----	142
	6.1 BRITAIN AND THE BAHRAIN-QATAR DISPUTES OVER AL-ZUBARAH AND THE HAWAR ISLANDS -----	143
	6.2 THE IRAN-UAE DISPUTE OVER THE THREE ISLANDS -----	153
	6.2.1 The Iranian Arguments and the UAE's Counter-Arguments	154
	6.2.2 Britain and the Early Iranian Claims to the Three Islands -	157
	6.2.3 The 1971 Iranian Occupation of the Three Islands -----	161
	6.2.4 Britain's Stand over the Iranian Occupation -----	166
PART II:	INSTABILITY IN THE GULF REGION: THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UNITED STATES -----	173
CHAPTER VII	OIL AND THE UNITED STATES-GULF REGION RELATIONSHIP: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW -----	175
	7.1 INTRODUCTION -----	175
	7.2 THE ROLE OF OIL IN THE UNITED STATES-GULF REGION RELATIONSHIP -----	178
	7.2.1 The American Oil Concessions -----	181
	7.2.2 The Western Oil Interests in the Gulf -----	186
	7.2.3 The 1973 Oil Crisis -----	192
CHAPTER VIII	THE BRITISH WITHDRAWAL AND THE SOVIET THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES' INTERESTS IN THE GULF -----	196
	8.1 THE BRITISH WITHDRAWAL -----	196
	8.2 THE SOVIET THREAT -----	204
	8.2.1 SOVIET OPTIONS FOR CONTROL OF THE GULF -----	210
CHAPTER IX	THE RESPONSE OF THE UNITED STATES: THE 'NIXON DOCTRINE' -----	215
CHAPTER X	THE UNITED STATES' GULF ARMS POLICY AND THE STABILITY OF THE REGION -----	227
CONCLUSION -----		241
APPENDIXES -----		248
BIBLIOGRAPHY -----		252
FIRST: IN ENGLISH -----		252
	I UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS -----	252
	II PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS -----	253
	III BOOKS -----	254
	IV ARTICLES -----	259
	V STUDIES -----	265
	VI THESES -----	265
SECOND: IN ARABIC -----		266
	I PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS -----	266
	II BOOKS -----	266
	III ARTICLES -----	267
	IV STUDIES -----	268

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	Major oil companies in the Gulf, 1971 -----	186
Table 2:	Growth in West's dependence on oil, (1960-1970) -----	187
Table 3:	Crude oil consumption in the major industrial countries for the years 1968-71 -----	188
Table 4:	The Life-Span of crude oil reserves in some of the Non-OPEC major producers in 1968 -----	189
Table 5:	Oil production in the Gulf area for selected years (1968-71) -----	190
Table 6:	Distribution of Gulf oil exports in 1971 -----	191
Table 7:	World published proved oil reserves at end 1968 -----	191

Introduction

The Gulf is one of the two arms of the Indian Ocean --the other is the Red Sea. The Gulf lies between *Shatt* al-Arab (Bank or coast al-Arab) at its north-west and *Ras* al-Hadd at the eastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula. In size, the Gulf consists of 238,800 sq km/92,200 sq mi.¹ Apart from the deep and narrow waters of the Hormuz Strait leading into the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea, the Gulf is a shallow sea. The Gulf is bound by the Arabian plateau on the west and the Iranian plain on the east. Today, the Arabian side is composed of the Republic of Iraq, the State of Kuwait, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The eastern side of the Gulf is wholly occupied by the Republic of Iran which gives her the longest coastline among the Gulf states stretching in a south-easterly direction to the Gulf of Oman. The archipelagic State of Bahrain lies between the Peninsula of Qatar and the Saudi mainland.

The Gulf area is, as has been described, "a region that scarcely reaches a state of stability"², or as another author states "a region where change is perhaps the only certainty."³ Geographical location and oil have introduced prestige and wealth to the Gulf, but equally they have brought instability.

¹ David Crystal, et. al., "The Gulf." The Cambridge Encyclopaedia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 497.

² Ahmad Al-Mayyal, The Political Boundaries of the State of Kuwait: A Study in Political Geography (University of London: Unpublished Ph.D., 1986), p. 13.

³ Robert Tucker, "American Power & the Persian Gulf." Commentary 70 (November 1980), p. 25.

Being attracted by its strategic location and economic interests, a long-standing rivalry occurred between the colonial powers over the region. The British and United States governments' relations with the Gulf revealed that these economic and strategic factors were all the time closely interlinked.

The determination of the Britain to protect her commerce with India --the jewel of her imperial crown-- was behind the British coming to the Gulf region. The discovery of oil in the region at the beginning of the current century reinforced the British interest in the Gulf and attracted the United States. Despite her early commercial and missionary contact in the nineteenth century, the American oil companies' Gulf concessions in the 1920s and 1930s were the genuine start of the United States' relations with the region. After the end of the Second World War, the British and United States interests in the Gulf strengthened more by the beginning of the 'Cold War' and India's independence of 1947.

For most of the nineteenth century, the British authorities managed, despite the challenge of other European imperial powers, through treaties and gun-boat diplomacy, to be the predominant power in the Gulf. The British signed the 1798 treaty with Oman; and three years later concluded two more agreements with the Shah of Iran. After destroying the Qawasim's maritime power, Britain signed the 'General Treaty' of 1820 with the Trucial emirates and Bahrain. These treaties remained in force until 1971, when they were substituted by agreements of friendship. To control the waters of the Gulf, the 1820 treaty was supplemented by various other treaties, the most important of

which were the 'Exclusive Agreements' of 1892 with the Shaikhs of the Trucial emirates and Bahrain. In 1899, the British signed a similar treaty with Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait. According to the conditions of the 1890s treaties, the Arab Shaikhs were not allowed to cede, sell, grant, or mortgage any part of their territory to anyone except the British, or to have relations with any foreign power without British government approval.

In 1914 the Great War exploded between the great European powers. As far as the Gulf was concerned, the war left the British, powerful before it, in a supreme position in that region. The Ottoman *Khilafah* had been removed from the scene; the threat from Russia and Germany, for the time being, had been eliminated; and the moment of the United States in the region had not yet come. The Gulf on both sides, the Arabian and Persian, was under British control or influence. Therefore, for all the world, the Gulf looked like a British lake.

In 1908 oil was discovered in Iran. In the inter-war years, oil began to be found on the Arabian side of the Gulf. The British government sought to exclude foreign oil companies from the Gulf areas which had been under her influence. This policy did not satisfy the Americans who claimed that much of their own oil deposits had been depleted during the First World War. The United States government insisted on establishing an 'open door' arrangement to be the basis of negotiation for new oil concessions in the region. As a result, great power rivalry between the two governments was to have serious implications for British hegemony in the Gulf. However, the proficiency of the United States during the First World War and possible future

needs convinced the British government to give way in the Gulf in return for the Anglo-American alliance.

In the period between World Wars One and Two, successive United States governments followed an isolationist foreign policy. Her ultimate refusal to take part in the League of Nations was one of the best examples of this. The explosion of World War II, however, ended America's isolationism. At the beginning of the war the United States sold arms to the allies. Then, in 1941, the Lend-Lease scheme began, and a few months later the United States joined the war against Germany and Japan. In the same year, Russia also entered the war on the side of Britain and France.

The Second World War's Western-Russian alliance against Hitler did not last for long. A new world system emerged after the end of the war. With this new system, the United States and the Soviet Union were the world's two superpowers. The expansionist policy of the Soviets caused considerable anxiety in Britain and the United States. In addition to their threats in Europe, the Russians refused after the end of the war to evacuate Iran as had been agreed (with Britain and the United States) in the Teheran Conference of 1943.

To face the Soviet challenge both the British and the American governments recognised that each country needed the support of the other. While the British needed America's economic and military support, the Americans believed that the British empire was very important to United States security. The New York Times commented after World War Two "that the

British Empire is our first line of defence."⁴ An American official (Philip C. Jessup) stated on 24 April 1950, "We fully agree that [the] UK is and should be [a] world power", and "the more powerful and more worldly the better."⁵ This alliance of the British and the United States against the Russians fuelled the myth of a 'special relationship'.

The fears of United States governments that the Russians would try to spread communism persuaded them to use all possible means to contain the communist regimes within existing territorial limits. Some of the major policies of the United States governments included: the 'Truman Doctrine' (March 1947), a declaration by which the United States announced that it would come to the support of 'free peoples' whenever their freedom was threatened by the communists; the 'Marshall Plan' (June 1947), a scheme to provide American economic aid to Western Europe; and the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in 1949, a military alliance by which the United States pledged to defend Western Europe against the eastern bloc. With these policies and the Soviets' counter policies the Cold War, which persisted until recently, started between the two superpowers.

In January 1944 a distinguished geologist, Everett Leede Goyler, confirmed that the centre of gravity of the world's oil production was shifting from the Caribbean to the Gulf with

⁴ New York Times (6 April 1946).

⁵ Evertt Gleason, et. al., Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1977), vol. III, p. 855.

"reserves of great magnitude" still to be discovered.⁶ Subsequently, the Gulf became very valuable to the West's economy. Maintaining access to the region's oil in either peace or in war has been the major British and American concern in the Gulf. It has been considered by both governments as a very important region in the balance of power. A United States State Department memo concluded after World War II that, "The oil reserve of Saudi Arabia is among the greatest in the World, and it must remain under American control for the dual purpose of supplementing and replacing our dwindling resources and from preventing this power potential from falling into unfriendly hands".⁷ In a memorandum called 'Middle East Policy' circulated to his colleagues in the Cabinet in August 1949, the Labour Foreign Secretary (1945-51) Ernest Bevin described the Middle East (including the Gulf region) as "In peace and war an area of cardinal importance to the United Kingdom, second only to the United Kingdom itself." He added that "Strategically the Middle East is a focal point of communications, a source of oil."⁸

Consequently, the United States started to share with the British the responsibilities of protecting the interests of the Western industrial countries in the Gulf. Her role in the Mossadeq crisis of 1951-3 in Iran pointed to this. Moreover, with her bilateral defence agreement with Iran of 5 March 1959 and

⁶ William Louis, The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, The United States, and Postwar Imperialism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 188.

⁷ A. Miller, "The Influence of Middle East Oil on American Foreign Policy." The Middle East Review 9 (Spring 1977), p. 22.

⁸ Louis, op. cit., pp. 15-6.

Kennedy's pledge of 25 October 1962 to maintain the integrity of Saudi Arabia the United States even took the lead.⁹

The real significant strategic concern of the United States in the Gulf, however, began in 1968. In that year the British announced their intention to withdraw their forces from the region in 1971. The United States government strongly opposed the British withdrawal on the grounds that it would pave the way for the communist regime in the Soviet Union to fill the so-called 'power vacuum' in the region. The Americans believed that the Soviets would seek to control the Gulf's oil and, in turn, the West's industries.

After the British Labour government's announcement, American decision-makers paid greater attention to the Gulf. Their judgement was that the American Administration must carry the burden of protecting the interests of herself and her allies in the region. At that time, direct American involvement was virtually impossible. This was due to American public opinion being against overseas deployment of forces following their unsuccessful involvement in Vietnam. Therefore, the strategy of the United States government was to arm the Shah of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to be able to bear the burden of local defence. This new American policy was indeed the application of the 'Nixon Doctrine'. In practice, however, the United States governments' policy of the 1970s was to support

⁹ George Lenczowski, "Conditions and Prospects for Tranquillity in the Middle East." in George Lenczowski, (ed.), United States Interests in the Middle East, (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1968), p. 98.

her surrogates by a gradual spreading of America's naval forces in the Gulf region and the areas around it.

It can not be disputed that the stability or instability of a given area is an outcome of interaction between internal and external policies. Therefore, this thesis is a study of external factors in the Gulf's instability; namely the roles and responsibilities of Britain and the United States. Britain's policies on land border disputes and her attitude towards a 'United Arab State' in the Gulf, and the United States' arms policy of the 1970s in the region are the policies examined. Internal factors, therefore, are not discussed unless they are directly related to these policies.

The thesis is divided into two main parts. It consists of ten chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. The first six deal with Britain's role and responsibility, as the dominating colonial power in the region for almost a century and a half, for stability in the Gulf. In other words, a return to the roots of the unstable situation which the Gulf states still witness. Therefore, the British part will have the lion's share of this study. The second part examines in four chapters the role of the 1970s United States arms policy in the instability of the region.

The thesis has relied on historical documents from the Public Record Office and India Office Library & Records, official documents and reports, books, papers of specialised agencies, and articles from professional journals and newspapers in both English and Arabic.

Part I: Instability in the Gulf Region: the British Legacy

The threats of other European imperial powers to Britain's interests in the Indian sub-continent were behind her decision to enter into treaty relations with the Gulf states and the Shaikhs of the Arabian tribes whose territories were adjacent to the coast. The major British concern during their long stay in the Gulf was to secure the passage of Britain's ships via the Gulf waters as one of the main routes to India. To ensure the upper hand in the Gulf, the British used all possible means to guarantee the creation and continuity of small, autonomous but weak emirates in the Arabian side of the region. Britain's treaty relations of the nineteenth century, her effort in the post-World War One peace conferences and her role in defining the borders between the Gulf states prevented the establishment of an independent united state on the Arabian side of the Gulf. There are many examples which support this hypothesis, but since it is not possible to analyse all of them, we shall concentrate on those which we believe to be central.

This part is divided into six chapters. The first focuses on British victory over other European imperial powers in the Gulf region since the sixteenth century. The next chapter deals with British governments' techniques to dominate the local Shaikhs. The British role in the emergence and political evolution of the present-day UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait will be the central focus of the third chapter. The fourth examines Britain's promises to the Arabs, represented by Sharief Hussein of Makkah, of an independent and united Arab Kingdom after the end of the Great War. The fifth and sixth chapters discuss the effect of the British

policies on some of the major problems or conflicts which still carry a great potential threat to Gulf stability.

Chapter I Britain's Victory over Other Imperial Powers in the Gulf Region: Historical Overview

Sir Arnold Wilson wrote in 1928 in his famous book The Persian Gulf: "No arm of the sea has been, or is of greater interest, alike to the geologist and archaeologist, the historian and the geographer, the merchant, the statesman, and the student of strategy than the inland water known as the Persian Gulf."¹⁰ The strategic location of the Gulf enabled it to be one of the major trade routes linking East with West. Through it the goods of India, China, and the Eastern Archipelago travelled, looking for markets in Persia and the Levant, and back passed the goods of Arabia, Persia, and Europe to India and the Far East. Therefore, the European great powers never seemed very interested in the inland area of the Gulf. Their concern was restricted to the coastal region. As a result, there has been a struggle for power in the Gulf in which the local (the Arabs) and the regional powers (the Ottomans and Persians), as well as the European powers: Portuguese, Dutch, French, Russians, Germans and British, all participated. Amongst the Europeans, the British in particular played a major role in the Gulf's politics.

As far as the regional powers are concerned, the Ottoman Sultan claimed, as a *Khalifah* (Ruler) of Muslims, the leadership of the Muslim world. Accordingly, the Arabian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula regions, as parts of that world, came, at least nominally, under Ottoman rule. As the British Ambassador in

¹⁰ Arnold Wilson, The Persian Gulf: an Historical Sketch from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century (London: Allen and Unwin, 1928), p. 1.

Turkey once stated the Ottomans felt that "as the dominant Islamic power they have undefined right to bring under their allegiance and to protect the small Arab tribes in the Arabian Peninsula."¹¹ However, in practice the Ottomans were the leaders of the large *Sunni* section of the Muslim world only.¹² The other major section was the *Shia* world, of which Persia was the centre.¹³ Persia was transferred from the *Sunni* to *Shia* world in the time of Shah Ismail Al-Safavi, the founder of the Safavids dynasty in Persia in 1501. With the rise of the Safavids the relations between the Ottoman and the Persian empires were characterised by a long and severe disagreement and hatred.¹⁴

Although following the details of this dispute would divert the study from its aim, an important point needs to be mentioned here. The inconclusive wars of the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries wasted the two empires' resources and exposed them to commercial penetration by the European powers which led to their subsequent helpless manipulation in the nineteenth century.¹⁵ Furthermore, when the European powers were finding in themselves not only the capability but also the motives to enlarge

¹¹ John Wilkinson, Arabia's Frontiers: the Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert (London: I. B. Tauris, 1991), p. 85.

¹² *Sunni* is one who follows the path of *Sunna* (the words and deeds) of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). The majority sect in Islam is *Sunna*.

¹³ The Arabic word *shiai* means partisan. The *Shia* split from the Islamic community in their belief that the *Khilafah* should have gone to Ali, Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, and his descendants.

¹⁴ The rule of the Safavids last until 1736. H. Roemer, "The Safavid Period," in Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart, (eds.), The Cambridge History of Iran (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), vol. XI, p. 189.

¹⁵ George Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East, from the Rise of Islam to Modern Times (London: Methuen, 1964), p. 58.

their mastery to forgotten areas of the world such as the Gulf, no one in that region held sufficient power to deter a foreign invasion. The Gulf was a power vacuum in a world where power ultimately decided the destiny of nations.

1.1 The Beginning of European Colonialism

In 1497 the Cape of Good Hope was discovered to the Europeans by the Portuguese Navigator Vasco da Gama. Da Gama's expedition paved the way for the establishment of the first European empire in India and the East by the Portuguese.¹⁶ For the Gulf region, the Portuguese attacks started in 1506. By 1515, the Portuguese had occupied the strategic and trading posts of Muscat, Hormuz, and Bahrain. By governing these cities the Portuguese controlled the Gulf trade. Portugal's triumph in the East was so great that their kings soon came to describe themselves as 'Lord of the Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of India, Ethiopia, Arabia and Persia'.¹⁷ The Portuguese victory attracted the competition and enmity of stronger rivals, the Dutch, English and French.

From the end of the sixteenth century the Portuguese faced serious difficulties that resulted in the decline of their empire in the Gulf. In 1580, the Spanish annexed their country. The Spanish rule lasted until 1640. The rise of the Safavids in Persia

¹⁶ In 1524 Vasco da Gama was sent as Viceroy to India. Crystal, "Vasco da Gama," The Cambridge Encyclopaedia, p. 450.

¹⁷ For more details of the Portuguese voyage in the Gulf region see Wilson, op. cit., pp. 111-21; and Donald Hawley, The Trucial States (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970), pp. 69-73.

and the Yaaribah in Oman and the arrival of the English to the Gulf waters were other important factors that helped to bring the Portuguese supremacy in the Gulf to an end. The Portuguese had been evicted from Bahrain in 1602.¹⁸ In 1603, the Persian Shah appealed for help to the French government, and to the English in 1610.¹⁹ In the coming years, the Persians were determined to use the English against the Portuguese. The mutual interests of England and Persia eased their co-operation against the Portuguese.²⁰ In 1619-20 the Persians took over Ras al-Khaimah.²¹ In January 1622 a joint successful Anglo-Persian expedition ousted the Portuguese from Hormuz --their headquarters in the region.²² The fall of Hormuz marked the beginning of the end to the Portuguese control in the Gulf. In 1640 the Portuguese lost Basrah, today's second largest city of Iraq, to the Ottomans.²³ Finally, the Yaaribah expelled them on 23 January 1650 from Muscat, their last stronghold, which indicated that their influence in the region was effectively ended.²⁴

¹⁸ John Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1795-1880 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 51.

¹⁹ W. Hunter, History of British India (London: 1919), vol. I, p. 329.

²⁰ Badraddéan Al-Khusousy, Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf (Al-Kuwait: That al-Salassel, 1978), vol. I, p. 29.

²¹ Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 51.

²² Reader Bullard, Britain and the Middle East (London, Hutchinson University Library, 1951), p. 26; Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 51; and Hunter, op. cit., p. 329.

²³ John Marlowe, The Persian Gulf in the Twentieth Century (London: The Cresset Press, 1962), p. 7.

²⁴ Wilson, op. cit., p. 155; and Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 8.

The Portuguese decline was almost simultaneous with the arrival of the Dutch power. In 1581, the Spanish rule over the Netherlands came to an end. Consequently, the Dutch had begun to develop as a great maritime and commercial state. In 1602 they established the 'Dutch East India Company', which would be the basis of their future overseas empire. In the following years, the Dutch became one of the principal rivals to the Portuguese in the Far Eastern trade. The others were the English and the French. However, after the expelling of the Portuguese from the Gulf the Dutch proved commercially very successful. The Dutch commercial success persuaded the English Parliament to pass in 1651 the Navigation Act, the aim of which was to destroy the Dutch commercial trade and fleet. In the following year, England declared war against the Dutch state.²⁵

By the 1750s the Dutch began to yield to the British. They withdrew their factory at Basrah in 1752.²⁶ A year later they also closed their factory at Bushire.²⁷ In 1759 the Dutch were forced to give up their only settlement on the Persian mainland at Bandar Abbas.²⁸ The abandonment of Kharg island, near the head of the Gulf, in 1765, marked the end of their dominance in that region.²⁹

²⁵ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 165; and Abdul-Aziz Ibrahim, Britain and Oman Coast Emirates: A Documentary Study (Al-Riyad: Darat al-Malik Abdul-Aziz 27, 1982), p. 62.

²⁶ Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 54.

²⁷ Al-Khusousy, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

²⁸ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 181; and Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 54.

²⁹ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 181; Hawley, *op. cit.*, p. 76; and Marlowe, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

It was, finally, France and England who struggled for mastery in the Indian Ocean areas. France, under Louis XIV (r. 1643-1715), had begun to plan the creation of a maritime commercial empire. In 1602, France established the 'French East India Company'. With regard to the Gulf, she sent an embassy to Persia in 1664 and obtained trading-rights at the Persian cities of Bandar Abbas and Isfahan.³⁰ In 1708, the Shah signed a commercial treaty with the French government by which Persia granted some capitulations to France.³¹ Moreover, the governments of France and Persia signed in 1715 a new treaty of Friendship and Commerce.³² However, France's plans in the Indian Ocean areas were blocked by her continuous wars, especially the Seven Years War (1756-63) between herself and Britain.³³ Though, the French lost most of their possessions in India as a result of their defeat, this had by no means extinguished their interest in the affairs of the Indian Ocean.

The Anglo-French struggle in the Gulf came to a peak with the French invasion of Egypt in 1798. On 12 April the French government decided to send an expedition to conquer Egypt, since a direct invasion across the Channel was considered to be too difficult. A decree of the French Directory instructed Napoleon Bonaparte, the future Emperor of the French (1804-14), to expel the "English from all their possessions in the Orient

³⁰ Ibrahim, Britain and Oman Coast Emirates, p. 65.

³¹ The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record, compiled, translated, and edited by J. Hurewitz. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), vol. I, pp. 49-55.

³² Ibid., pp. 57-8.

³³ Muhammad Murad, Britain and Arabs: the British Colonial History in the Arab World (Dimashq: Dar Tlas, 1989), p. 32.

which he can reach and shall in particular destroy all their factories on the Red Sea."³⁴ To win friends, Napoleon proclaimed himself the protector of Islam and saviour of the Egyptian people on 2 July 1798, after his entry to Alexandria, today's second largest city of Egypt.³⁵

These activities persuaded the British to take counter-measures. Aiming to protect their interests in India and to keep the road to it safe, the British began a new negotiation with the Sultan of Muscat and Oman and the new Qajar Dynasty (rulers of Persia since 1796). The British strategy was that no help should be given to the French by the local authorities as long as animosity dominated their relations with Britain. The British Governor-General of India, in his instruction letter of 10 October 1799, ordered the British negotiator, Captain John Malcolm to "act vigorously and heartily against the French in the event of their attempting at any time to penetrate to India by any route in which it may be practicable for the King of Persia to oppose their progress."³⁶

On 12 October 1798, the Sultan of Muscat signed the *Cawlnamah* or written engagement. According to Article 3 of the *Cawlnamah*, the Sultan promised that, as long as war continued between Britain and France, he would never, throughout all his territories, give the French "a place to fix or seat themselves in,

³⁴ Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 115-6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-7.

³⁶ Article 13 of the Governor-General of India's instructions to Captain John Malcolm. *Ibid.*, pp. 118 -22.

nor shall they get even ground to stand upon."³⁷ On 18 January 1800, a new agreement signed between the two parties affirmed the 1798 *Cawlnamah*.³⁸

As far as Persia was concerned, the Treaties of Alliance and Commerce were concluded on 28 January 1801. Article 5 of the Political Treaty declared that "Should it ever occur that an army of the French nation, actuated by design and deceit, attempts to settle with a view of establishing themselves on any of the islands or shores of Persia, a conjunct force shall be appointed by the two high contracting States to act in co-operation for their expulsion and extirpation, and to destroy and put an end to the foundation of their treason." The same Article added that if any French men "express a wish or desire to obtain a place of residence or dwelling on any of the islands or shores of the Kingdom of Persia that they may there raise the standard of abode or settlement, such request or representation shall not be consented" by the government of Persia.³⁹

All France's schemes for establishing an empire in the East were, however, brutally interrupted by her quick defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1. Subsequently, the French

³⁷ Translation of the *Cawlnamah* in A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, compiled by C. Aitchison, (Delhi: Government of India Press, 1933), vol. XI, pp. 287-8; and Hurewitz, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 124-5.

³⁸ Agreement entered into by Imam of Muscat with Captain John Malcolm. Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XI, p. 288.

³⁹ Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XIII, pp. 45-53; and Hurewitz, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 122-4.

government's imperial activity centred mostly on her important colonies in north-west Africa.⁴⁰

1.2 The British Era

From the second half of the sixteenth century, England emerged as a great maritime and major European power. In 1601, the English 'East India Company' was established for the purpose of trading with the East Indies. In 1608, the Company founded a trading station at Surat, on the western coast of India.⁴¹ In 1616, the Company was permitted to trade into Persia by Shah Abbas I.⁴² In the following years a few factories were opened at the important cities of Persia, such as Shiraz and Isfahan in 1617 and Jask in 1619.⁴³ Also, a factory was established by the Company at Basrah in about 1640.⁴⁴

Up to the mid-eighteenth century, the East India Company had been a purely commercial enterprise. Britain's victory in the Seven Years War, however, brought an important change to the Company's character. It had come out of the war as a territorial power in the Indian sub-continent, therefore political considerations became relevant to the Company's decisions and policies. The Company began to work for the security of its naval routes to India. As one of these routes, the Gulf started to hold a

⁴⁰ Kirk, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

⁴¹ Marlowe, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁴² Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, p. 50.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 50-1.

⁴⁴ Bullard, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

strategic importance it had earlier lacked.⁴⁵ In 1784, the British government became officially responsible for the political, military, and financial supervision of the British assets in India. In the words of a leading authority on the modern history of the Gulf: "At the close of the eighteenth century an era in British relations with the Persian Gulf was coming to an end, an era in which commercial interests had predominated, and another, in which political considerations were to become paramount, was about to dawn."⁴⁶ In September 1858, the British government took over the duties of the East India Company.⁴⁷

As we shall see in more detail in the following chapter, the British government, during the nineteenth century, signed several treaties with almost all the Shaikhs of the Arabian side of the Gulf. The most important of them were the treaties of the last decade of the century. The misgivings of the British government about the increasing Russian, French and German activities in the Gulf persuaded her to seek the conclusion of the 1891 treaty with Muscat, the Exclusive Agreements of March 1892 with Bahrain and the Trucial emirates, and the 1899 treaty with Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait.

These moves, which Britain had taken to confirm her influence in the Gulf waters, were disliked by her competitors.

⁴⁵ Wilson, op. cit., p. 169; and V. Moidu, "A Survey of British Policy in the Persian Gulf: from the Early Days to Mid-Twentieth Century," Journal of Indian History 56 (1978), pp. 366-7.

⁴⁶ John Kelly, "The Legal and Historical Basis of the British Position in the Persian Gulf," St. Antony's Papers, No. 4, Middle Eastern Affairs, Number one, (1958), p. 120.

⁴⁷ Marlowe, op. cit., p. 11.

The Ottoman government viewed them as an encroachment by the British on their territorial sovereignty over the Arabian coast of the Gulf, which they were, at that time, intending to make more firm. The 1871 expedition to al-Hasa (the Eastern province of present-day Saudi Arabia) was an obvious sign of the new determination of the Ottomans.⁴⁸ The British occupation of Cyprus in 1878 and Egypt (including the Suez Canal) in 1882 prejudiced her further in the eyes of the Ottomans.⁴⁹

The British treaties' restrictions on the local Shaikhdoms not to give any facilities to any power other than Britain or British representatives persuaded her European rivals that conducting their policies in the Gulf through the Ottoman government was easier than to deal directly with the local Shaikhs.⁵⁰

Since the time of Peter the Great (r. 1682-1725), the Russians worked hard at getting a warm-water harbour. With regards to the Gulf, the Russian Consul at Baghdad was scheming to secure a Russian port and naval base.⁵¹ In July-August of 1898, Count Vladimir Kapnist, the nephew of the Russian Ambassador to Vienna, had also applied to the Ottoman government for a railway concession. The concession was supposed to run from the Syrian port of Tripoli (present-day

⁴⁸ For further discussion on the 1871 Ottoman expedition to al-Hasa see Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, chp. XV; and Abdul-Aziz Ibrahim, Princes and Invaders, the Story of Local Boundary and Sovereignty in the Gulf: A Documentary Study (London: Dar Al Saqi, 1991), chp. I.

⁴⁹ Kirk, op. cit., p. 90.

⁵⁰ Foreign Office Confidential Print, The Affairs of Arabia, 1905-1906, edited by Robin Bidwell, (London: Frank Cass, 1971), vol. I, p. vii.

⁵¹ Kirk, op. cit., p. 89.

Lebanon) on the Mediterranean Sea to Kuwait on the Gulf waters (the 'Kapnist Project').⁵²

As far as Germany is concerned, her commercial influence by the end of the nineteenth century was a dominant force in Turkey, and she was a source of a large share of Ottoman armament demands.⁵³ The Germans had also sent a warship on a visit to Muscat in 1894 and opened a consulate at Bushire in 1897.⁵⁴ Two years later, the German government put to the Ottoman government their proposals for the extension of the Anatolian Railway to the head-waters of the Gulf in Kuwait (the 'Berlin-Baghdad Railway').⁵⁵

Britain, with her preoccupation with the defence of her Indian empire, could not view with indifference the Russian and German schemes in the Gulf. In the words of an American specialist on this episode of Gulf history, the Russian and German efforts raised issues concerning 'defense of India'.⁵⁶ In January 1899, Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India (1899-1905), sent the British Political Resident in the Gulf (1897-1900), Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm Meade, to conclude a secret agreement with Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait in which he undertook

⁵² Ravinder Kumar, India and the Persian Gulf Region, 1858-1907: A Study in British Imperial Policy (India: Asia Publishing House, 1965) p. 141; and Ahmad Abu-Hakimah, The Modern History of Kuwait, 1750-1965 (London: Luzac, 1983), pp. 117-8.

⁵³ Kirk, op. cit., p. 92; Muhammad Anis, The Ottoman State and the Arab East, 1514-1914 (Al-Qahira: Maktabat al-Anglo al-Massriah, 1985), p. 211.

⁵⁴ Bidwell, The Affairs of Arabia, vol. I, p. xvii.

⁵⁵ For further discussion on the 'Baghdad Railway' see Kumar, op. cit., pp. 151-93; and Briton Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 187-234.

⁵⁶ Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 3.

to grant no future leases or concessions to any foreign powers without the approval of the British government.

Although Britain issued a declaration pointing out her determination to preserve her position in the region. Lord Cranborne, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Foreign Office, stated in Parliament in 1902, "Our position in the Persian Gulf, both commercially and politically, is one of a very special character, and His Majesty's Government has always considered that the ascendancy of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf was the foundation of British policy. This is not merely a question of theory; it is a statement of fact."⁵⁷ It was not until the beginning of 1903, that Britain started to think about using force to preclude the Germans or the Russians from enjoying the use of a factory or a port in the Gulf. Lord Lansdowne, Britain's Foreign Secretary (1900-5), stated very clearly on 5 May 1903 before the House of Lords that: "our policy should be directed in the first place to protect and promote British trade in those waters.... I say it without hesitation, we should regard the establishment of a naval base, or of a fortified port, in the Persian Gulf by any other power as a grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal."⁵⁸

The Russian and German efforts to develop interests in the Gulf did not, however, worry all the British officials. On 18

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 248.

⁵⁸ Hurewitz, op. cit., vol. I, p. 507. Lord Curzon, then Under-Secretary, wrote in 1892 that "I should regard the concession by any Power of a port upon the Persian Gulf to Russia as a deliberate insult to Britain, as a wanton rupture of the status quo, and as an international provocation to war; and I should impeach the British minister who was guilty of acquiescing in such a surrender as a traitor to his country." Kirk, op. cit., pp. 88-9.

February 1898 Admiral I. A. Beaumont of the Admiralty agreed that Kuwait was a good harbour, but "it is on the way to nowhere and I cannot conceive why the Russians should desire to have it."⁵⁹ On 1 February 1900, Lord George Hamilton, Secretary of State for India (1895-1903) stated "I say frankly that I cannot see what harm would be done to British interests by Germany's having a railway terminus in the Persian Gulf."⁶⁰

In 1899, however, Britain was involved in the Boer War. It is a name given to the South African War, fought between the British forces and the Boer descendants of Dutch settlers in Orange Free State and Transvaal. The war was caused by the resentment of the Boers, under the leadership of Paulus Kruger (1825-1904), at the colonial policy of the British government. The war was ended on 31 May 1902 by the Treaty of Vereeniging. It had demonstrated how Britain stood alone in the world political arena. An argument soon followed on the importance of coming to agreement with other powers.

Within seven years of the beginning of the new century the long-standing and bitter conflicts of interest between Britain on the one hand, and her historic adversaries in Asia --Russia and France-- on the other, were abandoned in place of their increasing fear of the expansionist policy of Germany. The Anglo-French negotiations climaxed in the 1904 Entente Cordiale, by which their old differences in the Middle East as a

⁵⁹ Admiral Beaumont to Foreign Office. Foreign Office Confidential Print, The Affairs of Kuwait, 1896-1905, edited by Robin Bidwell. (London: Frank Cass, 1971), vol. I, part I, p. 27.

⁶⁰ Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 192.

whole were settled. Above all, the two powers settled their differences over Egypt and Morocco. The British control of Egypt was recognised and in return France was given a free hand in Morocco.⁶¹ That the Anglo-French Agreement helped to remove at once "all risk of a quarrel between the United Kingdom and France" was Sir Edward Grey's, the Foreign Secretary (1905-16), assessment in 1911.⁶²

After her defeat in the Japanese War of 1904-5, Russia was more ready to compromise. The Anglo-Russian disputes over Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet were solved by the concluding of the 1907 convention.⁶³ Without consulting the Persian government, Britain and Russia outlined their spheres-of-interest in north and south Persia respectively, leaving a no-man's-land between them.⁶⁴ By the 1907 agreement, the Russian and British governments succeeded in controlling all sources of disagreement over the Persian question. Grey stated to the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) that "I believe the Anglo-Russian

⁶¹ Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 507-10.

⁶² Grey's statement to the British Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) on 26 May 1911. G. Gooch and H. Temperley, (eds.). British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914 (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1926-38), vol. XI, p. 782.

⁶³ Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 538-41.

⁶⁴ For the Persian point of view see E. Browne, The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), chp. VI, pp. 172-195. Habl al-Matin (Strong Robe), a Tehran newspaper--which reflected the nationalist opinion in Iran, noted "To-day it is necessary that the Foreign Minister of Persia should clearly inform the two Powers [Britain and Russia] that no Agreement having reference to Persia and concluded without her knowledge is valid or entitled to the slightest consideration; and that any Power desiring to enter into relations with Persia must address itself directly to the Persians themselves, no one else having any right to intervene in any way." Habl al-Matin, 11 September 1907. Quoted in Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

Agreement has been of enormous relief to the Government of India." ⁶⁵

With the turn of the twentieth century, the Ottoman regime was too weak to challenge the ever-growing British influence in the Gulf. While the Ottoman authority over the region was nominally asserted, the British strengthened their influence there by persuading the Shaikhs of the Gulf Coast to undertake to give them the rights and privileges for oil and pearling concessions, and postal and telegraph services. In 1912 an understanding was reached between the Ottoman and British governments in which they agreed not to extend the Berlin-Baghdad Railway beyond Basrah to the head-waters of the Gulf without Britain's consent. The Ottomans also accepted the British request to police the waters of the Gulf and agreed that Britain should have the right to navigate on the Shatt al-Arab and share in the control of the port of Basrah. Eventually this reality was written into an Anglo-Ottoman Draft Convention of 1913. ⁶⁶

In conclusion, the long history of British diplomatic and military policies in the Gulf had achieved success. The Portuguese and the Dutch powers were expelled militarily in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries respectively, and they never came back. The British forces played a major role in these actions. After a long rivalry with the French and the Russians,

⁶⁵ Gooch and Temperley, op. cit., vol. XI, pp. 788-9.

⁶⁶ Marlowe, op. cit., pp. 39-40. The 1913 convention is in LP&S/18/B381. The convention is a collection of documents signed on 29 July 1913, originally a French version. The prologue of the 1913 Convention stressed that it formed a wide settlement to Britain's and the Ottoman empire's differences in the Gulf region. The convention reproduced in Hurewitz, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 567-70.

the British won them to their side in the 1904 Anglo-French Entente and the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907. As a result of this rapprochement, the French and Russian activities in the Gulf ceased to disturb the British. The two governments acknowledged the British special interest in the region. In the following few years, the British and Ottoman governments negotiated an overall settlement for their differences in the Gulf. In 1913, they concluded the Anglo-Ottoman Convention. Though unratified the convention showed Britain's regional dominance over the Ottoman and the German empires. The First World War, however, gave the British the chance to complete what they had started in diplomacy. With the defeats of the Ottoman and German powers, Britain was the sole master of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula regions.

Chapter II **A 'British Lake' by Treaties: the Techniques of British Domination over the Gulf Region**

Lord Curzon in his Persia and the Persian Question (1892) said: "The Pacification of the Persian Gulf in the past and the maintenance of the *status quo* are the exclusive work of this country [Britain]; and the British Resident at Bushire is to this hour the umpire to whom all parties appeal, and who has by treaties been entrusted with the duty of preserving the peace of the waters."⁶⁷

To secure the access of their ships sailing to and from India the decision-makers of the British government realised that Britain needed to control not only India, but also the roads to it. This belief drove successive British authorities to use all possible policies available to them to bring the Gulf, as one of these roads, under British mastery. The most common and general policies the British followed were prohibiting war at sea, piracy, slavery, and arms and ammunition trade; securing the right of arbitration in the local disputes; controlling the foreign relations of the local Shaikhs and winning all concessions from them. It is worth mentioning here that these policies were, in practice, interconnected and interwoven and splitting them is only for reasons of clarity.

⁶⁷ Qouted in Denis Wright. "The Changed Balance of Power in the Persian Gulf," Asian Affairs 60 (October 1973). p. 255.

Although the British Indian government has used both force and diplomacy to achieve its objectives in the Gulf region, this chapter will concentrate only on its treaty relations with the local forces. During her long stay in the region Britain signed many treaties with the Shaikhs, but only those which have relations with the aim of this chapter will be mentioned and discussed in the following pages.

2.1 Prohibiting War at Sea, Piracy, Slavery, and Arms and Ammunition Trade

Towards the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, the increased attacks (and competition) exercised by the Qawasim's ships in the Gulf started to be a real threat to British trade with India. These operations persuaded the British Indian government that the best way to face this new threat was to send its maritime forces to the Gulf waters. Indeed, just as the activities of the great European powers, especially the French, influenced the British government to sign a number of treaties with the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman and Persia, the challenge of the Qawasim convinced the British that they must carry out strong action against the so-called 'piratical Shaikhs'.⁶⁸

Before examining British policy in confronting the so-called 'piracy', a brief word about the basis of the accusation is necessary. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the decision-makers of the British Indian government classified any

⁶⁸ Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 99.

attack in the Gulf waters as an act of piracy. The Qawasim, who were involved in wide trading in and around the Gulf, were the number one target for these allegations. In recent times, the issue has become more controversial. Many modern historians of the region have challenged the use of the word piracy in this context and the accusations that the Qawasim were 'pirates'. They have argued that what the British called piracy was really another form of warfare, no different from what they themselves did. A former British Ambassador in the Middle East questioned: "Were the Qawasim in truth congenital pirates? Or were they rather established maritime traders whose merchant fleets posed an obstacle to the [British] East India Company in its aim of cornering the profitable sea-trade between India and the Gulf?" He added: "Who, in fact, were the real pirates?"⁶⁹ The Qawasim themselves rejected the British and others' accusations. The present Ruler of Sharjah, Shaikh Sultan bin Muhammad al-Qasimi, wrote in a Ph.D. study that, "Every misfortune that befell a British ship inside the Gulf --and sometimes outside it-- was attributed to the 'piracy' of the Qawasim....Rumours were taken as facts and compounded by other dubious hearsay, and were submitted as reports by various British agents who tried to trace every event and prove it to be the work of the mischievous Qawasim 'pirates'. When the culprits could not be identified, it was reported without a shade of doubt that it was the Qawasim who were responsible. When Agents and Residents wanted to

⁶⁹ Glen Balfour-Paul, The End of Empire in the Middle East: Britain's Relinquishment of Power in Her Last Three Arab Dependencies, Cambridge Middle East Library 25 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 98.

justify a certain action or to defend their policy or behaviour regarding an incident, the Qawasim provided a convenient scapegoat and the blame was laid on them. All these accusations were part of a deliberate policy which can only be described as the 'Big Lie'.⁷⁰

Under the pretext of suppressing piracy and the slave-trade the East India Company dispatched three naval expeditions to the Gulf.⁷¹ The three expeditions were undertaken in 1806, 1809 and 1818. Ras al-Khaimah, the Headquarters of Al-Qawasim, was totally crushed in 1819. The British navy then went to al-Hamrah, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ajman, Sharjah and Dubai where they smashed the defences of the emirates and burned their ships. Before the British force left for Bombay in March 1820 they destroyed the Qawasim's ships which were landing or hiding in the islands of Qais, Lingah, Mughu, Asalu and Kangun.⁷² As a result of this devastation, the Arab Shaikhs agreed in January 1820 to sign an agreement known as the 'General Treaty with the Arab Tribes of the Persian Gulf'.⁷³

By forcing the Arab Shaikhs to sign the General Treaty the British succeeded, theoretically, in prohibiting war, piracy and slave trading in the Gulf waters. Article 4 of the 1820 treaty stated that the contracting tribes "shall be at peace with the

⁷⁰ Sultan Al-Qasimi. The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf (London: Croom Helm, 1986). p. 32.

⁷¹ Anis, op. cit., p. 198; and Abdul-Aziz A. Ibrahim, The British Peace in the Arabian Gulf, 1858-1914: A Documentary Study (Al-Riyad: Darat al-Malik Abdul-Aziz 26, 1982), p. 15.

⁷² Al-Khusousy, op. cit., p. 207.

⁷³ R/15/1/736.

British Government, and shall not fight with each other." The Shaikhs promised in Article 1 not to commit any acts of "plunder and piracy by land and sea." Article 2 warned any Arab individual belonging to the signatory tribes that if he attack "any that pass by land or sea of any nation...he shall be accounted an enemy of all mankind, and shall be held to have forfeited both life and goods." Article 7 added "If any tribe, or others, shall not desist from plunder and piracy, the friendly Arabs shall act against them according to their ability and circumstances." Article 9 dealt with the slave trade. The Article declared that "The carrying off of slaves, men, women, or children, from the coasts of Africa or elsewhere, and the transporting them in vessels, is plunder and piracy, and the friendly Arabs shall do nothing of this nature."

On 21 May 1835, the Shaikhs signed a maritime truce in which they pledged to end offences by sea against one another during the pearl diving season.⁷⁴ The signatories of the treaty were henceforth referred to as Trucial Shaikhs and the coast as Trucial instead of piratical.⁷⁵ The 1835 truce was renewed every year until June 1843, when the Shaikhs agreed that the maritime truce would last for 10 years.⁷⁶ In 1853 a 'Treaty of Maritime peace in Perpetuity' was signed under British auspices.⁷⁷ By the

⁷⁴ The text is in Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, Appendix II, pp. 840-1.

⁷⁵ Anis, op. cit., p. 198.

⁷⁶ Terms of a Maritime Truce for Ten Years agreed upon by the Chiefs of the Arabian Coast, under the mediation of the British Resident in the Gulf, 1 June 1843. Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XI, pp. 250-1.

⁷⁷ Treaty of Peace in Perpetuity agreed upon by the Chiefs of the Arabian Coast on behalf of themselves, their heirs and successors, under the mediation of the British Resident, 1853. R/15/1/736.

first Article of the treaty the Shaikhs promised "a complete cessation of hostilities at sea...for evermore."

In January 1847 an imperial *firman*, or decree, was issued by the Ottoman government prohibiting engagement in the African slave trade.⁷⁸ News of granting the *firman* encouraged the Trucial Chiefs to do the same. The Shaikhs promised, in the same year, to abolish the slave trade. They pledged to prohibit "the exportation of slaves from the coasts of Africa and elsewhere."⁷⁹ The 1847 agreement also granted British ships of war the right to search, seize and confiscate any vessels belonging to the contracted emirates that breached this agreement. The commitments of the 1847 agreement were repeated by the Shaikhs in 1856.⁸⁰ In the period between August 1872 and March 1873, all the Trucial Shaikhs repeated their 1847 and 1856 promises to suppress the slave trade.⁸¹ Moreover, at the end of November 1902 the rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman undertook to "prohibit the

⁷⁸ Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 587. Moreover, an Anglo-Ottoman Slave Trade Treaty was concluded on 26 August 1881. The two parties agreed to co-operate for the abolition of the African slave trade. Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XIII, pp. 20-8.

⁷⁹ Engagement entered into by Shaikh Sultan bin Saqr, Chief of Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah, for the abolition of the African slave trade in his ports, 1847. The Shaikhs of Dubai, Ajman, Umm al-Qawain, and Abu Dhabi also signed the agreement. R/15/1/736. The Indian government sent presents of gold and silver watches, Kashmir shawls, and telescopes to the Shaikhs in return for their concessions. Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 589, note: 2.

⁸⁰ Further engagement entered into by Shaikh Sultan bin Saqr with the British government, for the more effectual suppression of the Slave Trade--1856. A similar engagement was entered into by the Shaikhs of Umm al-Qawain, Dubai, Ajman, and Abu Dhabi. R/15/1/736.

⁸¹ Letters of the Shaikhs of Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain and Dubai, to the acting Political Resident, Lewis Pelly. L/P&S/3/84. For the letters of the Shaikhs of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah and Abu Dhabi, to the acting Resident see Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XI, p. 256.

importation of arms for sale into...our territories, or the exportation therefrom."⁸²

The Bahraini Shaikhs also engaged not to commit any act of war, piracy or slavery. They accepted the 1820 General Treaty and the Slave Trade Agreements of 1847 and 1856.⁸³ On 31 May 1861, the Shaikh of Bahrain promised in a new treaty with the British government to refrain from "all maritime aggressions of every description, from the prosecution of war, piracy, and slavery by sea" in return for "the support of the British Government in the maintenance of the security of my own possessions against similar aggressions directed against them by the Chiefs and tribes of this Gulf."⁸⁴ In 1872, Bahrain confirmed its previous anti-slave trade engagements.⁸⁵ On 30 April 1898, the Shaikh agreed that "the importation of arms and ammunition into the islands of Bahrain, and the exportation of the same therefrom, is absolutely prohibited."⁸⁶

On 12 September 1868, Shaikh Muhammad bin Thani agreed to sign an agreement with the British Resident in the Gulf, Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, whereby the Shaikh promised that "on no pretence whatsoever will I at any time put to sea with

⁸² Agreement for the Prohibition of the Arms Traffic. 1902. R/15/1/736.

⁸³ For the 1820 General Treaty see R/15/1/736; and for the texts of the 1847 and 1856 agreements see L/P&S/20/C158D.

⁸⁴ Article II of the 1861 Friendly Agreement between Britain and Bahrain in L/P&S/20/C158D.

⁸⁵ For the 24 August 1872 engagement of the Bahraini Shaikh see L/P&S/3/84.

⁸⁶ A proclamation and notification by the Shaikh of Bahrain prohibiting the importation and exportation of arms into and from Bahrain. 30 April 1898. L/P&S/20/C158D.

hostile intention."⁸⁷ During the First World War a new treaty was signed between the British government and the Qatari Shaikh, Abdullah bin Jasim.⁸⁸ According to Article 1 of the 1916 treaty the Shaikh undertook that he would "co-operate with the High British Government in the suppression of the slave-trade and piracy and generally in the maintenance of the Maritime Peace." In a separate proclamation announced on the same day of the treaty the Shaikh also declared that "the importation and sale of arms, cartridges, and all munitions, into our territory, and the exportation of the same to other places, are absolutely prohibited."⁸⁹

As far as Kuwait is concerned, Shaikh Sabah bin Jabir, on behalf of his father the Ruler, announced in April 1841 Kuwait's adherence to the Maritime Truce for one year.⁹⁰ This was the first official contact between the British government and the Al-Sabah family.⁹¹ The Shaikh agreed to "the maintenance of truce and peace against the exercise of aggression at sea." Britain did not ask Kuwait to renew her adherence to the Maritime Truce in the following year or to join the 1853 Treaty of Maritime peace

⁸⁷ Aitchison, *op. cit.*, vol. XI, p. 255. Bin or Ibn means in Arabic son of: e.g. Ibn Sabah, meaning the son of Sabah.

⁸⁸ Treaty between the British government and Shaikh Abdullah bin Jasim of Qatar, 3 November 1916. L/P&S/20/C158E.

⁸⁹ Proclamation by Shaikh Abdullah bin Jasim. 3 November 1916. L/P&S/20/C158E.

⁹⁰ Adherence of the Shaikh of Kuwait to Maritime Truce for one year. 24 April 1841. L/P&S/10/606.

⁹¹ In 1809, Abdullah bin Sabah (r. 1756-1814) offered his help to the British expedition against the Qawasim of Ras al-Khaimah. Bidwell, The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. I, p. xi; and Kuwait's Centre of Information, The Legend of Iraq's Historical Rights in the State of Kuwait (Al-Qahira: Kuwait's Centre of Information, 1990), p. 28.

in Perpetuity. The belief was that the Kuwaitis were not involved in what the British regarded as piracy.⁹² Moreover, Shaikh Mubarak bin Sabah undertook in May 1900 that "the importations of arms and ammunition into Kuwait...and the exportation of the same are absolutely prohibited."⁹³ The Saudis' collaboration in stopping the Slave trade came only in the 1927 Jeddah Treaty.⁹⁴ By Article 7 of the treaty Ibn Saud undertook "to co-operate by all means at his disposal with His Britannic Majesty in the suppression of the Slave trade."

During the British expeditions of 1806, 1809 and 1818 the Omanis were fighting on the British side against the 'piratic' Qawasim. The Imams of Muscat also agreed in 1822, 1839, 1845 and 1873 to prohibit the exportation and importation of slaves from their African Dominions.⁹⁵ In April 1873, Sultan Turki bin Said issued the following proclamation "To all who it may concern let it be known that we have entirely forbidden all traffic in slaves either publicly or privately and that in the event of our finding any one engaged in the same in our dominions or dependencies he will forfeit his property as well as his personal safety."⁹⁶ As far as the arms trade was concerned, the Omanis

⁹² Jill Crystal, Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar, Cambridge Middle East Library 24 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 17.

⁹³ Notification by Shaikh Mubarak bin Sabah of Kuwait, 24 May 1900. L/P&S/10/606.

⁹⁴ Treaty between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of the Hejaz and of Najd and its Dependencies. 20 May 1927. L/P&S/10/1166.

⁹⁵ For the 4 September 1822 and 17 December 1839 agreements see Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XI, pp. 287-8 and pp. 299-300 respectively. Also, see the 2 October 1845 and 14 April 1873 treaties in R/15/1/737A.

⁹⁶ Proclamation issued by Sayyid Turki bin Said on 17 April 1873. R/15/1/737A.

Imams issued many proclamations and notifications in 1898, 1903 and 1912. The common point between these proclamations was the Omanis' commitment to prevent the illegal arms and ammunition trade. Imam Faisal bin Turki's Proclamation of 6 September 1912, for example, declared that "the sale of arms and ammunition or component parts...or their removal from place to place in my dominions is prohibited."⁹⁷ Moreover, on 17 February 1921 Sultan Taimur bin Faisal adhered to the International Arms Traffic Convention of 1919. In a letter to the British Consul in Muscat, R. Wingate, the Sultan wrote that he accepted "the conditions of the Arms Traffic Convention."⁹⁸

2.2 *Securing the Right of Arbitration Between the Local Shaikhs*⁹⁹

After prohibiting war at sea, piracy and slavery, the British Indian government worked for its Political Resident in the Gulf to be the absolute arbitrator in local disputes, and for his decisions to be accepted by the Shaikhs. The British government wanted all Shaikhs to inform its representatives in the region of all aggression upon their territories, ships or subjects. At the time of any aggression, the British demanded the Shaikhs promise not to retaliate against the attacker without seeking the permission of the British officials in the Gulf. By these

⁹⁷ Proclamation by Sayyid Faisal bin Turki in R/15/1/737A. For the 13th of January 1898 Proclamation and Notification and the 17th of October 1903 Notification see R/15/1/737A.

⁹⁸ Undertaking by Sultan Taimur to Adhere to the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919 in R/15/1/737A.

⁹⁹ Chapters five and six of this dissertation will examine Britain's arbitration practice in some of the major disputes between the Gulf states.

arrangements, the British succeeded in limiting disturbance in the Gulf waters.

In Article 3 of the 1843 Maritime Truce the Shaikhs of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman undertook that "in the event of any acts of aggression being committed at sea upon any of our subjects or dependants" they will not retaliate immediately, "but will inform the British Resident or the Commodore at Bassidore, who will forthwith take the necessary steps for obtaining reparation for the injury inflicted." Ten years later, the 1853 treaty of Maritime peace in Perpetuity recognised the British Political Resident's right of arbitration in local disputes and acknowledged the British as the guarantor power of security in the Gulf. The Shaikhs agreed that "the maintenance of the peace now concluded amongst us shall be watched over by the British Government."

In Article 3 of the Anglo-Bahraini Treaty of 1861 the Shaikh of Bahrain agreed "to make known all aggressions and depredations which may be designed, or have to place at sea, against myself, territories, or subject, as early as possible, to the British Resident in the Persian Gulf, as the arbitrator in such cases, promising that no act of aggression or retaliation shall be committed at sea by Bahraims or in the name of Bahrain, by myself or others under me, on other tribe, without his consent or that of the British Government, if it should be necessary to procure it." The Shaikh also promised, as the Ruler of Bahrain, to redress "all maritime offences which in justice can be charged against my subjects or myself" by the Resident.

Shaikh Muhammad bin Thani of Qatar promised in the 1868 agreement that, "in the event of disputes or misunderstanding arising, will invariably refer to the" Political Resident. The Shaikh also agreed in the same agreement that "in the event of a difference of opinion arising as to any question, whether money payment or other matter" with the Bahraini Shaikh, to refer it to the British government.

2.3 Controlling the Foreign Relations of the Local Shaikhs

As the study explained in the previous chapter, preventing other great European powers from enjoying any foothold in the Gulf was one of the principal pillars of the British policy practised in that region. Britain's treaties with Muscat (1798, 1800) and Persia (1801) were the starting point of this policy. A few decades after the crushing of the Qawasim in 1818, the British came to the conclusion that --in addition to forbidding war, piracy, slavery, arms and ammunition trade and precluding the local disputes-- the success of their policy in the Gulf depended on controlling the foreign relations of the local Shaikhs. The Arab Shaikhs must not be allowed to cede, sell, lease, mortgage or give any part of their territories to any power other than Britain, and not to enter into any agreement or correspondence with any foreign power without the consent of the British government. By signing a new round of treaties with the local forces the British succeeded in committing them to the aforesaid conditions.

The Shaikh of Bahrain was the first who gave up his control of foreign affairs to the British. In December 1880 and again in March 1892 the Shaikh signed two Exclusive Agreements with the British government.¹⁰⁰ The terms of the 1892 agreements were accepted by the Shaikhs of the Trucial emirates.¹⁰¹ One year earlier, the Sultan of Muscat and Oman also accepted not to cede, sell, mortgage or give any part of his territory "save to the British Government."¹⁰² In two secret agreements, the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Treaty and the Bandar Shwaikh Lease of 15 October 1907, Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait committed himself and his heirs and successors to the same promises.¹⁰³ In Article 3 of the 1916 Anglo-Qatari Treaty the Qatari Shaikh also abandoned his control of foreign affairs to the British government.

As far as Ibn Saud was concerned, until the outbreak of World War One in 1914, he had no agreements with the British government.¹⁰⁴ In order not to antagonise Ibn Saud and to gain

¹⁰⁰ Translation of Agreement signed by the Chief of Bahrain, 22 December 1880. Exclusive Agreement of the Shaikh of Bahrain with the British government, 13 March 1892. Both agreements in L/P&S/20/C158D.

¹⁰¹ The 1892 Exclusive Agreements are in R/15/1/736. According to Kelly, the 1892 treaty was not the first Exclusive treaty the British signed with the Trucial Shaikhs. He said in his Britain and the Persian Gulf, pp. 834-5, that in December 1887 the Trucial Chiefs undertook that they would not enter into official communication with any foreign government without British approval.

¹⁰² Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation between Britain and Muscat, 19 March 1891. R/15/1/738.

¹⁰³ Agreement of 23 January 1899 with Ruler of Kuwait in L/P&S/10/606; and Article 5 of the Lease of Land at Bandar Shwaikh, 1907. in L/P&S/10/606.

¹⁰⁴ In the period from May 1902 to February 1911 the British government rejected ten overtures of protection made by Ibn Saud before they finally signed the 1915 Darin Treaty. Jacob Goldberg, The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia: the Formative Years, 1902-1918, Harvard Middle Eastern Studies 19 (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 50-80.

his support against the Ottoman empire in the war, the British signed the first formal treaty with Abdul-Aziz in December of 1915.¹⁰⁵ In return for Britain's protection of his emirate, Ibn Saud undertook in Article 3 to "refrain from entering into any correspondence, agreement, or treaty, with any Foreign Nation or Power, and further to give immediate notice to the Political authorities of the British Government of any attempt on the part of any other Power to interfere with" his territories. In Article 4 Ibn Saud also agreed not to "cede, sell, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose" some of his territory or any part of them to "any Foreign Power, or to the subjects of any Foreign Power, without the consent of the British Government." The same Article concluded with Ibn Saud's promise to "follow her [Britain] advice unreservedly."

Even Iraq, when she was under British mandate, agreed to follow British advice in foreign relations. On 10 October 1922, the British signed a Treaty of Alliance with the Iraqi government.¹⁰⁶ In Article 4 the Iraqi government committed itself to follow the advice of the British High Commissioner in Iraq "on all important matters affecting the international and financial obligations and interests" of the British government. The Iraqi government also promised in Article 8 of the same agreement that "No territory in Iraq shall be ceded or leased or in any way placed under the control of any Foreign Power."

¹⁰⁵ The treaty was signed at a meeting of the British Resident in the Gulf Sir Percy Cox and Ibn Saud near Bahrain. L/P&S/20/C158E.

¹⁰⁶ Treaty between His Britannic Majesty and His Majesty the King of Iraq. L/P&S/18/B384.

Britain's Political Residency and Political Agencies in the Gulf, however, were the centre of her local power and influence. Through them the British government controlled the foreign policy of the local forces. The Political Resident and Political Agents watched the adherence of the local forces to the commitments they were obliged to respect in their treaties with the British government. Lord Curzon noted in August 1903 that the British Resident was the real "uncrowned King of the Gulf."¹⁰⁷ Dr Paul Harrison of the American Arabian Mission described the British political Agent as "an absolute czar."¹⁰⁸

2.4 *Winning All Concessions from the Shaikhs*

By their commitments not to cede, sell, give, mortgage and lease any part of their territories to other than Britain, and their promises not to enter into correspondence or agreements with any foreign power or receive any representative of any foreign power without the consent of the British government, the local Shaikhs were committed legally not to grant any concession to other than Britain. However, to ensure the success of her policy in the region the British government obtained new direct engagements from most of the local forces whereby the latter promised not to give any concession to any foreign government or subject. And sometimes if it happened that one of the local Shaikhs granted a concession to an unacceptable quarter, the British would force him to cancel it. In 1906, for example, the

¹⁰⁷ Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 258.

¹⁰⁸ Robert Lacey, The Kingdom (London: Hutchinson, 1981), p. 74.

British Resident used his influence to make the Ruler of Sharjah renounce a concession for the exploitation of red oxide on Abu Musa island formerly granted to a German Company.¹⁰⁹ It is not the intention to follow the history of all local forces concessions as a selection will provide sufficient illustration.

2.4.1 The Communication Concessions

In 1864 the Trucial Shaikhs engaged on behalf of themselves, their heirs and successors, to "respect and abstain from all and every interference with the...telegraphic operations that may be carried on" by the British government in or around their territory.¹¹⁰ In November 1864 the Sultan of Muscat promised to do the same.¹¹¹ Moreover, Articles I and II of the agreement allowed the British "to construct one or more lines of telegraphic communication anywhere within the territories appertaining to the State of Muscat" and also in the territories the Sultan "may hold in lease from the Shah of Persia." Two months later, the Muscati Sultan gave the same concession with regard to "any portion of territory subject to the sovereignty of His Highness, both in Arabia and Mekran."¹¹² In 1912, the Shaikhs of Bahrain and Kuwait accepted the establishment of a

¹⁰⁹ From Government of India to HM Secretary of State for India, 27 June 1907. R/15/1/254.

¹¹⁰ Additional Article for the protection of the Telegraph Line and Stations, agreed to before Lieutenant-Colonel Lewis Pelly, Acting Political Resident, and appended to the Treaty of Peace of 4 May 1853, 18 April 1864. R/15/1/736.

¹¹¹ Article III of Agreement between the British government and the Sultan of Muscat, 17 November 1864. R/15/1/737A.

¹¹² Article I of the 1865 Convention between the British government and Muscat, 19 January. R/15/1/737A.

wireless telegraph installation in their territories.¹¹³ By Article 9 of the 1916 treaty the Qatari Shaikh undertook "to allow the establishment of...a Telegraph installation anywhere in my territory whenever the British Government should hereafter desire."

In a letter dated 28 February 1904 Shaikh Mubarak promised on behalf of himself and his successors "not to allow the establishment of a Post Office" in Kuwait by any government other than the British.¹¹⁴ Also, the Bahraini Shaikh, Isa bin Ali, undertook in 1911 to reject any Foreign government's offer to establish a Post Office in his territory.¹¹⁵ Article 9 of the 1916 Anglo-Qatari Treaty dealt with the Post Office concession. According to this Article the Shaikh pledged to "allow the establishment of a British Post Office" in his territory and to protect it when established.

On 22 July 1932, an agreement between Shaikh Sultan bin Saqr, Ruler of Sharjah, and the British government for the establishment of an Air Station at Sharjah was concluded.¹¹⁶ On 23 May 1934, Shaikh Ahmad Al-Jabir signed the confidential 'Kuwait Civil Air Agreement' whereby he granted the British

¹¹³ For the Bahraini commitment see Shaikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifah, Chief of Bahrain, to Political Resident, 19 June 1912, in L/P&S/20/C158D. For the Kuwaiti concession see Undertaking of Ruler of Kuwait with regard to establishment of a Wireless Telegraph Installation at Kuwait, 26 July 1912, in L/P&S/10/606.

¹¹⁴ Postal Agreement of 28 February 1904, with the Shaikh of Kuwait in L/P&S/10/606.

¹¹⁵ A letter from Shaikh Isa to the Political Agent at Bahrain, Captain D. L. R. Lorimer, 4 September 1911, L/P&S/20/C158D.

¹¹⁶ Agreement between Shaikh Sultan bin Saqr and the British government for the establishment of an Air Station of Sharjah, R/15/1/742.

government "exclusive rights to establish and maintain...an aerodrome or aerodromes and ancillary services" within Kuwait's territories.¹¹⁷ In 1934, Bahrain and Muscat agreed to concede to the British the same rights, as did the Ruler of Dubai on 28 May 1960.¹¹⁸

In 1947, a British company signed Cable and Wireless Concession Agreements with Kuwait and Bahrain, and in 1951 with the Shaikh of Dubai.¹¹⁹ According to its terms the Shaikhs granted the company, for a period of twenty years the right "to establish, maintain and operate telecommunication services" between their emirates and the outside world.¹²⁰

2.4.2 The Pearling Concessions

In a letter dated 20 July 1911, the Political Resident warned the Bahraini Shaikh and the Trucial Chiefs "that you

¹¹⁷ Heads of Agreement between British government and the Shaikh of Kuwait, in R/15/1/742. This concession was confirmed later by another two agreements. The first was concluded on 21 June 1949 and the second on 5 September 1950. For both Agreements see R/15/1/742.

¹¹⁸ Heads of Agreement between British government and Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah, in R/15/1/742. In the case of Muscat, the Sultan renewed the concession on 5 April 1947. For the 1934 Muscat Civil Air Agreement see L/P&S/18/B443 and for the 1947 Agreement see R/15/1/742. For the Shaikh of Dubai's concession see his letter to the Political Agent, Trucial States, 28 May 1960, in FO 371/149071.

¹¹⁹ For the Agreement between Shaikh Ahmad Al-Jabir of Kuwait and the British Company, Cable and Wireless Limited, 1 May 1947, see L/P&S/12/4115A. For the 28 July 1947 Bahraini concession see Historical Summary of Events in the Persian Gulf Shaikhdoms and the Sultanate of Oman, 1928-1953, Appendix N, Paragraph 139, pp. 233-4. For the Agreement between the Ruler of Dubai and the Cable and Wireless Limited of 31 January 1951 see FO 1016/83.

¹²⁰ A similar licence granted by the Sultan of Muscat and Oman to Cable and Wireless Limited on 1 January 1939. The concession was renewed on 1 December 1951. For the Licences see Cabinet Office, Historical Summary of Events, Appendices.

should on no account respond to overtures from any quarter for concessions for fishing on pearl banks over which you possess rights without first consulting the Residency."¹²¹ In their replying letters, all the Trucial Shaikhs promised not to grant any pearling and sponge fishing concessions to other than the British government.¹²² The Shaikh of Bahrain promised to do the same.¹²³ In July 1911, Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait pledged to consult the British officials in the Gulf before giving concessions for sponge and pearl to anyone.¹²⁴ The Shaikh of Qatar agreed in the 1916 treaty, Article V, that "without the consent of the High British Government, I will not grant pearl-fishery concessions, or any other monopolies, concessions...to anyone whosoever."

2.4.3 The Oil Concessions

On 29 May 1901, Shah Muzaffar Al-Din of Persia (r. 1896-1907) granted William Knox D'Arcy, a British financier, the rights of drilling in Persia for sixty years, excluding only the five northern provinces.¹²⁵ In 1908, oil was discovered in the Persian edge of the Gulf. As a consequence, the hope of the British of discovering oil in the Arabian side of the Gulf increased. They

¹²¹ A letter from the Political Resident to the Rulers of Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Ajman and Umm al-Qaiwain in R/15/1/736.

¹²² Letters from the Shaikhs of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al-Qawain and Ras al-Khaimah to the Political Resident, 27 July-6 November 1911. R/15/1/736.

¹²³ A letter from Shaikh Isa of Bahrain to Colonel Percy Cox, 29 July 1911, in L/P&S/20/C158D.

¹²⁴ The letters of Captain W. Shakespear, Political Agent at Kuwait, to Shaikh Mubarak and Mubarak's reply, regarding Pearling Concessions, 29 July 1911. L/P&S/10/606.

¹²⁵ For the text of the concession see Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 483-4.

began to secure the oil concessions from the local Shaikhs. Shaikh Mubarak Al-Sabah was the first who committed himself not to give an oil concession to anyone except a person nominated by the British.¹²⁶ Shaikh Isa of Bahrain undertook in May 1914 not to "embark on the exploitation" by himself and would not "entertain overtures from any quarter" without the approval of the British Political Agent in Bahrain.¹²⁷

In 1922 the Rulers of Sharjah (17th February), Ras al-Khaimah (22nd February), Dubai (2nd May), Abu Dhabi (3th May), Ajman (4th May) and Umm al-Qaiwain (8th May) sent letters to the Political Resident Lieutenant-Colonel A. P. Trevor undertaking that, if oil was found in their territories, no concession would be given "except to the person appointed by the High British Government."¹²⁸ In 1923, the Sultan of Muscat undertook that he "will not exploit any petroleum which may be found anywhere within our territories and will not grant permission for its exploitation" without the consent of the British government.¹²⁹

As regards Qatar, the Political Resident threatened on 11 May 1935 that British protection to the Qatari Shaikh was on condition that the oil concession was given to the Anglo-Persian

¹²⁶ A letter from Shaikh Mubarak to the Political Resident regarding oil deposits at Kuwait, 27 October 1913. L/P&S/10/606.

¹²⁷ Shaikh Isa to Major A. P. Trevor, Political Agent in Bahrain. L/P&S/20/C158D.

¹²⁸ The Trucial Shaikhs' letters are in R/15/1/738.

¹²⁹ A letter from Sultan Taimur bin Faisal of Muscat to Major Rae, Britain's Consul at Muscat, 10 January 1923. Aitchison, *op. cit.*, vol. XI, p. 319.

Oil Company (APOC).¹³⁰ Six days later Qatar signed the Concession Agreement with the said Company.¹³¹ By Article 1 the Shaikh agreed to grant the Company "the sole right, throughout the principality of Qatar, to explore, to prospect, to drill for, and to extract and to ship and to export, and the right to refine and sell petroleum and natural gases, ozokerite, asphalt, and everything which is extracted therefrom."

On 18 August 1953, Shaikh Muhammad bin Hamad Al-Sharqi of al-Fujairah, one of the seven emirates of today's United Arab Emirates, also gave the oil exploration concession to a British Company.¹³² According to Article 3 of the concession, the Shaikh granted the Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast) Limited an "exclusive right to explore and search for natural gas, asphalt, ozokerite, crude petroleum and their products and cognate substances within the State."

Conclusion

It is clear that, by encouraging and facilitating the above truces and treaties between and from the Arab Shaikhs of that time, Britain's only concern was to secure the passage of her ships via the Gulf waters. However, watching the Gulf waters was

¹³⁰ Lieutenant-Colonel T. C. Fowle, Political Resident, to Shaikh Abdullah Al-Thani of Qatar, 11 May 1935. R/15/1/632.

¹³¹ Concession Agreement between the APOC and the Ruler of Qatar, 17 May 1935. Foreign Office, A Collection of Oil Agreements and Connected Documents Relating to the Persian Gulf Shaikhdoms and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman (1954), pp. 111-6.

¹³² Exploration Agreement between the Ruler of Fujairah and Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast) Limited, 18 August 1953, in FO 371/104401.

an important part in the success of British policy in the region. By the treaty system the British increased their control over the Gulf region. Britain formalised the presence of her cruisers and ships in the Gulf waters. Her treaty relations with the Gulf Shaikhs had granted the British ships of war the authority to intervene whenever they thought there was a threat to the safety of the Gulf waters. The British navy had the right to search, seize, confiscate, and even bombard any vessels belonging to the contracted Shaikhs if caught violating their engagements. The appointment of a full Political Resident and Agents in the region also helped in checking the local Shaikhs from breaching their promises to the British. In short, with her fleet escorting the Gulf waters and her Political Resident and Agents watching the activities and policies of the local Shaikhs, the Gulf was a 'British lake'.

Chapter III Britain and the Emergence and Political Evolution of the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait

Although, as the previous chapter illustrated, each of the above four modern Gulf emirates had individual treaty relations with the British government, the main theme of this chapter is pointing out the importance of the British role in their emergence and their political-historical evolution as independent states. While the second section concentrates on the British role, the first gives a general social and political background to the Arabian side of the Gulf prior to the British arrival.

3.1 Before the Advent of the British

It would be very difficult to understand the emergence and political evolution of modern UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait emirates without pondering, briefly and generally, the tribal and political structure of their societies. Throughout its long history, most of the Arabian Gulf region inhabitants belonged to tribes. Collectively, the Arabs comprised *hadar* and *bedou*. The individual Arab tribe could be composed solely of one or the other or a combination of the two.¹³³ Usually the *hadaris* centred on coastal towns or in oasis settlements and the *bedouins* moved from place to place in search of pastures and wells for their herds.

¹³³ It must be borne in mind that the terms 'tribe' and '*bedou* or nomad' are not synonyms.

The inhabitants of the four emirates were dependent for their livelihood on pearling, shipping, fishing, trading, agriculture and herding. The pearling industry, specifically, was the crucially important national resource for the economies of these emirates. In the case of Bahrain, Lorimer estimated that the annual value of the emirate's pearling trade in 1790 was near half a million Bombay Rupees.¹³⁴ Ten years later, according to Captain John Malcolm's assessment, the figure had even increased to one million.¹³⁵ Moreover, in the 1820s about 2,500 boats were busy in pearl fishing.¹³⁶

An Arab chief substantiated his claim to authority on three basic grounds: the loyalty of tribes within a given area, which he protected and dominated and from whom he collected *Zakat* (Alms)¹³⁷, his possession of property therein, and his authority in enforcing a settlement, either personally or through a deputy, of disputes between the inhabitants of the areas he claimed.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, there had never been definite territorial frontiers, in the western perspective, separating the neighbouring tribes' land or sea. Julian Walker, Assistant to the British Political Agent in the former Trucial emirates in the 1950s, described in

¹³⁴ Al-Qasimi, op. cit., p. 10.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 30.

¹³⁷ *Zakat* is one of five pillars upon which Islam is based. The *Zakat* is levied on property. It is collected by the state and used for the benefit of the poor.

¹³⁸ John Kelly, "Sovereignty and Jurisdiction in Eastern Arabia," International Affairs 34 (January 1958), pp. 20-1.

an article published in 1994 the frontiers that separated the small emirates of today's UAE as "the squiggly tribal frontiers." ¹³⁹

Although the western idea of territorial sovereignty was unknown, or at least unclear, for both the inhabitants and their Shaikhs in the Arabian Gulf region, some local territorial structures did indeed exist. ¹⁴⁰ The tribes had the perception that their right and authority had an earthly domain which should not be transgressed. The competition of the neighbouring tribes for access for their flocks to grazing lands or for their ships to pearling banks often caused disputes and constant clashes between them. ¹⁴¹ This certainly indicates that they were definitely aware whether they were carrying out their activities in an area which belonged to their tribe or whether they were in an area strange to them where others had authority. In short, neighbouring tribes knew that any sort of trespassing would be considered a violation or transgression resulting in a dispute or even a war between the respective tribes. ¹⁴²

In the period extending from mid-eighteenth century to the early years of the nineteenth three major factors, politically speaking, played a decisive role in providing the framework of the modern Arabian side of the Gulf. They were the birth and

¹³⁹ Julian Walker, "Practical Problems of Boundary Delimitation in Arabia: the Case of the United Arab Emirates," in Richard Schofield, (ed.), Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, The SOAS/GRC Geopolitics Series 1 (London: University College London Press, 1994), p. 109.

¹⁴⁰ John Wilkinson, "Britain's Role in Boundary Drawing in Arabia: a Synopsis," in Schofield, Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, p. 97.

¹⁴¹ John Anthony, Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum (Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1975), p. 22.

¹⁴² Muhammod Tawfiq, "An Introduction to the Arabic Political Borders Map," Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya 111 (January 1993), p. 166.

raising of the *Muwahiddun* (Unitarians)¹⁴³ movement in Najd (the central province of what is now Saudi Arabia) and its consistent efforts to spread its *Dawa* (call)¹⁴⁴ into the Gulf emirates; the weakness of the Ottoman *Khilafah's* influence in the Arabian Gulf region; and the coming of the British to the Gulf waters. These three factors, as the following pages will explain, were in practice interconnected.

Historically, the Arabian side of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula regions were regarded, at least theoretically, as parts of the Ottoman *Khilafah*.¹⁴⁵ The principal aim of the Ottoman governments, as the centre of leadership of the Muslim world, was to guarantee the safety of the *Hajj*¹⁴⁶ (Pilgrimage) road to the holiest cities in Islam: Makkah and Madinah.¹⁴⁷ The Ottomans,

¹⁴³ Though the movement of the *Muwahiddun* is known by the West as Wahhabism (after its founder Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab), its followers like to call themselves *Muwahiddun*. This study prefers to use the term which Ibn Abdul-Wahhab and his followers chose for themselves.

¹⁴⁴ *Dawa* means propagating Islam through word and action, calling the people to follow the orders of *Allah* (God).

¹⁴⁵ Halford Hoskins, "The Background of the British Position in Arabia," The Middle East Journal 1 (1947), pp. 146-7; and Herbert Liebesny, "International Relations of Arabia: The Dependent Areas," The Middle East Journal 1 (April 1947), p. 149. Present-day Iraq was exception. The Ottomans ruled it directly by appointing an Ottoman *Walis* (governors) in Baghdad and Basrah.

¹⁴⁶ *Hajj* is one of the five Pillars of Islam. Therefore every Muslim must perform the pilgrimage to Makkah at least once in his lifetime. However, *Hajj* is a must only for those who are able to afford it.

¹⁴⁷ Makkah and Madinah (the birthplaces of Islam) are the principal cities of the present-day Saudi Arabia Kingdom. Makkah, the Holy City as well as the spiritual capital of Islam, embraces the ancient House of God, the Holy *Kaabah*, which stands in the middle of the Great Mosque. The Holy *Kaabah* is the *qiblah*, or direction, towards which Muslims turn in *Salaat* (prayer) five times a day. Madinah was the capital of Islam at the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and the orthodox *Khalifahs* who followed him. From this city, the Prophet and his faithful launched the call to Islam. Madinah also hosts the Magnificent Mosque of the Prophet which in turn houses his tomb.

therefore, were happy to control the routes to these cities and to leave the remote areas of these regions to the local chiefs to administer "in return for a vague acknowledgement of submission."¹⁴⁸

As a consequence of loose Ottoman administration and weakness of control in the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula regions, some powerful Shaikhs set up native principalities and chiefdoms, which preserved their autonomy until the advent of the British. Despite their internal freedom the local Shaikhs did not deny the Ottoman authority over them. There were many ways and means by which the Shaikhs acknowledged it. Openly admitting Ottoman authority, raising the Ottoman flag over their forts or ships, accepting the Ottoman title of *qaimmaqam* (governor) and paying *Zakat* or tribute were some of these means.

Besides experiencing division, most parts of the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula regions had suffered from ignorance and poverty. Successive Ottoman governments shared the responsibility. They did not pay great attention to spreading the right Islamic education and beliefs. In 1744, Ibn Abdul-Wahhab made a compact to replace the anarchy and irreligion into which tribal Arabia had descended with a state based upon a reformed and a purified Islam.¹⁴⁹ A recent study conducted by J. Wilkinson, Arabia's Frontier, states rightly that the development

¹⁴⁸ Bidwell, The Affairs of Arabia, vol. I. p. xi.

¹⁴⁹ George Rentz, "Wahhabism and Saudi Arabia," in Derek Hopwood. (ed.), The Arabian Peninsula, Society and Politics (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972). p. 56.

of Ibn Abdul-Wahhab's movement "represented, at least in part, a reaction to...the corruption of the Ottoman order."¹⁵⁰

The *Muwahiddun* religious reform movement was established by Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, who was born at Uyaynah in 1703 and died at Dariyyah in 1792.¹⁵¹ Uyaynah and Dariyyah are both Najdi principalities. The movement subscribed to the majority *Sunni* sect of Islam, and its major objectives were to call the people away from associating others with Allah (God) and to adhere to the *Koran* (Allah's revelation) and *Sunnah* (Prophet Muhammad's sayings and deeds).¹⁵² An observer noted that it was a puritanical movement that sought to unify the Muslim nation "into its pristine form by rigid conformity to the precepts of Islam."¹⁵³

In 1744-45, Muhammad bin Saud (the father of today's Ruling family in Saudi Arabia), then the Ruler of Dariyyah town, campaigned for Ibn Abdul-Wahhab and became the patron of his mission in fighting all opposing forces in the region.¹⁵⁴ By the early years of the nineteenth century, with the spiritual force of the *Muwahiddun* revival and the fighting power of Al-Saud, a great part of the Arabian Peninsula, including Makkah and

¹⁵⁰ Wilkinson, *Arabia's Frontiers*, p. xv.

¹⁵¹ For Shaikh Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab's bibliography see Shaikh Uthman bin Bishr, *The Sign of Glory in the History of Najd* (Al-Riyad, Darat al-Malik Abdul-Aziz 27, 1983), vol. I, pp. 180-99.

¹⁵² Shaikh Abdul-Aziz bin Bazz, *Imam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab: His Call and Biography* (Al-Riyad: Maktabat Dar al-Ssalam, 1412/1992), pp. 50-2.

¹⁵³ Wilkinson, *Arabia's Frontiers*, p. xviii. The word Islam itself means submission and obedience to Allah. Submission is acceptance of Allah's orders. Obedience means putting Allah's commands into practice.

¹⁵⁴ Ibn Bishr, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 41-3.

Madinah, had fallen under the mastery of the *Muwahiddun*.¹⁵⁵ Wilkinson believes that by that time, the movement "presented a major challenge" not just to the Ottomans, but even to the British and the French.¹⁵⁶

By the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the Qawasim confederation of the Omani Coast had accepted the call of the *Muwahiddun*. The Qawasim, in the scale of that time, was a strong regional maritime power. Their naval force at the beginning of the eighteenth century consisted of, approximately, 8,000 belligerents and 900 ships.¹⁵⁷ Their influence extended to both the Persian and Arab coasts. The Qawasim acted as if they were the naval extension of the *Muwahiddun* movement.¹⁵⁸ In return for their secure passage in the Gulf waters, the European ships, including the British, were required by the Qawasim to pay a tribute. If any vessel refused to do so, the Qawasim navy would attack it.

The British believed that there was a relation between the influence of the *Muwahiddun* on the Qawasim tribe and the raids which the latter began to undertake on their ships. Aitchison, then Under Secretary in the Foreign Department of the

¹⁵⁵ Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 101; and Ibn Bazz, op. cit., pp. 47-9.

¹⁵⁶ Wilkinson, Arabia's Frontiers, p. xv.

¹⁵⁷ Rosemarie Zahlan, The Making of the Modern Gulf States: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 6. Al-Qasimi stated that the Qawasim naval force at that time consisted of 63 large and 669 small ships, with a crew of 18,760 men. Al-Qasimi, op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁵⁸ Zahlan, op. cit., p. 7; Ibn Bishr, op. cit., vol. II, p. 52; and Muhammad Keshk, The Saudis and the Islamic Alternative: the Source of Legitimacy for the Saudi Regime (Massachusetts: Halliday Lithograph Corporation, 1982), p. 202.

government of India, commented that "It was by instigating the Qawasim tribe of Arabs to acts of piracy in the Persian Gulf that Wahhabis first attracted the attention of the British Government."¹⁵⁹ For that reason, the decision-makers of the British Indian government watched the *Muwahiddun* movement with worry. The government feared that the success of the movement would lead gradually to the control by the *Muwahiddun* of the Coastal emirates of the Gulf and this was, according to the British imperial agenda, a forbidden area none was permitted to come close to. Thus action must be taken.

The accomplishment of the *Muwahiddun* also convinced the Ottoman government that they must put an end to the former's rule. In 1811, the *Khalifah* authorised his viceroy of Egypt, Muhammad Ali (r. 1805-48), to send an expeditionary force to Arabia. By 1813 the Egyptian-Ottoman forces, under the leadership of Muhammad Ali's son--Ibrahim *Pahsh*, had retaken Makkah and Madinah, and after a long blockade they captured and destroyed the *Muwahiddun's* capital of Dariyyah in 1818.¹⁶⁰ The achievements of the Egyptians encouraged the British Indian government to send its third naval expedition of 1818 to the Gulf waters in order to suppress the piratic, i.e. the Qawasim and their supporters, and from then began the long British stay in the Gulf waters.

¹⁵⁹ Aitchison, *op. cit.*, vol. XI. p. 182.

¹⁶⁰ A full detail of the Egyptian expedition is in ibn Bishr's book: The Sign of Glory, vol. I, pp. 321-32, 366-79, 384-422.

3.2 *The British Role in the Emergence and Political Evolution of the Four Gulf Emirates*

Looking in retrospect at the history of the British treaty relationships with the Shaikhs of the Arabian tribes whose territories were adjacent to the Gulf waters reveals that the modern emirate of the UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait owe so much of their emergence, survival and political evolution to the British. Had it not been for British acknowledgement and protection policies, these emirates (or at least large parts of them) would have undoubtedly been absorbed by, or united with, their larger powerful neighbours. Bahrain would be either an Iranian or a Saudi island. The Qatari Peninsula, or a large section of it, would belong either to Bahrain or to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The whole of mainland Kuwait, or great parts of it and/or some of her islands would be controlled by one of her big neighbours: Iraq, Saudi Arabia or Iran. A large part of present UAE, and especially of Abu Dhabi, would now belong to Saudi Arabia or even Oman. Glen Balfour-Paul, a former British Ambassador, argued that "By signing individual treaties with whatever shaikhly figures were dominant at the time along the route through the Gulf to the Indian empire, Britain's policy had the effect, wittingly or not, of 'legitimising' and perpetuating the fragmented political system which happened then to prevail."¹⁶¹

Though Britain's relations with the four emirates went through several principal stages, the remainder of this chapter

¹⁶¹ Glen Balfour-Paul, "Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates: Political and Social Evolution," in Ian Netton, (ed.), Arabia and the Gulf: from Traditional Society to Modern States (London: Croom Helm, 1986), p. 157.

will study only the consequences of British acknowledgement and protection policies in the region. It is felt that speaking in more detail about British policies towards each of the four emirates individually is the most appropriate way to examine the British role.

3.2.1 The United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates lies in the east of Arabia and is bordered by the Sultanate of Oman to the south and south-west, by the Gulf of Oman to the west, and by the Gulf and Qatar to the north. It is bounded by Saudi Arabia from east and south-east. The UAE, a federal state, consists of seven small, sovereign Arab emirates -- Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Umm al-Qawain, Ajman and al-Fujairah. Each emirate has its own Ruler. Their territories spread on the southern shores of the Gulf, extending eastwards to the Gulf of Oman. Six of the emirates front the southern shore of the Arabian Gulf, and al-Fujairah faces the Gulf of Oman. The UAE constitute a land area of 83,600 sq km/32,300 sq mi. Abu Dhabi is not only the capital of the federation, but is also the most important emirate.¹⁶² In 1970, the population of the UAE was about 230,000.¹⁶³

As already explained in the previous chapter, the record of the historical Anglo-Trucial emirates' treaty relations testified

¹⁶² Abu Dhabi has more territory than all the others combined (67,000 sq km/26,000 sq mi). Economically, speaking, Abu Dhabi's large oil reserves is another factor of her predominant position in the federation.

¹⁶³ United Nations Statistical Pocketbook. World Statistics in Brief (New York: United Nations, 1979), p. 141.

that throughout the nineteenth century the Shaikhs of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Ajman and Umm al-Qawain participated in all principal treaties.¹⁶⁴ They all signed the 1820 General Treaty, took part annually in the 1835-42 maritime truce, endorsed the ten years Maritime truce of 1843, engaged in the 1853 Treaty of Maritime peace in Perpetuity, and signed the Exclusive Agreements of 1887 and 1892. By these truces and treaties the British acknowledged and confirmed the divided societies that happened to exist at that time in that part of the Gulf. Indeed, repeated British dealings with these emirates served to raise the feeling of independence of their Shaikhs, and thus formed a basis for their claims of independence in future time.

In the case of protection, although Britain granted her formal protection to the Trucial Shaikdoms only in 1892, in practice the British government defended the emirates before that date. The long-standing rejection by British governments of Persian and Saudi claims in particular support the above assumption. Up to Britain's 1968 announcement of withdrawing her forces from the Gulf, successive British governments denied the Iranian claims to some of the emirates' islands, especially Abu Musa and the two Tunbs. On 29th and 30th November 1971, only hours before the British withdrawal from the region took place, Iran seized the three small islands. The Iranian operation provides a distinct indication of Britain's historical protective role in the region. However, chapter six will examine the Iranian-

¹⁶⁴ With regards to al-Fujairah, the British recognised her as an independent Shaikhdom only in 1952.

UAE dispute over the three islands and the British government's role in it in more detail.

As far as the Saudi threat was concerned, the Saudis promised in 1866, 1915 and again in 1927 not to attack the territories of the Gulf emirates who were in special treaty relations with the British government. Imam Faisal bin Abdullah, the Saudi leader, assured the British Resident in 1866 that he "will not injure or attack the territories of the Arab tribes in alliance with the British Government."¹⁶⁵ Ibn Saud repeated in 1915 the same assurance in return for British recognition of him as the independent Sultan of Najd and its dependencies and guaranteed him their assistance if any foreign power should attack his territories. Although the effect of the 1915 treaty ceased when the two parties signed on 20 May 1927 the Jeddah Treaty, Ibn Saud undertook in Article 6 of the latter treaty "to maintain friendly and peaceful relations with the territories of Kuwait, and Bahrain, and with the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are in special treaty relations" with the British government.

Ibn Saud's striving efforts before, in and after World War I to re-establish his forefathers' rule in the former Ottoman provinces of Najd, al-Hasa and Hejaz (the Western region bordering the Red Sea) increased the number of boundary

¹⁶⁵ A declaration by Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Manah, a representative of Imam Abdullah bin Faisal, at Bushire, on 21 April 1866. Aitchison, op. cit., vol. XI, p. 206.

disputes in the Arabian Gulf/Peninsula regions.¹⁶⁶ And although the 1922 Uqair Treaty delimited the northern boundaries of Najd with Iraq and Kuwait and the 1925 Hadda Agreement defined the Najd-Jordan frontier, no agreements were concluded to fix the Kingdom's eastern and south-eastern boundaries with Qatar, the Trucial emirates, Oman and Yemen.¹⁶⁷ As a result of this policy, the Buraimi dispute, which exploded in the 1930s, between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the one hand, and the Shaikhdom of Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, on the other, was one of these erupted disputes.

The Buraimi Oasis is situated in the south-eastern corner of Arabia. According to Lorimer, the oasis' location is "a little south of a straight line drawn between the coastal towns of Sohar and Abu Dhabi about 65 miles west by south of the former, and 85 miles east by south of the latter."¹⁶⁸ The Buraimi Oasis is a cluster of nine villages. They are: Hili, Al-Qattarah, Al-Qimi, Al-Mutaradh, Al-Ain, Al-Muwaiqii, Sara, Hamasa and Buraimi. Six of them were claimed by Abu Dhabi and three by Muscat, while Saudi Arabia demanded them all.

¹⁶⁶ On 16 January 1902, Ibn Saud began his conquests by capturing Riyadh. With the aid of the *Ikhwan* (brothers), Ibn Saud achieved all his following victories. He retook al-Hasa from the Ottomans in 1913. In 1922 he crushed Ibn Rashids' capital, Hail. Two years later, he obtained Makkah from the Hashemites and in the following year seized all the Hejaz. Furthermore, in 1934, two years after the declaration of today's kingdom, he ended with occupying the Asir region.

¹⁶⁷ For the Uqair Treaty of 2 December 1922 see L/P&S/20/C158E; and for the Hadda Agreement of 2 November 1925 see L/P&S/20/C158E.

¹⁶⁸ J. Lorimer, Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf: Oman and Central Arabia (Calcutta: Publication of the Government of India, 1908-1915), vol. II, p. 260.

In the Buraimi dispute the British government defended the interests of her proteges, Abu Dhabi and Oman. According to its special treaty relationship with Abu Dhabi, which gave Britain the right to conduct Abu Dhabi's foreign relations, and at the request of the Sultan of Oman, the British government represented their case both in direct negotiations with the Saudi government and in front of an international tribunal.¹⁶⁹ Throughout its negotiations with the Saudis, the British government always rejected the Saudi claims. Moreover, when, in August 1952, the Saudi government sent her forces to control the oasis, the British government named the Saudi behaviour an act of invasion.¹⁷⁰ On 26 October 1955, Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister (1955-7), announced that the Saudi forces had been compelled to leave Buraimi by the British-officered forces of Muscat and Abu Dhabi.¹⁷¹

The dispute over Buraimi continued until the British withdrew their forces from the Gulf at the end of 1971. Thereafter, it took the governments of Saudi Arabia and the newly established UAE federation only three years to reach an agreement over this long-running dispute. The two governments agreed to start direct negotiation over all their differences. The bilateral discussion culminated in the concluding of the 1974 agreement. According to the terms of the 29 July agreement, the Saudis' acknowledgement of Abu Dhabi sovereignty over the

¹⁶⁹ John Kelly, "The Buraimi Oasis Dispute," International Affairs 32 (July 1956), p. 318.

¹⁷⁰ George Lenczowski, Oil and State in the Middle East (New York: Cornell University Press, 1960), p. 146.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p 147.

Buraimi Oasis was given in exchange for an equal share in the rich Zararah oilfield with Abu Dhabi and a corridor to the Gulf shore through Abu Dhabi's territory at *Khour* al-Udayed (the northern region bordering Qatar).¹⁷²

The British role in the emergence of the UAE federation was more obvious. Despite its motives, the British government formed a number of important local institutions, which some observers believe constitute the essence of today's federation. In 1951, a British trained and equipped mercenary force was established under the name of Trucial Oman Scouts. In the following year, the Trucial States Council was formed, an organisation in which the Shaikhs of the emirates met once a year presumably to talk about matters of joint interest. In 1965, the third important institution, the Trucial States Development Council --a body to permit and supervise area development projects-- was organised.¹⁷³

British policy proved that Britain did not believe that these emirates would be able to survive separately in the turmoil of the region. Before its 1971 withdrawal, the British government proposed to the rulers of the seven small emirates, as well as Bahrain and Qatar, that they enter into a federated state. In other words, Britain's insistence on withdrawal and its encouragement to confederate presented the motivation for the Trucial emirates, along with Bahrain and Qatar, to form a federation. Several

¹⁷² Anthony, op. cit., pp. 148-9, and David Long and Bernard Relch, (ed.), The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980), p. 150.

¹⁷³ Anthony, op. cit., pp. 98-9.

obstacles, however, including disputes over borders and the degree of influence each emirate should have, obstructed rapid agreement on federation, and both Bahrain and Qatar decided against joining and to become independent instead.¹⁷⁴

On 1 December 1971, Britain formally abandoned its protective role over the seven Gulf Shaikhdoms. In a step seeking to affirm their independence, on the following day, six of the former Trucial emirates declared the establishment of a new federation in the politics of the Gulf. For different reasons from those of Bahrain's and Qatar's, the seventh emirate, Ras al-Khaimah, did not join the federation when it started, but followed on 10 February 1972.¹⁷⁵ The UAE became a member of the United Nations and the Arab League in December 1971.

3.2.2 Bahrain

Bahrain is an Arabian Shaikhdom comprised of a group of 35 islands in the Gulf. The archipelago of Bahrain lies halfway between the Qatari Peninsula and the Saudi coast at al-Hasa. Qatar being about 29 km distant and al-Hasa about 32 km. Bahrain, with an area of 678 sq km/262 sq mi, is the smallest

¹⁷⁴ For the Trucial emirates' attempts, along with Bahrain and Qatar, to form a federation see Riad El Rayyes, Arabian Gulf Documents (1968-1971): Attempts at Federation and Independence (London: Riad El-Rayyas Books, 1989).

¹⁷⁵ Ras al-Khaimah's reluctance was due to two reasons. Ras al-Khaimah was disappointed by the reactions of the other emirates to the Iranian occupation of the three islands. Ras al-Khaimah insisted on the right to veto decisions of the majority, as the larger and wealthier emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, in the supreme council. Frauke Heard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates: A Society in Transition (London: Longman, 1982), p. 369.

country in the Gulf. The largest island is Bahrain itself, 48 km long and 13-16 km wide. Bahrain's capital, Manama, is situated in the north-eastern section of the country. In the year of its independence (1970), Bahrain's population was approximately 220,000.¹⁷⁶

The Bahraini island was ruled by the Portuguese from the early years of the sixteenth century to 1602, when it passed into Persian control.¹⁷⁷ On 28 July 1783, the Al-Khalifah family, who emigrated from Najd in the early eighteenth century and settled at Qatar, took Bahrain from the Persians and established the present dynasty.¹⁷⁸ For the next several decades, the Al-Khalifah encountered threats from the Persians, Saudis, and the Omanis (who captured the islands in 1800 for only one year).¹⁷⁹

Bahrain's entry to Britain's 1820 General Treaty with the Omani Coast emirates was the British acknowledgement certificate to the island's existence as an independent principality. In 1861, the independence of Bahrain was confirmed by its concluding a new treaty with Britain. The Preliminary of the 1861 Anglo-Bahraini Agreement described the Shaikh of Bahrain, Muhammad bin Khalifah, as an independent Ruler. In other words, in the Anglo-Bahraini Treaty Britain declared its recognition of Bahrain as a separate political unit not belonging

¹⁷⁶ World Statistics in Brief, p. 10.

¹⁷⁷ Iran's rule in this period was not direct, but through her Arab client followers who accepted Persian authority nominally. Abdullah Al-Ghareeb, The Magians Time has Come: the Historical, Doctrinal and Political Dimensions of the Iranian Revolutions (n.a., 1985), p. 302.

¹⁷⁸ Atchison, op. cit., p. 190.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.; and Ibn Bishr, op. cit., vol. I, p. 258.

to the regional powers (the Ottomans and the Persians) or to the local (the Omanis or the Saudis).

Throughout Britain's long stay in the Gulf, successive British governments played an indispensable role in defending the Bahraini island. Article 2 of the 1861 agreement made Bahrain, officially, the first emirate in the region to secure British promise of protection in time of outside aggression. The British determined to protect the island against the Saudis, the Ottomans and the Iranians. As far as the Saudi threat was concerned, the Saudis undertook in their promises of 1866, 1915 and 1927, which we quoted in the UAE section, to respect the independence of Bahrain. With regards to the Ottoman threat, the British government rejected all Ottoman claims over the islands, especially after the latter's 1871 expedition to Najd. At the end, the two governments signed the 1913 agreement by which the Ottomans recognised the independence of Bahrain (Article 13).

The most dangerous and longest threat to the Bahraini island was the Iranian one. Iran's claims to Bahrain as one of its provinces have generally been based on three bases: former Persian rule during the period from 1602 to 1783, upon an agreement signed in August 1822 by the Political Resident, Captain William Bruce, whereby he admitted the sovereignty of Persia over the island¹⁸⁰, and upon Lord Clarendon's Note of 29 April 1869 to Mohsin Khan, the Persian Charge d'affairs in London.¹⁸¹ Successive British governments rejected the Iranian

¹⁸⁰ L/P&S/20/C248C, pp. 143-5.

¹⁸¹ FO 248/251. Lord Clarendon was three times British Foreign Secretary (1853-8, 1865-6, 1868-70).

claims. Bruce's agreement was condemned and denounced by the British as violating every principle of British policy in the Gulf.¹⁸² They added that Bruce signed the 1822 agreement without the authorisation of his government.¹⁸³ Concerning Lord Clarendon's Note, the British denied that Lord Clarendon had ever recognised the Iranian claim to the island.¹⁸⁴

This long-standing claim by Iran was recalled occasionally in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On one of these occasions, the Persian government presented, in 1927, the Clarendon Note before the League of Nations as a proof of the fact that Britain had accepted Persia's claim over the island before.¹⁸⁵ Thirty years later, the Shah instructed his government to introduce a bill in the *Majlis* (Iran's Parliament) declaring Bahrain to be the fourteenth Iranian province.¹⁸⁶ However, due to strong British opposition to the Iranian claims, all attempts by the latter were in vain.

¹⁸² See for example the reaction of Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay at the time of the agreement, in Kelly's Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 190.

¹⁸³ As a result to the agreement, Bruce was dismissed from his post. Ibid., p. 90; and Bidwell, The Affairs of Arabia, vol. I, p. xiv.

¹⁸⁴ Philip Graves, The Life of Sir Percy Cox (London: Hutchinson, n.a.), p. 96. Despite British official rejection of the Iranian interpretation of Lord Clarendon's Note, Aitchison comments on the Note were "really very painful to...allows Persia to assume the position of suzerain which we have all along denied to her." Kumar, op. cit., p. 111. For a more detailed account of Clarendon's Note, see John Kelly "The Persian Claim to Bahrain." International Affairs 33 (January 1957).

¹⁸⁵ Persian Foreign Office to HM's Minister, Teheran, 22 November 1927; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Persian Minister, London, 18 January 1928. Kumar, op. cit., pp. 131-2, note: 51.

¹⁸⁶ Trevor Mostyn, Major Political Events in Iran, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula, 1945-1990 (Oxford: Facts On File, 1991), p. 57; and Edward Gordon, "Resolution of the Bahrain Dispute," The American Journal of International Law 65 (1971), p. 560, note: 1.

In 1968, Britain announced that it would withdraw from the Gulf in three years time. The year following, the Shah announced, while on a state visit to India, that Iran would accept the Bahraini population's decision on their future. He declared that "If Bahrain does not want to join our country, we shall never resort to force to oblige them to do so."¹⁸⁷ On 30 March 1970, the United Nations Secretary-General's representative and Director-General of the United Nations office in Geneva, Dr. Vittorio Winspeare Guicciardi, arrived in Bahrain to investigate the wishes of its people; whether they wanted their island to be an independent state or to be part of Iran. In late April he submitted his report to the Secretary-General. His recommendation was clear: "My conclusions have convinced me that the overwhelming majority of the people of Bahrain wish to gain recognition of their identity in a fully independent and sovereign state free to decide for itself its relations with other states."¹⁸⁸ Following the United Nations Security Council's endorsement of Guicciardi's report, the Iranian Majlis formally ratified the United Nations resolution by 186 votes to 4, and on 18 May the Iranian Senate ratified it unanimously.¹⁸⁹ On 15

¹⁸⁷ Anthony Parsons, They Say the Lion, Britain's Legacy to the Arabs: A Personal Memoir (London: Jonathan Cape, 1986), p. 137; and Anthony Parsons, "Bahrain in Transition," in Netton, op. cit., p. 184.

¹⁸⁸ Mostyn, op. cit., p. 112; and Parsons, They Say the Lion, pp. 139-40.

¹⁸⁹ Mostyn, op. cit., p. 112.

August 1971, Bahrain became independent, and soon joined both the United Nations and the Arab League.¹⁹⁰

The view that the British were behind the Shah's final policy towards Bahrain is shared by many. The French government, for example, believed that the arrangements between the British government and the Shah, not the United Nations' good offices, solved the Bahraini dispute in 1970.¹⁹¹ Some even affirmed that there was an understanding between the British government and the Shah that in return for abandoning Bahrain he would be allowed to take the three islands of Abu Musa and the two Tunbs. In practice, the Shah let the Iranian claim to Bahrain rest formally on 13 August 1970 and a year later annexed the three strategically important islands of the UAE. More explanation will be given to this point in chapter six.

3.2.3 Qatar

The Peninsula of Qatar became an independent state on 1 September 1971, and soon joined the United Nations and the Arab League. The Peninsula, located halfway along the western coast of the Gulf, is about 115 miles long from north to south and 55 miles wide. It occupies a land area of 11,437 sq km/4,415

¹⁹⁰ Iran's claims over Bahrain did not stop forever. Immediately after the 1979 Khomeini revolution in Iran, the Iranian claim was renewed by Sadeq Rouhani, one of the senior Iranian *ayatollah* (a title given to the most learned teachers and scholars in *Shiite* Iran). Mark Katz, Russia & Arabia: Soviet Foreign Policy Toward the Arabian Peninsula (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), p. 176. Moreover, Iran's endorsement to the unsuccessful 1981 coup organised by the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain increased the fears of the suspicious Bahraini government.

¹⁹¹ Gordon, op. cit., p. 567.

sq mi. Qatar lies between the Gulf, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The Gulf bounds the Peninsula from east, north and south. The UAE lies in the south and Saudi Arabia to the west and south-west. The capital city is Doha. In 1970, Qatar's population was estimated to be 110,000.¹⁹²

Qatar's history is closely intertwined with that of neighbouring Bahrain. The Bahrainis continued to dominate al-Zubarah, a town in the north-west of the Qatari Peninsula, until the late 1870s when the Al-Thani Shaikhs of Doha, who emigrated from the Arabian Peninsula and settled in the Peninsula of Qatar about the end of the seventeenth century, drove the Al-Khalifah out, and since then there has been an outstanding dispute between the two emirates, which we shall have cause to examine more fully in chapter six.

In the years of 1867-8 attacks and counter-attacks took place between the Shaikhs of Bahrain and the inhabitants of Qatar, especially the Al-Thani Shaikhs of Doha. The British viewed these attacks as a rupture of the maritime peace in the Gulf waters. Prior to these clashes, Britain recognised Bahrain's authority over Qatar, or at least part of it, and therefore Qatar was considered bound by the treaties Bahrain signed earlier. The 1867-68 events proved that this order was not effective. On 12 September 1868, the British sent their Resident in the Gulf to conclude an agreement known as the 'Agreement of the Chief of El-Kutr (Guttur) engaging not to commit any Breach of the Maritime Peace' with Shaikh Muhammad bin Thani. Two

¹⁹² World Statistics in Brief, p.111.

important developments came with the 1868 agreement. It made Qatar for the first time an independent party to the maritime truce and addressed Muhammad bin Thani as the 'Chief' of Qatar. Therefore, the birth of modern Qatar as a separate independent emirate should be traced to the British acknowledgement of the 1868 agreement.¹⁹³

Before the British and the Ottoman governments settled their differences in the Gulf by the unratified agreement of 1913, Britain's fears of antagonising the Ottomans led her to reject extending her protection over Qatar. The British declined an 1893 appeal by Shaikh Jasim bin Muhammad Al-Thani to sign a treaty like those concluded with the Trucial Shaikhdoms a year earlier.¹⁹⁴ The Ottomans, for their part, regarded Qatar, like the other Shaikhdoms, part of the Ottoman *Khilafah*. But due to its problems in other parts of its empire, the Ottoman government felt the importance of reaching an agreement with the British in their disputes over the Gulf question. On 29 July 1913, the two parties signed at London the Anglo-Ottoman Convention. By Article 11 of the 1913 convention, the Ottomans abandoned all their rights over the Qatari Peninsula. The Article stated that "The Ottoman Imperial Government...[has] renounced all its claims to the peninsula of al-Qatar."

Although it was only on 3 November 1916 that Qatar signed a 'Treaty of Protection' with Britain, the British government worked before that date for the emirate's survival. In the 1913

¹⁹³ Rosemarie Zahlan, *The Creation of Qatar* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), pp. 144-7; and Wilkinson, *Arabia's Frontiers*, p. 47.

¹⁹⁴ Bidwell, *The Affairs of Arabia*, vol. I, p. xv.

Anglo-Ottoman Convention and the 1915 Darin Treaty with Ibn Saud the British had successfully protected the Qatari emirate from being absorbed by its neighbours. In Article 11 of the 1913 convention, the signatory governments undertook that they would not permit the Shaikh of Bahrain to interfere "in the internal affairs of al-Qatar, his endangering the autonomy of that area or annexing it." In the 1915 agreement with the British government the Najdi Ruler pledged that he would not attempt to attack the territory of Qatar.

Shaikh Abdullah bin Jasim pledged in the November 1916 treaty not to cede, give, sell, lease or mortgage any of Qatar's territory to any power except Britain; not to have relations with any foreign governments without British authorisation; to accept the stationing in Doha of a British political agent and to desist from piracy, the slave trade and arms traffic. In exchange, the British government promised in Article 10 of the treaty to protect Qatar's "territory from all aggression by sea." Probably because of Qatar's 1916 treaty with the British, Ibn Saud promised in Article 6 of the 1927 Treaty of Jeddah "to maintain friendly and peaceful relations" with the Al-Thani's emirate. The British protection extended, in 1935, to cover all the Shaikh's territory in return for giving Qatar's mainland concession to a British company.

3.2.4 Kuwait¹⁹⁵

Kuwait is situated in the north-western corner of the Gulf. It is bounded on the east by the Gulf, on the south and south-west by Saudi Arabia, and on the north and north-west by Iraq. The distance between the extreme points of Kuwait's boundaries from south to north is about 200 km and from west to east about 170 km. The total area of Kuwait is 17,818 sq km/6.878 sq mi. Kuwait's capital is Kuwait city. Kuwait's population was 740,000 at the census of 1970.¹⁹⁶

The year 1896 was the turning point in Kuwait's history. In May of that year, the ruling Shaikh, Muhammad bin Sabah (r. 1892-6) and his brother Jarah, were killed by their half brother, Mubarak.¹⁹⁷ Eager to maintain his throne and to avoid Ottoman rule, Mubarak (r. 1896-1915) approached twice, in March 1897 and again in 1898, the representatives of the British government in the Gulf to be awarded a status similar to that which the British gave in 1892 to the Trucial Shaikhs.¹⁹⁸ The belief of the British Indian government at that time was that Britain had no direct interests in Kuwait, and therefore her recommendations were to turn Mubarak's appeals down. The comments of Lord George Hamilton on Mubarak's demand of 1897, for example,

¹⁹⁵ "Kuwait is the diminutive of the Arabic word *al-Kout'* which...means a house built in the form of a fortress adjacent to water." Government of Kuwait: Ministry of Information, Kuwait Facts and Figures (Kuwait 1986), p. 19.

¹⁹⁶ World Statistics in Brief, p. 76.

¹⁹⁷ The murder is discussed by Abdul-Aziz Al-Rashid's, History of Kuwait (Beirut: Dar Maktabat Al-Hayat, n. a.), pp. 138-46.

¹⁹⁸ Telegram of Government of India to Foreign Office, in Bidwell, The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. I, part I, p. 9; and Government of India to Lord George Hamilton, 19 September 1897, in ibid., p. 14.

were that the British government "do not propose to interfere in the affairs of that Chiefship more than may be necessary for the maintenance of the general peace of the Persian Gulf."¹⁹⁹

As already pointed out in chapter one, the efforts of the Russian and the German governments to extend their railways projects to the head of the Gulf (mainly to Kuwait) were the real reason for British reconsideration of Shaikh Mubarak's earlier requests. It was the railways projects which persuaded the British to come to Kuwait, not Kuwait itself. The two letters of Meade to Curzon and Sir Arthur Godley (Permanent Under Secretary at the India Office in Whitehall) to the Viceroy of India demonstrated this fact. In his private letter Meade said that "even if we are not immediately interested in getting hold of Koweit for ourselves, we can not afford to let it fall in the hands of any other power."²⁰⁰ Godley said "We don't want Koweit, but we don't want anyone else to have it."²⁰¹ As a result, the period 1896-9 saw Kuwait rise "from a backwater dependency of the Ottoman Empire into a key area of British influence in the Persian Gulf."²⁰² The British government, therefore, signed on 23 January 1899 a treaty known typically as the 'Anglo-Kuwaiti Secret Bond'.

The Ottoman government's long refusal to recognise the Anglo-Kuwaiti Treaty, claiming that Kuwait was an Ottoman

¹⁹⁹ India Office to Foreign Office, 28 September 1897. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁰⁰ Lieutenant-Colonel M. Meade to Curzon, 28 March 1898. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. xii.

²⁰² Briton Busch, "Britain and the Status of Kuwayt, 1896-1899." *The Middle East Journal* 21 (Spring 1967), p. 187.

qada (district), ended with their consent to the terms of the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Convention. Article 3 of the famous agreement acknowledged the 1899 agreement. Furthermore, at the outbreak of the Great War, the British Resident sent a letter to Shaikh Mubarak by which the British government's recognition of Kuwait's independency from other powers was confirmed. Sir Percy Cox promised the Shaikh to consider Kuwait as an "independent Government under British protection" in return for his support in World War One.²⁰³

Although the 1899 agreement did not clearly pledge Britain to guarantee Kuwait's safety, Britain's promises and actions in defending Kuwait are scattered in many documents. In the accompanying letter to the 1899 treaty, the Political Resident promised Shaikh Mubarak his government's 'good offices' towards him and his heirs and a sum of 15,000 rials.²⁰⁴ Two years later, Lord Lansdowne, Britain's Foreign Secretary, emphasised Britain's protection to Mubarak. "We could scarcely allow the Shaikh to be crushed or deposed."²⁰⁵ In his letter of November 1914, Cox also confirmed British government protection of Kuwait.

Throughout Kuwait's history, the guarantees of British protection proved to be very fundamental. In November 1900, the British warned Ibn Rashid, then the Ruler of Najd emirate, that

²⁰³ Letter of 3 November 1914 from Sir Percy Cox, the Political Resident, to Shaikh Mubarak, in Aitchison, *op. cit.*, vol. XI, pp. 265-6.

²⁰⁴ Copy of the British Political Resident's letter to Shaikh Mubarak is reproduced in Lorimer, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 1048-50.

²⁰⁵ Lansdowne to Sir N. O'Connor, Britain's Ambassador in Turkey, 26 April 1901. Bidwell, *The Affairs of Kuwait*, vol. I, part III, p. 29.

"no attack upon Koweit will be allow", and that if Kuwait were overrun the invaders would be expelled "as soon as the means are provided."²⁰⁶ In December 1901 and January 1902, extra British gunboats were sent to Kuwait and "two Nordenfeldts and two Maxims were placed in the Shaikh's fort at Jahra [a settlement at the western end of Kuwait Bay]."²⁰⁷ In September 1902, British warships defeated a force commanded by Adhbi bin Muhammad Al-Sabah and Hamoud bin Jarrah Al-Sabah, who had intended to revenge their murdered fathers and to seize power from Mubarak.²⁰⁸ Consequently, the government of India stated that it "will undertake to defend the Koweit district."²⁰⁹

Despite contradictory British policies in the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman treaty and the 1922 Uqair Treaty, which we will have opportunity to examine in chapter five, the British also forced the Ottoman and the Saudis to abandon their efforts to absorb Kuwait. In September 1899, the Ottomans tried to appoint a harbour master in Kuwait. Shaikh Mubarak, with British backing, refused to allow him to land. The British government warned the Ottoman not to send any official to Kuwait "without previous agreement" with them.²¹⁰ On 24 August 1901, it was reported that the Ottoman sloop-of-war *Zuhaff* sailed into Kuwait's

²⁰⁶ Foreign Office to Admiralty, 14 November 1900. Bidwell. The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. I, part II, p. 50.

²⁰⁷ Lorimer, op. cit., vol. I, p. 1033.

²⁰⁸ Alan Rush, Al-Sabah: History & Genealogy of Kuwait's Ruling Family, 1752-1987 (London: Ithaca Press, 1987), p. 102.

²⁰⁹ Government of India to Lord George Hamilton, 3 October 1902. Bidwell. The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. II, part. IV, p. 122.

²¹⁰ Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury, 8 September 1899; and the Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor, 8 September 1899. Bidwell, The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. I, part I, pp. 81-2.

harbour, only to be prevented by the British navy from landing Ottoman troops on Kuwait's land.²¹¹ On 7 September 1901, Britain's Foreign Secretary sent a letter to Sir N. O'Connor, Britain's Ambassador in Constantinople (1898-1908), which concluded with the following paragraph, "Any attack upon the Sheikh [Mubarak of Kuwait], or any attempt to force him to accept conditions to which he is not now subject, would be regarded by us as an affront." The British Ambassador was instructed to convey the message to the Ottoman government.²¹²

As far as the Saudi threat was concerned, the best example was Britain's decisive intervention at the height of the al-Jahra war of 1920.²¹³ On 10 October, the Saudis attacked al-Jahra, besieging the Kuwaiti forces in *Qasr al-Ahmar* (the Red Fort). The Kuwaitis were badly defeated and since more raids seemed likely, Shaikh Salim bin Mubarak (r. 1917-21) asked for Britain's assistance. Britain's readiness to defend Kuwait frightened the Saudis and forced their immediate withdrawal.²¹⁴ Moreover, after the end of the crisis the British government told Ibn Saud that they "recognized the territory within the inner boundary [the red zone] shown on the map attached to the Anglo-Turkish

²¹¹ Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, p. 205; and Kumar, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

²¹² Lansdowne to O'Connor. Bidwell, *The Affairs of Kuwait*, vol. I, Part III, p. 94.

²¹³ Ibn Saud also promised in the 1915 and 1927 Anglo-Najdi Agreements not to invade Kuwait and to keep friendly relations with the small emirate. Chapter five will consider the Kuwaiti-Najdi dispute in wider context.

²¹⁴ Al-Rashid, *op. cit.*, p. 262; and Rush, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-1.

Agreement as definitely appertaining to Kuwait and that this was not open to dispute."²¹⁵

Even after Kuwait formally became an independent state, by signing the 'Ten Year Defence Treaty' on 19 June 1961, Britain continued the responsibility of defending Kuwait against any aggression if requested by the Kuwaiti government. Paragraph D of the 1961 treaty states that "Nothing in these conclusions shall affect the readiness of Her Majesty's government to assist the government of Kuwait if the latter request such assistance."²¹⁶ Immediately after its independence, British forces landed on Kuwait to defend it against the claim of General Qasim, Iraq's President (1958-63).

On 20 July 1961, the Arab League recognised Kuwait as an independent state and accepted it as a member. Until 14 May 1963, the Soviet Union vetoed Kuwait's applications for membership of the United Nations on the grounds that its identity was entirely linked to Britain.²¹⁷ On that date, Kuwait joined the international organisation as the 111th member. In May 1968, at the wish of the Kuwaiti government, Britain and Kuwait stated

²¹⁵ Richard Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq: Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes, A Report Compiled for the Middle East Programme of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991), p. 16.

²¹⁶ Exchange of Notes between Britain's Political Resident and the Ruler of Kuwait, 19 June 1961.

²¹⁷ Katz, op. cit., p. 158.

that their 1961 treaty would come to an end in three years, officially ending on 13 May 1971.²¹⁸

Finally, British acknowledgement of Kuwait's existence as an independent Shaikhdom in the 1899 agreement and the various treaties which followed it up to the death of Shaikh Mubarak in 1915 and the British declaration of November 1914 provided the bases of Kuwait's independent identity. Furthermore, Britain's protection in words and deeds played a fundamental role in the survival of the emirate. However, the role of the British government's policies in Kuwait's border problems will be discussed in chapter five.

Conclusion

By sponsoring and signing the above-mentioned truces and treaties, the British acknowledged the seven emirates of UAE confederation, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait as free and independent of their big neighbours; Iran, Oman and the Saudis, and as not belonging to the Ottomans.²¹⁹ However, at the same time that Britain fastened and tightened her control over the Shaikhdoms after every new treaty she concluded with them, the Shaikhs' feeling of independence grew as well. In other words, these truces and treaties served to emphasise the separateness that

²¹⁸ Exchange of notes between the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister and the British Ambassador to Kuwait, 13 May 1968. Husain AlBaharna, "The Legal Status of Iraq's Sovereignty Claims over Kuwait," Al Ta'awun Journal 21 (March 1991), pp. 73-91.

²¹⁹ M. Yapp, The Near East Since the First World War (London: Longman, 1991), p. 205.

happened to exist at that time in that part of the Gulf and thus induced each ruling family to claim the independence or the autonomy of the emirate it ruled. This British acknowledgement policy was supported by its promises and actions of protection. It is easy to imagine how the awareness that the British government would defend the territories/Shaikhs of these emirates and retaliate was enough to deter others from invading them, or at least reduce the number of the attackers and their assaults. In short, British acknowledgement and protection policies paved the way for the independence of modern UAE, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait Shaikhdoms when the appropriate time came.

Chapter IV Britain's Attitude Towards a 'United Arab State' in the Gulf

The earlier chapters illustrated the British dominating power and influence in the Gulf, which ended (formally) with their withdrawal from the region in November 1971. At the time of their departure, the Arabian side of the Gulf, excluding Iraq, was left torn and divided into six states -- Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The British policy during their long stay was to weaken the region as much as possible by recognising the Shaikhs of the very small local entities, those small enough not to challenge or threaten Britain's interests, as independent from other powers. There could have been no clearer statement of Britain's wish (and indifference to Arab aspirations if they clashed with her own interests), to leave the region disunited than Lord Crewe's, Secretary of State for India (1910-15), statement of November 1914. "What we want," Lord Crewe said, "is not a united Arabia, but a weak and disunited Arabia, split into little principalities as far as possible under our suzerainty--but incapable of co-ordinated action against us."²²⁰

The discovery of oil in the Persian side of the Gulf was to revolutionise the politics, economics and strategic importance of the whole Gulf region. On 26 May 1908, oil was discovered in commercial quantities at Masjidi Sulayman in Arabistan in south-west Persia, about 150 miles from the head of the Gulf. In 1909

²²⁰ Briton Busch, Britain, India, and the Arabs, 1914-1921 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), p. 62; and Lacey, op. cit., p. 137.

the APOC was formed to take over the concession from d'Arcy. The strategic importance of oil became more clear when the Royal Navy decided, in 1910, to convert from coal to oil as the fuel for their ships. Production, the opening of the Abadan refinery and the export of oil began in the same year (1912). In 1914 the British government acquired a majority share-holding in the company.²²¹ After that date, British interest in the Gulf concerned not only the security of the sea routes to her Indian empire, but also its supremacy and monopoly of control of the region's oil over both regional and outside powers.

The major event, however, which affected Britain's policies in the Gulf at the beginning of the twentieth century was the starting of the First World War. On 28 July 1914, the war broke out in Europe. The war was fought between the Allies (Britain, France, Russia, Japan together, later, with Italy, United States and others) and the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary empire, Ottoman empire and others). This meant that the Allies, and particularly the British, were now at war with Turkey throughout the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf areas. Britain's interests in these regions therefore could be damaged by the Ottoman-German alliance. The possibility of an Ottoman or German occupation of either Iraq or Iran endangered the British interests in the Gulf in three ways: first, it threatened the security of the sea routes to Britain's eastern empire; second, it carried a potential strategic threat to Britain's oil interests in the Gulf; and thirdly, it endangered the British colonies and

²²¹ Anthony Sampson. The Seven Sisters: The Great Oil Companies and the World They Made (London: Coronet Books, 1993), pp. 79-80.

protectorates in the regions. Thus, the immediate reaction of Britain to the Ottoman government's entry into the war was to occupy the Persian oil fields and the Basrah *Wilayet*, which marked the first major British engagement in land operations in the Gulf.

Britain was in a very delicate position between preserving her interests and not antagonising the Muslims under her control. In order to keep its interests in the East, the British government looked for the destruction of the Ottoman power but without arousing against the allied powers the enmity of Islam's followers. Before the beginning of the Great War, Britain was the actual dominant power in the Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula and the sub-continental Indian regions. While the first two areas were totally Muslim, there was also a substantial number of Muslims in the Indian sub-continent. At the sametime, Turkey was the centre of the Islamic *Khilafah* and it was agreed that revolts and disorders within the Ottoman empire would hasten its collapse. But, to avoid the whole of Islam in the East being united against the Allies, the British government needed to win the support and alliance of the Muslims in these three regions, especially the Arabs, against the Ottoman.

A descendant of Prophet Muhammad, Sharief Hussein of Makkah (1853-1931), was at that time entertaining hopes of becoming King or a *Khalifah* of the Arabs. Hussein was without doubt the best choice for the British task. He was a relative of the Prophet, the Sharief of Makkah (the Capital of Islam), and had the will to fight the Turks. British officials in Cairo, Egypt's capital, had been in negotiation with Sharief Hussein and his sons

to finance them for a revolt against the Ottoman government. With this end in view, the Secretary of War (1914-16), Horatio Kitchener, had approached the Sharief at the beginning of the War. On 31 October 1914, the same day on which the British announced war against the Ottomans, Kitchener sent a message to Abdullah, second son of Hussein, which promised that "If the Arab nation assist England in this war that has been forced upon us by Turkey, England will guarantee that no internal intervention takes place in Arabia, and will give Arabs every assistance against external foreign aggression." Kitchener also added "It may be that an Arab of true race will assume the Khalifate at Mecca or Medina and so good may come by the help of God out of all the evil that is now occurring."²²²

On 4 December 1914, moreover, the British Residency in Cairo issued a document under the title 'An official Proclamation from the government of Great Britain to the natives of Arabia and the Arab provinces'. The main significance of this proclamation lay in Britain's promises to the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula and the other Arab emirates and provinces of her help if they were to revolt against the Ottoman empire. "The Government of Great Britain informs you hereby that she has decided not to attack you nor initiate war against any of you - nor does she intend to possess any part of your country neither in the form of conquest and possession nor in the form of protection or occupation. She also guarantees to you that her allies in the

²²² Telegram from Foreign Office to Mr Cheetham, British Embassy at Cairo. L/P&S/18/B222. Lord Kitchener's letter of 31st October 1914 was not the first one. It was preceded by his 24th of September letter of the same year. L/P&S/18/B222.

present war will follow the same policy." If the Arabs were to get rid of the Turks "and take the reins of the Government of their country into their hands, we will", the proclamation undertook, "give up those places to them at once" after the end of the war. If the Arabs were to unite their forces, declare independence and drive out the Ottomans and their allies, "then Great Britain and her allies recognise their perfect independence and will moreover guarantee to defend you if the Turks or others wish to transgress against you and will help you to establish your independence with all her might and influence without any interference in your internal affairs." The other main theme of the proclamation was that the *Khilafah* belonged to Arabs.²²³

Kitchener's message of 31 October 1914 was clearly reiterated in Sir Arthur Henry McMahon's letter, the British High Commissioner in Cairo (1910-16), to Sharief Hussein of 30 August 1915: "Arab interests are English interests and English Arab...we confirm to you the terms of Lord Kitchener's message...", McMahon said "in which was stated clearly our desire for the independence of Arabia, and its inhabitants, together with our approval of the Caliphate when it should be proclaimed. We declare once more that His Majesty's Government would welcome the resumption of the Caliphate by an Arab of true race."²²⁴

²²³ Elie Kedourie. In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: the McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and its Interpretations, 1914-1939 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 21-2.

²²⁴ McMahon to Sharief Hussein. L/P&S/18/B222.

These British documents (Kitchener's message to Abdullah, Cairo's British Residency official Proclamation, and McMahon's letter of 30 August 1915 to the Sharief himself) had emphasised three points. First, to persuade the Arabs that the war in that region has been "forced upon us [the British] by Turkey" (Kitchener's message), and therefore the British and their allies were at war with the Ottoman empire and not the Arabs. To prove this claim the British government announced that it "has decided not to attack you [the Arabs] nor initiate war against any of you" (Cairo's British Residency Proclamation). The British government added that the "Arab interests are English interests and English Arab" (McMahon's letter). Obviously, the message to the Arabs was: Britain is a friendly power and not at enmity with them.

The second point was that the Allies desired the Arabs to fight with them against the Turkish empire. Their aim was very clear. McMahon himself later explained how his fundamental aim in trying to convince Sharief Hussein was to suborn the loyalties of the Arab soldiers in the Ottoman army. "At that moment a large portion of the Turkish force at Gallipoli and nearly the whole of the force in Mesopotamia were Arabs...could we give them some guarantee of assistance in the future to justify their splitting with the Turks? I was told to do that at once."²²⁵ To

²²⁵ Lacey, *op. cit.*, p. 119. On 25 April 1915, British effort in the war faced a setback. In an attempt to wrest control of the Dardanelles from Ottoman empire in order to better supply Russia, the Allies' Gallipoli military campaign commenced. (Gallipoli is a Peninsula forming the southernmost European shore of the Dardanelles). Few months later, the operation proved to be a disaster for the Allied powers, mainly Britain and France, before the evacuation started in December 1915.

encourage the Arabs to revolt against the Ottoman empire Britain declared her readiness to defend them against any threat. The British government also wished the Arabs to accomplish their freedom and grasp the reins of their administration both in theory and in practice.

The third point stressed by the documents was that if it became unavoidable for the British government and the Allied Powers to land on Arab soil and to occupy it during the war, Britain and her allies promised to evacuate it directly after the end of hostilities. In the words of the Proclamation, Britain and her allies did not "intend to possess any part of your country neither in the form of conquest and possession nor in the form of protection or occupation"; even more important, the Proclamation promised that if the Arabs succeeded in getting their independence, the Allies were ready to "give up those places to them at once."²²⁶

During the period from August 1915 to March 1916 the British High Commissioner in Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon, led the British government negotiating team with Sharief Hussein of Makkah. Their exchange of letters became known as the 'Hussein-McMahon Correspondence'. These documents demonstrated Britain's commitment to the independence of the Arabs and her approval of the Arabs' (i.e. Sharief Hussein) claims for the *Khilafah* after the end of the war. Moreover, in these documents the British government also promised to support a united Arab

²²⁶ McMahon had also said in June 1915, that Britain intended to annex not "one foot of land in it, nor suffer any other Power to do so." Busch, Britain, India, and the Arabs, p. 68.

Kingdom with a defined boundary. This new British position contradicted Britain's long established policy in the Gulf/Peninsula regions which was based on the principle: 'divide and rule'. The following pages will examine McMahon's promises in theory and in practice.

On 14 July 1915, the Sharief's family sent an unsigned and undated letter to McMahon. In it, they asked for British approval of the proclamation of an Arab *Khilafah* and Britain's acknowledgement of "the independence of the Arab countries, bounded on the north by Mersina-Adana up to the 37 of latitude, on which degree falls Birijik, Urfa, Mardin, Midiat, Amadia island, up to the border of Persia; on the east by the borders of Persia up to the Gulf of Basra; on the south by the Indian Ocean, with the exception of the position of Aden to remain as it is; on the west by the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea up to Mersina."²²⁷ The High Commissioner's reply on the 30th of August was: "With regard to the questions of limits, frontiers and boundaries, it would appear to be premature to consume our time in discussing such details in the heat of war, and while, in many portions of them, the Turk is up to now in effective occupation."²²⁸

The Sharief did not like McMahon's answer. In his letter of the 9th of September, the Sharief insisted that the boundary issue must be addressed. He wrote to McMahon "Your Excellency will pardon me and permit me to say clearly that the coldness and hesitation which you have displayed in the question of the limits

²²⁷ Letter from the Sharief's family to McMahon. L/P&S/18/B222.

²²⁸ McMahon to the Sharief of Makkah. L/P&S/18/B222.

and boundaries by saying that the discussion of these at present is of no use and is a loss of time and that they are still in the hands of the Government which is ruling them [i.e. Turkey]...our peoples have seen that the life of their new proposal is bound at least by these limits and their word is united on this. Therefore they have found it necessary first to discuss this point with the Power in whom they now have their confidence and trust as a final appeal, viz., the Illustrious British Empire."²²⁹

The British High Commissioner in Egypt agreed in the most important letter of the entire Hussein-McMahon Correspondence with the Sharief on the urgency of the boundary question. He outlined, on behalf of the British government, in his 24 October letter, the area in which Britain would give support for Arab independence. McMahon declared the following: "The districts of Mersina and Alexandretta and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Hama, Homs and Aleppo cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the proposed limits and boundaries" in the Sharief's Family letter of the 14th July of 1915. He added in the same letter that: "With the above modification, and without prejudice of our existing treaties with Arab chiefs, we [Britain] accept these limits and boundaries and...I am empowered in the name of the Government of Great Britain to give the following assurances and make the following reply to your letter [of the 9th September 1915]:- Subject to the above modifications, Great Britain is prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs within the territories

²²⁹ Hussein to Sir Henry McMahon. L/P&S/18/B222.

included in the limits and boundaries proposed by the Sherif of Mecca." In conclusion, McMahon said, "I am convinced that this declaration will assure you beyond all possible doubt of the sympathy of Great Britain towards the aspirations of her traditional friends the Arabs and will result in a firm and lasting alliance."²³⁰

According to the British High Commissioner's October promise to the Sharief of Makkah, the British government recognised today's Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen (except Aden), Jordan, Palestine, Iraq and most of Syria as provinces in a united Arab Kingdom, which was supposed to be established after the end of the Great War. In his speech to the Eastern Committee meeting of 5 December 1918, of which he was the chairman, Lord Curzon, then Foreign Secretary (1918-24), declared that: "there was the letter to King Hussein from Sir Henry McMahon, of the 24th October 1915, in which we gave him the assurance that the Hejaz, the red area which we commonly call Mesopotamia, the brown area or Palestine, the Acre-Haifa enclave, the big Arab area (A) and (B), and the whole of the Arab Peninsula down to Aden, should be Arab and independent."²³¹

In their following correspondence of November and December of 1915, Hussein and McMahon emphasised the expression 'Arab Kingdom'. In his reply of 5 November to McMahon's letter of October, the Sharief used the phrase Arab

²³⁰ Sir Henry McMahon to the Sharief of Makkah. L/P&S/18/B222.

²³¹ Kedourie, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-7.

Kingdom three times. "We renounce our insistence on the inclusion of the *Vilayets* of Mersina and Adana in the Arab Kingdom." He added "As the Provinces of Irak are parts of the pure Arab Kingdom...we might agree to leave under the British Administration for a short time those districts now occupied by the British troops,...against a suitable sum paid as compensation to the Arab Kingdom for the period of occupation."²³² In his reply of 17 December to the Sharief's November comments, McMahon had also used the expression Arab Kingdom twice. The High Commissioner said "In stating that the Arabs are ready to recognize and respect all our treaties with Arab Chiefs, it is of course understood that this will apply to all territories included in the Arab Kingdom." The second time was when McMahon repeated the promise of the British government to support the Sharief and said that the government "are ready to give all guarantees of assistance and support within their power to the Arab Kingdom."²³³ In this correspondence the expression Arab Kingdom meant an independent united Arab Kingdom of all the territories that had been accepted by McMahon's letter of 24 October 1915.

The use of words like 'province', 'district' or 'vilayet' in referring to Damascus, Hama, Homs, Aleppo, Baghdad and Basrah in more than one letter of the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, gave a clear indication of the British approval of a united Arab Kingdom. Equally important, in his memoirs, Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916, Grey confirmed this understanding when he spoke of

²³² Hussein to McMahon. L/P&S/18/B222.

²³³ McMahon to Hussein. L/P&S/18/B222.

a "promise to King Hussein that Arabia should be an entirely independent moslem state", and he called it a secret treaty.²³⁴ Harold Nicolson commented in his Peacemaking that "the impression left on the mind of King Hussein was that Great Britain had assured him support in the foundation of an united Arab Empire with its capital at Damascus."²³⁵

A few months later, in June 1916, the Sharief proclaimed the so-called 'Arab Revolt' against the Ottoman *Khilafah*. Many British officials believed that the Sharief's revolt was very important to the British and their allies and hastened the defeat of the Ottomans. General Gilbert Clayton, Director of Military Intelligence in the Egyptian Army, wrote on 11 October 1915 a memorandum in which he said "The Sharif's revolt has shattered the solidarity of Islam, in that Moslem is fighting against Moslem. It has emphasised the failure of the *Jihad*²³⁶, and endangered the *Khalifate* of the Sultan...it has rendered pro-British a large body of anti-Turk sentiments in Turkish Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia and it has impaired the loyalty of the Arab divisions of the Turkish army."²³⁷ On 'The Value of the Sherifial Arab Movement for British policy' Arnold Toynbee, a member of the Turkish section of the British delegation at the Paris Conference of 1919, wrote on 19 December 1918 that "If we [the British] support the Arab movement we shall destroy

²³⁴ Viscount Grey of Fallodon. Twenty-Five Years 1892-1916 (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), vol. II, p. 229.

²³⁵ Harold Nicolson. Peacemaking, 1919 (London: 1933), pp. 140-1.

²³⁶ A holy war in the cause of *Allah* (God) and His commands.

²³⁷ Kedourie, op. cit., p. 136.

Turkey with much less risk of arousing against us the permanent antagonism of Islam."²³⁸

The British also succeeded in persuading the Shaikhs of Muhammarah and Kuwait, Sayyid Muhammad bin Ali bin Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Idrisi of Asir and Ibn Saud of Najd to join the moves against the Ottoman *Khilafah*.²³⁹ With the outbreak of World War One, Britain presented a particular guarantee to Muhammarah.²⁴⁰ On 3 November 1914, Britain had given Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait a pledge of perpetual tax-free possession of his date groves "situate between Faw and Qurnah" and guaranteed Kuwait independence under British protection, in return for Mubarak's undertaken to attack "Safwan, Umm Qasr and Bubiyan and occupy them."²⁴¹ Also, by 30 April 1915 a treaty had been concluded between Britain and Al-Idrisi by which they agreed to co-operate against the Ottoman. To ensure the loyalty of Al-Idrisi, Britain would guarantee the safety of Asir from the sea, and her independence at the end of the war.²⁴² As chapter two pointed out by signing the 1915 treaty Ibn Saud promised, in

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 212-3.

²³⁹ Before Abdul-Aziz bin Saud occupied it in 1930. Asir was the Red Sea coastal province on the north-west of Yemen. Al-Idrisi was the great-grandson of Ahmad bin Idris, a Moroccan religious leader, and he was not related to Sayyad Muhammad Al-Idrisi, Grand Sanusi and late King Idris of Libya. Muhammad bin Ali Al-Idrisi had carved out a petty state for himself since 1906. Busch, *Britain, India, and the Arabs*, p. 218, note: 2.

²⁴⁰ Yousof Al-Abdulla, *A Study of Qatari-British Relations, 1914-1945* (Qatar: Orient Publishing & Translation, 1981), p. 32; and F. Al-Khatrash, *History of British-Kuwaiti Political Relations, 1890-1921* (Al-Kuwait: That al-Salassel, 1984), p. 120.

²⁴¹ Letter from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to Shaikh of Kuwait, in L/P&S/10/606.

²⁴² Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 12-3.

Article 4, to follow the advice of the British government completely.

There are two comprehensive British documents which show the position of the above mentioned leaders during the war. The first one was the De Bunsen Committee Report of June 1915.²⁴³ Paragraph No. 91 of the report confirmed that, following the outbreak of the Great War, the British government "have entered into, and in some cases completed, negotiations with several of the Chiefs in what was to have been the Turkish area, including the Sheikh of Kuwait, the Amir of Nejd (Bin Saud), the Sheikh Mavia [in Yemen], Said Idriss, and the Grand Sherif of Mecca. These negotiations vary in detail, but they have this much in common that in every case they offer a guarantee of independence in some form or another as a return for effective or successful support in the war against Turkey". The second document was Sir Percy Cox's draft proclamation about the future of Baghdad on 8 March 1917. He reported that in November 1916, Ibn Saud and the Shaikhs of Kuwait and Muhammarah met in Kuwait and "announce[d] to Islamic world...their firm intention to support Shereef Hussein and to co-operate to the utmost with British

²⁴³ On 8 April 1915, the British Prime Minister appointed a committee 'to consider the nature of British desiderata in Turkey in Asia' in the imminent fall of Constantinople. Its Chairman was Sir Maurice de Bunsen; G. R. Clerk represented the Foreign Office, Sir T. W. Holderness the India Office, Admiral H. B. Jackson the Admiralty, Major-General C. E. Callwell the War Office, and Sir H. Llewellyn Smith the Board of Trade, and M. P. Sir Mark Sykes was Kitchener's representative on the committee. De Bunsen Committee Report, June 1915, p. iv. CAB 42/3.

Government for the expulsion of the Turks for ever from the soil of Arabia."²⁴⁴

The British government's promises to Sharief Hussein of an independent and united Arab Kingdom and her promises of support to his claim to the *Khilafah*, however, outraged many British officials, whether in London, India or the Gulf. They believed that the creation of an Arab *Khilafah* or even a united Arab kingdom was definitely not in Britain's interest. Arthur Hirtzel, Secretary of the Political and Secret Department in the India Office, was sufficiently concerned about this when he stated in October 1914 that "a consolidated Arabia w[oul]d be a far greater danger than the Jewish freemasons who now represent the caliphate," the latter being a reference to the Young Turks.²⁴⁵ Austen Chamberlain, Secretary of State for India (1915-7), put it to Grey on 27 October 1915 that: "the best comfort he [McMahon] could give me was that the whole thing was a castle in the air which would never materialize."²⁴⁶ Charles Hardinge, the Viceroy of India (1910-6), also pointed out, on 15 November 1915, that nothing but trouble would come from these "fatuous proceedings." The Viceroy added that: "I devoutly hope that this proposed independent Arab State will fall to pieces, if it is ever created. Nobody could possibly have devised any scheme more detrimental to British interests in the Middle East than this."²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Kedourie, *op. cit.*, p. 167. Moreover, Cox reported that Ibn Saud, at that same meeting in Kuwait, praised unexpectedly the Sharief's action in fighting with the British against the Turks and asserted that it was the obligation of every true Arab to support him. Graves, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

²⁴⁵ Busch, *Britain, India, and the Arabs*, p. 220.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

Clayton in a private letter on 6 January 1916 to Sir Reginald Wingate, McMahon's successor in Egypt (1916-9), said that: "an Englishman would naturally avoid producing such a 'Frankenstein'."²⁴⁸

The British government's official promises to Sharief Hussein, however, were contradicted by her practical policies. The British government was in line with those who opposed McMahon's promises. Britain clearly abandoned her guarantees to the Arabs by which she promised not to possess any part of Arabia neither in the form of conquest and possession nor in the form of protection or occupation. The British government also forgot her readiness to recognise the perfect independence of the Arabs after the end of the war. Two famous examples of Britain's practical policies will prove her contradiction of her earlier promises to Hussein. They are the Asia Minor Agreement, commonly known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration of November 1917.²⁴⁹

On 16 May 1916, a few weeks before the announcement of the Arab Revolt, a secret agreement was concluded by British and French diplomats, Sir Mark Sykes and Georges Picot.²⁵⁰ In 1917,

²⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 220.

²⁴⁹ Majdy Al-Safouri, The Collapse of the Ottoman State and its Effect on Islamic Dawah (Al-Qahira: Dar Al-Sahwa, 1990), p. 167. Mark Sykes was a Conservative M. P., while Georges Picot, at the time of Sykes-Picot Agreement was the French Counsellor in London. Arthur Balfour was a former Prime Minister (1902-5) and was the Foreign Secretary at the time of the Declaration.

²⁵⁰ Few diplomatic documents have suffered the odium heaped upon the Sykes-Picot Treaty, from Arnold Wilson's "counter to every sound principle" or George Antonius's "shocking document...greed at its worst...a startling piece of double-dealing" to Lloyd George's "a fatuous arrangement judged from any and every point of view." Busch, Britain, India, and the Arabs, p. 88.

the Sykes-Picot Agreement was made public to the world by the Bolshevik government after the 1917 revolution in Russia. Under its secret terms, the signatory powers agreed on the partition of the Ottoman empire between them into spheres of interest and influence which would be mutually respected if the allies won the war. While Palestine would be internationalized, control of the Gulf, the *Wilayats* of Basra and Baghdad, Egypt and of her communications with India would go to Britain. France had interests in the *Wilayats* of Mosul, Syria and Lebanon. The Russians were to have Constantinople and other Turkish territories.²⁵¹ As far as the Balfour Declaration was concerned, the British government declared on 2 November 1917 that they "view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object..."²⁵²

It could not be denied, therefore, that the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration were incompatible with Kitchener's and McMahon's promises to the Sharief of Makkah and also to Cairo's Residency Proclamation of December 1914. Lawrence once said that, in case of an Allied victory, British promises to the Arabs were 'dead paper'.²⁵³ In a book first published in 1933, Nicolson wrote: "Our pledges to the Arabs...[conflicted]...with the promises we made to France in the

²⁵¹ Marlowe, *op. cit.*, p. 62; and Al-Safouri, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-7.

²⁵² Anis claimed that the Balfour Declaration was shown to the American President Woodrow Wilson before its announcement and the latter supported it. Anis, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

²⁵³ Anthony Nutting, *Lawrence of Arabia* (London: Hollis & Carter, 1961), p. 87; and Lacey, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-5.

subsequent Sykes-Picot agreement."²⁵⁴ Sir Lawrence Graffety-Smith, a former British diplomat in the Middle East, affirmed that the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration "made nonsense" of the McMahon promises.²⁵⁵ Sir Hugh Foot, also a former British official in Palestine and the Middle East, said in his comments on the failure of British Administration in Palestine that "The Arabs who fought with Great Britain in the first world war to throw off the yoke of the Turkish Empire were led to believe that they were fighting for their freedom...the main responsibility was ours...by prevarication and procrastination and basically by the fundamental dishonesty of our original double dealing we had made disaster certain... In 1915 we supported King Feisal's [Sharief Hussein's son] desert rising. In 1917 we signed the Balfour Declaration."²⁵⁶

The defeat of the Central Powers (including Turkey) in the First World War allowed the victorious Allies to convene peace conferences in Versailles (Paris) in January 1919 and in San Remo (Italy) in April 1920 to decide what should be done with the territories they had obtained from their enemies. As a result of the Ottoman withdrawal from the Arab countries, the great powers took the chance to negotiate and bargain between themselves.

The British government's problem was the conflicting promises and commitments which had been made at various stages

²⁵⁴ Nicolson, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-1.

²⁵⁵ Lawrence Graffety-Smith, *Bright Levant* (London, 1970), p. 151.

²⁵⁶ Hugh Foot, *A Start in Freedom* (London, 1964), pp. 35-6.

in the war to the Arabs, the French and the Zionists, in order to get their support in the fighting. It was at the peace conferences that the British proceeded to reconcile these rival promises. Ignoring her commitments to the Arabs, the British government agreed on the partition of the Arab world. Palestine and Iraq became British mandates and Lebanon and Syria French ones. The Arabian Peninsula region in its turn was divided up among several Shaikhs who were in treaty relations with Britain, by which the British controlled their foreign relations in return for protecting them. Certainly, the settlements of the Versailles and San Remo Peace Conferences complied with the interests defined in the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration on the one hand, and, on the other, contradicted the British promises of an independent united Arab state. Thus the announcement of these outcomes raised severe disappointments and unrest in the Arab world.

Conclusion

To ensure Britain's upper hand in the area, the British governments kept shifting their policies from an inactive encouragement and support to resume the *Khilafah* and to establish a united Arab state, to using all possible means to guarantee the establishment of autonomous, weak, tiny states in the same territories they promised Hussein would be an independent and united state under his leadership. British old treaty relations and her efforts in the peace conferences tore up the supposed independent united Arab state into 18 states and

emirates as follows: Najd, Hejaz, Hail, Asir, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Dhubi, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Ajman, Umm al-Qawain, Oman, Yemen, Palastine, Syria and Iraq. The words of G. R. Clerk, head of the war department at the Foreign Office, and Clayton reflected the strategy of the British government at that time. Clerk agreed that: "The creation of a definite Arab state is, especially for foreign Christian powers, practically an impossibility. We cannot do more than spread and encourage the idea. But what we can perhaps work for is a system of autonomous Arab states, recognizing and paying tribute to a spiritual Khalif at Mecca, but politically independent of him."²⁵⁷ Clayton went further when he stated on 8 September 1918 that: "As regards future settlement in the Arabian Peninsula, the best that could then be hoped for is the formation of a number of small States under Arab rulers devoid even of the nominal controlling influence formerly exercised by the Turkish Government."²⁵⁸ It is in this context that British policies before and after their promises to Sharief Hussein should be understood.

²⁵⁷ Busch, Britain, India, and the Arabs, p. 53.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 200.

Chapter V Britain's Role and Responsibility in Kuwait's Border Disputes with Najd and Iraq

From the time of its foundation in the early eighteenth century, Kuwait's security was in chronic jeopardy from its larger, more powerful neighbours --the Persians, the Najdis and the Iraqis, all of whom wanted to control it.²⁵⁹ Shaikh Ahmad bin Jabir bin Mubarak (r. 1921-50) of Kuwait once compared Kuwait's relationship with its larger neighbours of Najd and Iraq as "a bone being fought over by two dogs, the Najdi one large, loud and aggressive and the Iraqi one smaller, inactive but nonetheless, stealthy."²⁶⁰

The aim of this chapter is to follow the British role in Kuwait's border problems with Najd and Iraq. The chapter begins with an introduction on the nature of the political borders and the reasons behind the boundary problems in the Arabian Gulf/Peninsula regions. Although the Anglo-Ottoman Draft Convention of 1913 was never ratified it played a great role in Gulf politics, therefore attention will be given to it in the second section. The role and responsibility of British governments in Kuwait's border disputes with Najd and Iraq will be examined in two separate sections.

²⁵⁹ As far as the British role is concerned, the Irani-Kuwaiti dispute, compared with the Saudi and the Iraqi claims to Kuwait, is less important.

²⁶⁰ From H. Dickson, Political Agent at Kuwait, to the British Resident, H. V. Biscoe. R/15/2/12.

5.1 *The Boundary Problems*

The political borders between countries are nothing but lines drawn on a map specifying the territory which belongs to countries on either side of these lines, designating the piece of territory over which the governing body exercises its authority in a manner where it alone has the right to do so. These limiting boundaries do not define the land area of a country only, but in the situation of coastal countries, they extend into the sea, in order to delimit the coastal range of the countries as well. These limiting boundaries also define the territories of a country both above and below the earth's surface.²⁶¹ Disputes arising from all these matters are sometimes resolved by force, and sometimes by a direct accord between the disputing parties or by forwarding the case to international organisations, like the International Court of Justice at the Hague, for mediation.

When borders between countries are the result of natural geography such as rivers, mountains or valleys; or man-made features such as roads, railways and canals the countries involved are fortunate, for there can then be no, or at least less, disagreement about where to draw the boundary lines. These features would earn the borders involved a higher degree of stability.²⁶² Unfortunately, this is not the case in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula regions.

²⁶¹ Tawfiq, *op. cit.*, p. 166; and Ahmad Mahabah, "The Borders' Problems in North Africa," *Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya* 111 (January 1993), p. 239.

²⁶² Mahabah, *op. cit.*, p. 239; and Salah Al-Aqqad, "The Historical Background of the Arabic Borders Problems," *Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya* 111 (January 1993), p. 172.

The border problems in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula regions proved to be more troublesome. Their territorial disagreements are one of the primary reasons of conflict in the modern history of these regions. All the states of these regions are involved in boundary disputes. Frank Brenchley declared in (The GCC Border Disputes Seminar, August 1992) that, "From 1963-67 I was head of the Arabian department at the Foreign Office and from 1967-68 I was Under-Secretary for Middle East affairs.... When I handed over the Arabian department in 1967 to my successor I gave him a list of boundary disputes still outstanding. I don't remember the exact number but there were certainly more than 50 and less than 100."²⁶³ In the last two decades alone, the Gulf witnessed several acts of aggression. The Iranian occupation of the UAE's islands in 1971; the Iraqi attack on Iran in 1980; the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990; and the Saudi-Qatari clash of 1992 are the major ones to mention. Therefore, these disputes constitute a spectre of instability haunting the Gulf region today.

The Gulf border problems resulted from a multiplicity of facts and reasons. They are as follows: the rarity of natural or man-made features, throughout much of the area, which could act as markers in the huge desert sands; the presence of many islands in the Gulf; the similarities and historical connection of the areas to be bisected by border lines; the similarity found between people living on either side of boundaries due to the widespread

²⁶³ Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies. The GCC Border Disputes Seminar, with Special Reference to Iraq and Kuwait (London: Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, August 1992), p. 59.

nature of the tribes and the intermixing of their families; the existence of poor relations for most of the time between the governments/ruling families of the modern Gulf states; and finally the policies of the British government during its long stay in the Arabian Gulf/Peninsula regions. Of all these, the last two continued to increase tensions and to be the greatest obstacle to any overall solutions to the border problems in the regions. The hypothesis of this study, however, leads us to concentrate on British involvement in the border settlements. In his book Seize the Moment Nixon considered the border lines between today's Muslims states, most of which he believed were drawn by the colonial powers, to be a main reason for conflict between these states.²⁶⁴

5.2 The Anglo-Ottoman Draft Convention of 1913

With the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the interests of the British and the Ottoman governments persuaded them to negotiate their problems in the Arabian Gulf region. Due to their problems in other parts of the empire (such as the Balkan and the North Africa areas) and their weakness in face of the increasing British influence in the Gulf, the Ottoman government felt the importance of reaching an agreement with the British on their disputes in the Gulf. The British government, for its part, aiming to win the Ottomans and keep them away from the Germans arrived at the same outcome. Consequently, the two

²⁶⁴ Richard Nixon, Seize the Moment: America's Challenge in a One-Superpower World (Al-Qahira: Dar Al-Hilal, 1977). Trans. by Ahmad Murad. p. 137.

parties signed at London the Anglo-Ottoman Draft Convention of 29 July 1913.

As far as Kuwait was concerned, before Shaikh Mubarak killed his ruling brothers Muhammad and Jarrah and seized power in 1896, Britain had not disputed Ottoman sovereignty over the emirate. Indeed, between 1876 and 1896 alone there were many British documents which recognised the Ottomans' sovereignty or jurisdiction²⁶⁵ over the Arabian coast from Basrah to Udeid or Qatif --both considerably south of Kuwait.²⁶⁶ In 1876, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Prideaux, British Political Resident in the Gulf, named Kuwait, Qatif and Uqair as the main Ottoman harbours on the Arabian side of the Gulf.²⁶⁷ Again, in May 1879, Sir Austin Layard, British Ambassador in Constantinople, admitted Ottoman sovereignty as far south as Udeid.²⁶⁸ In 1893 the British Ambassador in Constantinople, Sir C. Ford, officially told the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs that the British government, "Whilst admitting the sovereignty of the sultan extended from Basra to a place called Al Qatif, considered that the coast running South of that place was looked upon as debatable land."²⁶⁹ These documents convinced an expert on Gulf

²⁶⁵ Schofield pointed out that both the Home government and the government of India appeared at that time to treat such terms as authority, jurisdiction, sovereignty and suzerainty as interchangeable. Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p 13.

²⁶⁶ Even during the early years of Mubarak's rule many British documents indicated that the British regarded Kuwait as a part of Ottoman Arabia. To mention just one of them: a Foreign Department minute at the end of 1896 declared that "The [British] Government has no concern with Koweit which is under Turkish sovereignty." Quoted in Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 97, note: 2.

²⁶⁷ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p 13.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Bidwell, The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. I, p. xi.

affairs to assert that, from the early 1870s up to the 1896 accession of Shaikh Mubarak, Britain formally recognised the Ottoman title to Kuwait on a number of occasions and never at any time disputed it.²⁷⁰

In 1899, as explained earlier in chapter three, the British concluded a secret treaty with Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait whereby they acknowledged the independence of the Shaikh. Accordingly, the British persistently rejected the Ottoman claims to Kuwait and defended her territory. The Ottoman government, for its part, refused to recognise the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Treaty declaring that Kuwait was under the Ottoman Porte's sovereignty and must continue so. These arguments continued until the two parties began their negotiations for an overall settlement in the Gulf.

To obtain Ottoman approval to other desiderata (including the Berlin-Baghdad Railway, Qatar and Bahrain questions), the British Home government was ready to make some sort of concession over Kuwait. On 29 July 1911, the British proposed to the Ottoman that they are "of opinion that any lasting settlement between the two Powers must provide for the definite renunciation by the Ottoman Government of Bahrain and adjacent islands and of the whole of the Peninsula of El Katr [Qatar]."²⁷¹ In return the British agreed, on 10 May 1912, that Kuwait would "form a sort of enclave within, and forming part of the Ottoman Empire, but enjoying complete self-government under Turkish

²⁷⁰ Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, p. 13.

²⁷¹ Gooch and Temperley, *op. cit.*, vol. X, part II, no. 34, p. 47.

suzerainty."²⁷² Two months later (18 July), the British government repeated the same concession.²⁷³ Finally, the two governments signed the 1913 agreement.

According to the terms of the 1913 convention, the Ottoman and the British governments were not only acknowledging the 1899 treaty (Article 3), but even more the Shaikhdom's frontiers were formally defined for the first time (Article 5 and 7). Kuwait's territory was divided into two circular zones (the red and the green zones), in which the Al-Sabah was acknowledged as having varying degrees of authority. Within a semi-circle of approximately 40 miles from the town of Kuwait the "complete administrative autonomy" of the Shaikh of Kuwait was recognised (Article 2). The islands of Bubiyan, Warbah, Mashjan, Failakah, Awhah, Kubr, Qaru, Maqtah, and Umm al-Maradim "together with the adjacent islets and waters" were also included within this red zone.

Within an outer zone, which was occupied by tribes recognising the authority of the Shaikh of Kuwait, the Shaikh would continue to collect their tithes (*ushur* taxes) and to perform "the administrative rights belonging to him in his quality" as an Ottoman *qaimmaqam* (Article 6). The limitation of that outer zone had been based on Shakespear's 1912 observations that "All Arab shaikhs base the territorial extent of their power upon their ability to enforce some order over the adjacent tribes, their power to enforce the payments of '*zikat*' by

²⁷² *Ibid.*, no. 50, p. 73.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, no. 55, p. 79.

Bedouin, and their capacity to prevent and to avenge outrages and raids within the territorial limits claimed. Judged by these standards there can be no question that Mubarak is the paramount chief within the limit described."²⁷⁴ In this outer zone, the Ottoman government would not "exercise any administrative action independently of the shaykh of Kuwayt", and would not establish garrisons or undertake any military activity without the prior understanding of Britain (Article 6).

Although the agreement recognised that both zones belonged to Kuwait and the tribes who lived in the outer zone acknowledged the Shaikh of Kuwait's authority and paid him their tithes, it failed to provide the reasons behind this division and on what grounds it was taken. The convention did not answer why the British and the Ottoman governments divided a territory they believed belonged to Kuwait. This division contributed to the confusion of Kuwait's boundary problems.

The British government, in exchange, recognised Kuwait as an autonomous Ottoman *qada* (district)²⁷⁵; the Shaikh of Kuwait as an Ottoman *qaimmaqam*; accepted that the Ottoman government could appoint an agent in the Shaikhdom; agreed that the Shaikh raised the Ottoman flag, as in the past, though he could add the word "Kuwait" to it "if he wishes it" (Article 2), and promised not to announce Kuwait a British protectorate so long as the *status quo* was preserved (Article 4).

²⁷⁴ Wilkinson, *Arabia's Frontiers*, p. 141.

²⁷⁵ *Qada* or *caza* is an Ottoman word referring to an administrative unit.

Shaikh Mubarak's initial reaction to the Anglo-Ottoman Convention was to reject it, especially the question of appointing an Ottoman agent at Kuwait. The Shaikh insisted that appointing an Ottoman agent would destroy any good the convention might bring.²⁷⁶ Mubarak argued that such a measure was against the Anglo-Kuwaiti treaties of 1899 and 1907, which he had faithfully observed for many years.²⁷⁷ In a lengthy letter to a journalist friend, Cox wrote that "The admission of a Turkish Agent he [Mubarak] was most bitterly opposed to. It was what he had fought successfully all his life and had thought that such a thing had long ago vanished from the horizon of practical politics.... This is the thing they [i.e. the Ottomans] have many times tried and which I [Mubarak] have always....defeated."²⁷⁸ Captain Shakespear, the Political Agent at Kuwait, also reported that Shaikh Mubarak "was so surprised at the possibility that he asked me to repeat and explain the matter to him more than once, and when I had done so, he became most vehement in his opposition to the idea."²⁷⁹

On 6 July 1913, Mubarak received a written assurance from the British Political Resident in the Gulf. Cox told Mubarak that Britain had to negotiate the 1913 convention on a 'give and take basis'. The Political Resident assured Mubarak that "The points which you have conceded in the course of this agreement - which was on a give and take basis - you must regard as the price paid

²⁷⁶ Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 338.

²⁷⁷ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, pp. 45-6.

²⁷⁸ Graves, op. cit., pp. 169-70.

²⁷⁹ Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 338.

in exchange for the great advantages which you derive from it. Among them [are] the confirmation of your independence...."²⁸⁰

The Shaikh had no real choice but to accept the convention. He told Cox "what can I do but put my faith in you and your government and do as you ask; but it is with great trembling of heart that I do so."²⁸¹

The 1913 convention signified a turning point for the British government's policy in Kuwait. The articles concerning Kuwait were totally opposed to Britain's former policy of defending Kuwait and recognising the independence of the emirate and its Shaikhs from the Ottoman empire. This probably explains why the British Indian government and its senior employees in the Gulf at that time, such as Cox and Shakespear, were not as enthusiastic about the convention as the Home government. After the two parties initialled the final Draft on 6 May 1913, Cox pointed out rightly that "If Mubarak was to be an Ottoman *qaimmaqam*, that is, government official, he would be a Turkish agent."²⁸² In his letter to the journalist Cox even admitted that in the 1913 agreement "we came off worst in the Kuwait part."²⁸³ Shakespear, in his turn, raised his reservations about the proposal of appointing a permanent Ottoman agent at

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 339; and Maurice Mendelson & Susan Hulton, "Iraq's Claim to Sovereignty over Kuwait," in Schofield, Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, p. 144, note: 25.

²⁸¹ Graves, op. cit., p. 170.

²⁸² Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 338.

²⁸³ Graves, op. cit., p. 170.

Kuwait.²⁸⁴ "To me his attitude is no surprise" was also the reaction of Shakespear to Mubarak's initial rejection.²⁸⁵

The generally held view was that the British government, by signing the 1913 convention, sacrificed the territory and interests of Kuwait for her own interests. This view was shared by Shaikh Mubarak himself. Suspicious that the British have might gained some privileges from the Ottoman government in the Baghdad Railway's issue in exchange for their concessions in Kuwait, Mubarak asked to see the railway terms.²⁸⁶ Shakespear's words also exemplified this belief. In May 1913, he wrote that, "No amount of explanation will ever remove the impression that we have used Kuwait as a pawn to secure other advantages to ourselves."²⁸⁷ Mubarak's 'give' in the 1913 treaty was in return for the 'take' Britain achieved in the Qatari, Bahraini and the Baghdad Railway questions.

Although the 1913 convention was never ratified, it had a great effect on the stability of the Gulf region. All parties involved in it, including the British, accepted the treaty when it ran in accordance with their interests and rejected it whenever it supported their opponents' argument. Though there are many examples to support this claim, three should suffice to illustrate the argument.

²⁸⁴ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 45.

²⁸⁵ Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 338.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

When clashes broke out in early 1920 between Salim's forces and Ibn Saud's over the green zone territory, Shaikh Salim appealed to the British to define Kuwait's frontiers according to the 1913 convention. The British reply was that the mentioned agreement had been substituted by the Anglo-Najdi Darin Treaty of 1915.²⁸⁸ According to Article 6 of the 1915 treaty, the limits of the territories of Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the Trucial emirates, which are under British government protection, "shall be hereafter determined." The British also claimed that one of the aims of the convention was to protect Kuwait against the Ottomans, but since the Ottomans were no longer a political factor in the Gulf, the agreement had become obsolete.²⁸⁹ Finally at the al-Uqair conference of December 1922, the British rejected Kuwait's claim and mollified Ibn Saud by giving him almost all the green zone area neighbouring his land disregarding the 1913 convention.

But when the Najdis extended their attack to al-Jahra town in October 1920, Ibn Saud was strongly warned by the British government that the red zone territory of the 1913 agreement was recognised as definitely belonging to Kuwait and that this question was "not open to dispute."²⁹⁰ Because of her interests in the survival of Kuwait, Britain could not allow Ibn Saud to take-over Kuwait or part of the boundary allocated to her by the red zone of the same agreement of 1913.

²⁸⁸ Wilkinson, Arabia's Frontiers, p. 141; and Al-Khatrash, op. cit., p. 107.

²⁸⁹ The Political Agent at Kuwait to Civil Commissioner at Baghdad, 20/6/1920. Wilkinson, Arabia's Frontiers, p. 142.

²⁹⁰ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 54.

The third example was on 19 April 1923, when the Kuwait-Iraq border was defined. In his letter to the British Political Agent in Kuwait, Cox, then British High Commissioner in Iraq, wrote "As you are aware it is in so far as it goes, identical with the frontier indicated by the Green line of the Anglo-Turkish agreement of July 29th, 1913, but there seems no necessity to make special allusion to that document in your communication to the Shaikh."²⁹¹ It appears that the High Commissioner wanted to avoid any question being raised by the Shaikh of Kuwait about Cox's rejection of the 1913 convention only four months earlier at the al-Uqair conference.

It is not without irony therefore that this same convention which the British had told Kuwait had no validity in their dispute with Ibn Saud over the green zone area was invoked as a valid document when dealing with Ibn Saud himself over the red zone area and with the Iraqi government over the same green zone area.

5.3 Britain and the Kuwait-Najd Border Dispute

In 1891, Ibn Rashid, the Ruler of Hail, crushed the Al-Saud family and destroyed their rule in Najd. The latter moved to different places until finally seeking refuge in Kuwait. They stayed there until the young Ibn Saud recaptured Riyadh by defeating Ibn Rashid's forces in 1902. In 1913, the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula fell to Ibn Saud's authority. After the

²⁹¹ Memorandum from Sir Percy Cox to the Political Agent at Kuwait, in L/P&S/20/C158E.

failure of a number of attempts, Ibn Saud signed on 26 December 1915, during the First World War, the Treaty of Darin with the British government, by which they pledged to protect his territories. The treaty addressed Ibn Saud as the 'Ruler of Najd, El Hassa, Qatif and Jubail, and the towns and ports belonging to them'. Al-Hasa, Qatif and Jubail are situated on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula. Since then, the power of Ibn Saud gradually spread over the tribes of Najd and the eastern side of Arabia.

Despite the close and strong relationship with Britain during Shaikh Mubarak's rulership which culminated in Kuwait fighting on the British side in World War I against the Ottoman *Khailafh* and Kuwait coming formally under British protection, Anglo-Kuwaiti relations were not always good. Shaikh Salim's weak response to the British request that Kuwait should participate in a blockade of exports to the Ottoman empire, led the British government to take some actions against him. The Kuwaitis' smuggling of supplies to the Ottomans in the last year of the war became so clear that it induced the British government to impose a naval blockade upon Kuwait, which was not lifted until the end of the war.²⁹² The British even warned the Shaikh, in July 1918, that their protection would be dependent on his full support of the blockade.²⁹³

²⁹² John Kelly, Arabia, the Gulf and the West (New York: Basic Books, 1980), p. 170. In February 1919, the British lifted the blockade and agreed to compensate Kuwait with 487,000 Rupees. Rush, op. cit., p. 80; and Al-Rashid, op. cit., pp. 239-40.

²⁹³ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 53. Al-Rashid claimed that at the beginning the British threatened Salim to bomb Kuwait if he refused to cooperate. Al-Rashid, op. cit., p. 239.

After the end of the First World War, the problems of the boundaries of today's northern Gulf states (Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) broke out. These problems caused havoc to the British authorities in the area. In May 1922, the British decided to call Ibn Saud and the Iraqis for a meeting in Muhammarah to discuss the border problems between the two parties. Again, in December 1922, the British government asked Iraq, Najd and Kuwait to send their representatives to attend a conference at al-Uqair. As a result of these meetings, a new boundary between the three parties was drawn. However, the discussion in this section will be limited to the Kuwait-Najd border only.

5.3.1 The Arguments of the Two Parties

In the last months of Mubarak's rule, tension had grown between him and Ibn Saud. The situation went from bad to worse when Salim bin Mubarak succeeded his brother Jabir in 1917 and started to emphasise Kuwait's authority over the green zone territory allocated by the 1913 convention to Kuwait. Shaikh Salim insisted that Captain Daniel McCallum, the British Political Agent at Kuwait, confirmed to him during 1919 the British recognition of the whole area of the green zone as part of Kuwait. On 17 February 1920, Salim asked for Kuwait's border with Najd to be delimited according to the 1913 convention and McCallum's confirmation.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁴ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 61.

The arguments of Ibn Saud were that Salim's power and influence over the tribes in the disputed areas was not like Mubarak's and that the convention of 1913 had not been ratified by its signatories.²⁹⁵ Ibn Saud insisted that the disputed area come under his rule and the tribe there acknowledge his authority. He claimed that the Al-Sabah's boundary was far from what they claimed. On one occasion, Ibn Saud said that Salim's "boundaries are known to start from al-Subaihiyah or even further northwards", that was at the most 30 miles from Kuwait town.²⁹⁶ On another, the Saudi Amir said that Al-Sabah's hegemony extended nowhere beyond Kuwait city walls.²⁹⁷ As a result, armed clashes started in 1920 between the two parties. The Kuwaiti Shaikh appealed to the British for arbitration.

5.3.2 The 1922 Borders Settlement of al-Uqair

On 2nd December 1922, the British government called a conference at al-Uqair. The conference was held under the supervision of Sir Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner in Iraq. Iraq was represented by Faisal's (King of Iraq 1921-33) Minister of Communications and Works, Sabih Bey and Fahad Bey, chief of the *Amarat* tribe. The Saudi emirate of Najd was represented by Ibn Saud himself. Shaikh Ahmad Al-Jabir, the new Shaikh of Kuwait, was represented by Major J. C. More, the British political Agent in Kuwait (1920-9). Major H. R. Dickson,

²⁹⁵ Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

²⁹⁶ Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, p. 54.

²⁹⁷ Ibn Saud to the Political Agent, Bahrain, 5 September 1920. R/15/1/522.

then the Political Agent in Bahrain, was present as well. Amin Rihani, a close friend of Ibn Saud, was also at al-Uqair, although not in any official capacity.²⁹⁸

At the conference, to compensate Ibn Saud for the loss of the territory he was forced to cede to Iraq in the drawing of the Najd-Iraq frontier, the British compelled Shaikh Ahmad to abrogate Kuwait's right to the coastal hinterland south of the boundary designated to Kuwait in the convention of 1913, when Mubarak's influence in the desert was at its peak. Major Dickson, who joined the High Commissioner in the conference, reported how Cox took "a red pencil and very carefully drew in on the map of Arabia a boundary line from the Persian Gulf to Jabal Anaizan, close to the Transjordan frontier. This gave Iraq a large area of the territory claimed by Najd. Obviously to placate Ibn Saud, he ruthlessly deprived Kuwait of nearly two-thirds of her territory and gave it to Najd."²⁹⁹ As a result of al-Uqair Agreement, the Kuwaiti territory was "pushed back a hundred and fifty miles, reducing the kingdom to an area of six thousand square miles" Dickson wrote.³⁰⁰ In size, the al-Uqair settlement reduced Kuwait's territory from nearly 45,000 sq km to 17,818 sq km.³⁰¹

The al-Uqair conference also brought to existence, for the first time in Arabia, the strange feature of the 'Neutral Zone'.

²⁹⁸ Gary Troeller, The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud (London: Frank Cass, 1976), p. 179.

²⁹⁹ H. Dickson, Kuwait and Her Neighbours (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956), p. 274.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 276.

³⁰¹ Some observers believed that Kuwait-Najd settlement of al-Uqair was a high price Kuwait paid for Shaikh Salim's ill support to Britain during the Great War. Kelly, Arabia, p. 170.

Such features are usually agreed upon when the concerned governments agree to share equal rights of sovereignty in the territory disputed between them.³⁰² In the conference, Cox drew out, south and west of Kuwait proper, "two zones, which he declared should be neutral and known as the Kuwait Neutral Zone and the Iraq Neutral Zone.... Pressed by [the Saudi adviser]..., he snapped out: why, pray, are you so anxious that this area go to Najd? Quite candidly the pasha replied: because we think oil exists there. That", retorted Sir Percy, "is exactly why I have made it a neutral zone. Each side shall have a half share."³⁰³

Regarding the Kuwait-Najd Neutral Zone, "the government of Najd and Kuwait will share equal rights until through the good offices of the government of Great Britain a further agreement is made between Najd and Kuwait concerning it."³⁰⁴ No such an agreement was ever made. Though Cox and the Najdis expected that the Kuwait-Najd Neutral Zone was to accommodate oil, no instructions were put for mutual co-operation between the two emirates in the administrative field or what to do in time of disputes.³⁰⁵

British official arguments were based on one point: that Salim's power was not like that of his father Mubarak at the time of concluding the agreement of 1913 and that Ibn Saud was the

³⁰² Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 58.

³⁰³ Dickson, op. cit., pp. 274-5.

³⁰⁴ E. Lauterpacht, et. al., The Kuwait Crisis: Basic Documents (Cambridge: Grotius, 1991), p. 48.

³⁰⁵ Gerald Blake, "Shared Zones as a Solution to Problems of Territorial Sovereignty in the Gulf States," in Schofield, Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, p. 204.

new master of the desert. In February 1917 Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Hamilton, Political Agent at Kuwait, had "laid stress on the recent deplorable loss of [Kuwait Shaikh's] influence in the [Kuwait] hinterland."³⁰⁶ In August 1918, Cox, then the Political Resident in the Gulf, acknowledged this diminishing of Al-Sabah territorial rule when he proposed that Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud could capture the Hafar wells, located in the south-west section of the area defined by the 1913 convention as part of Kuwait.³⁰⁷ Two years later, Captain John More's opinion was that "Shaikh Salim's influence can in no respect be compared with that of his father."³⁰⁸ Though the Political Agent admitted that Ibn Saud based his claim on the unwritten law of the desert while Shaikh Salim had the 1913 convention document on his side, he judged that "Ibn Saud has a very valid claim to the southern portion of the territory" circumscribed by the green line of the 1913 convention to Kuwait.³⁰⁹ This weak influence of Salim and Ibn Saud's powerful position over the tribes were in Cox's mind when he drew the new boundary line between the two emirates in the al-Uqair conference. Dickson reported that Cox's argument was "that the power of Ibn Sabah was much less in the desert than it had been when the Anglo-Ottoman Agreement had been drawn up."³¹⁰

³⁰⁶ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 53.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 54; and Wilkinson, Arabia's Frontiers, p. 142.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Dickson, op. cit., p. 274.

As far as the Gulf's stability is concerned, the British policy in the 1922 Uqair conference laid the seeds for some future conflict between Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. This conclusion is emphasised by the following two revealing conversations between the British High Commissioner in Iraq and Ibn Saud on the one hand, and the High Commissioner and the Shaikh of Kuwait on the other after the end of the conference. Major Dickson wrote that after Cox drew the boundaries, Ibn Saud asked the High Commissioner to visit him. Ibn Saud proceeded to break into tears because of the loss of what he believed was his land to Iraq. In an answer to Ibn Saud's complaints, Cox replied: "My friend, I know exactly how you feel and for this reason I gave you two-thirds of Kuwait's territory. I don't know how Ibn Sabah will take the blow."³¹¹ The second conversation happened when Cox stopped in Kuwait to inform Shaikh Ahmad about the results of the conference. Major More and Major Dickson were also present. Dickson reported the following remarkable scene, "If some day" said Shaikh Ahmad to Cox "Ibn Saud dies and I grow strong like my grandfather, Mubarak, will the British government object if I denounce the unjust frontier line and recover my lost territories?" "No" laughed Cox. "And may God bless your efforts."³¹²

The last two conversations bring to light three points at least. The first is that Cox admitted that he was not fair to Najd

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 275. Rihani believes that Ibn Saud gave way to the British High Commissioner's decisions for fear of losing his annuity. Wilkinson, *Arabia's Frontiers*, p. 386, chp. 6, note: 1.

³¹² Dickson, *op. cit.*, p. 279. Shaikh Ahmad, however, died in 1950 earlier than Ibn Saud who died on 1953.

when he gave Najdi territory to Iraq. This was very clear when Cox expressed his sympathy with Ibn Saud by saying "My friend, I know exactly how you feel and for this reason I gave you two-thirds of Kuwait's territory." The second point is that the British High Commissioner knew that his frontier line was unjust to Kuwait. This is supported by Cox himself when he said to Ibn Saud "I gave you two-thirds of Kuwait's territory" as a compensation for his lost territory to Iraq. Another proof can be found in the fact when Cox accepted Shaikh Ahmad's claims that he lost his territories because of "the unjust frontier line" imposed upon him by the High Commissioner himself. The third and final point is that the British High Commissioner realised from the beginning that his decision would be a reason for future conflict between the two emirates. Two pieces of evidence support this assumption. The first is that Cox described his decision to Ibn Saud as a 'blow' to Ibn Sabah. The second is Shaikh Ahmad's question to Cox: will the British government object "If some day...I denounce the unjust frontier line and recover my lost territories?"

There can be no doubt that British interests were the decisive factor behind Cox's decisions at the al-Uqair conference. There was no consideration of the local, i.e. Kuwait or Najd, interests in Cox's mind. Since the concluding of the 1899 secret treaty with Kuwait, Shaikh Mubarak proved to be very important to British policy in the Gulf region. Therefore, during his reign, the British supported Kuwait's territorial claims. But with Mubarak's death at the end of 1915 and the raising up of Ibn Saud as the new lord of the tribes, Britain's policy was modified.

As a result of this change of power, the British refused to support the Sabah Shaikhs territorial claims, which were based on the 1913 convention. Conversely, they appeased Ibn Saud by accepting his claim to the same territories demanded by the Kuwaitis. Dickson put it plainly when he reported that Cox's action sprang from a desire to "mollify the powerful and troublesome Ibn Saud" at the expense of a small and weak neighbour.³¹³ However, no evidence could illustrate how Britain's interest was the major element behind the al-Uqair settlement better than her official's (the High Commissioner in Iraq and Political Agent in Kuwait at that time) favouring the desert law instead of the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Convention document.

In conclusion, the results of Britain's policy at the al-Uqair conference was, and still is, a source of troubles and arguments between the Saudi and Kuwaiti governments. Many Kuwaitis continue to believe that the green zone area belongs to Kuwait and the British deprived them of it in 1922 when they gave it to Ibn Saud. And although the Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian governments agreed, in 1976, to divide the Neutral Zone between the two countries, the Saudis still claim the two islands of Qaru and Umm al-Maradim arguing that they are off the Neutral Zone, despite the fact that the 1913 convention considered them as parts of Kuwait.³¹⁴ Thus, no one could guarantee that this chapter of history has closed for ever, and herein lies a great threat to Gulf stability.

³¹³ Dickson, op. cit., p. 276.

³¹⁴ Wilkinson, Arabia's Frontiers, p. 243.

5.4 Britain and the Kuwait-Iraq Border Dispute

Iraq's long standing claims to Kuwait could be divided into two parts. The first is that Kuwait should give some concession on the two islands of Warbah and Bubiyan, the control of which had been a key strategic objective of Iraq's policy for over half a century. The second is that the whole of Kuwait's territory belongs to Iraq. However, the chief characteristic of the territorial dispute between Iraq and Kuwait before the 1990 Iraqi invasion, with the exception of the 1963 treaty, has been Iraq's total refusal to accept the demarcation of the boundary as defined by the 1932 Kuwait-Iraq Agreement, which clearly specified Kuwaiti ownership of Warbah and Bubiyan islands, unless Kuwait first agreed to modify her boundary with Iraq to allow the latter greater access to the waters of the Gulf.³¹⁵ Kuwait, for her part, implied that the alteration of the boundary, the cession of portions of its northern land and island territories, might be studied, but only if the boundary was first demarcated according to the 1932 agreement.³¹⁶

Throughout their dispute, many attempts were made to free the Iraq-Kuwait border dispute from this dilemma. Proposals have been made that Iraq might get Warbah in exchange for other Iraqi territorial concessions to Kuwait.³¹⁷ Other proposals suggested

³¹⁵ It is worth noted that Bubiyan represents one fifth of the total land area of Kuwait.

³¹⁶ Richard Schofield, "The Kuwaiti Islands of Warbah and Bubiyan, and Iraqi Access to the Gulf," in Schofield, Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, p. 153.

³¹⁷ Ibid., p. 162.

that Iraq should be satisfied to lease rather than to control the islands. In 1956, for example, the British proposed that Iraq might lease Warbah in return for providing Kuwait with water from Shatt al-Arab.³¹⁸ While others suggested that a territorial solution should be part and parcel of a much wider package of bilateral agreements between the two states.³¹⁹ Ultimately, all these efforts were unsuccessful and the territorial dispute between the two states remained in a deadlock. A leading authority on Arabian territorial affairs described the history of the Kuwait-Iraq border dispute up to the 1990 invasion "as being 'more of the same'."³²⁰

5.4.1 Britain and the Definition of the Kuwait-Iraq Border

The British position on the Kuwait-Iraq border was clear evidence of a *realpolitik* policy. As was explained earlier, Britain's fears of her European competitor powers reaching through a railway to the head of the Gulf had prompted her to conclude the 1899 secret treaty with Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait. However, in the next few years the Germans increased their pressure on the Ottoman government. In January 1900, for example, a German technical commission visited Kuwait to explore the prospect of constituting a terminus there. The British government reached a conclusion that such progress would

³¹⁸ The National Union of Kuwait Students, United Kingdom & Republic of Ireland Branch, The Claims of the Iraqi Regime in the Territories of the State of Kuwait between History and Law 2, p. 6.

³¹⁹ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 132.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 128.

eventually result in the "Germanization of the Baghdad or Basra vilayets, the diminution of British prestige and commerce in these provinces, and the disturbance of our relations with the Arab Chiefs on the southern and western shores of the Persian Gulf."³²¹ And above all, the coming of the Germans to the Gulf region would affect the British position in the Indian sub-continent. Thus the Shaikh of Kuwait was directed to refuse the German proposal. "The Shaikh of Kowiet has been instructed to enter into no engagement with the German Commission without reference to the Government of India."³²² Al-Rashid wrote that Mubarak even requested the German commission to leave his emirate.³²³

To deny the Ottomans and their allies an access to the best natural outlet on the Gulf, the British Indian government supported Shaikh Mubarak's claims to Bubiyan and Warbah islands. The government of India admitted in 1906 that her support to Mubarak's claims to Bubiyan island had been made only "in anticipation of the day when the port of a trans-continental railway system should be located in the neighbourhood" i.e. the Ottoman-Iraq.³²⁴ This self-interested policy resulted effectively in 'squeezing out' the Ottomans from

³²¹ Ibid., p. 33. The British Political Resident in the Gulf, Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm Meade, also warned that the "establishment of German influence at Koweit will seriously affect our own position throughout the Persian Gulf." Meade to Government of India, 5 February 1900, in Bidwell, The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. II, part II, p. 19.

³²² Government of India to Lord George Hamilton, 11 January 1900; Hamilton to Government of India, 13 January 1900; and Government of India to Rear-Admiral Bosanquet, 18 January 1900. Bidwell, The Affairs of Kuwait, vol. I, Part II, p. 3, 13.

³²³ Al-Rashid, op. cit., p. 99.

³²⁴ Richard Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula During the Twentieth Century," in Schofield, Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, p. 42.

the Gulf and denying the Porte (and its allies) any suitable site for a railway terminus along the Gulf coast.³²⁵ This British success was formalised by the concluding of the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Convention.

The first definition of the Kuwait-Iraq border appeared in Article 7 of the 1913 convention. The contracting governments agreed that the limits of Kuwait's territory were to run as follows: "The demarcation line begins on the coast at the mouth of Khawr al-Zubayr in the northwest and crosses immediately south of Umm-Qasr, Safwan, and Jabal Sanam, in such a way as to leave to the Vilayet of Basrah these locations and their wells; arriving at the al-Batin.... This line is marked in green on the map annexed to the present convention." Article 5 of the convention also named the islands belonging to Kuwait as follows: "al-Warbah, Bubyar, Mashjan, Faylakah, Awahh (Auhah), al-Kubr, Qaru, al-Maqta and Umm-al-Maradim."

In the early inter-war years, Turkey gave up all right of sovereignty over the territories detached from her after World War One. In the Sévres Treaty of 10 August 1920, reiterated three years later in the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey renounced in favour of the Principal Allied Powers "all rights and title" over all territories that had belonged to her outside the frontiers laid down in these treaties.³²⁶ Turkey's possessions in the Arab world

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-3; Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, pp. 132-3; and Khalid Al-Sarajani, "Delineating the Iraq-Kuwait Borders after the [Second] Gulf Crisis." *Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya* 111 (January 1993), p. 231.

³²⁶ Article 132 of the Sévres Treaty and Article 16 of Lausanne Treaty. While the Sévres Treaty, owing to resistance by Turkey, was never ratified, the Treaty of Lausanne signed on 24 July 1923 and entered into force on 6 August 1924.

were included. Modern Iraq was created in succession from the Baghdad, Basrah and Mosal *wilayats*. And as a result of the Anglo-French political manoeuvring during and after the First World War, Iraq became a British League of Nations mandate.³²⁷

A nationalistic opposition developed in 1920. Britain found it difficult to have direct rule over Iraq, and therefore planned to rule through a friendly and co-operative local government. In March 1921, the Cairo Conference under the leadership of W. Churchill, the Colonial Secretary, decided that the best course of action was to create a monarchy in Iraq. Amir Faisal, the third son of Sharief Hussein of Makkah, a minor ally of Britain in the Great War was the best choice. On 11 July 1921, convinced by Sir Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner in Iraq under the mandate, the Iraq Council of State passed a resolution formally declaring Faisal to be King. In August 1921, Amir Faisal was elected as King.³²⁸ Despite all this, control of Iraq's foreign, military and financial affairs remained firmly and directly with the British.

In April 1923, only four months after the conclusion of the al-Uqair Treaty, following a request from the Shaikh of Kuwait, the second attempt to define the Kuwait-Iraq border took place. The Shaikh pointed out that Kuwait's border with Iraq would be

³²⁷ For the Declaration which constituted the Mandate for Mesopotamia (Iraq) see FO 371/5245. Mandate is rights granted to certain powers after World War I by the League of Nations, to whom annual reports on conditions were supposed to be submitted, to administer the former German colonies and non-Turkish territories of the Ottoman *Khilafah*, which were deemed unable to govern themselves.

³²⁸ Faisal was the first King of modern Iraq and the founder of the Hashemite dynasty in Iraq's modern history.

as follows: "From the intersection of the Wadi El Audja with the Batin and thence northwards along the Batin to a point just south of the Latitude of Safwan; thence Eastwards passing south of the Safwan wells, Jabal Sanm and Um Qasr, leaving them to Iraq and so on to the junction of the Khor Zobeir with the Khor Abdullah." He also named the islands he considered to belong to Kuwait as follows: "Warbah, Bubiyan, Maskan (or Mashjan), Failakah, Auha, Kubba(r), Qaru and Um-el-Maradim." Britain, as the mandate power in Iraq, agreed to the border and islands the Kuwaiti Shaikh had listed. "The Shaikh can be informed that his claim to the frontier and islands above indicated", Cox wrote to Kuwait's Political Agent, "is recognised in so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned."³²⁹

The 1913 and 1923 definitions of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border were reaffirmed in the exchange of letters, dated 21st July and 10th August 1932, between Nuri Al-Saed, Iraq's Prime Minister, and Shaikh Ahmad Al-Jabir, with the British representatives acting as the mediators. In his letter to Britain's High Commissioner in Iraq, Sir F. Humphrys, the Iraqi Prime Minister agreed to "reaffirm the existing frontier between Iraq and Koweit." The Iraqi Prime Minister's letter described the frontier between the two countries in the same words cited above in the April 1923 definition. On 30 July 1932, Shaikh Ahmad received a letter from the Political Resident informing him that the British government approved the frontier proposed by the Iraqi Prime Minister. On 10 August 1932, Shaikh Ahmad told the British

³²⁹ Memorandum from the High Commissioner for Iraq to the Political Agent in Kuwait, 19 April 1923. L/P&S/20/C158E.

Political Agent at Kuwait of his acceptance of the description of the frontier in the Iraqi Prime Minister letter.³³⁰

Before the involvement of Britain in Kuwait's affairs in 1899, Kuwait, like the other emirates in the Arabian side of the Gulf, had no clear border separating her territories from that of her neighbours. Lorimer commented that "The boundaries of Kuwait principality are for the most part fluctuating and undefined; they are, at any given time, the limits of the tribes which then, either voluntarily or under compulsion, owe allegiance to the Shaikh of Kuwait."³³¹ This problem continued even after the conclusion of the 1899 Treaty. The views of Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, were frankly expressed in a memorandum of 21 March 1902 that "no one knows where his [Mubarak] possessions begin and end, and our obligations towards him are as ill-defined as the boundaries of his Principality."³³² A few years later, in early 1908, a British memorandum stated that "the limits of Kuwait have never been accurately, or, indeed, even approximately, defined."³³³ The three documents indicate that the British knew the necessity of defining Kuwait's border precisely. Unfortunately, this was not the case in practice.

As far as the Kuwait-Iraq border was concerned, the vague definition of Kuwait's border holds a great part of the

³³⁰ Letters from the Prime Minister of Iraq and the Ruler of Kuwait Re-affirming the Kuwait-Iraq Boundary. 21 July and 10 August 1932 respectively. R/15/1/738.

³³¹ Quoted in Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 35.

³³² Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 216. note: 105.

³³³ Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq, p. 35.

responsibility for its long confusion throughout this century. The language of the 1913, 1923 and the 1932 agreements was a clear example. This lack of clarity made it very difficult to understand what exactly was meant by words like "cross immediately south of Umm-Qasr, Safwan, and Jabal Sanam", "arriving at the al-Batin", "along the Batin", "just south...Safwan" and "Eastwards passing south of the Safwan wells, Jabal Sanm and Um Qasr", and where, precisely, to draw Kuwait's boundary in the sand. Therefore it increased the confusion of the border issue.³³⁴ Indeed, even the British themselves faced difficulties in deciding, and convincing the two parties, where the border line must run.³³⁵ Moreover, it took the United Nation Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission (UNIKBDC) almost one year to announce its final interpretation of where, exactly, the Kuwaiti-Iraqi land boundary should run. This explained, partially, why all the attempts to solve the Kuwait-Iraq border dispute based on the previous definition met with failure.³³⁶

In his reply to Shaikh Ahmad's letter of 1923, Cox's words to the Political Agent in Kuwait "The Shaikh can be informed that his claim to the frontier and islands above indicated is recognised in so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned" produced another example. Although both the context of the

³³⁴ Ibid., p. 72, 100; and Al-Sarajani. op. cit., p. 232.

³³⁵ In early December 1951 Sir John Troutbeck, British Ambassador in Baghdad, was instructed by the Foreign Office to present to the Iraqi government a note clarifying the boundary alignment specified by the 1932 exchange of notes. This interpretation made reference to the point south of Safwan as lying 1,000 metres south of the old Iraqi customs hut. The new interpretation was delivered to the Iraqi Foreign Ministry in a note verbale of 18 December 1951. Schofield. Kuwait and Iraq, p. 95.

³³⁶ Ibid., p. 72.

words and the practical reality suggested that Cox recognised Shaikh Ahmad's claim on behalf of both the governments of Britain and Iraq, the phrase "in so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned" did not fully suggest that this was the case.³³⁷ The British High Commissioner in Iraq had the power to make this pledge very clearly on behalf of the government of Iraq, but his vague language would be yet another reason for more troubles between the two states.

5.4.2 Britain and Iraq's Major Attempts to Absorb Kuwait

Before Saddam's brutal invasion of August 1990, Iraq's claim to the whole of Kuwait had been extended most notably on two occasions.³³⁸ First, during 1938, King Ghazi and his Foreign Minister Taufiq Al-Suwaidi tried to utilise the internal opposition to Shaikh Ahmad's policies by provoking the Kuwaitis against their Ruler through a private broadcasting station in the King's *Qasr al-Zuhur* (Rose's Palace) and urged them to unite with Iraq.³³⁹ On 28 September 1938, Al-Suwaidi formally informed the British government that "Just before the War of 1914-1918,

³³⁷ The Iraqis themselves have treated the agreement as one that was made on their behalf, challenging it on the basis that it constituted a breach of the mandate. Mendelson & Hulton, *op. cit.*, p. 145, note: 42 and p. 149, note: 99.

³³⁸ In 1958, Nuri Al-Said, Iraq's Prime Minister, also pressured Kuwait's Shaikh Abdullah bin Salim (r. 1950-65), to join the proposed Hashemite Union between the Kingdoms of Iraq and Jordan. Qasim's coup of the same year saved Kuwait from Nuri's plots. P. Mangold, "Britain and the Defence of Kuwait, 1956-71," *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* 120 (September 1975), p. 45.

³³⁹ Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement, *Al-Kuwait, Her Existence and Borders: the Objective Facts and the Iraqi Claims* (Al-Qahira: Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement, 1991), pp. 93-4; and Rush, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

Kuwait was an autonomous *qadah* of the *Wilayat* of Basra. The Iraqi Government, as the successor to the Ottoman Government in the *Wilayats* of Mosul, Baghdad and Basra, considers that Kuwait should properly be incorporated in Iraq."³⁴⁰

Britain's response to Al-Suwaidi's claim was that "The Shaikhdom of Koweit was for a considerable period in an anomalous state of semi-dependence on the Ottoman Empire; His Majesty's Government have nevertheless been in treaty relations with the Shaikhs of Koweit since 1841; and Koweit finally became completely independent of Turkey and Koweit nationality finally came into existence on the same date as Iraq and Iraqi nationality."³⁴¹ The Iraqis then turned their claims to the 'slight rectification' principle of the boundary line.

The second major attempt was made by Iraq's President General Abdul-Karim Qasim on the announcement of Kuwait's independence on 19 June 1961. On that day, the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Agreement was abrogated by a new treaty between Britain and Kuwait, as being inconsistent with the sovereignty of Kuwait. Under the 1961 treaty terms, Britain would assist Kuwait if requested. One day after Kuwait declared her independence, Qasim showed his relief at the "abrogation of the illegal, forged and internationally unrecognized" agreement of 1899, which, he

³⁴⁰ Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, p. 77.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 78. The British claim that they have been in treaty relations with Kuwait since 1841 is exaggerated. As explained in chapter two of this study, it is true that the Shaikh of Kuwait adhered on 24 April 1841 to the Maritime Truce, but it was only for one year. Kuwait's next treaty with Britain was the well-known 1899 agreement with Shaikh Mubarak. In this sixty years period Kuwait was far more close to the Ottomans than to the British.

claimed, had been "falsely concluded with Shaikh Mubarak al-Sabah, *Qaymmaqam* of Kuwait, who belonged to Basra province, without the Knowledge of his brothers in Kuwait and the then legal authorities in Iraq."³⁴² As far as the 19 June 1961 exchange of notes is concerned, Qasim warned Shaikh Abdullah against the "plots and intrigues of the British imperialists who divide the ranks inside the Arab homeland to ensure that they will remain behind the scenes."³⁴³ On 25 June, Qasim seized the occasion of Britain's departure to announce in a press conference that "Kuwait was an integral part of Iraq" and should return as such.³⁴⁴

Shaikh Abdullah rejected Qasim's claims and swiftly turned to Britain to protect Kuwait from Iraq's threats. Britain immediately deployed its troops, ships, and aircraft to Kuwait, and blocked the Iraqi threat. The Arab League, despite Iraqi objections, admitted Kuwait into its ranks and decided to support it against Baghdad. An Arab League force consisting of units from the United Arab Republic (UAR)³⁴⁵, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Sudan arrived in September 1961 to replace the British, who completely withdrew the following month. No fighting occurred, but the Arab League force (except for the UAR units, which left

³⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 106.

³⁴³ *Ibid*

³⁴⁴ Majid Khadduri, Republican Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics Since the Revolution of 1958 (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 166. Two months before Kuwait's independence, Qasim declared that "there were no frontiers between us and the Kuwaiti people." Khadduri, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

³⁴⁵ A federation of the contemporary states of Egypt and Syria lasted only for three years, 1958-61.

in December 1961) remained until Qasim was finally overthrown and executed by the 1963 coup led by Colonel Abdul-Salam Arif.

Consequently, relations between Iraq and Kuwait improved. In 1963, the new Iraqi government, headed by the Baathist Ahmad Al-Bakr, recognised Kuwait as an independent Arab country. The October 1963 memorandum stated that: "Iraq recognized the Independence and complete sovereignty of the state of Kuwait with its boundaries as specified in the letter of the Prime Minister of Iraq dated 21st July 1932 and which was accepted by the Ruler of Kuwait in his letter dated 10th August 1932."³⁴⁶

5.4.3 Iraq's Arguments and the Responses to them

Though Iraq's political system had changed from a monarchy (1932-58), to a republic (since 1958), all Iraqi regimes shared a common allegation that: Iraq had a 'historical right' in Kuwait which Britain had deprived them of. The Iraqi argument laid stress on the notion of historical continuity of states. All Iraqi regimes argued, and continue to argue, that Kuwait formed an integral part of Basrah when both of them were a part of the

³⁴⁶ For the "Agreed Minutes between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq Regarding the Restoration of Friendly Relations, Recognition and Related Matter of 4 October 1963," see United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS), vol. 485, p. 321, 326. This Baghdad signed agreement was registered with the United Nations by the Kuwaiti government on 10 January 1964.

Ottoman *Khilafah*. Subsequently, as a successor to the Ottomans in governing Basrah, Iraq too had the right to govern Kuwait.³⁴⁷

To justify their claims, successive Iraqi governments insisted that all treaties and correspondence between Iraq and Kuwait (1913, 1923, 1932, 1963) and between Britain and Kuwait (1899, 1961) were null and void. For the 1913 convention, the Iraqis argued that the Ottomans did not ratify the agreement. They also claimed that Sir Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner in Iraq, breached his authority under the mandate when he accepted in 1923 the Kuwaiti Shaikh's suggestion for the border between Kuwait and Iraq. The Iraqis repeatedly rejected the 1932 agreement on the basis that it was forced upon Nuri Al-Saed, the Iraq Prime Minister, by the British government.³⁴⁸ Concerning the 1963 treaty, the Iraqis respond that it was not ratified by the National Council of Revolutionary Command, the highest Iraqi legislative authority according to the interim constitution of 1963.³⁴⁹ With regard to the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti Treaty, the Iraqis rejected it claiming that it had been signed without authorisation from the right authority, i.e. the

³⁴⁷ Schofield, *Kuwait and Iraq*, Introduction; and Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement, *op. cit.*, p. 116. The "historical right" argument was discussed in detail in a seminar organised by Kuwait's Centre of Information: The Legend of Iraq's Historical Rights in the State of Kuwait.

³⁴⁸ Kuwait's Centre of Information, *op. cit.*, p. 43; and The National Union of Kuwait Students, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

³⁴⁹ Tariq Aziz's, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Iraq, letter to the Foreign Ministers of all Countries of 4 September 1990. Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, The GCC Border Disputes Seminar, Appendix C, p. 77; and The National Union of Kuwait Students, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

Ottomans.³⁵⁰ As a consequence, the Iraqis also rejected the 1961 treaty which declared Kuwait's independence.³⁵¹

There are a number of irrefutable legal and historical facts which refute the Iraqi allegations. But before discussing these facts, it should be noted that in the event of all British-Kuwaiti and Kuwaiti-Iraqi agreements being invalid, Kuwait must be regarded in the same light as Iraq. Following the collapse of the Ottoman empire, Iraq became a British mandate country, likewise Kuwait was a British protectorate since 1899. Thus, as Iraq got its independence in 1932, Kuwait had its in 1961. Therefore, if all Iraqi regimes regard themselves as the natural heir to the Ottoman empire in Iraq, then the Kuwaitis had the right to consider themselves the legal inheritor to the Ottomans in Kuwait. The above-mentioned British response to Al-Suwaidi's claim supports this. It said that "Koweit finally became completely independent of Turkey and Koweit nationality finally came into existence on the same date as Iraq and Iraqi nationality."

As far as the notion of historical continuity of states is concerned, all Iraqi arguments omit the fact that Turkey gave up, in the 1920 treaty of Sévres and again in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, all right of sovereignty over the territories detached from her after World War One. Legally speaking, if Iraq regards herself as the inheritor of the Ottomans in today's Iraq, she must

³⁵⁰ Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement. *op. cit.*, p. 100. For the Arabic text of Qasim's cable see Muhammad Al-Adhami, et. al., Al-Kuwait and the Attempts of Getting Her Back to Iraq (n.a., 1991), pp. 116-7.

³⁵¹ Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement. *op. cit.*, pp. 102-3.

respect and fulfil the Ottomans' obligations in those treaties. "While Iraq was one of the successor states, she could not claim sovereign rights", is Khadduri's viewpoint on Qasim's claim to Kuwait in 1961, "over a territory which Turkey had not surrendered to her. Thus in law Qasim could hardly justify his action, but he kept shifting the grounds of his claim from legal to historical to political considerations."³⁵²

There is no legal legitimacy to the Iraqi claims to ignore the historically accepted facts and documents. The most important of these were the 1913 Anglo-Ottoman Agreement, which defined the boundaries between Kuwait and Ottoman Iraq and denied that Kuwait was part of Basrah, and the 1963 Iraq-Kuwait Treaty declaring independent Iraq's recognition of an independent Kuwait. In addition, there were many conventions, correspondence and events which indicated that since its foundation as a political entity in 1921, Iraq had openly agreed to the existence of Kuwait as an independent emirate. And up to 1990, Iraq has had full and continuous diplomatic relations with Kuwait at the ambassadorial level. It is also worth stating here that all geography and history books, whether academic or otherwise, which were printed and circulated in Iraq have always referred to Kuwait as an independent Arab country.³⁵³

If these are the legal and historical facts, what were the real motives behind Iraq's claims to the whole or part of Kuwait? The Iraqis raised the strategic factor. According to this

³⁵² Khadduri, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

³⁵³ Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement, *op. cit.*, p. 102, 133.

argument, Iraq's two principal points of access to the Gulf were from Basrah through the Shatt al-Arab waterway whose sovereignty was disputed with Iran; and at the port of Umm Qasr whose sea-lanes were controlled by Warbah and Bubiyan islands. Thus, it became fixed in official minds within Iraq that an effective Gulf role for Iraq was dependent either on Iran recognising Iraq's sovereignty over the entire Shatt al-Arab --and this was impossible, or on Kuwait transferring control over Warba and Bubiyan islands to Iraq.³⁵⁴

The argument continued that Iraq's geographical disposition causes great difficulties and makes it easy for its historical enemy, Iran, to blockade its shipping lanes in the Gulf.³⁵⁵ In an interview with the editors of Kuwaiti newspapers, in April 1984, Saddam Hussein (Iraq's President since 1978) expressed this feeling. He stated that, "for Iraq, we are in an impossible position, worse than anywhere in the Gulf. If our navy sailed away two steps, it could be hit so easily."³⁵⁶ The Iraqis have always believed that Kuwait's ownership of the two islands squeeze their country out from the Gulf.³⁵⁷ In April 1973, the

³⁵⁴ Tim Niblock, "Iraqi Policies Towards the Arab States of the Gulf, 1958-1981," in Tim Niblock, (ed.), Iraq: The Contemporary State, (London: Croom Helm, 1982), p. 126. Kelly believed that it was this question of maritime access which was to be largely responsible for reopening the Iraq-Kuwait frontier question, from time to time. Kelly, Arabia, p. 278.

³⁵⁵ Al-Mayyal, op. cit., p. 31. The Iranian-Iraqi historical dispute convinced the Iraqis that it is of vital importance to them to secure alternative ports on the Gulf to guarantee Iraq's oil exports, to secure the Iraqi navy's sailing and functioning in the Gulf, and to keep up with the superiority of the Iranian navy.

³⁵⁶ The interview was published in all the Kuwaiti daily newspapers on 3.5.1984.

³⁵⁷ Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf," p. 4; and Schofield, "The Kuwaiti Islands of Warbah and Bubiyan," pp. 153-4.

then Iraqi Foreign Minister, Al-Hadithi, for example, stated that Iraq would not be a Gulf state unless the islands of Warba and Bubiyan belonged to her.³⁵⁸ Therefore, Iraq's officials have all the time expected Kuwait to compensate Iraq for her geographic and strategic difficulty.³⁵⁹

The reality, however, is that the incorporation of all Kuwaiti territory into Iraq would be insufficient to match Iran's marine geopolitical superiority. Iran enjoys naval control of all of the eastern seaboard of the Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz and the coast on the Gulf of Oman to the Arabian Sea. Thus Iraq's quest for competition with Iran, would force her to be involved in further territorial disputes with all the Arab Gulf states, not just Kuwait. Therefore, a more comprehensive and effective method which would sufficiently protect Iraqi ports and shipping would have to be decided upon through common co-ordination with the weak Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states and not through the short-sighted and ineffective option of conducting military invasions on vulnerable small states.

Finally, the truth is that, not only historical, legal or strategic causes lie behind Iraq's long standing claims over Kuwait; rather, personal ambitions, and domestic and financial problems were certainly involved, which none of the Iraqi regimes had the courage to make public. All the Iraqi leaders attempted to score a prestigious victory for their leadership and regimes. Moreover, all the revolutionary regimes in Iraq were

³⁵⁸ Kuwaiti Times (5 April 1973).

³⁵⁹ Schofield. "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf." p. 5.

unpopular and facing deep difficulties. Under the fear of a coup, their usual policy was to shift the attention of their people from the internal troubles to foreign affairs. Also, the seizing of Kuwait's oil fortune was always an attractive objective. These general causes may explain why different Iraqi governments claimed Kuwait.

Chapter VI Britain's Role and Responsibility in the Bahrain-Qatar and the Iran-UAE Disputes

The Bahrain-Qatar unsolved dispute over al-Zubarah and the Hawar islands jeopardised, and will continue to jeopardise, the stability of the whole Gulf region. Twice in the 1980s, in 1982 and 1986, the dispute between the two emirates reached the brink of war. The successful mediation efforts of the British and the GCC (since its establishment in May 1981, in particular Saudi Arabia), were limited to preventing the dispute from exploding into a war rather than solving it. In 1986, for example, the Shaikhs of Bahrain and Qatar agreed not to escalate their dispute.³⁶⁰

The effect of the Iran-UAE dispute over the three islands of Abu Musa and the two Tunbs on the stability of the Gulf region was also, and still is, very serious. Quotation from two recent documents will be enough to prove that consequence. In April and August 1992, the Iran-UAE dispute over the islands exploded again. The GCC states held their annual meeting in the following December. In the closing statement, the GCC states emphasised that the Iranian occupation of the UAE's three islands conflicting with the principles of "good neighbourliness, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the region's states and non-interference in others' internal affairs...and the declared desire to promote bilateral relations." The GCC states also called on Iran "to cancel and abolish all [the new] measures taken on

³⁶⁰ Muhammad Abu Al-Fadl. "The Dispute between Qatar and Al-Bahrain." Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya 111 (January 1993), p. 229.

Abu Musa island and to terminate its occupation of the Greater and Lesser Tunb islands, which belong to the UAE."³⁶¹ Iran's reaction came a few days later, on 25 December, when its President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani warned the GCC states that "You yourself know that Iran is stronger than the likes of you.... To reach those islands one would have to cross a sea of blood."³⁶²

During their long stay in the Gulf region, successive British governments made several contradictory decisions in attempts to settle the local disputes. These decisions did not put an end to the disputes, but instead participated in the continuity of conflicts and wars between the disputant parties. The conflict of the governments of Bahrain and Qatar and the Iran-UAE dispute are good examples to contemplate. The next two sections will examine these disputes in more detail.

6.1 *Britain and the Bahrain-Qatar Disputes over al-Zubarah and the Hawar Islands*

Geographically, while the group of Hawar islands lies within the territorial waters of Qatar, only one mile distant from it, the location of al-Zubarah is on the north-west coast of the Qatari Peninsula. The Hawar islands are about 18 miles away

³⁶¹ "Closing Statement of the 13th GCC Summit: Criticism of Iraq and Iran." BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East, ME/1573/A7, 29 December 1992.

³⁶² "Tehran Friday Prayers: Rafsanjani Criticises GCC for Raising Issue of Islands." BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East, ME/1573/A11, 29 December 1992.

from Bahrain. The group of Hawar islands consists of one large island, approximately 11 miles long and at its widest point 2 miles in width, with an area of about 17 sq mi, and a number of smaller islands and rocky islets.³⁶³

In the mid-1930s, the Bahrain-Qatar territorial dispute over the al-Zubarah and Hawar islands began. As far as al-Zubarah was concerned, the argument of the Ruler of Qatar was based on geography. He asserted that al-Zubarah town was an integral part of the Qatar Peninsula far away from Bahrain, while the argument of the Bahrainis was rooted in historical and tribal grounds.³⁶⁴ The historical claim was that of continual occupation and administration of al-Zubarah by the Shaikhs of Bahrain, from the time of their settlement at al-Zubarah in 1766 until their relinquishment of it in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.³⁶⁵ The tribal grounds of the Bahraini claim were that the Bahraini tribe of al-Nuaymi were the only inhabitants of al-Zubarah for many years, obeyed the Ruler of Bahrain and paid no taxes to the Shaikh of Qatar.³⁶⁶

The then British Political Resident in the Gulf, Trenchard Fowle, was in favour of Qatar's claim over al-Zubarah and

³⁶³ Al-Abdulla, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-3, note: 28.

³⁶⁴ Nabil Adawy, "Resolving Boundary Disputes in the Gulf Region." in Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, *The GCC Border Disputes Seminar*, p. 13.

³⁶⁵ Kelly, "Sovereignty and Jurisdiction." pp. 17-8.

³⁶⁶ Political Resident to Secretary of State for India, 5 May 1937. R/15/2/202. Al-Zubarah also retained a symbolic importance for Al-Khalifah. To conceive its position as their ancestral home --the ruling family of Bahrain point out that their first Ruler was buried there. Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf." p. 50; and Anthony, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

rejected the Bahraini argument. The main reasons behind Fowle's opinion were: the announcement of the British Indian government of 1873 that Bahrain had no obvious or significant rights in Qatar; the British government's aid to Bahrain in 1895 against the Qataris invasion from al-Zubarah, which indicated that the area was not under Bahrain's rule; and the acknowledgement of Bahrain that she did not collect taxes at al-Zubarah.³⁶⁷

In 1937, the Political Resident declared the British government verdict in the dispute. His finding was that al-Zubarah town belonged to Qatar.³⁶⁸ However, this decision only lasted for a few years. On 24 June 1944, the Shaikhs of Bahrain and Qatar, under the supervision of Major T. Hickinbotham, the Political Agent at Bahrain, signed a new treaty. According to the 1944 agreement the Shaikh of Qatar agreed that al-Zubarah "will remain without anything being done in it which did not exist in the past."³⁶⁹ In other words, cancelling the 1937 decision of the Political Resident.

The 1944 agreement raises two points. The first is that in her attempts to secure a settlement to the al-Zubarah dispute the British government used its influence upon the Shaikh of Qatar to reach the 1944 conclusion. The Political Resident's decision of 1937 granted all al-Zubarah to the Shaikh of Qatar, therefore it

³⁶⁷ Political Resident to Secretary of State for India, 5 May 1937. R/15/2/202.

³⁶⁸ John Bulloch, "The Involvement of the United Nations in Border Disputes," in Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, The GCC Border Disputes Seminar, p. 34.

³⁶⁹ Agreement between Bahrain and Qatar, 24 June 1944. R/15/2/371.

was not rational to abandon it for nothing. Bahrain Political Agent's covering letter to the 1944 agreement indicated that the Shaikh of Qatar raised some arguments before he finally accepted the agreement. The Political Agent said that "Shaikh Abdullah bin Qasim Al Thani...was eventually persuaded to accept" the new arrangements.³⁷⁰ The second comment on the 1944 treaty is that the object of this agreement was not clear. It did not solve the problem at all. In the Political Agent's words it "restored the *status quo* ante 1936."³⁷¹ In other words, the ownership of al-Zubarah town would continue undecided which meant that the reason for the conflict continued to be ongoing. The British were well aware of the deep historical hostilities between the two houses of Al-Khalifah and Al-Thani, therefore, in this environment, it was strange to hear the Political Agent concluding his covering letter with the following sentence "What the future will hold it is difficult indeed to foretell but with care and goodwill on both sides it is possible that there will be no further rupture between the parties for many years."³⁷² The next few years proved the Political Agent's misjudgement. The skirmishes between the two emirates were revived until 1957 when Sir Bernard Burrows, the then British Political Resident, ruled that al-Zubarah was part of Qatar.³⁷³ Nevertheless, their

³⁷⁰ Major T. Hickinbotham, British Political Agent at Bahrain, to Political Resident, 24 June 1944. R/15/2/371.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Sir Bernard Burrows to Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifah, Ruler of Bahrain, 10 August 1957. FO 371/126935.

dispute over al-Zubarah continued up to the present without a lasting solution

The issue of the ownership of the Hawar islands, however, proved to be more complicated and more threatening to the relationship between the two emirates in particular, and to the stability of the Gulf in general. In discussing the British role in the Bahrain-Qatar dispute over the Hawar islands, it is very important to pay some more consideration to the effect of Qatar's mainland oil concession and of the attitude of Charles Belgrave, the British adviser to the Shaikh of Bahrain at that time.

By the end of the 1920s, the big oil companies intensified their search for oil in the small Arab emirates. For the proper functioning of the oil companies, every Shaikh needed to know the exact limits of his territory. In other words, every oil company wanted to know where its concession ended. The "sovereignty over any sandbank or rock" could bring a fortune to the country concerned.³⁷⁴ Those new developments awakened the border problems in the southern area of the Gulf. Claims and counter claims had been set by different parties to different places and islands.

The Political Resident in the Gulf pressured the Shaikh of Qatar to agree to grant Qatar's mainland oil concession to the APOC. In his letter of 11 May 1935, the Resident wrote that "Protection will be afforded you on the condition...that you give the Oil Concession about which the Anglo-Persian Oil Company

³⁷⁴ Bulloch, op. cit., p. 34.

have been negotiating, to that Company."³⁷⁵ A few days later, the Qatari Shaikh agreed to grant the oil concession to APOC.³⁷⁶ In return, the British government secured the definition of the territory of Qatar.³⁷⁷ The Bahrainis, as we shall see later, refused to accept this new definition. In early 1936, the Shaikh of Bahrain stationed a military force in the islands.³⁷⁸ In April, Bahrain claimed officially the Hawar islands for the first time.³⁷⁹ This encouraged some authors to believe that the eruption of the Bahrain-Qatar dispute over the Hawar islands must be attributed to the British oil concession.³⁸⁰

With regards to Belgrave's role in the Qatar-Bahrain dispute over the Hawar islands, the Shaikh of Bahrain did not include the Hawar islands in the area of the Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco) concession in 1925.³⁸¹ A year later Belgrave was appointed an adviser to the Ruler of Bahrain. For many years after, Belgrave collected evidence of Bahrain administration over the Hawar islands with an object of claiming the islands for the Ruler of Bahrain.³⁸²

³⁷⁵ Fowle to Shaikh Abdullah Al-Thani, 11 May 1935. R/15/1/632.

³⁷⁶ On 5 February 1937, the Qatar oil concession of 1935 was transferred from APOC to Petroleum Development (Qatar) Limited (PDL).

³⁷⁷ Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf," p. 17.

³⁷⁸ Charles Belgrave, Adviser to the Ruler of Bahrain, to Political Resident, 28 April 1936. R/15/2/1858.

³⁷⁹ Belgrave's letter to the Political Agent in Bahrain. Foreign Office, Historical Summary of Events, p. 26.

³⁸⁰ Al-Abdulla, op. cit., p. 58.

³⁸¹ Ibid., p. 61.

³⁸² Ibid., pp. 64-65, note: 37.

In December 1938, Belgrave wrote a letter presenting the foundation of Bahrain's claim over the Hawar islands. The argument of the British advisor was based on history and law. Historically, the Hawar islands had been occupied by Bahrainis who settled there with their families and established an Arab community living in permanent stone houses. As far as law is concerned, the islands had been controlled by the Ruler of Bahrain, in contrast to Shaikh Abdullah of Qatar who never exercised his alleged right of ownership over the islands and their inhabitants. As a result, the Ruler of Bahrain enforced his orders or courts over the inhabitants of Hawar and their properties. The inhabitants of the islands also travelled on Bahraini passports and their boats were registered in Bahrain and sailed under the Bahraini flag. Moreover, Belgrave presented a petition signed by the leading men of the islands claiming that they were subjects of Bahrain. In the end, Belgrave accused the Shaikh of Qatar of placing his claim when he realised the islands might have oil.³⁸³

The Qataris rejected Belgrave's proofs. Their counter argument was based on emphasising the geographical point of view that the Hawar islands "were considered as part of northern Qatar", an argument Belgrave had denied in his letter of December 1938.³⁸⁴

³⁸³ Belgrave to Political Agent at Bahrain, 22 December 1938. R/15/2/547.

³⁸⁴ Shaikh Abdullah bin Jasim, Ruler of Qatar, to Political Agent at Bahrain, 30 March 1939. R/15/2/547.

On 11 July of 1939, Fowle informed the rulers of Bahrain and Qatar that the British government had decided that Hawar islands "belong to the State of Bahrain and not to the State of Qatar."³⁸⁵ The decision contradicted the prior British endorsement of the Petroleum Development (Qatar) Limited (PDL) incorporation of the Hawar islands to its area of concession.³⁸⁶ The then Ruler of Qatar complained and sent a letter on 4 August 1939 to the Political Resident urging him to reverse his verdict. "I am unable to remain quiet over the case, which preferably is the result of abstruseness, ambiguity, and non-elucidation of the relevant facts. I therefore protest for a second time asking for the clarification of the question."³⁸⁷ Despite the objection of Shaikh Abdullah Al-Thani the Resident did not change his decision.³⁸⁸

In September 1939, Lieutenant-Colonel Geoffrey Prior succeeded Fowle as the new Political Resident in the Gulf. With his appointment, came another viewpoint. The comments of Prior on Belgrave's role and Fowle's verdict illustrate their involvement. "Belgrave makes various claims", Prior said "which may carry weight to western minds but mean nothing to an Arab." Prior added that during his three and half years in Bahrain he had never heard anything which suggested that the Hawar islands

³⁸⁵ L/P/&S/12/3895.

³⁸⁶ Al-Abdulla, op. cit., p. 59, 61.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 60. Some observers stated that Bahrain was given sovereignty over the Hawar islands as an attempt by the British to compensate it for its rejected claims on al-Zubarah. Bulloch, op. cit., p. 34; and Abu Al-Fadl, op. cit., p. 228.

³⁸⁸ Al-Abdulla, op. cit., p. 60.

belonged to Bahrain. "He [Belgrave] has been collecting evidence of administration in Hawar for many years past", Prior said "with the object of making this claim, in which he has been very successful. Had Qatar had a British Adviser this claim could not have been made."³⁸⁹

In his review of Fowle's decision, the new British Resident said that the award of the islands had been decided according to Western jurisprudence and without paying any regard to the actual geographical arguments presented by the Shaikh of Qatar. The opinion of Prior was that the decision of his predecessor was unfair to Qatar. Despite all of that, Prior confessed that he could not change the verdict.³⁹⁰ Two years later, in November 1941, Britain reversed Fowle's decision and affirmed that the Hawar islands belonged to Qatar.³⁹¹

Chapters two and three of this study explained how the entity of Bahrain and Qatar, as independent emirates, was emphasised by the British treaty relations. The two emirates' identity was confirmed again and again during the years up to the First World War. In the 1913 unratified Anglo-Ottoman Draft Agreement the British insisted on authenticating this arrangement. Accordingly, Bahrain and Qatar were entitled to

³⁸⁹ Prior's comments on Belgrave's role in *ibid.*, pp. 60, 64-65, note: 37.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

³⁹¹ India Office to Political Resident in the Gulf, 19 November 1941. R/15/2/547. Even Fowle, when the American Oil Company succeeded during the 1940s in preventing other companies being granted an oil concession in Bahrain including Hawar islands, conceded his intrusion on Qatar rights and discredited the unjust reasons which he had previously approved to excuse his unfairness. Al-Abdulla, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

British protection and the foreign relations of the two emirates were a British responsibility. Settling the border problems of the two emirates were part of British responsibility. Therefore, the unresolved boundary between the two parties was, largely, a consequence of British policy.

In her attempts to settle the Hawar islands and al-Zubarah disputes the British government hurried her decisions. It was the two emirates and their peoples who suffered from these hasty and contradictory judgements. The British government judged in 1937 that al-Zubarah was part of Qatar, only to nullify it seven years later. Then after 13 years to again rule that al-Zubarah is Qatari land. The case was even worse in the Hawar islands.³⁹² In 1939 the British decided that these islands belonged to Bahrain. Two years later, they reversed the decision and ruled that the islands belonged to Qatar. The consequence of these contradictory decisions was that both the Bahraini and the Qatari authorities insisted on their ownership of al-Zubarah and the Hawar islands and had a British document or documents in their hands to support their claim.

³⁹² The Hawar case was worse because in al-Zubarah's dispute the British decisions took longer time (20 years). Moreover, the British judged in one decision that Hawar belongs to Qatar while in the other it belongs to Bahrain.

6.2 The Iran-UAE Dispute over the Three Islands³⁹³

Iran has had a number of extensive claims over the territories of her Arabian neighbours. These Iranian claims have deep roots in history. For example, during the mid-1840s, the Iranian Prime Minister, Hajji Mirza Aghassi, claimed that all of the waters and the islands of the Gulf belonged to Iran.³⁹⁴ The Iran-Iraq chronic dispute over Shatt al-Arab, the Iranian claims to Bahrain and to the three small islands of the UAE, Abu Musa, Tunb *al-Kubra* (Greater) and Tunb *al-Sughra* (Lesser), stand out as perennial causes of conflict in the Gulf.

In 1992, the Iran-UAE historical dispute exploded again. Only a couple of months after a visit to Abu Musa island by the Iranian President Rafsanjani, the Iranian government refused, in April 1992, entry to a group of non-national employees of the emirate of Sharjah to the island.³⁹⁵ Again, on 24 August 1992, the Iranian authority turned back 110 Arab school teachers (mainly Egyptians) and their families returning after their summer vacation to the island to prepare for the opening of the new school year requiring them to get Iranian entry visas.³⁹⁶ A few weeks later, the Iranian government refused to accept the UAE government's demand to return the Greater and Lesser Tunbs

³⁹³ In 1935, Shah Reza Pahlavi changed officially the name of the country from Persia to Iran (by which name the chapter will call it throughout).

³⁹⁴ Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf," p. 35; and Al-Ghareeb, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

³⁹⁵ Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf," p. 71, note: 159. Ali Akbar Velayati, Iran's Foreign Minister, stated at that time, wrongly, that the 'Memorandum of Understanding' of 1971 gave the right only to Sharjah citizens to live in the island. *Ibid.*

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-2, note: 159

islands or, at least, to agree to take the whole question of the three islands to the International Court of Justice at The Hague for arbitration.³⁹⁷ This Iranian behaviour, however, was just a continuation of the Iranian settlement of 29th November 1971 with Sharjah and Iran's invasion of 30th November 1971 of the two Tunbs. Both the settlement and the invasion will be considered in the subsequent pages.

6.2.1 The Iranian Arguments and the UAE's Counter Arguments

As far as geography is concerned, the island of Abu Musa is located 38 miles off the coast of the United Arab Emirates and 43 miles off the Iranian mainland, while the Greater and Lesser Tunb islands are located at the entrance of the Strait of Hormuz.

According to the British records, the three islands had been in the possession of the Arabian Qawasim tribe since 1750.³⁹⁸ The Iranians started their claim to the islands formally in 1887.³⁹⁹ The Iranian governments based their claims to the three islands mainly on historical and strategic reasons. As far as history is concerned, Iran has backed its aspirations by stressing that in a British War Office map, produced in 1887, the three disputed islands were shown clearly in Iranian colour.⁴⁰⁰ This map was

³⁹⁷ "Gulf States Condemn Iranian Action," Reuters news service 1992, (9 September 1992).

³⁹⁸ Memorandum on the Persian Claim to Tunb and Abu Musa by D. Laselles, 4 September 1934. FO 371/17827.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.; and memorandum on the Status of Islands of Tunb, Little Tunb, Abu Musa and Sirri by J. Laithwaite, 24 August 1928. L/P&S/18/B397

given to the Shah of Iran at that time as a gift by the British Minister in Tehran under the direction of the then British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary Lord Salisbury.⁴⁰¹

When the British announced their intention to withdraw their forces from the Gulf region by the end of 1971, the Iranian officials placed more stress on the strategic factor. The argument was that control of the three strategically important islands was a great advantage to whichever power sought to command the Strait of Hormuz. The main shipping channel in the Gulf would be jeopardised if hostile forces, such as Iraq, were to seize these islands.⁴⁰² Accordingly, for the interests of the region and the whole world, Iran must have the three islands. Shortly before Britain withdrew from the Gulf, the Shah committed himself to the position that Iran would defend the interests of the Gulf states and the entire world. He stated that "the Persian Gulf must always be kept open for the benefit of not only my country but the other Gulf countries and the world."⁴⁰³

Contrary to the argument that the islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs were occupied by Iran to safeguard the Gulf's main shipping channel, Kelly has persuasively argued that if the Iranian desire was to control shipping lanes then as an outpost Sirri, which they already possessed, was of equal suitability; and

⁴⁰¹ Richard Schofield, "Abu Musa and the Tunbs: the Historical Background," in Arab Research Centre, Round Table Discussion on "The Dispute over the Gulf Islands," (London: Arab Research Centre, January 1993), p. 8.

⁴⁰² Kelly, Arabia, p. 87.

⁴⁰³ P. Harvy, "The Shah's Aim in the Gulf," The Manchester Guardian, (9 October, 1971), p. 7.

still more relevant, the strategic position of the islands of Qishm, Hanjam and Larak offered even better command of the Straits of Hormuz.⁴⁰⁴ Another analyst of Gulf security problems has also explained that it is not essential to have control of the three islands to block shipping in the Gulf and neither is such control sufficient to prevent anyone else with adequate naval power from so doing.⁴⁰⁵ The strategic argument has been proved to be a pretext to justify the Iranian demands and occupation. It was reported that while the negotiations between Britain, Iran and the two Shaikhdoms continued throughout November 1971, Iran rejected suggestions by an Arab third party that the three islands could be leased to it when Britain withdrew its forces from the Gulf.⁴⁰⁶

The counter arguments of the UAE pointed out the long-standing British recognition of Abu Musa and the two Tunbs as Arab islands belonging to Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah emirates, respectively. The government of the UAE also referred to the British long guarantee of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah's control over the three disputed islands and active defence support for this guarantee until Britain withdrew from the region. The following section will give several examples that confirm the British recognition and defence policies.

⁴⁰⁴ Kelly, Arabia, p. 89.

⁴⁰⁵ Joseph Churba, Conflict and Tension among the States of the Persian Gulf, Oman and South Arabia (Alabama, Air University Documentary Research Study, 1971), p. 68. Cited in Robert Litwak, Security in the Persian Gulf (Aldershot: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981), vol. II, p. 57.

⁴⁰⁶ Litwak, op. cit., p. 57.

6.2.2 Britain and the Early Iranian Claims to the Three Islands

The early policies of successive British governments gave a clear proof of Britain's firmness in upholding the Qawasim claims to the three islands. Although there are several examples and documents which prove this, recalling a few of them will be sufficient to make the argument clear. In 1904, the Iranians tried to assert their claims to the three islands. In that year, the Iranians occupied the islands for a short time and a Belgian employee of the Iranian customs authorities removed flags placed by the Qawasim Shaikhs on the islands and hoisted the Iranian flag in their place. But because of the firm British objections, which reached the threat of using force unless Iran retreated, the Iranian attempt was short-lived.⁴⁰⁷ In June 1904, Sir Percy Cox, then Political Resident in the Gulf, arranged with the Qawasim Shaikhs for the rehoisting of their flags on the islands.⁴⁰⁸

In 1912, the British decided to build a lighthouse on the Greater Tunb island to use as a guide for ships. Cox's two letters of September and October 1912 are documents which show unequivocal British recognition of Qawasim ownership of the Tunb island. In his first letter, Cox addressed the Sharjahian Shaikh saying "your Island of Tumb."⁴⁰⁹ He demanded, in the same letter, that the Shaikh ask his "representative on the Island

⁴⁰⁷ Laithwaite's memorandum, 24 August 1928.

⁴⁰⁸ Graves, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

⁴⁰⁹ Sir Percy Cox to Shaikh Saqr bin Khalid, 28 September 1912 R/15/1/736. At that time Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah were united (until 1921) under the leadership of Sharjah.

to show civility and give any help he can on your behalf." On 13 October, the Shaikh of Sharjah accepted the British Resident's request.⁴¹⁰ In a reply to the Shaikh, Cox stated clearly in his letter of 22 October that the British government recognised "your sovereignty over the Island."⁴¹¹

In the period from 1796 to 1925, Iran was ruled by Shahs from the Qajari dynasty. In 1921, a new era in Iran's modern history began, when Colonel Reza Khan (r. 1925-41) led a coup and later in 1923 became the Prime Minister. Two years later, Reza Khan took full power ending the Qajari rule and established his own dynasty, the Pahlavis. A few years later, the peaceful approach of the Iranians to the islands question underwent a volte-face. The Shah believed that Iran's supremacy over the three islands would help to strengthen her power in the region. But again, the British government stood firm against the Shah's new moves. He was told that these islands had since the nineteenth century been regarded by Britain as belonging to Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah.⁴¹²

There was further obvious evidence of the stiff British opposition to the Iranian domination of the islands in 1934. In that year, the Iranian government succeeded secretly in persuading the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah to lower his flag and replace it with the Iranian flag in Greater Tunb. The British

⁴¹⁰ Shaikh Saqr bin Khalid to Sir Percy Cox, 13 October 1912. R/15/1/736.

⁴¹¹ Sir Percy Cox to Shaikh Saqr bin Khalid, 22 October 1912. R/15/1/736.

⁴¹² Kelly, *Arabia*, p. 88.

government stopped the process and ordered the Ruler to take down the Iranian flag and to replace it with his.⁴¹³

In the early 1930s, the Iranians again raised the question of ownership of the three islands. But this time they tried to solve the dispute through negotiations with the British authorities in the Gulf. At that time, the British and Iranian governments were trying to reach a comprehensive treaty for all their differences in the region. To arrive at this objective, the firm British opposition to Iran's attempts to control the three islands started to ease.⁴¹⁴ The British began to study the possibility of leasing the Tunb islands to Iran. In May 1930, the British Resident in the Gulf discussed the issue with the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah. The Shaikh of Sharjah was also present in the meeting. The two Shaikhs strongly rejected the British idea.⁴¹⁵ On 4 October 1930, the Persian Minister of Court, Monsieur Taimourlache, declared his country's readiness to acknowledge Sharjah's sovereignty to Abu Musa in return for British and Qawasim acknowledgement of Iran's ownership of the Tunb Islands.⁴¹⁶

In July 1932, Taimourtache told R. H. Hoare, the British Minister in Tehran, that his government would give up its claims to Bahrain if the British government acknowledged Iranian

⁴¹³ Political Resident in the Gulf to Secretary of State for India, 10 April 1935. FO 371/18901.

⁴¹⁴ Sir R. H. Clive, British Minister at Tehran, to Government of India, 5 December 1930. FO 371/14535.

⁴¹⁵ Political Resident to Secretary of State for India, 10 May 1930. FO 371/14478.

⁴¹⁶ Suggestion that the Island of Tunb might be Leased to Persia (Memorandum), 14 November 1930. FO 371/14478.

sovereignty over the three islands.⁴¹⁷ In 1934, the British responded with a scheme of leasing Abu Musa and/or the Tunbs to Iran.⁴¹⁸ In his telegram of April 1935 to the Foreign Office, the British Minister in Tehran, H. Knatchbull-Hugessen, mentioned that "Taimourtache was prepared to abandon the Abu Musa claim in return for Tamb and later even spoke of a long lease Tamb."⁴¹⁹ The Iranian claims more or less stopped until 1948, when Iran's Counsel in London expressed to the Foreign Office the desire of his government to establish administrative offices on the three islands.⁴²⁰ The answer of the Foreign Office was that never before had the British government acknowledged the Iranian claims to the three islands.⁴²¹

During 1955, the British officials tried to advocate an agreement whereby Iran would accept Sharjah's possession of Abu Musa island and the independence of Bahrain, the Shaikh of Sharjah would endorse Iranian sovereignty over Sirri island, and the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah would agree to sell the Tunb islands to Iran.⁴²² The British version of events attributed the failure of this scheme to the unwillingness of the Iranian government to sacrifice its claim to Abu Musa.⁴²³

⁴¹⁷ R. H. Hoare to Foreign Office, 15 July 1932. FO 371/16070.

⁴¹⁸ Hoare to Foreign Office, 7 April 1934. FO 371/17893.

⁴¹⁹ H. Knatchbull-Hugessen to Foreign Office, 9 April 1935. FO 371/18980.

⁴²⁰ Desire of the Persian government to Establish Administrative Office on the Islands of Tunb and Abu Musa, 1 December 1948. FO 371/68329.

⁴²¹ From Foreign Office to Tehran, 7 July 1949. FO 371/74968.

⁴²² Foreign Office to the Secretary of the Admiralty, 31 January 1955, in FO 371/114640; and Foreign Office to British Embassy at Tehran, 19 August 1955, in FO 371/114641.

⁴²³ Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf," p. 38. ✓

Since the failure of the 1955 negotiations, the Iranian claims to the three islands more or less rested until the British government announced in January 1968 her intention to withdraw from the Gulf in three years. Muhammad Reza Shah (r. 1941-79) and Iranian officials wasted no time in insisting on the transferring of the three islands to the Iranian control.⁴²⁴

6.2.3 The 1971 Iranian Occupation of the Three Islands

Up to their withdrawal, the United States was happy with the dominant British presence in the Gulf. The American Administration predicted that Britain's withdrawal would bring a power vacuum to the region which the Russians would try to fill. As we shall explain in part two, handicapped by her experience in Vietnam the United States looked for a new power to police the strategic and important region on behalf of the West.

The Iranians found in the British withdrawal the awaited opportunity to emphasise their historical claims to Bahrain and the islands of Abu Musa and the two Tunbs. Between the time of Britain's announcement and her actual withdrawal (1968-71), negotiations were conducted between the British government and the Shaikhs of the nine Gulf emirates on the one hand, and, on the other, between the British and the Iranians. During these negotiations, the position of the islands became linked both with Iran's recognition of the new UAE federation and, more tacitly, with the solution of the Bahraini question.

⁴²⁴ Kelly, *Arabia*, p. 88.

In August 1970, Iran renounced her claim to Bahrain and accepted the emirate's independence. The Shah, therefore, could not afford to make another concession over the islands question. In other words, he wanted a victory to save face in front of the Iranian people. He began to stress Iran's demands for the three islands. In October 1970, the Iranian government formally informed Britain that she would not acknowledge the existence of the proposed UAE federation unless her claim over the three islands were secured. Two months later, Ardeshir Zahedi, then Iran's Foreign Minister, restated straightforwardly the same warning. He said that: "Iran will never abandon her legal rights to sovereignty over the islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs and unless these rights are completely recognized there can be no peace and security in the Persian Gulf."⁴²⁵ The Shah himself asserted, two months prior to the actual occupation, Iran's claims to the islands by saying that "Those islands are ours. We need them. We shall have them. No power on earth will stop us."⁴²⁶ An argument that was backed by the American and the British governments as new regional security orders were being drawn up to fill the vacuum predicted by the British withdrawal from the region. The American role will be examined in the second section of this thesis.

Some commentators believe that the Iranian-British negotiations during the 1968-71 period were based on acknowledging Iran's rights to the disputed three islands in

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 89.

⁴²⁶ The Guardian (28 September 1971).

return for the relinquishment of her increasingly unacceptable claim to Bahrain.⁴²⁷ It was reported that the late Shah stated that prior to the settlement of Iran's long-standing claims to Bahrain, Britain's envoys had told him that if he would agree to renounce his demand to the Bahraini island, Britain would not actively oppose Iran's claims to the three islands.⁴²⁸ Recently, in a seminar organised by the 'Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies' in August 1992, the UAE's Ambassador in London indicated that Iran's occupation of his country's islands was part of a deal with the British government. He stated that "it was due to specific arrangements made with Great Britain to make the Shah withdraw his claim against Bahrain for which he was promised the two Tumbs."⁴²⁹

Fearing an imminent Iranian invasion, Sharjah accepted Britain's recommendation and signed, on 29 November 1971, the 'Memorandum of Understanding' with the Iranian government, by which Iran officially received half of Abu Musa. The two parties were able to reach an agreement that provided for the establishment of an Iranian military station on Abu Musa in return for the payment to Sharjah of \$1.5 million as annual economic assistance until Sharjah's revenues from oil deposits reached the sum of \$3 million annually.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁷ S. Amin, International and Legal Problems of the Gulf (London: Middle East and North African Studies Press, 1981), p. 163.

⁴²⁸ Anthony, op. cit., p. 28.

⁴²⁹ Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, The GCC Border Disputes Seminar, p. 56.

⁴³⁰ Schofield, "Abu Musa and the Tunbs," pp. 12-3. Text of 'Memorandum of Understanding' is in Ibid., p. 14.

Only the question of Ras al-Khaimah and the Tunb islands remained unsolved. Saqr bin Muhammad Al-Qasimi, the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah, was determined to resist the Shah's claims. In other words, the dispute over the Tunb islands proved more difficult to settle in an amicable manner. Sir William Luce, Britain's special envoy in the Gulf, suggested that Ras al-Khaimah cede its sovereignty over the Tunbs in exchange for an annual payment of £1.6 million by Iran and a forty-nine percent share of the oil revenues, a suggestion rejected by the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah.⁴³¹ As a consequence of Shaikh Saqr's continual refusal to concede the Iranian demands, Iran occupied the two Tunbs on the last day of November 1971, a day before Britain terminated its treaties with the Gulf emirates and two days before the official declaration of the United Arab Emirates confederation. The Iranian troops met resistance from a police detachment from Ras al-Khaimah stationed on the Greater Tunb, with loss of life on both sides.

There was a major outcry in the two concerned Shaikhdoms and in the Arab world in general over the Iranian occupation. The Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah sent a cable on the same day of the invasion to the British Prime Minister (1970-74), Edward Heath,

⁴³¹ Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, p. 366. However, in a recent study Schofield suggests that initially a different offer was made by Iran to the Shaikh of Ras al-Khaimah. Quoting a private and confidential source, Schofield asserted that "Iran was apparently prepared to supply the Shaikhdom with military and humanitarian support by way of compensation." He continued that, "Though the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah initially seemed disposed to accept Iran's offer of Western-built guns and armoured vehicles plus the unspecified 'humanitarian' component, he apparently later changed his mind, demanding a significant sum of money instead" which Iran refused to accept. Schofield, "Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf," pp. 38-9.

accusing Britain of violating its protective agreement with the emirate by not expelling the Iranian forces.⁴³² Ras al-Khaimah also witnessed anti-Iranian and anti-British demonstrations.⁴³³ In Sharjah, following an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate the Deputy Ruler, the Ruler, Khalid bin Muhammad bin Saqr, was murdered in February 1972 by his cousin the ex-Ruler of Sharjah Shaikh Saqr bin Sultan bin Saqr (r.1951-65).⁴³⁴

The Arab countries strongly condemned the Iranian occupation of the islands. Predictably, Iraq was the centre of opposition to Iran's move. The Iraqi government described the occupation as 'flagrant aggression'.⁴³⁵ They believed that Britain had agreed to transfer her previous role in the region to Iran. According to that assumption, the occupation was carried out "in collusion with Britain."⁴³⁶ The Baathi government of Iraq broke off diplomatic relations with Britain and Iran, and six months later, nationalised the Iraq Petroleum Company's remaining possessions in Iraq.⁴³⁷ On 7 December 1971, the two years old revolutionary Libyan government nationalised the British Petroleum Company's concession and assets in Libya.⁴³⁸ On 9 December, Iraq, Algeria, Libya, and South Yemen asked the

⁴³² Hussien Sirriyeh, "Conflict over the Gulf Islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs, 1968-1971," Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 8 (Winter 1984), p. 82.

⁴³³ Anthony, op. cit., p. 27; and Heard-Bey, op. cit., p. 366.

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ Mostyn, op. cit., p. 120.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ Kelly, Arabia, p. 96; and Heard-Bey, op. cit., p. 366.

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

United Nations Security Council to hold a special meeting to discuss the occupation. The Security Council adjourned its "consideration of the matter *sine die*" as friendly states were attempting a discussion to resolve the conflict.⁴³⁹

6.2.4 Britain's Stand over the Iranian Occupation

The British role and responsibility in the Iranian-UAE historical dispute over the three islands can be assessed in the light of three considerations: the sudden British withdrawal from the region; the British failure to defend the territories of the Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah Shaikhdoms; and the effect of contradictory British policies and practices in the dispute.

The effect of the unexpected British withdrawal from the Gulf on the Iranian-UAE dispute over the three islands, is clear. The announcement of the withdrawal, and the following British pressure, on the one hand weakened the capability of the two emirates to negotiate or resist and, on the other, strengthened the power of the Shah to force the kind of settlement he desired. The withdrawal exposed the small Arab emirates to the powerful ambitions of the Shah, to the extent that he forgot Iran's readiness in 1935 to acknowledge the Qawasims of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah's rule over the three islands in exchange for only leasing the Tunb island.⁴⁴⁰ In November 1971, the Shah, with no matching power on the other side of the Gulf and a knowledge of

⁴³⁹ UN Monthly Chronicle, IX:1, January 1972, p. 50.

⁴⁴⁰ Knatchbull-Hugessen telegram of 9 April 1935 to Foreign Office. FO 371/18980.

the west's dependence on Iran, insisted on full control of the three islands. From the Western perspective, safeguarding the interests of the West was certainly more important than maintaining the sovereignty of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah over the three small islands. It was judged that sacrificing the three islands was a cheap price for the co-operation of the Shah.

The second consideration under which the British role and responsibility can be examined is their protection obligation. As was explained in chapter two, according to her historical treaty relations with Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah Britain had been the protecting power for both emirates at the time of the Iranian occupation. On the very day of the Iranian occupation, the aircraft carrier HMS Eagle and the cruiser HMS Albion were standing by in the Gulf. Kelly, rightly, asked whether they were at hand to cope with any complications that might arise over the termination of the treaties and the ending of Britain's naval protectorate of the Gulf. If this were the case why did Britain not carry out its protection responsibility right up to the last moment of its existence?⁴⁴¹

Britain's stand on the three disputed islands was a classic case of *realpolitik*. Aiming to preserve her commercial interests in the Indian sub-continent and the Arabian side of the Gulf, successive British governments continuously rejected the Iranian claims over the three islands. When she decided to leave the region, Britain reached the conclusion that her interest, and that

⁴⁴¹ Kelly, Arabia, p. 96.

of the west in general, lay in mollifying the powerful Shah of Iran.

There were good reasons, for Britain and the west, to conciliate the Shah. Some of these reasons were: British financial interests, especially in the Iranian oil industry⁴⁴²; the free flow of oil through the Straits of Hormuz to the West; and the importance of Iran in the new regional security arrangements to fill the vacuum anticipated after the British withdrawal from the Gulf. The Sunday Times wrote on 11 July 1971 that it was far better for Britain to act as a scapegoat in the Gulf and to bear "the probably short-lived Arab odium that would result" from leaving the islands to the Shah. The Iranian military power and the "very considerable British financial interest in the Iranian oil industry" convinced The Guardian to suggest on 3 November to follow "the path of realism...to accept the inevitable and recognize" the Iranian occupation.

In her (1968-71) negotiations with her allies in the two Arab emirates, Britain made it clear that she had no intention of standing in the Shah's way in the event of an Iranian invasion of the islands, and recommended them to seek an agreement with Iran in an attempt to solve their disputes. In practice, the British government even went further. She pressured the Ruler of Sharjah emirate to come to terms acceptable to Iran, and allow

⁴⁴² Kelly reported that in May 1971 the Shah signed a contract of Arms and communications equipment from Britain to a value of over £100 million. Ibid., p. 93.

the Iranian occupation of the Tunb islands. Several statements by British, Iranian and Arab politicians support this.

The British special envoy Sir William Luce, and Sir Denis Wright Britain's Ambassador in Tehran (1963-71), had told the rulers of the two emirates, during their visit to the Gulf in April 1971, that if no agreement was reached with Iran "the Shah is going to occupy the islands" by force.⁴⁴³ During a debate in the House of Commons on 13 December 1971, Joseph Godber, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, stated that the British government had made it clear to the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah that she would not be able to intervene militarily on the last day before Britain's protective treaty with the emirate was terminated.⁴⁴⁴

In his confidential diary, the then Minister of Imperial Court, Amir Assadoullah Alam, also wrote several comments on the British-Iranian negotiations of 1968-71. In his diary of Monday 18 February 1969, Alam wrote that the British Ambassador in Tehran told him very confidentially that "the case of Tunb Islands is practically settled and will definitely be given to Iran, for we [the British] have told the Sheikh of Ras al-Khaimah that if you don't come to some sort of arrangement with Iran... Iran will lawfully, and if that was not possible, will forcefully take these islands."⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴³ Sirriyeh, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

⁴⁴⁵ Pirouz Zadeh, "The Issue of Abu Musa Island from an Iranian Point of View" in Arab Research Centre, Round Table Discussion on "The Dispute of Islands." p. 24.

On 29 November 1971, the Ruler of Sharjah declared that the conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding agreement with Iran was due to an obvious threat that Abu Musa island would be occupied should Sharjah not comply with Iran's wishes.⁴⁴⁶ In a press conference held in Ras al-Khaimah, three days after the Iranian occupation of the Tunbs, the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah said that Luce had exerted pressure on him to come to a peaceful arrangement with Iran over the Tunb islands. He added that during his visit, the British envoy warned that Iran would occupy the islands and that "it would be better for you [the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah] to take part of your rights."⁴⁴⁷

It is, therefore, not the case that Britain failed to counter the Iranian invasion because she was unable to do so. Rather, the failure arose because a decision had been agreed between the British and Iranian authorities. This perception was confirmed by Alam in his book The Shah and I when he said that the United States and British governments were aware of the Shah's arrangements to occupy the three islands.⁴⁴⁸ This understanding is also reinforced by the statements of Luce and Abbas Hoveida, the Iran Prime Minister. Luce declared upon leaving Tehran, only two weeks before Iran's invasion of the Tunb islands, that Britain and Iran had "sorted out their differences over the islands" and

⁴⁴⁶ Schofield, "Abu Musa and the Tunbs." p. 12.

⁴⁴⁷ The Government of Ras al-Khaimah, Information Office, *an-Nashra al-Ikbbariyya* (News Bulletin, No. 26, 6 December 1971), p. 5. Quoted in Sirriyeh, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁴⁴⁸ Arab Research Centre, Round Table Discussion on "The Dispute over the
islands" pp. 42-3.

that, "the Shaikhdoms can now form their federation."⁴⁴⁹ On the same day of the Iranian occupation, Hoveida informed the Iranian Parliament that the sovereignty of Iran over the islands "had been restored following long negotiations with the British government."⁴⁵⁰ More to the point, there are the earlier warnings of Luce to the rulers that the Shah would occupy the islands if they did not reach an agreement with Iran, and Godber's statement that the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah had been warned that Britain could not defend the Tunb islands if an Iranian invasion happened on the last day of their treaty relations. These statements raise the suspicion that the British government knew about the Iranian occupation before it took place and surely showed the desire of Britain to allow the Shah to fill the expected power vacuum and to be the new stabilising power in the Gulf.

The third consideration of British responsibility is the contradiction in her actions and decisions. It was the British Residency in the Gulf who published many documents recognising that Abu Musa and the two Tunbs islands were owned by the Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah emirates. It was also the British authorities who had rejected, since the nineteenth century, renewed Iranian claims to the three islands. At the same time, it was the British government who produced, in 1887, a map in which the three disputed islands were shown clearly in Iranian colour. It was the British government who in 1971 pressured the

⁴⁴⁹ The Times (London, 18 November 1971).

Arabia, p. 96.

rulers of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah emirates to come to an arrangement with the Shah and warned them of an Iranian invasion. And finally it was the British government who agreed to the Shah's control of the long recognised Arab islands. These self-contradictory British documents and practices had been, and still remain, one of the primary reasons behind the continuity of the dispute which, in its turn, carries a great threat to the stability of the Gulf region.

Part II: Instability in the Gulf Region: the Role and Responsibility of the United States

In 1968, the British government announced its intention to withdraw its military forces from the Gulf region in 1971. The decision shocked many, including the American Administration. The Americans believed that the British withdrawal would result in a power vacuum in the region, which the Russians would surely try to fill. Consequently, the interests of the West would be damaged. The United States government reached the conclusion that she needed to do something to prevent this scenario. However, the very strong opposition of the American people to their country's heavy involvement in the Vietnamese War (1960-75) hindered the Nixon government from playing a direct role in the Gulf and taking over the British position.

The best available response for the United States Administration was to advocate the Nixon Doctrine, with its characteristics of 'twin pillars' and a high degree of military sales. In other words, to back and support her strongest allies in the Gulf, i.e. Iran and Saudi Arabia, to face any direct or indirect Russian intervention in that region. The American choice of Iran and Saudi Arabia as a senior and junior ally was based mainly on their strategic location, their economic power, and their strong relations with the United States. In practice, however, the policy of the United States government was, in addition to her support of Iran and Saudi Arabia, to begin the gradual increase of her naval attendancy in and around the Gulf waters.

This second part examines in four chapters the role and responsibility of the United States' Gulf arms policy of the 1970s for instability of the region. With more than half of the world's known proved oil reserves in the Gulf it is very difficult to investigate the policies of successive American governments in the region and ignore the oil factor. Thus, this part will begin with a chapter that looks at Western European, Japanese, and United States interests in the Gulf's oil. A historical overview on United States-Gulf region relations will also be covered in chapter seven. The British withdrawal from the region and the Soviet Union's threat to the area as seen from the United States perspective will be the central point of chapter eight. The same chapter discusses the causes that led the British government to take the decision, the domestic Gulf reaction to it, and the attitudes of United States and the former Soviet Union. The following chapter will study the United States response (the Nixon Doctrine) to the anticipated Russian threat. The tenth and last chapter puts the American response to the supposed Russian threat under close examination.

Chapter VII Oil and the United States-Gulf Region Relationship: Historical Overview

7.1 Introduction

The United States-Gulf region relationship developed long before the discovery of oil in Iran in 1908. Indeed, commerce and missionary activity were the two main elements of her early relationship with the region. While the United States commercial and missionary ambitions were most important in the nineteenth century, oil was at the centre of their relations during the twentieth. The body of this chapter deals with the great interest of the United States in the Gulf's oil wealth whilst the remainder of this introduction briefly covers the other two principal elements.

The commercial relations between the United States and the Gulf extend back to the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the little American trading vessels reached the Gulf. The arrival of these vessels was enough for British officials to wonder if another challenge to the British hegemony in the Gulf waters was in the offing. The British Resident at Basrah noted the appearance of the Two Sons in 1802 "the first vessel of that nation which ever visited the port of Bussora. It was out of New York..."⁴⁵¹

In 1832, the Ruler of Muscat invited the President of the United States to conclude a commercial treaty between their

⁴⁵¹ Joseph Malone. "America and the Arabian Peninsula: the First Two Hundred Years." The Middle East Journal 30 (1977). pp. 408-9.

states.⁴⁵² At that time, the Omani navy was larger than that of the United States.⁴⁵³ In the following year, on 21 September, a Muscati-American Treaty of Amity and Commerce was signed.⁴⁵⁴ The United States Senate ratified the treaty on 30 June 1834. The 1833 agreement remained in force for a century and a quarter when it was replaced by the 1958 Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations and Consular Rights.

On the other shore of the Gulf, Iran approached the United States government with a bid for a commercial treaty. To face British influence and Omani expansionism, the Iranian charge d'affairs at Constantinople proposed in 1855 to the United States Minister to the Ottoman government that the two countries should conclude a treaty. Article XV of the treaty would require the United States to escort Iranian merchant shipping. Article XVI, which Kelly believes was the actual purpose of the treaty, called upon the Americans to defend the Iranian coast and islands in the Gulf "against the attacks of strong and weak enemies, whether they be Christians or otherwise", and to provide naval assistance "to enable the Persian Government to take possession of and to subjugate such of its islands and ports (for instance Kishm, Ormuz, and Bahrein) as show insubordination and refuse to pay the revenue..."⁴⁵⁵ America's imperial era was decades away. The United States rejected the Iranian proposal and the

⁴⁵² Hurewitz, op. cit., vol. I, p. 255.

⁴⁵³ David Long, "The United States and the Persian Gulf," Current History 76-77 (January 1979), p. 27.

⁴⁵⁴ For the 1833 treaty document see ibid., vol. I, pp. 255-6.

⁴⁵⁵ Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf, p. 458.

two governments signed at Constantinople on 13 December 1856 the Friendship and Commercial Treaty.⁴⁵⁶

The next significant element of American involvement in the region was missionary activity. In 1829, the first missionaries began their work in north-west Iran (Tabriz Province). Later on, an Arabian Mission, founded in 1889 at New Brunswick (New Jersey) by the Reverend Samuel Zwemer of the Reformed Church, established in 1892 its first mission at Basrah on the Arabian side of the Gulf. The mission in Muscat was opened a year later, and in 1895 another was opened in Manamah, the capital of Bahrain. By 1910, plans were made to open a mission in Kuwait and later a mission was opened in Amara, Iraq.⁴⁵⁷

By the end of World War One, the missionaries maintained five stations, three substations, six Sunday schools, seven day-schools, one boys' boarding school, and five hospitals and dispensaries at the locations mentioned above on the Arabian side of the Gulf. The missionaries also built Baghdad College (later al-Hikma University) in 1932 as well as the American Tehran College in Iran. By the Second World War, the number of working missionaries differed from one Gulf state to another. While there were less than two dozen in Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and the Trucial Shaikhdoms, there were about 42 in Iran and one hundred and thirteen missionaries in Iraq. Thus, the missionaries

⁴⁵⁶ For the text of the agreement see Hurewitz, *op. cit.*, vol. I, pp. 337-9.

⁴⁵⁷ Long, *op. cit.*, p. 27; and Malone, *op. cit.*, p. 413.

took a leading role in bringing Western thought, ideas, and education into the region.⁴⁵⁸

There is no doubt that the missionary remained as America's best link with the region, until the arrival of the age of Gulf petroleum. They developed into 'goodwill' ambassadors for the United States, and some even worked as part-time consuls, thus becoming an accepted tool of foreign policy. In future, the performance of these missionaries would benefit both the American oil companies and the United States government. They helped the oil companies during their oil negotiations in the region. It also assisted the United States government in gradually diminishing the predominant position of the British in the Gulf.⁴⁵⁹ British missionaries had never officially been present in the region.

7.2 The Role of Oil in the United States-Gulf Region Relationship

Since oil was discovered at the end of the nineteenth century, the international demand for it has been increasing. The world production of oil rose from approximately 20 million tons in 1900 to 1791 million tons in 1968.⁴⁶⁰ This level made oil a major element in the world market. From analysis of sales, six of the world's top thirteen businesses in 1972 were oil companies

⁴⁵⁸ A. Assiri, The Impact of Arms and Oil Politics on United States Relations with the Arabian Gulf States 1968-78 (University of California--Riverside: Unpublished Ph.D., 1981), pp. 16-7.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Fiona Venn, Oil Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century (London: Macmillan, 1986), Appendix, pp. 171-6.

In the United States, there were five oil concerns among the leading twelve companies. Shell and BP were the largest two companies in Britain.⁴⁶¹

During the First World War the vital importance of oil to the industrial world was realised. The war led the Western powers to the understanding that petroleum products were crucial to victory, and no nation could win a mechanised war without a sufficient supply of this strategic resource. Lord Curzon's statement that "The Allies floated to victory [in the Great War] on a wave of oil" is one of many famous remarks delivered by Western politicians that recognised oil's future role in world politics in the aftermath of World War One.⁴⁶²

By the end of the Second World War, the necessity of oil to the industrial world increased very dramatically. Oil was considered as the golden key to industrial production. Loy Henderson, Director for Near Eastern and African Affairs in the American State Department, wrote in 1948 that "at this state of industrial development, oil, like food, is essential to the operation of our very economic life and to the maintenance of what we Americans consider as civilization."⁴⁶³

The Gulf states' oil was discovered and exported at different times. Oil began to flow from Iran in 1912, Iraq in

⁴⁶¹ Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans (England: Penguin Books, 1974), p. 395.

⁴⁶² The Times (London, 22 November 1918).

⁴⁶³ Loy Henderson, "American Political and Strategic Interests in the Middle East and Southeastern Europe," Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science (January 1948), p. 453.

1927, Bahrain in 1933, Saudi Arabia in 1937, Kuwait in 1946, Qatar in 1949, Abu Dhabi in 1962, Oman in 1967, Dubai in 1969, and from Sharjah in 1974. Henceforth these states began a new era of prosperity. This tremendous oil wealth made the Gulf at the time of British withdrawal, and for a long time to come, the leading region in meeting the demands of the industrial world. A 1972 Congressional report expressed this fact clearly by asserting that "Never before in the history of mankind, have so many wealthy, industrialised, militarily powerful, and large states been at the potential mercy of small, independent and potentially unstable states which will provide, for the foreseeable future, the fuel of advanced societies."⁴⁶⁴

For this reason, it has been estimated in American official circles that the effect of losing the Gulf's oil would have a devastating impact on the economy of the Western industrialised societies. James Akins, the Director of the Office of Energy and Fuel in the State Department during the Nixon Administration, predicted in a 1973 Foreign Affairs' article, six months before the *Ramadan* War, that: "the loss of the production of any of these countries [the Gulf states] could cause a temporary but significant world oil shortage; the loss of any two could cause a crisis and quite possibly a panic among the consumers."⁴⁶⁵ In the words of Carter's Defence Secretary, Harold Brown "The loss of this [Gulf] oil to the economies of the West and the

⁴⁶⁴ Emile Nakhlah, Arab-American Relations in the Persian Gulf (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975), p. 56.

⁴⁶⁵ James Akins, "The Oil Crisis: This Time the Wolf is Here," Foreign Affairs 51 (April 1973), p. 469. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim year, when Muslims must fast from dawn to dusk.

industrialized Far East would be a blow of catastrophic proportions...the loss of Persian Gulf supplies would do irreparable damage to our allies and friends..."⁴⁶⁶

Thus oil became the most important element in United States-Gulf region relations. The following pages, however, will concentrate on the story of the American oil concessions in the region and the deep interest of the industrial world in the Gulf's oil at the time of the British withdrawal. To prove the Gulf's oil importance, the 1973 oil crisis will be discussed.

7.2.1 The American Oil Concessions

At the turn of the twentieth century, the United States and the Soviet Union were the world's main oil producers. Therefore, prior to the end of the First World War, American governments had shown little interest in foreign oil exploration. However, the First World War and the depleting of her own oil reserves persuaded the government of the United States to extend its search for oil in the outside world, including the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula regions.⁴⁶⁷

In the few years preceding World War One, the British government increased its involvement in the oil industry to a far greater degree than had been the case. This new policy was continued in the aftermath of war. The British government sought to exclude foreign oil companies from the Gulf areas that had

⁴⁶⁶ Harold Brown. "Protecting U.S. Interests in the Persian Gulf." Department of State Bulletin 80 (May 1980). p. 63.

⁴⁶⁷ Venn, op. cit., p. 48.

been under its influence. The United States was disinclined to accept this. To her, the struggle for control of the Gulf oil resources seemed just another part of Britain's old imperialist diplomacy. As a consequence, in the inter-war years, great power rivalry between the two countries was to have profound implications for British strength and prestige in the Gulf.⁴⁶⁸

Before the involvement of the United States with the Gulf's oil, the dominant oil companies were the APOC --later British Petroleum (BP), Shell (an Anglo-Dutch combine with 40% British interest and 60% Dutch) and Compagnie Francaise des Petroles (CFP). The United States government announced, after the end of the Great War, her own open door policy, as a basis for negotiating new oil concessions in the Gulf.⁴⁶⁹ The State department had encouraged American oil companies to go out and obtain foreign oil concessions. The United States Secretary of State, Charles Hughes, wrote to President Calvin Coolidge (1923-9) on 8 November 1928, that "our position is that we are always ready to give appropriate support to our nationals in seeking opportunities for business enterprise abroad."⁴⁷⁰ As a result, in the late 1920s and 1930s, the American oil companies had obtained concessions in most of today's Gulf states.

⁴⁶⁸ For oil's role in the First World War and its aftermath see Venn, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-53.

⁴⁶⁹ Originally, the United States government objected at the beginning of twentieth century against tearing China into area of concessions between the European colonial powers. Instead, the Americans asked for same economic chance for all states. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴⁷⁰ Assiri, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

In Iraq, the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) discovered oil in the northern part of the country in late 1927. The British government tried to secure for the APOC and Shell the controlling share in the IPC but were frustrated by the Americans. In July 1928, the American companies -- Standard Oil of New Jersey (Exxon) and Mobil-- secured 23.75 per cent of the assets of the IPC. In 1927, the American Company Standard Oil of California (Socal) also succeeded in purchasing Bahrain's concession for \$50,000.⁴⁷¹ In 1932, Socal's subsidiary, Bapco, discovered oil.

In Saudi Arabia, IPC and Socal were competing for the highest bid to win the Saudi Eastern province (al-Hasa) oil concession. IPC's inability to make down payment in gold as desired by Ibn Saud was responsible for the concession being granted to the American Company. On 29 May 1933 Socal signed an agreement for a sixty-year concession for the whole of eastern Saudi Arabia by beating the IPC's offer of \$45,000 with its bid of about \$250,000 in gold sovereigns.⁴⁷² The loss of the al-Hasa concession proved to be the greatest blow in the history of British concern in the Gulf's oil. When the Americans received the concession, the British Minister in Saudi Arabia at Jeddah was shocked.⁴⁷³

In 1933, Socal obtained another concession from Ibn Saud and created a wholly owned subsidiary, California Standard Oil

⁴⁷¹ Sampson, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

⁴⁷² Assiri, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-6; and Troeller, *op. cit.*, pp. 240-1.

⁴⁷³ Malone, *op. cit.*, p. 418.

Company (Casco) to explore for oil. Two years later, Socal and Texaco joined forces overseas with a jointly owned subsidiary, Caltex, which became the new owner of Casco. On 5 March 1938, oil was discovered in commercial quantities. World War Two intervened, and it was not until the late 1940s that Saudi Arabia started to be one of the world's greatest oil exporters. In the meantime, in 1948, Casco's name was changed to the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO). Two other American companies, Mobil and Exxon, bought into Aramco with Texaco and Socal upon payment of 500 million dollars.⁴⁷⁴ According to this new arrangement: each of Socal, Exxon and Texaco got 30 per cent and Mobil got the remaining 10 per cent.⁴⁷⁵

In the face of this American activity, the British moved very quickly. Briefly, Shaikh Ahmad of Kuwait granted, in December 1934, Kuwait's oil concession to the new Kuwait Oil Company (KOC), owned jointly (50/50) by the American Gulf and the British BP companies.⁴⁷⁶ Exclusive rights were also obtained by IPC in the Trucial Shaikhdoms and in Oman, but these became commercially important only in the 1960s.

As far as Iran's oil was concerned, the United States move came after the Second World War. After Mossadiq's ousting from office in August 1953 and the Shah's return to Iran, a consortium of international oil companies was formed to operate Iran's oil production. On 5 August 1954, Iran concluded an agreement with

⁴⁷⁴ Long, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁴⁷⁵ Halliday, *op. cit.*, p. 400. Since 1/1/1976, Aramco company has been completely owned by the Saudi government.

⁴⁷⁶ Katz, *op. cit.*, p. 159

Western oil companies that resulted in the founding of the Iranian Consortium, a union of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) and other, mostly American, companies. Under the new terms, AIOC owned only 40 per cent of the assets of the new company. The American companies of Gulf, Exxon, Texaco, Mobil and Socal each received a seven per cent interest, and a group of smaller United States companies collectively called the Iricon Group received an additional five per cent. The other 20 per cent was divided as follows: Shell 14 and CFP 6 per cent.⁴⁷⁷

The last few pages have shown that British companies, despite the pledges their government received at the beginning of the current century from most of the local forces not to award oil concessions to anyone but British subjects, were unable to gain the upper hand in the scramble for concessions in the Gulf. Therefore, why, despite Britain's predominant political position in the region for more than a century, were American oil companies so successful there?

At the beginning, the British government tried to prevent the coming of the United States' oil companies to the region, but ultimately it gave way. The strength of the United States during the Great War was the main reason for the giving way of British imperial policy in the Gulf to that of the Anglo-American alliance. In other words, British petroleum policy was subordinated to the more fundamental issue of Anglo-American relations as a whole. Fiona Venn writes in her Oil Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century that "If the British government was

⁴⁷⁷ Long, op. cit., p. 28.

prepared to compromise on such vital issues as naval superiority and the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, it would not hesitate to surrender partial control of the as yet unproved oil reserves of the Middle East."⁴⁷⁸ As a result, the governments of Britain and the United States became in the Gulf, in the period between the two world wars, rivals and allies, each hoping to stress co-operation, on one hand, and, on the other, eager to advance their own particular interests.⁴⁷⁹

7.2.2 The Western Oil Interests in the Gulf

Before the 1970s, world oil production, the greater part of which was in the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), was controlled by a small group of foreign companies, generally referred to as the 'Seven Sisters'. Five of them were from North America: Exxon, Socal, Texaco, Gulf and Mobil; the two others are British BP and Anglo-Dutch Shell. (The French CFP, with less economic strength, came next to them). As a consequence, production levels, refining and marketing were determined by these seven companies. As late as 1968, they controlled 77.9 per cent of world production, 60.9 per cent of refining and 55.6 per cent of world marketing facilities.⁴⁸⁰ Table 1. shows the major oil companies' production share in the leading Gulf states producers.

⁴⁷⁸ Venn, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 67-8.

⁴⁸⁰ Halliday, *op. cit.*, pp. 395-6.

Table 1: Major oil companies in the Gulf, 1971 (Million Metric Tons)^a

<u>Gulf States</u>	<u>Esso</u>	<u>Shell</u>	<u>BP</u>	<u>Gulf</u>	<u>Texaco</u>	<u>Socal</u>	<u>Mobil</u>	<u>CEP</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Total</u>
Abu Dhabi	3.25	6.5	17.8	--	--	--	3.25	12.2	1.4	44.5
Iran	14.5	29.1	83.8	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	12.5	26.3	227.0
Iraq	9.8	19.7	19.7	--	--	--	9.8	19.7	4.3	83.0
Kuwait	--	--	72.5	72.5	--	--	--	--	--	145.0
Qatar	1.1	12.5	2.4	--	--	--	1.1	2.4	0.5	20.0
N. Zone	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	26.4	26.4
Saudi Ar.	66.6	--	--	--	66.6	66.6	22.2	--	--	222.0
Total	95.2	67.8	196.2	87.0	81.1	81.1	50.8	46.8	58.9	767.9

a. Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, p. 404.

During the 1960s oil had surpassed the coal industry as the world's first energy source. At the end of that time, the leading industrialised countries obtained more than half of their energy supplies from oil. Tables no. 2 and 3 show the growth of dependency on oil and its consumption in the prominent industrial countries.

Table 2: Growth in West's dependence on oil, (1960-1970)^a

<u>Area</u>	<u>1960</u>		<u>1970</u>	
	<u>Volume (m. b/b)</u>	<u>% of total energy</u>	<u>Volume (m. b/b)</u>	<u>% of total energy</u>
North America	10.2	44.9	15.3	43.3
OECD Europe	0.4	32.6	12.4	59.6
Japan	0.6	36.4	3.8	71.7
Rest of World	5.5	22.4	10.7	31.8
Total world	20.3	33.2	42.2	43.9

a. Christopher Tugendhat and Adrian Hamilton, Oil: the Biggest Business (London: Eyre Methuen, 1975), p. 252.

Table 3: Crude oil consumption in the major industrial countries in million barrels daily for the years 1968-71^a

Country	Canada	France	W. Germany	Japan	Italy	UK	US
1968	1.375	1.470	2.135	2.850	1.385	1.840	13.085
1969	1.440	1.705	2.420	3.390	1.530	1.980	13.815
1970	1.525	1.920	2.655	4.000	1.740	2.095	14.350
1971	1.585	2.090	2.745	4.435	1.875	2.105	14.845

a. BP Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1978 (London: The British Petroleum Co. Ltd., 1978), p. 21.

The quantity of crude oil reserves and their consumption level are the most crucial factors in determining the availability of oil. And while oil was depleting in the Western countries its quantities were increasing in tremendous amounts in the Middle East, particularly in the Arab Gulf states. Therefore it was expected that by the end of the 1960s, many oil-producing countries, especially those with high level oil consumption, were likely to run out of crude oil (see table no. 4). The United States, for example, was depleting her crude oil reserves of 39.3 billion barrels at a high rate due to her large level of oil consumption which equalled 3.320 billion barrels per year as of 1968.⁴⁸¹ According to their levels of production of oil in 1973, the life-span of crude oil reserves in the leading Arabian Gulf states' oil producers was estimated as follows: Kuwait 63.6

⁴⁸¹ Another study conducted by the American Enterprise Institute stated that proved oil reserves in the United States had been reduced from a 12.5-year supply in 1958 to a ten-year supply in 1968. "Economic Interests," in George Lenczowski, (ed).. United States Interests in the Middle East, p. 40.

years; Saudi Arabia 49.2 years; Abu Dhabi 46 years; and Iraq 42.7 years.⁴⁸²

Table 4: The Life-Span of crude oil reserves in some of the Non-OPEC major producers in 1968^a

<u>Product</u>	<u>Crude Oil Reserve^b</u>	<u>Crude Oil Production^c</u>	<u>Life-Span (Years)</u>
Canada	10.0	1.165	23.5
Caribbean	17.8	3.985	12.2
US	39.3	9.095	11.7
USSR, E. Europe & China	55.9	6.785	22.6

a. Compiled from Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1968.

(London: The British Petroleum Co. Ltd., 1968), p. 5, 7.

b. in billion barrels.

c. in million barrels a day.

It was clear at the time of British withdrawal, that the industrialised world's increasing consumption level of crude oil would make the future demand for OPEC countries' oil in general, and the Gulf's oil in particular, very urgent. The Gulf was, in 1971, the world's greatest oil producing area. The oil production of the region was just over 16,000.000 barrels per day (b.p.d.) compared with some 11,050.000 in North America, 425.000 in Western Europe, and 7,835.000 in Eastern Europe and the former USSR. In figures, the percentage of the 1971 oil production of the Gulf was 27.6% of total world production.⁴⁸³

⁴⁸² Compiled from BP Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1978, p. 19; and Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Oil and Security (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1974), p. 66

⁴⁸³ BP Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1978, p. 19.

Table 5: Oil production in the Gulf area in thousand barrels daily for selected years (1968-71)^a

Country	1968	1969	1970	1971
Bahrain ^b	0.075	0.076	0.076	0.075
Iran	2.840	3.375	3.845	4.565
Iraq	1.505	1.525	1.565	1.700
Kuwait	2.420	2.575	2.735	2.925
Oman	0.240	0.330	0.330	0.285
Qatar	0.340	0.355	0.370	0.430
Neutral Zone	0.405	0.420	0.505	0.545
Saudi Arabia	2.830	2.995	3.550	4.500
UAE	0.495	0.610	0.780	1.060
Total Gulf	11.150	12.261	13.756	16.085

a. BP Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1978, p. 19.

b. United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Energy Supplies, 1950-74, Statistical Papers, Series J, No. 19 (New York: United Nations, 1976), p. 210, 213.

Exports of crude oil and refined products were dispatched from the Gulf to most consuming areas of the world. For many years, the whole world was heavily reliant upon the millions of barrels of crude oil leaving the region every day, passing through the Strait of Hormuz at the mouth of the Gulf. At the end of 1971, for example, the world obtained about 56.6 per cent of its oil from the Gulf: about 22.1% of North America's (21% of the United States'), 58.9% of Western Europe's, 83.7% of the Far East's (84.5% of Japan's), and 76.8% of Africa's oil supplies came from the Gulf (see table no. 6). Such a position gave the region a unique importance in both energy and economic terms in relation to the economies of the United States, Western Europe, Japan, and much of the African and Asian continents.

Table 6: Distribution of Gulf oil exports (Thousand Metric Tons) in 1971^a

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Africa</u>	<u>North America</u>	<u>Far East</u>	<u>Western Europe</u>	<u>Others</u>
Gulf		20.170	26.210	225.770	369.800	39.550

a. United Nations, World Energy Supplies, pp. 228-37.

The oil-producing and exporting states of the Gulf were, and still are, the owners of the world's largest oil reserves. The Gulf states possessed, in 1968, more than half of the world's proven oil reserves. Indeed, the next largest holder of oil reserves, the former Soviet bloc, had only 12.0% of the world's proven reserves. Table 7. shows the oil reserves at the end of 1968 in the world's major producing regions.

Table 7: World published proved oil reserves at end 1968^a

<u>Country/Area</u>	<u>Billion Barrels</u>	<u>World Share %</u>
Africa ^b	44.6	9.6
Canada	10.0	2.2
Caribbean	17.8	3.8
Middle East ^c	270.1	58.1
USA	39.3	8.4
USSR, E. Europe & China	55.9	12.0
Western Europe	2.6	0.6
<u>Others</u>	<u>24.7</u>	<u>5.3</u>
Total World	465.0	100.0

a. Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1968, p. 5.

b. The oil production of North Africa's countries is included.

c. Almost all of it in the Gulf region states.

7.2.3 The 1973 Oil Crisis

On 6 October 1973, the *Ramadan* War broke out between the Arab countries, principally Egypt and Syria, and Israel. The United States and some other countries supported Israel. This American stance prompted OAPEC to use all its efforts, especially its oil wealth, to maintain Arab interests against Israel and her supporters. In practice, the OAPEC members followed three lines. They started immediately with the reduction of oil production. A few days later they raised the prices of their oil. The third direction they followed was a full embargo on oil exports against specific countries.

The gradual cutback in oil production was chosen by OAPEC as a more effective option to persuade Israel's supporters, especially the United States, to modify their alignment with the Israelis against the Arab countries. In November 1973, the reduction in crude oil reached 26.7 per cent of the September 1973 production levels.⁴⁸⁴

Since the beginning of the 1970s, many OAPEC members have controlled their own oil production and prices. In September 1973, oil prices were very low, averaging only \$1.77 a barrel. OAPEC's decision to reduce their oil production resulted in a decrease in their oil revenues. Consequently, Arab oil-producing countries held a meeting in Kuwait on 16 October, and decided to increase the oil prices by 70 per cent to \$3.05 per barrel. This was the first action taken by oil producing countries

⁴⁸⁴ A. Al-Sowayegh, Arab Petro-Politics (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 130-1.

to determine their oil prices. A dramatic increase in spot oil prices raised the posted price to \$5.17 per barrel in November, and to \$11.65 in January 1974, this latter a 558 per cent increase from the price only four months earlier.

But since the earlier policies did not produce an immediate response from the government of the United States to change her pro-Israel policy, the Arab oil producing countries decided to halt all oil exports to the United States. This took effect on 19 October 1973. The oil-consuming countries were divided, with respect to the oil embargo, into three groups: friendly, unfriendly and neutral. The friendly states which included Britain, France and Spain, were to continue to receive oil at the pre-embargo level. The unfriendly countries were to receive no oil at all. In addition to the United States, this group included those countries that provided military support to Israel, namely, the Netherlands, Portugal, South Africa and Rhodesia. The neutral countries, which constituted the rest of the world's consuming states, were to receive whatever oil was left.⁴⁸⁵

The consequence of these actions taken by OAPEC was the 1973 energy crisis. This crisis had major effects on the economy of the industrial countries, particularly the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. As a result, the United States and other major industrial countries followed an energy conservation policy to reduce their dependency on OAPEC oil, which led to a substantial decrease in oil consumption. For example, between 1973 and 1986, oil consumption among the major OECD

d., pp. 130-2.

industrial countries declined by over 15 per cent. This was accompanied by a significant improvement in energy efficiency. This was especially clear in the automobile industry. In other words, the Arab oil embargo encouraged the major industrial countries to increase their dependence on non-oil energy sources, such as coal, natural gas and nuclear power, and to develop renewable energy resources such as solar energy, wind energy and hydropower.⁴⁸⁶

But despite the search for alternative energy sources, the West realised that for the near future only oil would be available at hand in sufficient quantities and at reasonable cost to meet the expanding thrust of its industrial machine. More to the point, to the West the Gulf represented the only supplier that would be capable of satisfying future oil import demands. Business Week magazine stated during the *Ramadan* War that, "The world will buy more Arab oil, whatever the outcome of the fighting, because there are no alternative energy sources at present to meet soaring demand."⁴⁸⁷

The 1973 Arab oil embargo, therefore, proved that the use of oil as a political weapon could lead to an energy crisis. The embargo also confirmed that the political factors could play a crucial role in the availability of crude oil. The Palestinian question, the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Iraq-Iran conflict of 1980-88, and lastly the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990,

⁴⁸⁶ K. McCann, "OPEC Policy and the Future of Oil," OPEC Bulletin 19 (October 1988), p. 11.

⁴⁸⁷ "The New Economics in the Middle East," Business Week (20 October 1973), p. 78.

all these examples resulted in a severe shortage in crude oil supplies from the Arab supplier states.

Chapter VIII The British Withdrawal and the Soviet Threat to the United States' Interests in the Gulf

The last chapter showed that the great interest of the United States in the Gulf region's oil was the most important issue that governed her relationship with the Gulf throughout the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the need of the United States for British co-operation and her rivalry with the Soviet Union were the other main pillars of her Gulf policy since the end of the Second World War. It is worth noting that these three pillars were for most of time overlapping.

Britain's presence in the Gulf eased the fears of the West in general and of the United States in particular about their interests in the region. Therefore when the British Labour government announced in 1968 its intention to withdraw its forces from the region, the American officials viewed it as a unique opportunity for the Soviet Union to increase her power in the region and to control its oil wealth. The following two sections will attempt to show the link between the British withdrawal and the Russian threat to the West's interests in the Gulf region, from the United States' perspective. An examination of the Soviet's options for control of the region will be also.

8.1 *The British Withdrawal*

In a dramatic signal of Britain's retreat from 'Big Power' status, the British Prime Minister of the Labour government,

Harold Wilson (1964-70, 1974-6) announced, on 15 January 1968, to the House of Commons his government's decision to withdraw forces from 'East of Suez', including the Gulf, by the end of 1971. In other words, despite her 'will to empire' the British government, according to Wilson's announcement, was unable to continue her protectorate position in these regions. Wilson attributed his government's decision to the growing financial pressures and high expenditure of maintaining British troops there.

The Labour government's decision to withdraw was unexpected. The world had witnessed as late as 1964, Wilson himself asserting that one British soldier East of Suez was more valuable than one thousand British soldiers on the Rhine.⁴⁸⁸ As regards the Gulf specifically, the Wilson government had sent in November 1967, just two months before its announcement of withdrawal, the Foreign Office Minister of State, Goronwy Roberts, to assure the rulers of the Gulf emirates that Britain had no intention to withdraw, but had positively decided to stay in the region for the foreseeable future.⁴⁸⁹

The British government's decision, therefore, produced mixed or diverse reactions in Britain, in the Gulf countries, and in the two superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union. While to some the decision was a 'blow', others favoured it. However, before discussing the different powers' reactions, it

⁴⁸⁸ Alvin Cottrell, "British Withdrawal from the Persian Gulf," Military Review 50 (June 1970), p. 14.

⁴⁸⁹ Balfour-Paul, op. cit., p. 262; and Parsons, They Say the Lion, p. 132

is necessary to explain briefly the circumstances that led the Labour government to make the important decision to withdraw from a region that was regarded as economically vital for all Western powers.

The Labour government admitted publicly that its decision was rooted in the deteriorating British economic situation. Its purpose was to disengage Britain from military spending overseas which, according to their judgement, had become economically beyond Britain's ability to tolerate. In his book A Personal Record: the Labour Government 1964-70, Wilson states that his government asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce public expenditure. As far as defence expenditure was concerned, the Chancellor proposed, among other things, the immediate withdrawal of British forces from the Gulf.⁴⁹⁰

In Britain, those who argued for the decision agreed that Britain, since the 1960s, faced major economic difficulties. Her share in the total export of manufactures in the industrial world, for example, fell from two-ninths in 1952 to less than one-eighth in 1967. Thus, the decision was acceptable to them as a means of seeking a way out of these problems by cutting public expenditure. The Conservative party (then the opposition party) condemned the Labour government's decision and promised to reverse it if they succeeded in the next general election, which was due to be held before the withdrawal would take place. The

⁴⁹⁰ Harold Wilson, The Labour Government, 1964-1970: A Personal Record (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 479.

Conservative Party pamphlet, 'East of Suez,' argued that the cost of Britain staying in the Gulf was very low compared with what was gained from its investments there. At the time of the decision Britain spent 25 million dollars while gaining 450 million dollars annually.⁴⁹¹ The Conservatives believed that a continued British presence in the region was essential to protect Britain's trade and commercial interests that might be threatened by the withdrawal. It is noticeable, however, that the main motive for the Labour government in taking the decision and the Conservative opposition in trying to reverse it was Britain's interests.

With the exception of Oman, where the British forces were not affected by the 1968 announcement, the rulers of the Gulf states were divided in their responses toward the British government's decision. While the big three --namely Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia-- and Kuwait felt their interests were served by Britain's withdrawal, the nine small protectorate emirates opposed it.

Those who supported the British decision rejected the argument that the British withdrawal would create a power vacuum and that the Soviets would jump in to fill it. They considered the withdrawal to be a potential stabilising factor and asserted that the states of the region had the capacity and the will to fill the anticipated vacuum and to defend themselves.

⁴⁹¹ The Conservative Party pamphlet, "East of Suez". Quoted in Cottrell, p. 16; and Balfour-Paul, op. cit., p. 224, note: 73.

Some detail about the reaction of the four states will clarify their position more.

Iran, under Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi's leadership, welcomed the British decision. The decision gave the Shah the opportunity he had long been waiting for to revive the great ancient Persian empire. The British withdrawal provided Iran with 'a propitious opportunity' to accomplish her ancient dream of spreading her control over both sides of the Gulf.⁴⁹² The Shah, therefore, expressed his belief that there would be no power vacuum and as a result no need for a foreign power to fill it. The Iranian government confirmed that the Gulf states would defend their interests as well as the world's. Iran suggested some type of regional co-operation in the form of a defence pact among Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In addition to Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia denounced the proposal, refusing to join in military and political alliances.⁴⁹³

In Iraq, the Baath party came to power for the second time on 14 July 1968. Although not communist, the Baath was pro-Soviet. In other words, six months after the British government's announcement of withdrawing, Iraq was under a pro-Soviet regime. Therefore, Iraq's stance concerning the British withdrawal was a predictable one. Ahmad Al-Bakr, Iraq's President (1968-79), in a speech delivered on 22 June 1970, made

⁴⁹² R. Ramazani, "Iran's Changing Foreign Policy: A Preliminary Discussion," The Middle East Journal 24 (Autumn 1970), pp. 435-7.

⁴⁹³ Ali Khalifa, The United Arab Emirates: Unity in Fragmentation (London: Westview Press, 1975), p. 162.

his country's position very clear, "There must be complete [British] withdrawal from the Gulf."⁴⁹⁴ Four months before the time of British withdrawal, Al-Bakr, in a step designed to face the so-called power vacuum, called for the creation of an Arabian defence alliance in the region. No doubt Iraq's intention was to exclude Iran --Iraq's main rival-- and to lead the Arabian side of the Gulf.⁴⁹⁵

Saudi Arabia, with her difficult relations with Britain over the Buraimi Oasis, also welcomed the British decision and rejected the region's power vacuum argument. The Saudis opposed the proposal of the Conservative opposition that Britain should stay in the Gulf. They threatened to refer the case to the International Court of Justice if a new Conservative government decided to reverse the Labour decision.⁴⁹⁶ Kuwait also favoured the Labour government decision to withdraw and urged that a future Conservative government should respect it. Though Kuwait rejected the Iraqi proposal for an Arabian defence alliance in the Gulf, they requested the small emirates of the region to work together to safeguard their independence.⁴⁹⁷

On the other hand, the nine small protectorate emirates involved regarded the British decision as against their interests.

⁴⁹⁴ The Times (London, 23 June 1970), p. 7 a.

⁴⁹⁵ Muhammad Sadik and William Snavely, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, Colonial Past, Present Problems, and Future Prospects (Massachusetts: D. C. Heath and Company, 1972), p. 198.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, The Foreign Relations of Iran, a Developing State in a Zone of Great-Power Conflict (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1974), p. 237.

The rulers of these emirates believed that the British withdrawal would cause dramatic changes that would be detrimental to the survival of their emirates. They felt that after being protected from external aggression for a long time, they were suddenly abandoned by the British to survive in turmoil. Therefore, they demanded that Britain should reverse her decision and stay in the region.

To understand the argument of Bahrain, Qatar and the seven Trucial emirates, it is important to view it in the local political context. At the time of Britain's announcement, the small protectorate emirates were involved in several border disputes with their powerful neighbours. The most threatening were Iran's historical claims to Bahrain, the Abu Musa island of Sharjah and the two Tunb islands of Ras al-Khaimah, and the Saudi Arabia-Abu Dhabi-Oman dispute over the Buraimi Oasis. Under such circumstances, Britain's 1968 announcement came as a great shock to the emirates. Fearing the possibility that, after the British withdrawal, the regional big powers would be likely to attack them, their rulers called on the British to cancel their decision. The late Shaikh Rashid Al-Maktom of Dubai, one of the most influential rulers, said that he tried to express his objection to British officials, but was told that the decision had been theirs and that he would not be allowed an opportunity to express his opinion.⁴⁹⁸

⁴⁹⁸ The Times (London, 3 March 1971), p. 6 c. The Times described on 9 December 1971 the effect of the Conservative government's final decision to adhere to the Labour government's timing of withdrawal on the emirates rulers, as "the bitter pill" which they had to accept.

In the superpower circle, the attitudes of the United States and the Soviet Union towards the British announcement stood in sharp contrast. The United States criticised the British decision strongly under the pretext that it would expose the region to an imminent Soviet threat. American Presidents Lyndon Johnson (1963-8) and Richard Nixon (1969-74) warned of the danger of British withdrawal from the Gulf. The United States Secretary of State William Rogers went even further by accusing the Labour government of being less than honest with the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO) allies.⁴⁹⁹

In the case of the Soviets, they were pleased with the British decision and demanded that Britain should fulfil the plan as quickly as possible. The Soviet officials rejected the argument of the United States that Britain's presence would keep the region in order and her withdrawal would expose the Gulf states to a potential threat, emanating particularly from the Soviets and from domestic and regional radicals. The Soviets denounced this argument and labelled it as propaganda against them. They proclaimed that they were not looking to seize the region but wanted mutually friendly relations with its states.

Finally, despite the growing dependency of the industrial world on imported oil from the Gulf; despite the rejection of the United States Administration; despite the offers of burden sharing or financial contribution from some of the rulers of the Gulf states; and despite the claims of the Conservative party that

⁴⁹⁹ The Times (London, 26 June 1970), p. 7 a.

for every dollar Britain spent in the region it was gaining 18, the British Labour government insisted on the decision to withdraw from the Gulf, and it was the Conservatives themselves, who, by the end of November of 1971, carried it out. This involved the recall of Britain's ground troops stationed at the British bases in Bahrain and Sharjah and the abolition of the nineteenth century Exclusive Agreements of protection over the nine small Arab emirates.⁵⁰⁰ The British withdrawal marked the end of one era and the beginning of another characterised by intensive struggle between the two superpowers.

8.2 The Soviet Threat

As mentioned in the first chapter, the Russians, even before their 1917 revolution, had intensified their efforts to create a presence in the Gulf waters. In 1893 a Russian warship first visited the Gulf, and in 1895 and 1897 they made an attempt to gain Bandar Abbas on the Persian side of the Gulf. The Russians had asked in 1898 for the Ottoman government's approval to build a railroad through Tripoli with a terminus at Kuwait. In 1901, the Russians sent naval vessels to the Gulf, and subsidised a steamship line from Odessa to Muscat and Kuwait. Russian ships came to the Gulf again in 1902, and in 1903, they were accompanied this time by French vessels.⁵⁰¹ But as with the

⁵⁰⁰ Cottrell, *op. cit.*, p. 15. Kuwait had already received her independence in June 1961.

⁵⁰¹ Katz, *op. cit.*, p. 5, 199, note: 3.

German plans, the British stopped the Russians. In August 1907, the two governments concluded the Anglo-Russian Treaty by which the Russian government controlled the northern part of Iran, viz. they were pushed away from the Gulf waters.

In 1914 the Russians fought the Great War in the Western camp. During the war, in 1917, the Czarist regime was overthrown, and in November the Bolsheviks gained power. With Marxism in the driving seat, the first Communist state arrived and was interested in extending 'world revolution' by overthrowing the existing world order. As a result enmity had been inherent in Western-Soviet relationships.⁵⁰² Therefore, many governments withheld recognition of the new Soviet regime for a long time. For example, it was only acknowledged by Britain in January 1924 and by the United States in November 1933.

Hitler's invasion in June 1941 of the Soviet Union, however, revived again the old Western-Russian alliance. The Russians entered the Second World War against the Nazis and their partners. But despite the fact that both the United States and the Soviet Union fought as allies in the war, the new world order that succeeded it was characterised by its bipolarity. In this bipolar system, power was divided between two camps: the Eastern bloc under Russian leadership and the Western axis under

⁵⁰² Michael Dockrill. The Cold War, 1945-1963 (London: Macmillan, 1988). p. 8.

the Americans. This produced what has come to be called the 'Cold War'.⁵⁰³

At the time of Britain's decision, the Cold War between the western and eastern camps reached its climax. Due to its physical weakness, strategic location and economic wealth, the Gulf was one of the main regions for superpower competition and confrontation. The competition in the Gulf waters was regarded as a part of the world's balance of power. To be a world, rather than a regional power, the Soviet Union decided to make its sea power felt right around the globe. In 1968 a small Soviet 'flag-showing' force entered the Gulf and visited the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr just two months after the British announcement.⁵⁰⁴

These Soviet ambitions were in conflict with the American interests in what Robert Tucker has called "the indispensable key [i.e. the Gulf] to the defense of the American global position."⁵⁰⁵ In accordance with such an appraisal, the struggle between the two superpowers in the region was to be carried out by all means, direct or indirect. They both continued to fight to expand their

⁵⁰³ The Cold War, which may be said to have started with unrest in Iran (the Azerbaijan Issue), is a protracted state of political and diplomatic tension between countries, falling short of actual war. The Cold War is a name usually used for the international rivalry that developed between the Western powers and the Eastern European bloc after World War II, which divided the world into Western and Communist spheres of influence. The term, however, originated in a speech of Bernard Baruch, United States financier and special adviser to successive Presidents, in Columbia, South Carolina, on 16 April 1947 at a time when the United States Congress was discussing the 'Truman Doctrine'.

⁵⁰⁴ A. Yadfat and M. Abir, In the Direction of the Persian Gulf: the Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf (London: Frank Cass, 1977), p. 65.

⁵⁰⁵ Robert Tucker, The purposes of American Power: An Essay on National Security (New York: Pareger Publishers, 1981), p. 93.

own influence while working to diminish the influence of the other. The mutual suspicion between the United States and the Soviet Union meant that neither superpower wanted to ignore developments in the area for fear that her competitor would take advantage of the circumstances.

The American argued that the aim of the Soviet Union was to reduce the Western influence wherever it existed, hoping to eliminate it; and if possible, to replace it by a Soviet one. A panel convened by Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) affirmed in 1969 that, "It must be assumed that the Soviet Union will attempt to fill the power vacuum resulting from British withdrawal [from the Gulf]," since Moscow always moved into an "area where the West shows its inability to safeguard its interests."⁵⁰⁶

The American argument continued that the vulnerable Gulf region was bordered by the Soviet Union, a superpower with a historical dream to reach the warm waters of the Gulf. The statement of William Crawford, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State during the Carter Administration, revealed this fact. He said "The Russian objective was clearly stated more than 100 years ago at the Constantinople Convention, that the Red Sea and

⁵⁰⁶ The Center for Strategic and International Studies, The Gulf: Implications of British Withdrawal (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, Special Report Series: No.8, February, 1969), p. 91. In 1946, the British Chiefs of Staff held the same assumption. "If we move out in peace time, Russia will move in, pursuing her policy of extending her influence...to further strategic areas." Louis, op. cit., p. 28.

the Southern entrance thereto were a legitimate area of Russian military hegemony."⁵⁰⁷

The Gulf's oil wealth added another dimension to the American argument. Some studies expected that the Soviets would face oil shortages in the near future. In 1966, for example, a journalist predicted that, by 1980, the Soviets would be forced to import oil to meet their need.⁵⁰⁸ A 1977 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report also estimated that in a few years Soviet domestic demand for oil would overtake and surpass domestic supply. The report predicted that, in 1985, the Soviet Union would have to import 3.5-4.5 million barrels of oil per day. Under the pressure of such circumstances, the theory emerged that to obtain the oil they needed the Soviets would try to extend their control and establish a strong foot-hold somewhere in the Gulf.⁵⁰⁹

The United States feared that if the Russians managed to extend their control to the vulnerable Gulf region, this would lead to the increase of oil prices, the reduction of the flow of oil, or even the termination of exported oil to the Western camp. The report of the CSIS concluded that "the strategic interests of the noncommunist world would be in grave jeopardy if freedom of movement in and out of the Gulf were curtailed or denied."⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁷ Katz, op. cit., p. 199, note: 3.

⁵⁰⁸ John Berry, "Oil and Soviet Policy in the Middle East," The Middle East Journal 26 (Spring 1972), p. 150.

⁵⁰⁹ Katz, op. cit., p. 5; and John Campbell, "The Soviet Union in the Middle East," The Middle East Journal 32 (Winter 1978), p. 10.

⁵¹⁰ The Gulf: Implications of the British Withdrawal, p. 9.

Therefore, to safeguard Western interests in the Gulf the United States tried to fill the so-called power vacuum that would be created after the British withdrew their forces. However, the response of the United States to the expected Soviet threat will be given more attention in the next chapter.

The American analysis that the Gulf's oil would be an overriding impetus for the Soviets to rush to control one or more states of the region after British withdrawal can not be accepted. If the Soviet's future oil production was to be insufficient for their needs, they had other easier options before deciding to occupy one or more states of the Gulf with the strong Western reaction this would provoke. To cut down on their exports of oil rather than importing additional supplies was the obvious option available to them.⁵¹¹ The second option was that the Soviets could satisfy their needs from their oil rich allies such as Iraq. The third was that they could obtain oil from the Gulf states without the necessity of occupying any of them. The Gulf states would be ready to avoid such a scenario by buying Moscow's contentment. They would be happy to follow the 'better safe than sorry' attitude by reaching an agreements with the Soviets, guaranteeing them the oil they needed.⁵¹²

Finally, even if the Gulf countries were to be controlled by the Soviet Union or a native radical movement, the United States should not be worried about her own and the West's oil supply

⁵¹¹ David Wilson. Soviet Oil and Gas to 1990 (Massachusetts: Abt Books, 1982), pp. 2-4.

⁵¹² Assiri, op. cit., pp. 249-50.

because whoever controlled these states would have, at the end, an interest in selling oil and importing goods and technology from the West as strong, or probably more than, the West's need for Gulf oil. This interdependence between the two parties was the best guarantee for the West; not who governed the Gulf states. Therefore, the West would be able to get along with whoever was the controlling power in the region. This evaluation was supported by several facts. Looking for hard currency, the Soviet Union itself was interested in selling her oil to the West. Iraq, presumably an anti-Western regime after the 1968 Baath party coup, sold her oil to Western countries. Likewise, Iran after the 1979 revolution has also been governed by a supposedly anti-Western government, but nevertheless she has continued to export oil to the West.

8.2.1 Soviet Options for Control of the Gulf⁵¹³

According to the Western appraisal, there were several options available to the Soviet Union to gain control of the Gulf. A direct Soviet invasion of one or more countries of the region, supporting an invasion by one of Moscow's allies, and helping a revolution in one of the Gulf states were the most likely choices for the Soviets at the time of British withdrawal.

Despite the truth that the forces of the Gulf states would not have been sufficient to defend a direct military invasion by

⁵¹³ Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-12.

the former USSR, there were two main reasons that made this option an extremely difficult scheme for the Soviets. First, since the Gulf area was so indispensable to Western interests, the Russians knew that the United States and her allies would not allow them to take control of such a vital region and, therefore, might well decide to contest the attack. In other words, the Soviet invasion of one or more of the Gulf states could possibly lead to a direct confrontation with the West. Second, attacking any of the Gulf states would not be consistent with the Soviet policy of supporting the Arabs in the Arab-Israeli dispute, which the Russians were very anxious to benefit from in their long term policy in the region.

As far as supporting an invasion of one of the Gulf countries by one of Moscow's allies was concerned, again there were two reasons for ruling out this option. The possibility of risking Western intervention and a wider conflict with the West was the first. The second was that Moscow's allies in the region, such as Iraq or South Yemen, were not necessarily prepared or willing to carry out an invasion of a Gulf state for the sake of the Soviets.

Although helping a revolution in one of the Gulf states was the kind of policy favoured by the Soviet Union in certain other periods and circumstances, it does not seem to have been on the Soviet foreign policy agenda in the region at the time of the British withdrawal. The final years of the Dhofari rebellion in Oman demonstrated this change in Soviet Gulf policy. In September 1969 the rebellious leaders stated that their arms came

from China and complained about the Soviets, "We do not say that the Soviet has totally discarded us. We are still hopefully trying in this direction."⁵¹⁴ There were many reasons behind this new Soviet Gulf policy. The Soviets decided not to provide the West with any opportunity to come into the region. They feared that any support to national radicals might provoke the regime against which they were struggling to seek Western military assistance. The Soviets also realised that supporting rebellions did not always succeed, especially if the West showed its willingness to help to suppress them. Another reason was that the communist parties in the Gulf states were very weak, unreliable for an active Soviet policy and not worth antagonising the installed government for. Lastly, most of the Gulf states were generally enjoying such rapid economic growth that their monarchies appeared to have a cushion against revolution.⁵¹⁵

Pursuing a revolutionary policy in the Gulf, therefore, either independently or through their allies, was not the sort of policy that the Soviets preferred at the time of the British withdrawal. Consequently, they realised that the best policy available to them was befriending governments already in power.⁵¹⁶ There were certain important foreign policy issues on which the viewpoints of the Russians and the Gulf states,

⁵¹⁴ Al-Hurriyah (22 September 1969). Cited in ibid., p. 113.

⁵¹⁵ John Campbell, "The Superpowers in the Persian Gulf Region." in Abbas Amirie. (ed.). The Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics (Tehran: Institute for International Political and Economic Studies, 1975), p. 55.

⁵¹⁶ Katz, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

particularly the Arabian, seemed to be identical. The most important of these was the Arab-Israeli conflict, in which the Russians opposed Israel and supported the Arabian side. By advocating the Arab cause, the Soviet Union attempted to persuade the Arab countries to distance themselves from the West which supported Israel and to draw closer to them.⁵¹⁷

But despite the advantages presented by befriending the existing governments in the Gulf, the success of the Soviets was very limited. They failed to establish good relations with the modern Gulf states. Up to the 1979 Iranian revolution, apart from Iran and Iraq, Kuwait was the only GCC state which had diplomatic relations with the Soviets. The failure of the Soviets was due to different political, economic and religious reasons. The political factors could be summarised in the Gulf states' fears of the Soviet's intention in the region. The Gulf regimes viewed Moscow's support for the radical groups as a real danger against their own thrones. The economic reasons were that the Soviet Union had less in technology and goods to provide the region with than did the West and her need for oil was limited. Religiously, Islam, the religion of all Gulf states, is based on worshipping the one God, strongly contradicted by Communists atheism. Consequently, these inconsistencies played a major role

⁵¹⁷ Yadfath and Abir, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

in delaying relations between the Arab Gulf states and the Soviet Union.

Chapter IX The Response of the United States: the 'Nixon Doctrine'

The strategic interests of the industrial world would be in grave jeopardy if the freedom of oil supply were to be denied. It had been estimated in official American circles that any disruption in the supplies, especially during periods of crisis, could bring about serious consequences to the oil-consuming states. They believed that the British military withdrawal from the Gulf would constitute an open invitation to the Soviet Union to extend her control to the Gulf waters. Admiral Arleigh Burke, for example, noted in 1969 that, "If the announcement in 1968 that Britain would withdraw from the Gulf by 1971 had no other consequences, it certainly focused attention on this vitally important political, military and economic part of the world."⁵¹⁸ It was under this assumption that the United States received the 1968 British decision. Therefore, the Americans officials felt that they must do something to counter the supposed Soviet threat in the region.

After the end of the Second World War the United States became the undisputed leading power of the Western world. With global responsibilities for the security of their allies and their interests, the Americans had come to see themselves as ready to confront any Soviet threat. President Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of the United States (1976-80), expressed this proposition in his 1980 State of the Union address following the Russian invasion of Afghanistan of December 1979. He said that,

⁵¹⁸ The Gulf: Implications of British withdrawal, p. iii.

"Since the end of the Second World War, America has led other nations in meeting the challenge of mounting Soviet power."⁵¹⁹

The policy of containing communism replaced co-operation with the USSR. In the Gulf, Iran was the site of the first confrontation between the two camps. Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union agreed in the Tehran Conference of 1943 to withdraw their forces from Iran after the war, and at its conclusion, the forces of Britain and United States began their withdrawal but the Soviets attempted to establish client states in the Northern regions. After being pressured by the United States, the Soviets evacuated Iran in March 1946. Combined with difficulties in Turkey and Greece, the situation according to United States President Harry Truman (1945- 52) "began to look like a giant pincer movement against the oil-rich areas of the Near East and the warm-water ports of the Mediterranean."⁵²⁰ Moving towards taking over British responsibilities in Turkey and Greece, the United States announced on 12 March 1947 American support for "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."⁵²¹ This new departure in United States' foreign policy was called the Truman Doctrine. By this doctrine, the United States government affirmed her global responsibility in containing what was perceived in Washington as world-wide Soviet expansionism.

⁵¹⁹ U.S. Congress. House. State of the Union Address, H. Doc. 96-257, 96th Congress, 2nd Session, 1980, p. 1.

⁵²⁰ Harry Truman, Memoirs, Vol. 1: Years of Decisions (New York: Doubleday, 1955), pp. 522-3.

⁵²¹ "Special Message to the Congress on Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine," in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry Truman--1947, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, 1963), pp. 178-9.

On 31 October 1956, British and French forces, jointly with the Israelis, attacked Egypt during the 'Suez Crisis'. At this time the Soviets supported Egypt, and as a result, while the influence of Britain and France in the Middle East was reduced, that of the Russians increased. In an attempt to face the growing Soviet influence in the Middle East, Foster Dulles, the United States Secretary of state (1953-9), declared on 31 December 1956 that Washington "has a major responsibility to help prevent the spread to the Middle East of Soviet imperialism."⁵²² The 'Eisenhower Doctrine' of 5 January 1957 came amid such circumstances. The Doctrine (named after President Dwight Eisenhower) was perceived as an attempt to fill the vacuum left by Britain and France in the Middle East and to act as a stop sign to the Russians. The thirty-fourth President of the United States recommended the use of American forces "to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence" of the Middle Eastern states against open aggression from international Communism.⁵²³ The Soviet government denounced the Eisenhower Doctrine as a plot to turn the Middle East "into a permanent hotbed of military conflict."⁵²⁴ In an attempt to justify the Eisenhower Doctrine to the governments of the Middle East states Dulles warned, on 14 January, that possible Communist aggression in the Middle East was "the most serious threat we

⁵²² Mostyn, op. cit., p. 49.

⁵²³ "Special Message to the Congress on the Situation in the Middle East." in Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Dwight Eisenhower--1957, (Washington, D.C.: Federal Register Division, National Archives and Records Service, 1958), p. 13.

⁵²⁴ Mostyn, op. cit., p. 49. On 10 January the former U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, also opposed the Eisenhower Doctrine as "perilously like another approach to the brink" of a Third World War. Ibid., p. 50.

have faced over the last 10 years."⁵²⁵ Nevertheless Dulles' attempt did not succeed. On 19 January, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Jordan issued a joint statement rejecting the Eisenhower Doctrine's 'vacuum theory' of Middle East politics.⁵²⁶

When Britain announced in January 1968 her decision to withdraw her forces from the Gulf by 1971, the immediate American response to fill the so-called power vacuum came on 19 January 1968 from Under-Secretary of State Eugene Rostow. The Under-Secretary suggested the creation of the Gulf Defence Pact, which included Turkey and Pakistan in addition to Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.⁵²⁷ Moscow rejected Rostow's proposal on the grounds that such a defence system would be directed ultimately against the security of her southern frontier.⁵²⁸

In the years between Britain's decision and her actual withdrawal (1968-71), the Nixon Administration found itself in a dilemma. With the insistence of Britain that she would complete her withdrawal at the announced time, the Nixon Administration realised that the United States was the only power capable of replacing her. However, the unsuccessful experience of United States troops in Vietnam made such overseas involvement unacceptable to American public opinion.

The Vietnamese experience exercised a great influence on the Nixon government's reaction to the British withdrawal.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, op. cit., p. 237; and Khalifa, op. cit., p. 171.

⁵²⁸ Ibid.

Briefly speaking, in March 1965, seeking to build up barriers against the spread of communism in south-east Asia, the United States' military involvement in Vietnam began. By 1966 over 400,000 American troops were already involved. Two years later the war aroused great resentment within the United States and President Nixon began to withdraw combat troops in June 1969, to abolish conscription, and to order massive cuts in military strength.⁵²⁹ The Nixon Administration sought a cease-fire with North Vietnam. On 27 January 1973, a peace treaty was signed in Paris and the last United States combat troops were withdrawn.⁵³⁰

It is beyond any argument that the major premise in United States decision-makers' minds at the time of British withdrawal was to keep the flow of Gulf oil to herself and her allies secure and adequate at reasonable prices. Theoretically, there were three options available to the Nixon Administration to achieve this objective.⁵³¹

To do nothing or to make no change in its commitments was the first. Although pursuing this option would prevent another catastrophe like Vietnam, it would obviously increase the influence of the Soviets and their allies, could lead to the

⁵²⁹ Michael Klare, Arms, Oil and Intervention: U.S. Military Strategy in the Persian Gulf During the Nixon Era (The Union Graduate School: Unpublished Ph.D., 1976), p. 56.

⁵³⁰ In his 1973 foreign policy report to the Congress Nixon described the Paris Agreement as the "most satisfying development in the past year." U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s: An Analysis of the President's 1973 Foreign Policy Report and Congressional Action. Prepared for the Committee on Foreign Affairs by the Foreign Affairs Division of the Congressional Research Service, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 2, 17.

⁵³¹ Klare, op. cit., pp. 100-8.

overthrow of the Gulf's monarchies, and probably the stoppage, or at least the decrease, of the oil flowing to the West. On these grounds the National Security Council concluded that it was a dangerous choice which would be very costly for the United States, as a superpower with a great interest in the Gulf, to choose.

To intervene militarily and assume the British role as the protecting power or the big-power policeman in the Gulf region was the second option. Though following this course would obviously guarantee the interests of the West in the Gulf and would have increased America's power to influence future events there, it would also arouse major dissatisfaction both at home and in the region itself. It was believed that a direct American military presence would cast the United States in the role of colonial power in the eyes of the Gulf states' people. More important, the American people would view a large scale military involvement in the Gulf as 'another Vietnam'. As a consequence, the American Administration could not have an obvious military involvement in the region after the British withdrawal. Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield declared, on the day following Britain's announcement, that "I am certain we will be asked to fill the vacuum east of Suez. I don't think we have the men or resources for it."⁵³²

The third choice available to the United States government was to apply the Nixon Doctrine to the region. The idea of the Nixon Doctrine was to distribute the burden of collective defence

⁵³² Long, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

more equitably between the United States and her allies in the region concerned. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense James Noyes later explained the Nixon Doctrine in his testimony in 1973 that "primary responsibility for peace and stability would henceforth fall on the [powerful pro-western] states of the [concerned] region."⁵³³ Accordingly, the United States policy in the Gulf would be to help and encourage Iran and Saudi Arabia, as the big pro-western states in the region, to fill the impending vacuum after the British withdrawal, but without the military presence of the United States.

The factors outlined above which caused the dilemma for the Nixon Administration in the Gulf, namely, Britain's insistence on withdrawing her forces at the announced time, the danger of not doing anything against the supposed Soviet threat, and adverse public opinion to sending troops overseas, were the main influences on the Administration in adopting the Nixon Doctrine in the region. In practice, however, United States' decision-makers did not restrict their country's Gulf policy to the Nixon Doctrine only. The United States followed a mixed policy combining the application of the Nixon Doctrine and the presence of 'moderate' United States military forces in and around the Gulf.

As far as the Nixon Doctrine was concerned, Under Secretary of State Joseph Sisco recounts, in 1973, the United

⁵³³ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, New Perspectives on the Persian Gulf, Hearings, 93rd Congress, 1st Session, 1973. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 39.

States adoption of her policy after the British withdrawal, "We asked ourselves: What is the United States to do, consistent with the 'Nixon Doctrine', to make a major contribution toward stability in the area without ourselves getting directly involved, because this is an area obviously in which we have very, very significant political-economic strategic interests. What we decided was that we would try to stimulate and be helpful to the two key countries --namely, Iran and Saudi Arabia-- that, to the degree to which we could stimulate cooperation between these two countries, they could become the major elements of stability as the British were getting out."⁵³⁴

Therefore, according to the Nixon Doctrine, the new mission of the United States, was to arm Iran and Saudi Arabia and turn them into regional superpowers that could sustain stability and Western influence in the Gulf. To ensure that the two regimes could successfully carry out their wider obligations would need a sharp increase in the United States military sales to both of them. Having unlimited access to American armaments, Iran's and Saudi Arabia's purchases speedily rose in the few years following the British announcement of 1968. The United States military sales to Iran and Saudi Arabia tripled between 1968 and 1969 (from \$75 million to \$244 million), then doubled over the next two years (to \$494 million in 1971), doubled again in the following year (to \$861 million), tripled the next (to \$2.7 billion), and peaked in 1974 at \$6.5 billion.⁵³⁵ In short, Iran replaced Israel as America's leading arms customer in the mid-

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

⁵³⁵ Klare, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

1970s, and Saudi Arabia surpassed Iran as the largest importer of United States weapons in 1978.⁵³⁶ This fact was strong evidence of the application of the Nixon Doctrine.

But why precisely Iran and Saudi Arabia? They were the most suitable to the Nixon Doctrine because Iraq, at the time of British withdrawal, was under a new pro-Soviet regime and the other Gulf states were less important than these two countries. Moreover, by guaranteeing the co-operation of Iran and Saudi Arabia the government of the United States would be able in the end to bring the small Arabian Gulf states under her influence. However, the characteristics of Iran and Saudi Arabia require a special assessment.

Iran's strategic location was the most important factor in the American consideration. Iran, flanking the Soviets' southern border with her 1,600-mile long frontier, stood as "a shield against the spread of Communist influence into the Persian Gulf region."⁵³⁷ Iran's geographical position also placed her alone on the Persian side of the Gulf with a close eye on the Strait of Hormuz, through which most of the region's oil flows. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom enjoys a vast expanse of land (more than two million km²) bordering all the Gulf states, except Iran. The Kingdom's position as guardian of Makkah and Madinah (the Holiest cities in the Muslim world) also gave her a dominant

⁵³⁶ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. World Armaments and Disarmament: Yearbook 1979 (London: Taylor & Francis, 1979), p. 177, 182.

⁵³⁷ James Bill, "Iran and the Crisis of 78." Foreign Affairs 57 (Winter 1978-79), p. 336.

political position on the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian side of the Gulf in particular and on Muslim world affairs in general.

Equally important was the formidable economic power of both countries, which was very necessary to the fulfilment of the Nixon Doctrine. Another factor was the 'special relationship' of the United States with the two countries. While United States' support to the Shah in Mossadiq's crisis (1951-3) was the real beginning of her special relationship with Iran, the oil concession of 1933 was the key to her close relations with the Saudis. Finally, the anti-Communism and anti-radicalism attitudes of the two regimes were other factors in United States officials' minds when they chose them.

The second arm of policy exercised by the United States to fill the so-called power vacuum in the region was the presence of moderate American military forces in and around the Gulf waters. United States officials came to the conclusion that, after all, whatever state Iran's and Saudi Arabia's armament reached, it would not alone be enough to match any Soviet threat either as a deterrent or a true defensive ability. In other words, the United States officials realised that the adoption of the Nixon Doctrine in a remote valuable area such as the Gulf was not enough.

Therefore, they pursued a mixed policy; a combination the Nixon Doctrine and the readiness to intervene.⁵³⁸

Melvin Laird, Nixon's Secretary of Defense, explained this mixed policy in 1970 when he said that, "The basic policy of decreasing direct U.S. military involvement [the Nixon Doctrine] cannot be successful unless we provide our friends and allies...with the material assistance necessary to assure the most effective possible contribution by the manpower they are willing and able to commit to their own and the common defence." Then Laird described what he believed was a better policy for the United States in the Gulf region. He said that "The most challenging aspects of our new policy can, therefore, best be achieved when each partner does its share and contributes what it best can to the common effort. In the majority of cases, this means indigenous manpower organized into properly equipped and well-trained armed forces with the help of material, training, technology and specialized skills furnished by the United States through the Military Assistance Program or as Foreign Military Sales."⁵³⁹ These 'specialized skills', Laird later explained,

⁵³⁸ Assiri, op. cit., p. 1. This mixed policy was not new. Kennedy's Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara, once described America's strategic options as follows: "Either we can station numbers of men and quantities of equipment and supplies overseas near all potential trouble spots, or we can maintain a much smaller force in a central reserve in the United States and deploy it rapidly when needed." U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Military Procurement Authorization, Fiscal Year 1966, Hearings, 89th Congress, 1st Session, 1965, p. 120. Cited in Klare, op. cit., pp.60-1.

⁵³⁹ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee, Foreign Assistance Appropriations for 1971, Hearings, 91st Congress, 2nd Session, 1970, p. 307. Cited in Klare, op. cit., p. 18.

consisted principally of air and naval support for the ground forces of the selected countries.⁵⁴⁰

Military figures understood the implications of this policy for the American armed forces. Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr., Chief of Naval Operations, for example, wrote in 1972, "So, as I understand the 'Nixon Doctrine', the Navy's future contribution will be even greater than in the past."⁵⁴¹ In a 1972 article, Colonel Zeb. B. Bradford also wrote in Military Review that as a result of the Vietnamese War, "we have learned that, in strategic terms, ground power can be quite inflexible once committed, however, much flexibility it may provide on a tactical level... While aircraft and ships can often reverse course and make a clean break, ground forces rarely can do so once engaged." The use of ground forces thus "burns the bridges of easy political or logistical withdrawal."⁵⁴²

Consequently, the United States government launched a major naval build-up in the Indian Ocean-Mediterranean-Gulf regions. Two examples will be sufficient to illustrate this. In December 1971, the United States government signed an agreement with the Ruler of Bahrain allowing the American navy to replace Britain in using a naval base in his emirate.⁵⁴³ On 24 November 1974, a United States aircraft carrier entered the Gulf waters for the first time in 26 years. The visit by the 60,000-ton

⁵⁴⁰ The Washington Post (21 January 1970). Cited in Klare, op. cit., p. 35.

⁵⁴¹ Elmo Zumwalt, Jr., "The Navy Tomorrow," Ordnance (January-February 1972), p. 285.

⁵⁴² Zeb. B. Bradford, "American Ground Power After Vietnam," Military Review 52 (April 1972), p. 4.

⁵⁴³ Katz, op. cit., p. 176.

Constellation was viewed as a signal by United States of her willingness to use force if necessary to protect her interests. The Christian Science Monitor noted, on 26 November 1974, that Washington "will not accept any threat to, or interruption of, the supply of oil from Persian Gulf states." This interpretation was confirmed a few weeks later when Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State (1973-7) under both Nixon and Ford, stated in a Business Week interview that the United States government would not rule out military action in the Middle East if the Arab countries threatened "some actual strangulation of the industrialized world."⁵⁴⁴

The advantages of applying this mixed policy in the Gulf were varied: preventing a major commitment of the United States in another Vietnam; not appearing as a colonial power; shifting the burden of protecting the region on local states; giving the United States a considerable political influence onto local events; and, by the shipment of arms, recycling the oil revenue of the Gulf states and strengthening their local allies repressive capabilities to stay in power. The choice was the least expensive at that violent time.

⁵⁴⁴ For complete text of interview see Business Week (13 January 1975), pp. 67-76.

Chapter X The United States' Gulf Arms Policy and the Stability of the Region

The successful Iranian revolution of 1978-9 confirmed that the United States arms policy exercised in the Gulf, which did not take into consideration the local states' circumstances and interests, failed to provide political stability for the region after the British withdrawal of 1971, as had been predicted for it. Indeed, on the contrary, it contributed to the instability of the region. By supplying the Gulf states, especially the late Shah of Iran, with modern military arms products the United States increased, rather than lessened, the risk of violence and destruction. The Centre for Defense Information warned in 1975 that, "the countries of the region are acquiring the capacity to make war at ever-increasing levels of potential destructiveness."⁵⁴⁵

It was explained in the last three chapters that the major concern of the United States, as the defender of the West's interests, was to guarantee the continuous flow of Gulf oil to herself and her allies at reasonable prices. Therefore, the serious threat to these interests if the Soviets were allowed to dominate the Gulf after British departure persuaded the United States government of the necessity of facing the predicted Russian move. But due to her unhappy Vietnamese experience, the government of the United States decided not to be involved directly in the region. Instead, they preferred to apply the Nixon Doctrine, which was based mainly on arming Iran and Saudi

⁵⁴⁵ "U.S. Arms to the Persian Gulf," The Defense Monitor (May 1975), p. 2.

Arabia to be in the words of one American source, the "American proxy in the region".⁵⁴⁶

In their efforts to protect the interests of the United States and her allies in the Gulf, successive American Administrations pursued a self-interested policy. There were many local sources of conflict and enmity that threatened the stability of the region but the United States governments did not pay them the appropriate attention. The problematic relationship between individual Gulf states and the late Shah's dictatorial method of rule are the obvious examples.

Though all the Gulf countries share the same religion (i.e. Islam), their deep suspicion of each other was a major internal reason for instability in the region. These suspicions were fuelled by their historical conflicts and wars and their border problems. There was, at the time of the British announcement, a border dispute between almost all neighbouring states in the region, the most important of which were Iran's disputes with both Iraq and the two emirates of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah of the UAE and the Buraimi dispute between Saudi Arabia on one side and Oman and Abu Dhabi of UAE on the other. And, since much of the Gulf states' oil was discovered in border regions and in the Gulf waters, there was always a threat that the big states of the Gulf would attack their smaller neighbours to increase their oil stocks. This situation was further complicated by the fulfilment in November 1971 of the British withdrawal.

⁵⁴⁶ Cited in Assiri, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

The long-standing rift in Arab-Iranian relations, however, which became a typical collateral to the modern history of the region, needs special consideration. In the Gulf's modern history, the Shah's ambitions to be the dominant power in the region complicated Iran's relations with her Arab neighbours and always threatened Gulf stability. The late Shah dreamed of reviving "the great Persian Empire of the past."⁵⁴⁷ He anticipated that within his lifetime Iran would emerge as the "fifth industrial and military power" in the world.⁵⁴⁸ In practice, as has been explained in chapter six, the Shah sent his troops to seize the three islands of Abu Musa and the two Tunbs of the UAE in November 1971. Two years later his forces were on their way to help Sultan Qabous bin Said of Oman against his rivals. In May of the same year, the Shah told Newsweek that "If Kuwait government resisted [Iraq's border attack of 1973] and asked for my help, they would get it instantly."⁵⁴⁹ These Iranian policies and statements demonstrated Iran's intention to gain political and military domination of the region and that lesser obstacles would be similarly dealt with.⁵⁵⁰

Equally important, in addition to the Shah's dreams, was that Iran's oil reserves had not been as promising as expected. It was estimated that, "By 1993...Iran will entirely cease to be an exporter of oil and will be producing only enough for its

⁵⁴⁷ Klare, op. cit., p. 20.

⁵⁴⁸ F. Hoveyda, The Fall of the Shah (New York: Wyndham Books, 1980), p. 78.

⁵⁴⁹ Interview, Newsweek (21 May 1973), p. 44.

⁵⁵⁰ Joe Stork, Middle East Oil and the Energy Crisis (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), p. 142.

domestic needs."⁵⁵¹ As a consequence, Iran's income would be reduced very sharply. Therefore, logically the Shah's dreams, in combination with Iran's expected economic difficulties, would probably someday encourage the Shah to attack the weak, rich Arab states. In other words, if Iran's economic situation was as serious as reported, wasn't it possible that the Shah or his successors would as a result seek military hegemony over neighbouring Arab countries?

American relations with the late Shah of Iran was another area that confirmed the United States neglectful attitude towards the local sources of instability. Washington did not allow her own democratic traditions to prevent support for a dictatorial regime like that of the Shah. After deposing Muhammad Mossadiq, Iran's Prime Minister (1951-3), the United States helped Muhammad Reza Shah to strengthen his hand over the country. A new period of dictatorship began. The Shah was at the core of a series of circles between which there was little contact, except through him. The court, the imperial family, the central government, the provincial governments, the armed forces, the Organisation of National Security and Intelligence called Sazman-e amniyat va ittilaat-e keshvar (SAVAK), and the police, all worked independently of each other and each reported directly to the Shah.⁵⁵²

⁵⁵¹ Forbes 122: 1, (10 July 1978), p. 68.

⁵⁵² Hamza Al-Ajmi, The International History of the Gulf, 1958-1979 (Glasgow University: Unpublished Ph.D., 1988), p. 5.

During the 1970s, it was in the United States' interest that the Shah should continue to rule Iran. Therefore, the United States Administrations did not make any significant effort to assess the social and political foundations on which the Shah's conduct of policy was based. In their Analysis of the President's 1973 Foreign Policy Report 'U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s' the Congressional Research Service said "A corollary to the Nixon doctrine which appears to be of increasing significance is that U.S. foreign policy toward any country is governed by that country's foreign policy, not its domestic policy."⁵⁵³ Therefore, with regards to the Iranian political opposition's demands, the instruction of the United States government was, in an American diplomatic metaphor, "to wear gags, earmuffs and blinders."⁵⁵⁴ According to a witness at the May 1972 Tehran meeting, Nixon himself endorsed the Shah's dictatorial policies by remarking, "I envy the way you deal with your students...Pay no attention to our liberals' griping."⁵⁵⁵

The United States, therefore, failed to predict the outbreak of the Iranian revolution. The Democratic President Jimmy Carter stated on 15 November 1977, that the United States viewed Iran "as a very stabilising force in the world at large."⁵⁵⁶ Less than a year later, Khomeini's revolution started. In January 1979 the Shah was overthrown, which was the last thing the United States

⁵⁵³ U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s, p. xiii.

⁵⁵⁴ Cited in Assiri, op. cit., p. 236.

⁵⁵⁵ Hoveyda, op. cit., p. 77.

⁵⁵⁶ "Shahanshah of Iran Visits Washington." Department of State Bulletin 77 (26 December 1979), pp. 908-10.

officials wanted to happen in the Gulf. In February, Khomeini returned to Tehran from his exile in France as the undisputed leader of the Iranian people. A referendum held on 30 and 31 March resulted in an overwhelming vote in favour of an Islamic republic. Since then, Iran has been ruled by a government unfriendly to both the West and her Arab neighbours. The Americans failure could be attributed mainly to their concentration upon the Soviets and the threat their local allies were supposed to present.

The Gulf internal political atmosphere persuaded many American politicians and observers to question and criticise their country's arms policy in the region. They argued that this policy contradicted the general objectives of the United States policy in the area. In 1973, representative Lee Hamilton reported to the Congress that, "Our stated policy has been to try to promote regional cooperation of Gulf riparians with the Iranian-Saudi relationship the key factors....In practice, however, we are not promoting regional cooperation, partially because of our policies and partially because of the acts and ambitions of some of the leaders of the area. Our arms supply policy, in particular, creates as many suspicions as it alleviates fears." Hamilton added that "The ambitions and policies of the Shah of Iran...do not necessarily help create a dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia based on sovereign equality. The Shah speaks of the Gulf as 'his lake', of a defense perimeter in the Indian Ocean, and of his intention to intervene militarily on the Arab side of the Gulf should any change in the political environment be detrimental to his country's interests. Regional cooperation for the Iranians

seems to be based on a major or dominant role for Iran in Gulf affairs."⁵⁵⁷ Senator Edward Kennedy also charged, in February 1975, that the United States government policy was "an apparently indiscriminate policy of selling as much military equipment...as [the Gulf] countries can pay for."⁵⁵⁸ In 1975, the Congress also sent a study mission to Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. The mission described the United States arms sales policy as "a nonpolicy --an *ad hoc* response to individual arms requests rather than a well-formulated plan to protect U.S....interests."⁵⁵⁹

United States' officials, however, rejected the allegations that the United States military exports increased the prospect of war in the Gulf. Richard Violette of the Defense Security Assistance Agency told a House sub-committee in 1974 that, "Iran's military requirements are based on Iran's concern for the security of its northern border with the USSR and its western border with Iraq."⁵⁶⁰ Pentagon spokesperson Amos Jordan stated, in 1975, that, "Since war...is expensive and very risky, it seems doubtful that nations will resort to arms merely because they have them. An arms build-up for defensive and balancing reasons

⁵⁵⁷ House. New Perspectives, p. vi.

⁵⁵⁸ Congressional Record (22 February 1975), p. S2409.

⁵⁵⁹ U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. United States Arms Sales to the Persian Gulf. Report of a Study Mission to Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. 94th Congress, 1st Session, 1975. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 8.

⁵⁶⁰ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the New East and South Asia, The Persian Gulf 1974: Money, Politics, Arms, and Power, Hearings, 93rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1974. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975), pp. 7-8.

may well reduce the dangers of conflict."⁵⁶¹ Philip Habib, Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, defended, in 1976, the American Administration's arms sales to the Shah, "since our military sales to Iran add to the strength of a valued ally and that nation's ability to continue to carry out a policy on which we and the Iranians agree."⁵⁶²

These statements were less than frank in several respects. First, if the evaluation of United States officials was accurate, then the Shah's priority would have been to buy defensive weapons such as interceptor aircraft, anti-tank missiles, shore batteries, etc; instead, the Shah's military programme was shaped exclusively by the acquisition of offensive arms which would be suitable for an aggressive expansionist policy. During 1974 and 1975 alone, Iran had outstanding orders of 400 war-planes, 500 helicopters, 730 tanks, 18 war-ships and thousands of air-to-air, air-to-ground, ground-to-air, anti-tank and anti-ship missiles.⁵⁶³ A report published on 25 September 1975 in The Washington Post observed that huge stockpiles of munitions were to be found on board Iranian ships and in fields. Sophisticated weaponry, including planes and helicopters, were left unassembled in their crates for weeks. General Tanfanian, the Vice Minister for War, in charge of armament "has no doubt about the Shah's rush to

⁵⁶¹ Amos Jordan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Statement Before the Subcommittee on Investigations, House International Relations Committee, (18 June 1975). Press release, p. 6.

⁵⁶² U.S. Congress, House, Hearings, Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on International Political and Military Affairs, Proposed Foreign Military Sales to Middle Eastern Countries--1976, 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 1976. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 68.

⁵⁶³ Klare, op. cit., p. 134.

become a regional superpower."⁵⁶⁴ Therefore, it inescapably follows that the United States endorsed the Shah's policies to form a substantial interventionary capability.⁵⁶⁵

Second, if Iran was afraid of an Iraqi or a Soviet attack, as suggested by American officials, then Iran's troops should have been crowded on her western and northern borders. Instead, the Shah moved most of his forces to the south and east.

Third, the claim that war is "expensive and very risky" has never precluded any country from engaging in conflict if it was assured that the promising rewards exceeded the expenses or if it felt inaction was more risky. Kissinger once remarked about helping an ally under attack, "the ultimate consequences of passivity will be worse than the immediate results of the conflict."⁵⁶⁶ Moreover, the Shah did not appear as someone who would be deterred by such costs.

Fourth and most important, the argument of selling arms to 'a valued ally' who would take into consideration the provider's, i.e. the United States, interests was not the right policy. There was no guarantee that these arms could not be used without or against the approval of the provider. The possibility of a clash of interests between the provider and the receiver was one reason. The difficulty of ensuring that these huge quantities of massively destructive arms would not fall into the wrong hands in future

⁵⁶⁴ The Los Angeles Times, (10 October 1977) Part 1, p. 17.

⁵⁶⁵ Klare, op. cit., p. 155.

⁵⁶⁶ Patrick Morgan, Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis (California: Sage Publications, 1977), p. 115

was another. The overthrow of the Shah in 1979 confirmed this argument.

Indeed the transferring of high-technology arms to a potential belligerent, as in the Gulf states, made the temptation to initiate a war stronger than the inclination to refrain. Tahtinen noted in his 1974 study that, "the last two Arab-Israeli conflicts have demonstrated [that] the possession of highly sophisticated weapons by potential belligerents in explosive situations enhances the possibility that disagreements will be settled by fighting instead of diplomacy."⁵⁶⁷ In a response to the dramatic growth of military capabilities in the Gulf, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) also warned in 1974 that "As arms become more widespread, so political violence is made easier, and any conflict that results more bloody".⁵⁶⁸ A year later, the earlier mentioned Congress study mission to the region reported that "arms buildups may provoke instability in a region by promoting an arms race which raises the level of tension in the area, and tension plus availability of weapons may create greater potential for conflicts."⁵⁶⁹ The Iraq-Iran war of the 1980s proved how accurate were these prophecies.

Despite the internal factors of instability, the government of the United States sold the Shah almost all types of new weaponry American industry produced, except the atomic bomb.

⁵⁶⁷ Dale Tahtinen, Arms in the Persian Gulf (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1974), p. 30.

⁵⁶⁸ The Strategic Survey 1973 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1974), p. 45.

⁵⁶⁹ House, United States Arms Sales to the Persian Gulf, p. 8.

Indeed there were other American objectives, in addition to enhancing Iranian and Saudi Arabian capabilities, for the United States arms policy in the region. The arms industries exerted enormous influence over the United States' economy and therefore over local politics. Arms sales provided for the employment of a massive work-force in the American arms industry. It had been estimated that every \$1 billion in arms exports supported some 47,000 jobs.⁵⁷⁰ Dwight Eisenhower, President of the United States (1953-61), asserted once that the arms industry exercised "total influence -- political, economic and even spiritual-- was felt in every city, every state house, and every office of the federal government."⁵⁷¹ But the hard fact remained, as some observers rightly predicted, that the United States' arms sales to the Gulf, although generating business for American arms manufacturers, could provoke war between the Gulf states themselves.⁵⁷²

Minimising the balance-of-payments deficit that the United States experienced in October 1971 for the first time since 1893 was another American goal. By the 'recycling arms for oil' policy the Gulf states, with their high oil revenue, were the most suitable buyers for United States military products. As a result, the combined United States foreign military sales and commercial

⁵⁷⁰ Business Week (11 August 1975).

⁵⁷¹ Dwight Eisenhower, Waging Peace, 1956-1961 (New York: Doubleday, 1965), p. 616.

⁵⁷² Bob Berman and Stefan Leader, "U.S. Arms to the Persian Gulf: \$10 Billion Since 1973", The Defense Monitor (May 1975), p. 4.

arms exports to the Gulf states in the period from 1967 to 1977 reached over \$31 billion.⁵⁷³

The third objective for the American arms policy in the Gulf was that by accelerating the flow of United States arms and equipment into the region, United States governments endeavoured to keep the Gulf states dependent on her arms industry products.⁵⁷⁴ The fourth objective was to strengthen the repressive forces of pro-United States regimes in the region. A diplomat at the State Department admitted, with Saudi Arabia's royal family in his mind, that the United States arms sales aimed, "to entrench the royal family or to make them more repressive...."⁵⁷⁵

In conclusion, the United States arms policy in the Gulf did not bring stability to the region, as the American decision-makers had planned. The downfall of Muhammad Reza Shah, who was once described by Nixon as "a friend of our country and as a pillar of stability in a turbulent and vital region"⁵⁷⁶, and the result of the Iranian referendum were clear evidences of the failure of the United States arms policy in the 1970s. Kissinger's congressional testimony of 1980 reflected this fact. He stated that "the United States' future is now at the mercy of a

⁵⁷³ Assiri, op. cit., pp. 196-7.

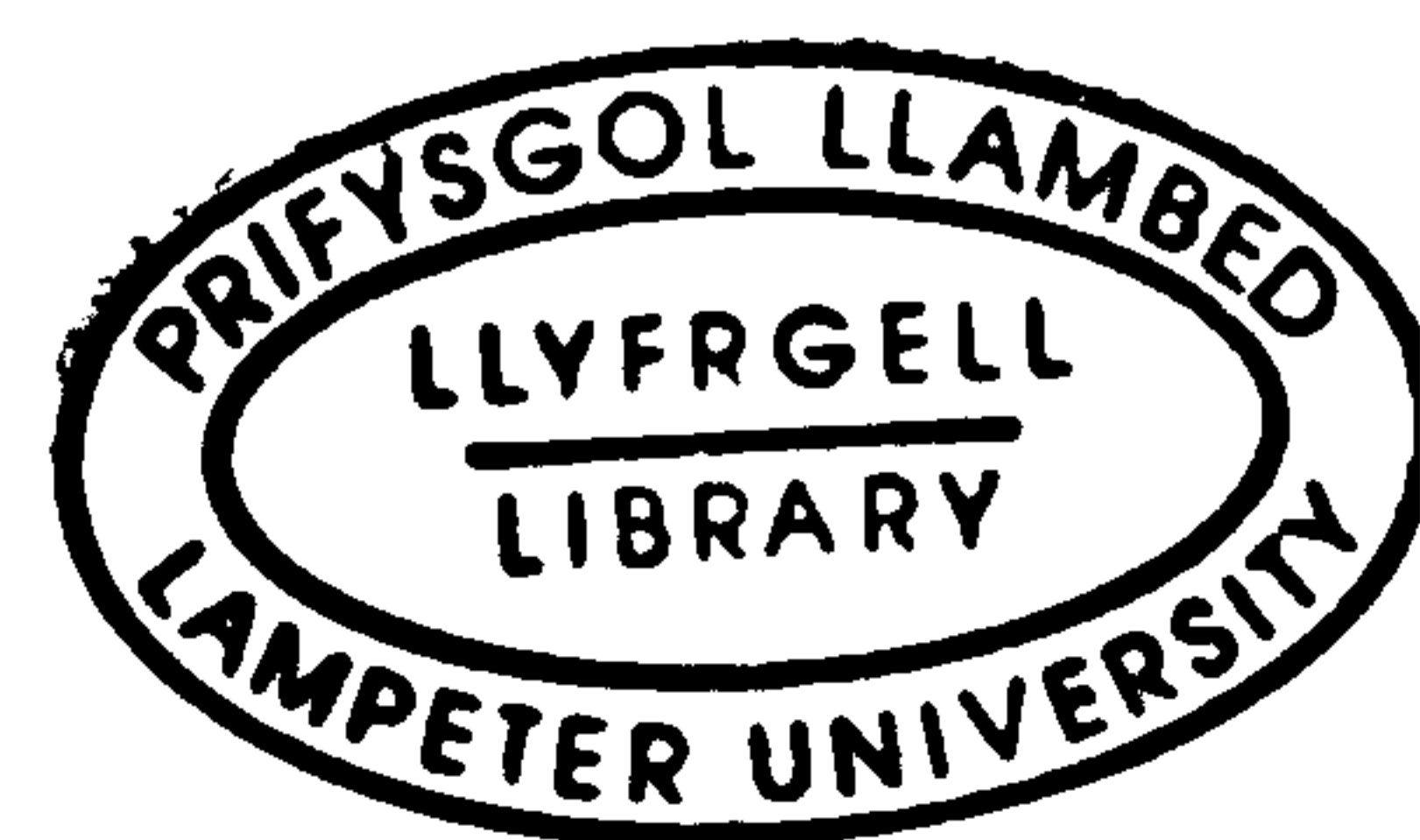
⁵⁷⁴ Stanley Hoffmann, Primacy or World Order (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), p. 77.

⁵⁷⁵ Cited in op. cit., p. 229.

⁵⁷⁶ Henry Kissinger, White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1979), p. 1265.

precarious political *status quo* in what is probably the most volatile, unstable and crisis prone region of the world."⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁷ New York Times (17 July 1980), p. 14.



Conclusion

The modern history of the Gulf region is one of continuous instability which reached a peak following the official British military withdrawal in 1971. The Iranian occupation of the United Arab Emirates' three islands of 1971, the eight years Iraqi-Iranian war (1980-88), the 1982 and 1986 Bahraini-Qatari clashes over the Hawar islands and al-Zubarah, and the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in 1990 stand as clear evidence of this claim.

The Gulf region was dominated by the British since 1820 and by the United States since the British withdrawal. Gulf instability can be directly attributed to the policies of these two countries. Though it is not true to say that internal factors of the Gulf states themselves did not contribute to this instability, there is no doubt that the external influence of Britain and United States played the leading role. This is most clearly evidenced by the attitudes of Britain towards Arab Gulf unity and the United States' towards Arab-Iranian rivalry.

Aiming to protect their substantial interests in the Gulf region and beyond, successive British and United States governments kept to a minimum the peace and stability in the Gulf. To achieve this, they kept the other rival powers (especially the Russians) out of the region; did not encourage the establishment of a strong, unified Arab Gulf state and a working relationship between the two sides of the Gulf. The region's stability, as viewed by the British and United States, did not cover the internal sources of unrest and instability.

The experiences of the *Muwahiddun* (Unitarians) and the Qawasim of the last decades of the eighteenth century and early decades of the nineteenth strengthened the assumption that it would be very difficult to control a powerful, united Arab Gulf state. Therefore, the British Gulf policy since the General Treaty of 1820 was to encourage and support the creation of autonomous emirates in the Gulf. The British acknowledged the petty Gulf Shaikhs as independent rulers, endowed them with protection, defined their territories after the discovery of oil, and finally recognised the independence of their emirates and helped them to join international organisations as fully sovereign states. (Britain's efforts in the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the settlements of the Versailles and San Remo Peace Conferences had also contradicted the British promises of an independent united Arab state made to Shareif Hussein of Makkah). As a result of these policies, the British contributed to the emergence, survival and political evolution of today's inherently unstable Arab Gulf states.

One of the clearest consequences of British 'divide and rule' policy is that all the Gulf states became embroiled in border disputes. The effect of these disputes on the stability of the region was, and still is, very serious. The formative role of the British in their creation cannot be denied. The frequent British policies of giving territory to one side as reward or compensation, or removing it as punishment; of forcing border settlements between the disputing parties; of creating neutral zones between the rival states; and of mollifying big local powers only served to further concentrate grievances rather than to

alleviate them. When Britain abandoned her dependencies, these policies led to conflicts and wars. The border lines between the Gulf states were time-bombs waiting to explode. An observer has stated that "the British before they left Palestine left their finger prints....They did exactly the same, it seems, in the Gulf."⁵⁷⁸

In order to evaluate the impact of British Gulf policy, it is legitimate to speculate on what the present situation would be had the British never entered the region. As they had done in the early decades of the nineteenth century, the Saudis would have continued to extend their authority; in Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. Even with the absence of the Saudis, the region would not have been divided into as many states as is now the case. Mutual interests would have brought about the integration of most of the emirates. A recent study conducted by a former British Ambassador reached the conclusion that the fragmentation of the Gulf "would not otherwise have survived the rationalising pressures of history; for without British patronage these tiny mini-states would long since have been absorbed by, or merged into, larger ones of sensible size."⁵⁷⁹

The 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait proved once more the destabilising effect of the legacy of disputed borders and Western arms policy in the Gulf. The subsequent 'Iraqgate' affair revealed how the West had armed Iraq during the previous decade; a regime which had been regarded by many strategic institutes and

⁵⁷⁸ Arab Research Centre, Round Table Discussion on "The Dispute over the Gulf Islands," p. 55.

⁵⁷⁹ Balfour-Paul, op. cit., p. 103.

political observers as a threat to the stability of the region. This occurrence was not new to the modern history of the Gulf. It had deep roots in American policy-making since Britain's withdrawal in 1971.

Britain's presence in the Gulf region had eased the fears of the West in general and of the United States' in particular about their interests in the region. Therefore when the British Labour government announced in 1968 its intention to withdraw its forces from the Gulf the United States was deeply disturbed. They viewed the withdrawal as an unmissable opportunity for the former Soviet Union to increase her power in the region and consequently to control its oil wealth. The United States, as heir to the British, decided to arm Iran and Saudi Arabia, her strongest allies in the region. Many in the Gulf states believed that the United States used the supposed Soviet threat as a way to justify her increasingly direct involvement in the Gulf.

The United States was not concerned with internal causes of instability. The dream of the late Shah to control the Arabian side of the Gulf, Iran's unsolved territorial disputes with almost all the Arab Gulf states, and Saudi Arabia's border disputes with some of her small neighbours were all known to the American Administration prior to its advocacy of the Nixon Doctrine in the region. Therefore, the United States arms policy could only perpetuate and add to the general instability. Moreover, despite her unique influence in the region, the United States did little to promote a close and genuine relationship between the Arabian and Iranian sides of the Gulf.

As a result of the 1990 Iraqi invasion, most of the GCC states signed bilateral defence pacts with the United States, Britain and France (a process begun with the United States-Kuwaiti agreement of 1991). These agreements, however, cannot contribute to regional stability. They are security contracts between the Western powers and individual Gulf states, and not with the region as a whole. In reality, they were concluded against its two strongest powers, Iraq and Iran, thereby creating opposing camps. Moreover, these agreements were signed for a limited number of years. What is to happen after their expiry? These agreements, therefore, are clearly designed to serve Western interests not Gulf stability.

The initiative for Gulf stability must come from within the Gulf states. The Arab states, or at least the six monarchies of the GCC, must unite, and good relations be established between the two sides of the Gulf. This would serve as the pillar to hold stability in the region. Undoubtedly, an end to the border disputes would be the first step to this end.

The border disputes have jeopardised, and will continue to jeopardise, the stability of the region. To prevent this, the Gulf states need to follow the example of the African continent. In 1963, thirty two governments signed the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity which accepted the colonial boundaries between their states. Though there were winners and losers, it was no doubt the least painful solution. Likewise, today's Gulf states should accept their present boundaries.

The Iraq-Iran war and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait revealed that the GCC in its present form is not able to protect its members from external threats. Thus these weak states should find a new framework for the future. Their 15-years old alliance has to become a real union. They have much in common. They share one language, religion, and social structure. Politically, each of them is governed by a ruling family. They are the richest in the world, and do not suffer from a population shortage. The UAE federation is an excellent example for the GCC states to ponder. In practice, the federation faced, and still faces, many obstacles. The integration of the armed forces; the question of abolishing borders; transforming the present provisional constitution into a permanent one and holding popular elections instead of having the seven rulers appoint representatives to the advisory National Assembly being the major ones. However, despite these difficulties, the federation was unified with relative ease and success and became, after 25 years, a matter of fact.

For Arab-Iranian cooperation, the Iranians should respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the small Arab emirates (especially Bahrain) and not to interfere in their domestic affairs. Both sides should also accept the principle of solving disagreements peacefully. Their mutual interest dictates that even if they cannot achieve cooperation they must avoid conflicts.

Finally, though the British and United States governments secured the supreme influence in the Gulf to themselves for a long time, they did not work toward eradicating the origins of

disputes and instability. On the contrary, their policies helped in creating many of them. In the light of the fact that the West's protection would continue only as long as oil remains to be the leading source of energy and the Gulf continues to be the world's foremost producer, stability in the Gulf can only be guaranteed by the region's states themselves, despite the difficulty for them in exercising this responsibility in the near future.

Appendixes

Appendix no. 1:a

Population Statistics of the Gulf States (In thousands)

	1965	1970	1975	1978
Bahrain	0.18	0.22 ^b	0.26	0.35
Iran	24.81	28.66	33.02	35.21
Iraq	8.05	9.44	11.12	12.33
Kuwait	0.48	0.74	1.00	1.20
Oman	0.57	0.65	0.77	0.84
Qatar	0.07	0.11	0.17	0.20
Saudi Arabia	5.40	6.20	7.18	7.87
UAE	0.15	0.23	0.56	0.71

- a. Compiled from United Nations Statistical Pocketbook, World Statistics in Brief, pp. 10, 66, 67, 76, 102, 111, 117, 141.
- b. United Nations estimate.

Appendix no. 2:^aOil Exporting Countries of the Gulf

<u>Beginning Country</u>	<u>Date of 1st Successful Concession</u>	<u>First Concessionaire</u>	<u>Discovery</u>	<u>Date of Exports</u>
Abu Dhabi 1962	1939	ADPC ^b		1960
Bahrain	1930	Socal	1932	1934
Iran	1901	D'Arcy (APOC)	1908	1912
Iraq	1925	TPC (IPC) ^c	1927	1934
Kuwait	1934	KOC	1938	1946
Oman	1937	PCL ^d	1967	1967
Qatar	1935	QPC ^e	1939	1949
Neutral Zone	1948	Getty & Aminoil	1953	1954
Saudi Arabia 1939	1933	Socal (Aramco)		1938

- a. Zuhayr Mikdashi, A Financial Analysis of Middle Eastern Oil Concessions: 1901-65, Praeger Special Studies in International Economics and Development, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), p. 315.
- b. Abu Dhabi Petroleum Company.
- c. Turkish Petroleum Company (Iraq Petroleum Company).
- d. Petroleum Concessions Limited.
- e. Qatar Petroleum Company.

Appendix no. 3:a

Crude Petroleum Production in the Gulf States for Selected Years^b

Year	Bahrain	Iran	Iraq	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	UAE	S. Ar. ^c
1911								
1912		80						
1915		480						
1918		1.000						
1923		3.775						
1927		5.325	45					
1933	5	6.550	115					
1937	1.060	10.330	4.255					10
1939	1.040	9.735	3.965					540
1946	1.095	19.495	4.680	800				8.200
1949	1.500	27.235	4.085	12.380		100		23.240
1951	1.505	16.845	8.590	28.225		2.370		37.195
1952	1.505	1.360	18.520	37.635		3.295		40.510
1953	1.500	1.490	28.185	43.285		4.060		41.545
1955	1.500	16.355	33.240	54.760		5.440		47.535
1957	1.600	36.020	22.000	57.285		6.650		49.005
1958	2.035	40.905	35.815	70.225		8.220		50.130
1962	2.250	65.810	49.170	92.175		8.810	795	75.750
1963	2.255	73.555	56.670	97.200		9.095	2.430	81.050
1965	2.840	94.125	64.475	109.045		10.960	13.700	101.035
1966	3.080	105.445	67.960	114.355		13.845	17.480	119.455
1967	3.490	130.580	59.885	115.175	3.150	15.485	18.530	129.305
1968	3.795	141.635	73.775	122.090	12.010	16.285	20.005	141.005
1969	3.820	168.490	74.485	129.550	16.180	17.185	30.345	148.845
1970	3.825	191.295	76.455	150.635	16.585	17.375	37.700	188.410
1971	3.740	226.830	83.775	161.435	14.535	20.455	51.045	238.680

a. Fiona Venn, Oil Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century, pp. 171-2.

b. In thousands of metric tons.

c. Saudi Arabia.

Appendix no. 4:^aMajor Gulf Countries' Oil Revenues (1971-78)^b

	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Iran	1815	2396	4599	17821	18433	22042	21210	19300
Iraq	840	575	1843	5700	7500	8500	9631	10200
Kuwait	954	1403	1734	6542	6393	6869	7515	7699
Qatar	199	255	463	1849	1684	2091	1994	2200
Saudi Arabia	1884	2744	4340	22573	25675	30754	36538	32233
UAE	431	551	900	5536	6000	7000	9030	8200

a. OPEC, Annual Statistical Bulletin, 1980, p. XLIX.

b. In millions of U.S. dollars.

Bibliography

First: In English

I Unpublished Documents

A) Public Record Office (PRO), London:

-Foreign Office (FO) files:

Series 78 (Turkey)

Series 84 (Slave Trade)

Series 248 (Persia)

Series 371 (Foreign Correspondence)

B) India Office Library & Records (IOLR), London:

-L/P&S Political and Secret Department Records:

L/P&S/3 Home Correspondence, 1807-1911

L/P&S/10 Political and Secret Subject Files, 1902-31

L/P&S/12 Political and Secret External Collections, 1931-50

L/P&S/18B Political and Secret Memoranda (Arabia and the Persian Gulf)

L/P&S/20 Political and Secret Department Library

-R/15 Records of the British Residency and Agencies in the Gulf:

R/15/1 Records of the British Residency, Bushire

R/15/2 Records of the British Political Agency, Bahrain

R/15/4 Records of the British Political Agency, Trucial Coast

R/15/5 Records of the British Political Agency, Kuwait

II Published Documents

Aitchison, C., A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Relating to India and Neighbouring Countries (Delhi: Government of India Press, 1933), vols. XI and XIII.

Foreign Office Confidential Print, The Affairs of Arabia, 1905-1906, edited by Robin Bidwell, (London: Frank Cass, 1971), vols. I and II.

Foreign Office Confidential Print, The Affairs of Kuwait, 1896-1905, edited by Robin Bidwell, (London: Frank Cass, 1971), vols. I and II.

Gleason, Evertt, et. al., Foreign Relations of the United States, (1950) (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1977), vol. III.

Gooch, P. and H. Temperley, (eds.), British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914 (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1926-38), vols. X and XI.

Government of Kuwait: Ministry of Information, Kuwait: Facts and Figures (Kuwait: 1986).

Government of Qatar: Ministry of Information, Qatar (Doha: Ministry of Information Press, 1979).

Hurewitz, C., (ed.), The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), vol. I and II.

Lauterpacht, E., et al., The Kuwait Crisis: Basic Documents (Cambridge: Grotius, 1991).

Lorimer, G., Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf: Oman and Central Arabia (Calcutta: Publication of the Government of India, 1908-1915), vols. I and II.

Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Dwight Eisenhower--1957, (Washington, D.C.: Federal Register Division, National Archives and Records Service, 1958)

Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry Truman--1947, (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, 1963)

United Nations: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Energy Supplies, 1950-74, Statistical Papers, Series J, No. 19 (New York: United Nations, 1976).

United Nations Statistical Pocketbook, World Statistics in Brief (New York: United Nations, 1979).

U.S. Congress, House, State of the Union Address, H. Doc. 96-257, 96th Congress, 2nd Session, 1980.

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, New Perspectives on the Persian Gulf, Hearings, 93rd Congress, 1st Session, 1973. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973).

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, The Persian Gulf, 1974: Money, Politics, Arms, and Power, Hearings, 93rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1974. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975).

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on International Political and Military Affairs, Proposed Foreign Military Sales to Middle Eastern Countries--1976, Hearings, 94th Congress, 2nd Session, 1976. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973).

U.S. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. United States Arms Sales to the Persian Gulf, Report of a Study Mission to Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. 94th Congress, 1st Session, 1975. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973).

U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s: An Analysis of the President's 1973 Foreign Policy Report and Congressional Action, Prepared for the Committee on Foreign Affairs by the Foreign Affairs Division of the Congressional Research Service, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1973).

III Books

Al-Abdulla, Yousof, A Study of Qatari-British Relations, 1914-1945 (Qatar: Orient Publishing & Translation, 1981).

Abughosh, Bassam and Waffaa Shaqra, A Glossary of Islamic Terminology (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, July 1992).

Abu Hakimah, Ahmad, The Modern History of Kuwait, 1750-1965 (London: Luzac, 1983).

Amirie Abbas, (ed.), The Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics (Tehran: Institute for International Political and Economic Studies, 1975).

Amin, S., International and Legal Problems of the Gulf (London: Middle East and North African Studies Press, 1981).

Anthony, John, Arab States of the Lower Gulf: People, Politics, Petroleum (Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1975).

- AlBaharna, Husain, The Arabian Gulf States: Their Legal and Political Status and Their International Problems (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968).
- Balfour-Paul, Glen, The End of Empire in the Middle East: Britain's Relinquishment of Power in Her Last Three Arab Dependencies, Cambridge Middle East Library 25 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- Belgrave, Charles, The Pirate Coast (London: C. Bell and Son, 1966).
- Bolton, Geoffrey, Britain's Legacy Overseas (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).
- Browne, E., The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910).
- Bullard, Reader, Britain and the Middle East (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1951).
- Busch, Briton, Britain, India, and the Arabs, 1914-1921 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971).
- Busch, Briton, Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1894-1914 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967).
- Chubin, Shahram and Sepehr Zabih, The Foreign Relations of Iran, a Developing State in a Zone of Great-Power Conflict (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1974).
- Cottrell, Alvin, (ed.), The Persian Gulf States: A General Survey (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).
- Crystal, David, et. al., The Cambridge Encyclopaedia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- Crystal, Jill, Oil and Politics in the Gulf: Rulers and Merchants in Kuwait and Qatar, Cambridge Middle East Library 24 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- Dickson, H., Kuwait and Her Neighbours (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956).
- Dockrill, Michael, The Cold War, 1945-1963 (London: Macmillan, 1988).
- Edmonds, Robin, Setting the Mould: The United States and Britain, 1945-1950 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).
- Eisenhower, Dwight, Waging Peace, 1956-1961 (New York: Doubleday, 1965).
- Foot, Hugh, A Start in Freedom (London, 1964).

- Goldberg, Jacob, The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia: the Formative Years, 1902-1918, Harvard Middle Eastern Studies 19 (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986).
- Graffety-Smith, Lawrence, Bright Levant (London, 1970).
- Graves, Philip, The Life of Sir Percy Cox (London: Hutchinson, n.a.).
- Grey of Fallodon, Viscount, Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916 (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), vol. II.
- Halliday, Fred, Arabia Without Sultans (England: Penguin Books, 1974).
- Hawley, Donald, The Trucial States (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970).
- Heard-Bey, Frauke, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates: A Society in Transition (London: Longman, 1982).
- Hoffmann, Stanley, Primacy or World Order (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978).
- Hopwood, Derek, (ed.), The Arabian Peninsula: Society and Politics (London: Allen & Unwin, 1972).
- Hoveyda, F., The Fall of the Shah (New York: Wyndham Books, 1980).
- Hunter, W., History of British India (London: 1919), vol. I.
- Jackson, Peter, and Laurence Lockhart, (eds.), The Cambridge History of Iran (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), vol. XI.
- Katz, Mark, Russia & Arabia: Soviet Foreign Policy Toward the Arabian Peninsula (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).
- Kedourie, Elie, In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: the McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and its Interpretations, 1914-1939 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
- Kedourie, Elie, England and the Middle East: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1921 (London: Mansell Publishing, 1987).
- Kelly, John, Arabia, the Gulf and the West (New York: Basic Books, 1980).
- Kelly, John, Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1795-1880 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
- Kelly, John, Eastern Arabia Frontiers (London: Faber, 1964).

- Khadduri, Majid, Republican Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics Since the Revolution of 1958 (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).
- Khalifa, Ali, The United Arab Emirates: Unity in Fragmentation (London: Westview Press, 1975).
- Kirk, George, A Short History of the Middle East, from the Rise of Islam to Modern Times (London: Methuen, 1964).
- Kissinger, Henry, White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1979).
- Kumar, Ravinder, India and the Persian Gulf Region, 1858-1907: A Study in British Imperial Policy (India: Asia Publishing House, 1965).
- Lacey, Robert, The Kingdom (London: Hutchinson, 1981).
- Lenczowski, George, Oil and State in the Middle East (New York: Cornell University Press, 1960).
- Lenczowski, George, (ed.), United States Interests in the Middle East (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1968).
- Long, David and Bernard Relch, (ed.), The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980).
- Louis, William, The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Postwar Imperialism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
- Marlowe, John, The Persian Gulf in the Twentieth Century (London: The Cresset Press, 1962).
- Mikdashy, Zuhayr, A Financial Analysis of Middle Eastern Oil Concessions: 1901-65, Praeger Special Studies in International Economics and Development. (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966).
- Morgan, Patrick, Deterrence: A Conceptual Analysis (California: Sage Publications, 1977).
- Mostyn, Trevor, Major Political Events in Iran, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula, 1945-1990 (Oxford: Facts On File, 1991).
- Nakhlah, Emile, Arab-American Relations in the Persian Gulf (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1975).
- Netton, Ian, (ed.), Arabia and the Gulf: from Traditional Society to Modern States (London: Croom Helm, 1986).
- Niblock, Tim, (ed.), Iraq: The Contemporary State. (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

- Nicolson, Harold, Peacemaking, 1919 (London, 1933).
- Nutting, Anthony, Lawrence of Arabia (London: Hollis & Carter, 1961).
- Parsons, Anthony, They Say the Lion, Britain's Legacy to the Arabs: a Personal Memoir (London: Jonathan Cape, 1986).
- Al-Qasimi, Sultan, The Myth of Arab Piracy in the Gulf (London: Croom Helm, 1986).
- Robbins, Keith, The Eclipse of a Great Power: Modern Britain, 1870-1975 (London: Longman, 1987).
- Rush, Alan, Al-Sabah: History & Genealogy of Kuwait's Ruling Family, 1752-1987 (London: Ithaca Press, 1987).
- Sadik, Muhammad, and William Snavely, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates: Colonial Past, Present Problems, and Future Prospects (Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1972).
- Sampson, Anthony, The Seven Sisters: The Great Oil Companies and the World They Made (London: Coronet Books, 1993).
- Saunders, David, Losing an Empire, Finding a Role: British Foreign Policy Since 1945 (London: Macmillan, 1990).
- Schofield, Richard, Kuwait and Iraq: Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes, A Report Compiled for the Middle East Programme of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991).
- Schofield, Richard, (ed.), Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, The SOAS/GRC Geopolitics Series 1 (London: University College London Press, 1994).
- Al-Sowayegh, A., Arab Petro-Politics (London: Croom Helm, 1984).
- Stork, Joe, Middle East Oil and the Energy Crisis (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975).
- Tahtinen, Dale, Arms in the Persian Gulf (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1974).
- Troeller, Gary, The Birth of Sa'udi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud (London: Frank Cass, 1976).
- Truman, Harry, Memoirs (New York: Doubleday, 1955), vol. I: Years of Decisions.
- Tugendhat, Christopher and Adrian Hamilton, Oil: the Biggest Business (London: Eyre Methuen, 1975).

Tucker, Robert, The purposes of American Power: An Essay on National Security (New York: Pareger Publishers, 1981).

Venn, Fiona, Oil Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century (London: Macmillan, 1986).

Watt, D., Succeeding John Bull, America in Britain's Place, 1900-1975 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

Wetterau, Bruce, Macmillan Concise Dictionary of World History (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1983).

Wilkinson, John, Arabia's Frontiers: the Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert (London: I. B. Tauris, 1991).

Wilson, Arnold, The Persian Gulf: an Historical Sketch from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Twentieth Century (London: Allen and Unwin, 1928).

Wilson, David, Soviet Oil and Gas to 1990 (Massachusetts: Abt Books, 1982).

Wilson, Harold, The Labour Government, 1964-1970: A Personal Record (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971).

Yadfath, A. and M. Abir, In The Director of the Persian Gulf: the Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf (London: Frank Cass, 1977).

Yapp, M., The Making of the Modern Near East, 1792-1923 (London: Longman, 1987).

Yapp, M., The Near East Since the First World War (London: Longman, 1991).

Zahlan, Rosemarie, The Creation of Qatar (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

Zahlan, Rosemarie, The Making of the Modern Gulf States: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

IV Articles

Akins, James, "The Oil Crisis: this Time the Wolf is Here," Foreign Affairs 51 (April 1973), pp. 462-90.

Anani, Ahmad, "Gulf Relations with the West: an Historical Survey," Islamic Culture 60 (October 1986), Part I, pp. 53-82.

Anani, Ahmad, "Gulf Relations with the West: an Historical Survey," Islamic Culture 61 (January 1987), Part II, pp. 39-58.

- Beck, Nelson, "Britain's Withdrawal from the Persian Gulf and the Formation of the United Arab Emirates, 1968-1971," Towson State Journal of International Affairs 12 (Spring 1978), pp. 77-97.
- Belgrave, Charles, "Persian Gulf--Past and Present," Royal Central Asian Journal 55 (February 1968), pp. 28-34.
- Berman, Bob and Stefan Leader, "U.S. Arms to the Persian Gulf: \$10 Billion Since 1973," The Defense Monitor (May 1975).
- Berry, John, "Oil and Soviet Policy in the Middle East," The Middle East Journal 26 (Spring 1972), pp. 149-60.
- Bill, James, "Iran and the Crisis of 78," Foreign Affairs 57 (Winter 1978-79), pp. 323-42.
- BP Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1978 (London: The British Petroleum Co. Ltd., 1978)
- Bradford, Zeb. B., "American Ground Power After Vietnam," Military Review 52 (April 1972), pp. 4-13.
- Brewer, William, "Yesterday and Tomorrow in the Persian Gulf," The Middle East Journal 23 (Spring 1969), pp. 149-58.
- Brown, Harold, "Protecting U.S. Interests in the Persian Gulf," Department of State Bulletin 80 (May 1980), pp. 63-7.
- Busch, Briton, "Britain and the Status of Kuwait, 1896-1899," The Middle East Journal 21 (Spring 1967), pp. 187-98.
- Campbell, John, "The Soviet Union in the Middle East," The Middle East Journal 32 (Winter 1978), pp. 1-12.
- "Closing Statement of the 13th GCC Summit: Criticism of Iraq and Iran," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East, ME/1573/A6-A8, 29 December 1992.
- Cottrell, Alvin, "British Withdrawal from the Persian Gulf," Military Review 50 (June 1970), pp. 14-21.
- Cottrell, Alvin, "Conflict in the Persian Gulf," Military Review 51 (February 1971), pp. 33-41.
- Cottrell, Alvin, "Iran, the Arab and the Persian Gulf," Orbis 17 (Fall 1973), pp. 978-88.
- "Foreign Ministry and Cabinet Reject GCC Statement on Gulf Islands," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East, ME/1573/A9-A10, 29 December 1992.
- Gordon, Edward, "Resolution of the Bahrain Dispute," The American Journal of International Law 65 (1971), pp. 560-8.

Grundy-Warr, Carl, and Richard Schofield, "Man-Made Lines that Divide the World," Geographical Magazine (June 1990), pp. 10-5.

"Gulf States Condemn Iranian Action," Reuters news service 1992, (9 September 1992).

FitzGerald, Frances, "Giving the Shah Everything He Wants," Harper's Magazine (November 1974), pp. 55-82.

Harvy, P., "The Shah's Aim in the Gulf," The Manchester Guardian (9 October, 1971).

Hay, Rupert, "The Persian Gulf States and their Boundaries Problems," Geographical Review 120 (December 1954), pp. 433-45.

Henderson, Loy, "American Political and Strategic Interests in the Middle East and Southeastern Europe," Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science (January 1948).

Hogarth D., "Wahhabism and the British Interests," Journal of the British Institute of International Affairs 4 (March 1925), pp. 70-81.

Holden, David, "The Persian Gulf: After the British Raj," Foreign Affairs 49 (July 1971), pp. 721-35.

Hoskins, Halford, "The Background of the British Position in Arabia," The Middle East Journal 1 (1947), pp. 137-47.

Hosni, Sayed, "The Partition of the Neutral Zone," The American Journal of International Law 60 (October 1966), pp. 735-49.

Hunter, Shireen, "Arab Iranian Relations and Stability in the Persian Gulf," The Washington Quarterly 7 (Summer 1984), pp. 67-76.

Ignotus, Miles, "Seizing Arab Oil," Harper's Magazine (March 1975), pp. 45-62.

"An Interview with Henry Kissinger," Business Week (13 January 1975), pp. 67-76.

"Iran-UAE Relations," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East, ME/1501/A3-A4, 2 October 1992.

Kassim, Anis, "Conflicting Claims in the Persian Gulf," Journal of Law and Economic Development 4 (1969), pp. 282-337.

Katz, Mark, "Soviet Policy in the Gulf States," Current History 84 (January 1985), pp. 25-8.

Kelly, John, "The British Position in the Persian Gulf," The World Today 20 (June 1964), pp. 238-49, 495-6.

Kelly, John, "The Buraimi Oasis Dispute", International Affairs 32 (July 1956), pp. 318-26.

- Kelly, John, "The Legal and Historical Basis of the British Position in the Persian Gulf," St. Antony's Papers, No. 4, Middle Eastern Affairs, Number one, (1958), pp. 119-40.
- Kelly, John, "The Persian Claim to Bahrain." International Affairs 33 (January 1957), pp. 51-70.
- Kelly, John, "Sovereignty and Jurisdiction in Eastern Arabia." International Affairs 34 (January 1958), pp. 16-24.
- Khadduri, Majid, "Iran's Claim to the Sovereignty of Bahrayn," The American Journal of International Law 45 (1951). pp. 631-47.
- Liebesny, Herbert, "International Relations of Arabia: the Dependent Areas," The Middle East Journal 1 (April 1947). pp. 148-68.
- Long, David, "Stability in Saudi Arabia," Current History 90 (January 1991), pp. 9-13.
- Long, David, "The United States and the Persian Gulf," Current History 76-77 (January 1979), PP. 27-30.
- Louis, Dame, "Objectives in Arabia." The Muslim World (April 1930), pp. 179-84.
- Luce, William, "Britain's Withdrawal from the Middle East and Persian Gulf." Journal of the Royal United Service Institution 114 (March 1969), pp. 4-10.
- Luce, William, "A Naval Force for the Gulf: Balancing Inevitable Russian Penetration," The Round Table 326 (October 1969), pp.347-52.
- Malone, Joseph , "America and the Arabian Peninsula: the First Two Hundred Years," The Middle East Journal 30 (Summer 1977), pp. 406-24.
- Mangold, P., "Britain and the Defence of Kuwait, 1956-71." Journal of the Royal United Service Institution 120 (September 1975). pp. 44-8.
- McCann, K., "OPEC Policy and the Future of Oil." OPEC Bulletin 19 (October 1988), pp. 11-17. 69.
- Melamid, Alexander, "Oil and the Evolution of Boundaries in Eastern Arabia." The Geographical Review 44 (April 1954). pp. 295-6.
- Melamid, Alexander, "Political Geography of Trucial Oman and Qatar." The Geographical Review 42 (1952). pp. 194-206.
- Miller, A., "The Influence of Middle East Oil on American Foreign Policy." The Middle East Review 9 (Spring 1977). pp. 19-24.

- MaNaugher, T., "Arms and Allies on the Arabian Peninsula." Orbis 28 (Fall 1984), pp. 489-26.
- Moidu, V., "A Survey of British Policy in the Persian Gulf: from the Early Days to Mid-Twentieth Century," Journal of Indian History 56 (1978), pp. 365-79.
- "The New Economics in the Middle East," Business Week (20 October 1973), p. 78.
- OPEC, Annual Statistical Bulletin, 1980.
- "The Persian Gulf: U.S. Role in a Struggle over Oil." U.S. News & World Report (21 May 1973), p. 90.
- Pillai, R. & Mahendra Kumar, "The Political and Legal Status of Kuwait," International and Comparative Law Quarterly 11 (January 1962), PP. 108-30.
- Pranger, Robert, "Six U.S. Perspectives on Soviet Foreign Policy Intentions," Foreign Policy and Defense Review (American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979), 1:5, pp. 2-25.
- Pranger, Robert & Dale Tahtinen, "American Policy Options in Iran and the Persian Gulf," Foreign Policy and Defence Review (American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979), 1:2, pp. 1-29.
- Ramazani, R., "Iran's Changing Foreign Policy: A Preliminary Discussion," The Middle East Journal 24 (Autumn 1970), PP. 421-37.
- Rentz, George, "The Iraq Najd Frontier," Journal of the Central Asian Society 17 (1930), pp. 77-92.
- Richard, Whittle, "Oil is Main U.S. Interest: Instability and Soviet Pressure Seen as Persian Gulf Threats," Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report 39 (1981), pp. 2009-16.
- Ruszkiewicz, John, "The Power Vacuum in the Persian Gulf," Military Review 53 (October 1973), pp. 84-92.
- Sahwell, A., "The Buraimi Dispute: the British Armed Aggression." Islamic Review 44 (April 1956), pp. 13-7.
- Saunders, Harold, "U.S. Relations with the Persian Gulf States," Department of State Bulletin 80 (October 1980), pp. 1-8.
- Schultz, Ann, "A Leadership Role for Iran in the Persian Gulf." Current History 62 (January 1972), pp. 25-30, 50.
- "Shahanshah of Iran Visits Washington." Department of State Bulletin 77 (26 December 1979), pp. 908-10.
- Singh, K., "Conflict and Co-operation in the Gulf." International Studies (India) 15 (October 1976), pp. 487-508.

Sirriyeh, Hussien, "Conflict over the Gulf Islands of Abu Masu and the Tunbs, 1968-1971," Journal of South Asia and Middle Eastern Studies 8 (Winter 1984), pp. 73-86.

Sisco Joseph, "U.S. Policy in the Area of the Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula," Department of State Bulletin 73 (14 July 1975), pp. 73-81.

Sisco Joseph, "United States Policy Toward the Persian Gulf Region," Department of State Bulletin 67 (4 September 1972), pp. 241-5.

Standish, J., "Britain in the Persian Gulf," Contemporary Review 211 (October 1967), pp. 235-9.

Statistical Review of the World Oil Industry, 1968 (London: The British Petroleum Co. Ltd., 1968)

Swearingen, Will, "Sources of Conflict over Oil in the Persian/Arabian Gulf," The Middle East Journal 35 (1981), pp. 315-30.

"Tehran Friday Prayers: Rafsanjani Criticises GCC for Raising Issue of Islands," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East, ME/1573/A10-A12, 29 December 1992.

"Thirteenth GCC Summit Issues Abu Dhabi Declaration," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts: The Middle East, ME/1573/A8-A9, 29 December 1992.

Troeller, G., "Ibn Sa'ud and Sharif Husain: A Comparison in Importance in the Early Years of the First World War," Historical Journal 14 (1971), pp. 427-33.

Tucker, Robert, "American Power & the Persian Gulf," Commentary 70 (November 1980), pp. 25-41.

Tucker, Robert, "Oil: the Issue of American Intervention," Commentary 59 (January 1975), pp. 21-31.

Twinam, Joseph, "U.S. Interests in the Persian Gulf," American Arab Affairs 21 (Summer 1987), pp. 1-14.

United Nations Monthly Chronicle, "Complaint Against Iranian Occupation of Gulf Islands," 9 (January 1972), pp. 46-50.

Watt, D., "Britain and the Future of the Persian Gulf States," The World Today 20 (November 1964), pp. 488-496.

Watt, D., "The Decision to Withdraw from the Gulf," Political Quarterly 39 (July-September 1968), pp. 310-20.

"Why Marines are Training in the Desert?," U.S. News & World Report (27 August 1973), pp. 28-30.

"Will U.S. Seize Mideast Oil?" U.S. News & World Report (2 December 1974), pp. 18-20.

Wright, Denis, "The Changed Balance of Power in the Persian Gulf." Asian Affairs 60 (October 1973), pp. 255-62.

Zumwalt, Jr., Elmo, "The Navy Tomorrow," Ordnance (January-February 1972), pp. 285-7.

V Studies

Arab Research Centre, Round Table Discussion on "The Dispute over the Gulf Islands" (London: Arab Research Centre, January 1993).

The Center for Strategic and International Studies, The Gulf: Implications of British Withdrawal (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, Special Report Series: No.8, February, 1969).

Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, The GCC Border Disputes Seminar, with Special Reference to Iraq and Kuwait (London: Gulf Centre for Strategic Studies, August 1992).

The International Institute for Strategic Studies, Security in the Persian Gulf (Aldershot: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981), 4 vols.

International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Strategic Survey 1973 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1974).

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Oil and Security (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1974).

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, World Armaments and Disarmaments: Yearbook 1979 (London: Taylor & Francis, 1979).

VI Theses

Al-Ajmi, Hamza, The International History of the Gulf, 1958-1979 (University of Glasgow: Unpublished Ph.D., 1988).

Assiri, A., The Impact of Arms and Oil Politics on United States Relations with the Arabian Gulf States 1968-78 (University of California--Riverside: Unpublished Ph.D., 1981).

Al-Mayyal, Ahmad, The Political Boundaries of the State of Kuwait: A Study in Political Geography (University of London: Unpublished Ph.D., 1986).

Klare, Michael, Arms, Oil and Intervention: U.S. Military Strategy in the Persian Gulf During the Nixon Era (The Union Graduate School: Unpublished Ph.D., 1976).

Second: In Arabic

I Published Documents

Government of Saudi Arabia: Ministry of Information, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Past and Present (n.a., n.a.).

Government of United Arab Emirates: Ministry of Information, The Emirates: Facts and Figures, 1973-1984 (Abu Dhabi: The Company of Abu Dhabi for Printing and Publishing, n.a.).

El Rayyes, Riad, Arabian Gulf Documents (1968-1971): Attempts at Federation and Independence (London: Riad El-Rayyas Books, 1989).

II Books

Al-Adhami, Muhammad, et. al, Al-Kuwait and the Attempts of Getting Her Back to Iraq (n.a., 1991).

Anis, Muhammad, The Ottoman State and the Arab East, 1514-1914 (Al-Qahira: Maktabat al-Anglo al-Massriah, 1985).

Ibn Bazz, Shaikh Abdul-Aziz, Imam Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab: His Call and Biography (Al-Riyad: Maktabat Dar al-Ssalam, 1412/1992).

Ibn Bishr, Shaikh Uthman, The Sign of Glory in the History of Najd (Al-Riyad, Darat al-Malik Abdul-Aziz 27, 1983), 2 vols.

Al-Ghareeb, Abdullah, The Magians Time has Come: the Historical, Doctrinal and Political Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution (n.a., 1985).

Ibrahim, Abdul-Aziz, Britain and Oman Coast Emirates: A Documentary Study (Al-Riyad: Darat al-Malik Abdul-Aziz 25, 1982).

Ibrahim, Abdul-Aziz, The British Peace in the Arabian Gulf, 1858-1914: A Documentary Study (Al-Riyad: Darat al-Malik Abdul-Aziz 26, 1982).

Ibrahim, Abdul-Aziz, Princes and Invaders, the Story of Local Boundary and Sovereignty in the Gulf: A Documentary Study (London: Dar Al Saqi, 1991).

Keshk, Muhammad, The Saudis and the Islamic Alternative: the Source of Legitimacy for the Saudi Regime (Massachusetts: Halliday Lithograph Corporation, 1982).

Al-Khatrash, F., History of British-Kuwaiti Political Relations, 1890-1921 (Al-Kuwait: That al-Salassel, 1984).

Al-Khusousy, Badraddaan, Studies in the Modern and Contemporary History of the Arabian Gulf (Al-Kuwait: That al-Salassel, 1978), vol. I.

Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement, Al-Kuwait, Existence and Borders: the Objective Facts and the Iraqi Claims (Al-Qahira: Kuwait's Foundation for Scientific Advancement, 1991).

Murad, Muhammad, Britain and Arabs: the British Colonial History in the Arab World (Dimashq: Dar Tlas, 1989).

Nixon, Richard, Seize the Moment: America's Challenge in a One-Superpower World (Al-Qahira: Dar Al-Hilal, 1977), Trans. by Ahmad Murad.

Al-Rashid, Abdul-Aziz, History of Kuwait (Beirut: Dar Maktabat Al-Hayat, n. a.).

Al-Safouri, Majdy, The Collapse of the Ottoman State and its Effect on Islamic Dawah (Al-Qahira: Dar Al-Sahwa, 1990).

III Articles

Abu Al-Fadl, Muhammad, "The Dispute between Qatar and Al-Bahrain," Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya 111 (January 1993), pp. 227-30.

Al-Aqqad, Salah, "The Historical Background of the Arabic Borders Problems," Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya 111 (January 1993), pp. 172-5.

AlBaharna, Husain, "The Legal Status of Iraq's Sovereignty Claims over Kuwait," Al Ta'awun Journal 21 (March 1991). Quarterly Journal issued by the Secretariat General of the GCC, pp. 73-91.

Fadhel, Sadqqah, "The Contemporary International Importance of the Gulf and the GCC's States." At-Ta'awun Journal 5 (January 1987), pp. 36-61.

Mahabah, Ahmad, "The Borders' Problems in the Arabic West." Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya 111 (January 1993), pp. 239-46.

Al-Sarajani, Khalid, "Delineating the Iraq-Kuwait Borders after the [Second] Gulf Crisis." Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya 111 (January 1993), pp. 231-8.

Tawfiq, Muhammod, "An Introduction to the Arabic Political Borders Map," Al-Siassa Al-Dawlya 111 (January 1993), pp. 166-71.

IV Studies

Kuwait's Centre of Information, The Legend of Iraq's Historical Rights in the State of Kuwait (Al-Qahira: Kuwait's Centre of Information, 1990).

The National Union of Kuwait Students, United Kingdom & Republic of Ireland Branch, The Claims of the Iraqi Regime in the Territories of the State of Kuwait between History and Law 2, (n.a.)