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# Iran and American Security Policy in the Middle East

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*That a vital interest of both the United States and the industrial West lies in free access to the Middle Eastern oil supply has been made abundantly clear by the embargo and subsequent increases in the price of oil. Threats to this vital interest range from Soviet adventurism to the inherent domestic instabilities of the region. A firm and mutually profitable relationship with Iran, perhaps the most militarily potent and politically stable state in the region, seems to be the best policy against realization of these threats.*

# IRAN AND AMERICAN SECURITY POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

An article prepared

by

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and

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**Introduction.** In October 1973 the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) sent shock waves through the industrialized world when it decreased the overall production of oil and embargoed the United States, Portugal, South Africa, and the Netherlands. The impact of these developments and a subsequent quantum rise in oil prices for the Western states and Japan was immediate and far reaching. On both sides of the Atlantic and in Tokyo there were fears of recession and even depression, the possibility of millions unemployed, and of massive deficits in the balance of payments.

Although in the ensuing months the experts debated the magnitude of the cutback, the behavior of the industrialized states suggested that they considered the threats both real and serious. Besides turning their attention to

conservation measures and the development of domestic oil and other energy resources, the developed nations began a search for long-term external petroleum supplies at reasonable prices. In their scramble to obtain Middle Eastern oil, the European countries and Japan moved quickly to endorse the Arab demand that the Israelis withdraw from all of the territories occupied in the June 1967 Middle Eastern war, actions which reflected the extreme dependency of Japan (over 90 percent) and Europe (over 70 percent) on external sources of oil. Such a course of action was judged unacceptable by the United States which instead stressed active and intensive diplomacy as the best means to deal with the oil problem. The more moderate reaction on Washington's part was, of course, related to the fact that America was far less dependent on

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Middle Eastern oil than its allies. Yet, in spite of the fact that the United States did not find itself in a state of extreme dependency at the time of the embargo, it could not afford to be overly confident about the future for the embargo had dramatized a situation that had become increasingly obvious prior to the October war, namely, that by the 1980's the United States itself would become dependent on the Middle East for some 30 to 40 percent of its oil.<sup>1</sup> Although in the wake of the embargo the President and his advisers called for development of domestic energy sources and continued conservation efforts in order to achieve self-sufficiency in the 1980's, by the spring of 1974 Americans were reverting to normal consumption patterns and progress on internal energy development remained uneven.

Given the uncertainty of the future, policymakers could ill afford to ignore developments in the Middle East, especially those in the oil-rich Persian Gulf.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the United States had acquired a vital interest in securing the flow of oil from the states in that area—Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi—for both itself and its allies. The security policy that the United States has adopted to serve this interest is the main consideration of this article. Essentially, we are concerned with four dimensions of this issue:

- potential threats to the free flow of oil;
- domestic and international constraints on policymakers;
- the emergence of an American-Iranian partnership; and
- the gains, costs and risks of this relationship.

**Threat Perceptions.** While the suggestion that American policymakers are showing more concern with the security of the Persian Gulf implies that there are conceivable threats to the U.S. interests in the area, the exact nature of

such threats must be spelled out. In our view, both American and Iranian decisionmakers seem most concerned with the possibility that radical Arab elements might launch attacks on established regimes through clandestine actions, insurgencies, or conventional engagements by regular armed forces. Guerrillas, for example, could be used to sabotage oil installations or to interfere with oil shipments by attacking oil tankers or by blocking chokepoints such as the 24-mile wide Strait of Hormuz at the mouth of the gulf. Alternatively, radical elements could replace existing governments in the conservative oil producing states, and such radical regimes could sacrifice oil income on behalf of the confrontation with Israel or some other issue. Former Secretary of State William Rogers, during a June 1973 visit to Tehran, commented that "as the threat of major nuclear confrontation declines, subversion continues to be the way to spread an ideology." He then added his view that "this is a danger against which the countries of this region [the Persian Gulf] must guard."<sup>3</sup>

For its part, Iran has been in confrontation with Iraq both along their mountainous central and northern frontier and in the province of Khuzestan in southwestern Iran. In Oman, Baghdad has encouraged the rebels in western Dhofar Province, while Iran and Britain have countered this by aiding the Omani Sultan. In Pakistan and southeastern Iran the Iraqis have extended support to dissident tribesmen attempting to carve out an independent Baluchistan.<sup>4</sup> This has led the Shah of Iran to publicly support the territorial integrity of Pakistan.

In addition to clandestine and insurgent activities involving Iraq, there are Palestinian groups and a variety of organizations, such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO), and the territorial dispute between Iraq and Kuwait, which led to skirmishes by conventional forces in 1961 and again in

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1973, that provide considerable cause for concern.

Further complicating the situation is the role played by the Soviet Union. Given the present state of détente with the West, any Soviet involvement seems likely to remain modest. Nevertheless, Moscow appears to have replaced Peking as a supporter of the Dhofar rebellion in Oman. Soviet aid to radical movements in opposition to conservative anti-Soviet regimes such as Saudi Arabia could serve a number of purposes. In the first place, such support provides substance to Moscow's claim that it, rather than Peking, is the leader of international revolutionary forces. A second factor is the increased leverage Moscow gains in the more radical Arab States, notably in Iraq where the local Communist Party has joined the ruling Ba'ath Party in a National Front. Indeed, Baghdad has allowed Soviet naval ships to put in at Umm Qasr and could conceivably make these gulf port facilities available on a more permanent basis. Such a prospect is hardly pleasing to Iran. For its part, the United States has had a small naval facility in Bahrain since 1949, the status of which is not entirely clear at the present time.<sup>5</sup>

From the Shah's perspective, Moscow's interest in the gulf must be related to the czarist dream for a warm water port there. In any event, most analysts would concede that the Soviets view the Persian Gulf as linked with their broader objective of establishing an Indian Ocean presence. Moscow's involvement in the Indian Ocean is seen as related to her desire to assert influence in regional politics. Washington's interest in maintaining port facilities in the Persian Gulf and in building up an Indian Ocean island facility at Diego Garcia is, in part, a counter to the increased Soviet naval activity in the area.<sup>6</sup> Thus far, Washington has shown no real concern that Moscow might attempt to use its new position of greater influence by injecting oil

considerations into bargaining situations with the West in order to gain concessions elsewhere, and there has been no indication that Moscow intends to use her position in the Indian Ocean to impede or otherwise thwart movements of oil tankers from the Persian Gulf.

**Restraints on American Policy.** In designing and implementing a security policy to deal with perceived threats in the Persian Gulf, policymakers have been constrained by domestic political considerations. In the first place, it seems quite clear that the U.S. Congress and the American people are inclined to take a jaundiced view of military intervention abroad, due in large part to the experience and costs of the Southeast Asia conflict. The merit of this political reality is not at issue here. Nevertheless, the constraints placed on our executive branch to support U.S. foreign policy with military force is a reality that our strategists must consider.

In our view only two situations would result in popular and congressional support for direct U.S. military involvement abroad: an extraordinary deprivation at home or a direct, dramatic challenge to a vital U.S. interest. By contrast, it is probably safe to say that neither Congress nor the American public would be likely to sanction military intervention in cases where the threat is perceived as being small or indirect and the benefits to be derived unclear.

The prevailing congressional and public attitudes therefore place significant constraints on policymakers who must evaluate alternative responses to insurgent or low-level conventional threats to American interests in the Persian Gulf. In order to resolve this dilemma, the United States has turned increasingly to its principal ally in the gulf, Iran, a policy facilitated by the fact that the Iranian monarch shares the American interest in preventing both an interruption in the flow of oil and the

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expansion of Soviet influence on the region. Both factors represent a common foundation for a United States-Iranian partnership.

The Iranian Partnership. The American-Iranian partnership began to take form in the late 1940's when it became apparent that both parties share a common objective of restricting Moscow's influence in Iran. Even prior to World War II, Iran had come to view the Soviet Union as a threat to its security and had sought support from Europe. Since Iran had trouble obtaining the desired guarantees she continuously played off Britain, also perceived as a threat, against Moscow. This policy worked only when the two powers were at odds, and luckily for Iran it was the normal state of affairs—the only exception being a limited entente with Moscow in 1907.<sup>7</sup>

During World War II the U.S.S.R. and Britain both occupied sections of Iran, thus effectively blocking the country from assisting any of the Axis Powers. The current Shah's father was deposed for his alleged complicity with the Hitler regime, and the occupation of Iran had a profound effect upon the new Shah. Following the war, Britain withdrew her forces, but the Soviet troops remained. Soviet support was given to separatist movements in northwestern Iran, and pressure was applied for oil concessions. Perceiving Soviet actions as a threat to the free world, the Truman administration responded with stern warnings to the Kremlin. The Soviets withdrew their troops, and Washington found that it had established a firm basis for friendly relations with Tehran.<sup>8</sup>

By 1955 Iran's links with the West were formalized through its membership in the Baghdad Pact. Iran remains a member of the successor to the Baghdad Pact, the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). Although the organization is weak, continued Iranian membership in

CENTO and participation in annual military exercises held under CENTO auspices is, at least, a symbolic demonstration of the Shah's continuing concern with the colossus to his north. The suspicion of Moscow's motives engendered by the machinations of the 1940's have been reinforced by the Soviet interventions in Hungary (1956) and in Czechoslovakia (1968). These events merely added fuel to Iranian fears that Moscow might yet seek to realize the czarist dream of land access to a warm water port on the Persian Gulf.

Recognizing that Iran would have little hope acting alone against Soviet military forces, the Shah has been quite pragmatic in dealing with Soviet leaders. Since the late 1960's Iran has exported natural gas to the Soviet Union in exchange for military equipment, including armored personnel carriers and anti-aircraft guns. The Soviets have also contributed to the industrial development of Iran by building a steel mill and various public works projects. Should this strategy fail and for some reason the Soviets become aggressive in the area, the Shah is well aware that he will have to rely heavily upon the United States for Iran's physical security. Therefore, the Shah has refrained from openly criticizing the presence of U.S. naval vessels in the area. Moreover, it is not surprising that Iran has been careful to avoid any dependency on Moscow for the more complex military hardware—aircraft, tanks, and ships. Fixed wing military aircraft purchased by Iran are almost exclusively of U.S. origin, and it appears that the Shah has used the U.S. Air Force as a blueprint for developing his own air arm. By contrast, the Iranian Army, Navy and Gendarmerie have procured tanks, helicopters, and ships from the United States, Britain, and other Western countries.

Consistent with the Nixon Doctrine, the United States has fully supported Iran's military development plans by

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authorizing sales of the most advanced U.S. manufactured weapons systems and by providing associated training for Iranian personnel. Although the U.S. policy in support of Iran is seen as a key to maintaining peace, stability, and continued flow of Persian Gulf oil, continued Iranian purchases of expensive military equipment will also help offset the heavy, adverse balance of payments stemming from extensive U.S. oil purchases from Iran and elsewhere.

Although the focus of U.S. security policy in the Persian Gulf has been the development of Iranian military forces, Washington has also supported Saudi Arabia and other regional states in strengthening their positions through cooperation and military development. Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco made this point clear in June 1973 when he summarized Washington's policy as follows:

... Support for indigenous regional collective security efforts to provide stability and to foster orderly development without outside interference. We believe Iranian and Saudi Arabian cooperation, *inter alia*, is of key importance as a major element of stability in this area. We also welcome the fact that Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and North Yemen are each in their own way seeking to strengthen their defensive capacities.<sup>9</sup>

As part of this policy, the United States and Saudi Arabia agreed in the spring of 1974 to closer cooperation in economic and security matters.

In order to deal with the possible threats mentioned above, Iran is currently engaged in an extensive military and naval development program.<sup>10\*</sup>

In assessing its security needs, it is apparent that the Shah's defense planners have been greatly influenced by Iran's geography and have thus made provisions for the strongest navy in the gulf with 3 destroyers, 4 frigates or

destroyer escorts, and more than 30 smaller surface combatants, including British-built hovercraft. In addition to having a long coastline and excellent ports, Iranians see themselves as having greater maritime interests than either Iraq or Saudi Arabia. As the pre-dominate indigenous naval force in the area, the gulf has not only become subjected to greater Persian rather than Arab naval influence, but the destroyers and escorts augmented by helicopters and antisubmarine aircraft could also form the nucleus for Iranian deployments into the Indian Ocean. Granted, Iranian naval presence in that sphere today would be no match for Soviet or American presence;<sup>11</sup> but nevertheless, efforts to build a major port at Chah Bahar on the Indian Ocean suggest that the Indian Ocean is part of the Shah's grand design for extending Persian influence.<sup>12</sup>

The recent Iranian Navy buildup began as Britain conducted her withdrawal from the gulf. Iran stands prepared unilaterally to maintain freedom of navigation there, particularly for the export of oil by tanker. In addition to its sea force capabilities, Iran also possesses the transport and landing craft to mount amphibious operations with its sea ranger commando battalion. These commandoes could deal with insurgent bands bent on threatening commercial shipping and could also, in a matter of hours, intervene against insurgents operating in the Arab sheikhdoms.

Of all the Persian Gulf armies, Iran's is the best equipped, best trained, and best maintained. With 160,000 men, the

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\*Although the Shah is sharply criticized by some who would prefer less emphasis on defense, he is quick to point to extensive domestic development programs that accompanied his bloodless or "white" revolution of the early 1960's. Consistent with this program, industrial, agricultural, and socio-economic development spending is also being increased. For details, see De Onis, "Modernizing Iran Seeks Role."

**IRANIAN ARMED FORCES**

Description	MAJOR EQUIPMENT TYPES*	
	Current Inventory (Estimate)	1975-80 Inventory (Estimate)
Medium Tanks	900-1000	1600-1700
Helicopters	150-200	650-750
Destroyers	3	3
Frigates (Destroyer Escorts)	4	4
Hovercraft	10	14
F-4 Fighter Aircraft	60-75	130-140
F-5 Fighter Aircraft	80-100	135-145
Advanced Fighter Aircraft (F-14)	-	50-75
Aerial Refuelers	-	6
C-130 Transport Aircraft	30-40	50-60
Heavy Transports (C-5/747)	-	not known

**IMPERIAL IRANIAN AIR FORCE**

Major Units	UNIT EXPANSION PROGRAM*	
	Currently Forming or Operational (Estimate)	Operational 1975-80 (Estimate)
F-4D/E Fighter Squadrons	4-6	8
F-5 Fighter Squadrons	6	8
Advanced Fighter Squadrons (F-14/15)	0	2-4
RF-4 Reconnaissance Squadrons	1	1
RF-5 Reconnaissance Squadrons	1	1
RT-33 Reconnaissance Squadrons	1	0-1
707-320C Tanker Refueling Squadrons	0-1	1
C-130 Medium Transport Squadrons	2-4	5-7

\*Estimates based on data in IISS, *The Military Balance: 1973-74* and *International Defense Review*, December 1973.

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army consists of three armored divisions, two infantry divisions, and four independent brigades—all deployed around the capital and in the western part of the country near Iraq. With 860 U.S.-built medium tanks already in inventory, Iran has recently acquired the first of 800 "Chieftain" medium tanks on order from the United Kingdom. There have also been reports of Iranian interest in the German-built "Leopard" tank.<sup>13</sup> These tanks, coupled with C-130 transport support from the Iranian Air Force, armored personnel carriers of American and Soviet origin, and a large number of light aircraft and helicopters give the Army good mobility.

Already well equipped with artillery, the Army has additional guns and howitzers on order, and while its air defense relies heavily upon a large number of anti-aircraft guns, it has been augmented by U.S.-manufactured "Hawk" surface-to-air missiles. Also, the "TOW" wire-guided antitank missile has been added to its inventory of French SS-11 and SS-12 missiles that had previously provided the nucleus of the army's antitank defense.

While the Iranian Army can not provide full protection vis-a-vis the U.S.S.R., these ground forces are certainly capable of dealing with potential enemies in the gulf, notably Iraq. Relations with Iraq have been tempered by two moderating factors. First, both sides would stand to lose should a large-scale conflict disrupt mutually profitable oil operations, particularly in the southern sector of the frontier. Accordingly, most skirmishes have occurred in the central and northern sectors—mountain engagements involving police forces and Kurdish irregulars. The second factor, which inhibits Iran from fulfilling dreams to "regain lost Persian territories" in Iraq or elsewhere, is the reality of Soviet intervention. Thus, Iran's army is confined largely to a defensive role vis-a-vis the Iraqis and is

unlikely to initiate large-scale hostilities. On the other hand, if threatened by Baghdad, Tehran will not hesitate to protect what it sees as vital national interests. In short, Iran is more than capable of dealing with conventional threats posed by all of its neighbors except the U.S.S.R.

The army can also contribute directly to internal security missions that are the responsibility of the 70,000 man National Gendarmerie and SAVAK, the country's security and intelligence organization. Light aircraft, helicopters, and armored personnel carriers are at the disposal of gendarmerie and regular army elements for use in maintaining domestic order and in countering insurgents sponsored either by radical elements in Iran or neighboring Arab States. Critics of the Shah have pointed to his somewhat heavyhanded use of these forces against "domestic" opponents—members of the illegal, Communist-oriented Tudeh Party, the Confederation of Iranian Students, and other antiregime groups who are periodically tried by military tribunal and occasionally executed by firing squad.<sup>14</sup>

While improvements in the Iranian Navy, Army, and paramilitary forces have been considerable, the most dramatic changes have taken place in the air force. With an estimated 64 F-4 and 80 F-5 U.S.-manufactured fighter aircraft on hand, Tehran has 70 additional F-4's and 140 F-5's on order. The Iranian Government has also recently agreed to purchase F-14's in order to have the capability to intercept the highest flying, fastest Soviet aircraft.<sup>15</sup> American manufactured "Sidewinder" and "Sparrow" air-to-air missiles also contribute to fighter-interceptor capabilities. Moreover, Iranian fighter-bomber and reconnaissance capabilities will be enhanced through acquisition of six tanker aircraft which extend the combat radius of Iranian F-4's from about 300 miles (depending on bomb



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load, altitudes, and speeds flown) to about 500 miles with just one refueling. Operations over the Indian Ocean will be greatly facilitated through the acquisition of these tankers. "Maverick" air-to-surface missiles are also available for use on the F-4 and will contribute significantly to fighter-bomber capabilities. Given the Shah's interest in modernizing his air defenses and general strike capabilities, it seems reasonable to assume that he may have or be considering both the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft and laser-guided weapons.

With respect to transports, the air force is equipped with 35 C-130 "Hercules" and has 20 more on order. Interest has also been expressed in purchase of either the Lockheed C-5 or the Boeing 747.<sup>16</sup> The Shah was very favorably impressed by demonstration of C-5 airlift capabilities during the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973. In addition to these proposed purchases, more light transports and close to 300 helicopters are on order.

As in any military buildup, the key factor is training personnel not only to operate, but equally important, to maintain complex, sophisticated military hardware. The United States has agreed to station more than 500 military men in Iran as technical assistance field teams to develop and conduct military training programs.<sup>17</sup> The effort is organized into a set of "field advisory teams" attached to the respective armed services including the National Gendarmerie. Aside from mechanical skills associated with operation and maintenance of complex military weapons systems, tactics of employment and command and control are undoubtedly addressed as well.

U.S.-owned multinational corporations are also involved. Northrop, for example, owns 49 percent of Iran Aircraft Industries, which operates from Mehrabad Airport at Tehran and provides training and maintenance support

to the air force.<sup>18</sup> Technicians from Westinghouse are also available as consultants for "avionics, electronics, and weapons systems overhaul."<sup>19</sup>

Relying largely on its oil revenues, Iran is developing combat-ready units which will be responsive to its security needs. The Shah has already committed ground forces and helicopter units to the conflict in Oman where the PFLO is actively trying to separate western Dhofar Province from Oman and topple the conservative Sultan because of the threat posed to the narrow Strait of Hormuz and to shipping from the Persian Gulf.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the Shah sees Oman as the "soft underbelly" of the Persian Gulf from which radicals can work against the conservative Arab sheikhdoms and, for that matter, against Saudi Arabia. Involvement in support of the Omani Sultan is tangible evidence of Iran's commitment to the status quo and active opposition to any forces which would threaten the Iranian position in the gulf.

**Gains, Costs and Risks.** Since Iran has decided to maintain the security of oil shipments and to oppose radical movements in the Persian Gulf, the United States stands to benefit from its current relationship with Iran. In short, the United States has been able to ensure vital gulf oil exports at a political price that has been palatable so far. Such a situation, however, is not completely devoid of costs and a degree of risk.

In terms of foreign policy costs, the only states which seem to be significantly alienated by current U.S. policy are Iraq and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), a burden with which Washington has been able to cope. While the other Arab States and Sheikhdoms of the gulf were not happy about Iran's seizure of three small islands, the Tunbs, and Abu Musa in 1971 and are probably concerned about the present Iranian military

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buildup, there would appear to exist no major divisive issues that could lead to immediate trouble between them and Iran. Indeed, if anything, the differences and concerns just noted are mitigated by a substantial congruence of interests.

For one thing, both Iran on the one hand, and Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the sheikhdoms on the other hand have similar political systems which stress monarchical principles. During a period in which revolutionary groups threaten all of these regimes, it is in their interest to be mutually supportive (e.g., Iran's support of Oman). A second convergent interest is, of course, the common and vital aim of securing the free flow of oil from the gulf. Therefore, it would seem that the close ties between the United States and Iran should not adversely affect American relations with its Arab friends in the gulf, provided Iran maintains its present defensive orientation.

There is little reason to believe that the Iranian partnership will have any significant impact on American relations with other Middle Eastern states since the latter are not directly threatened by Iran. The same holds true for U.S. relations with Peking and Moscow.

For its part, Tehran, rather than seeking to antagonize the Soviet Union, has undertaken an effort to improve economic and political relations with the Kremlin. As long as Iran refrains from striking a belligerent or aggressive stance vis-a-vis Iraq, the Russians can largely overlook United States-Iranian ties and instead focus their attention on areas they view as far more important such as Europe and the Far East.<sup>21</sup>

In the case of China, there has been a warming of relations with Iran, perhaps motivated by a Chinese desire to out-flank rival India. Recent reports also suggest that Peking has all but eliminated its support for PFLO's operations in Oman and has quietly sanctioned the American decision to expand the military facilities on Diego Garcia, mostly because it would like to see the United

States counterbalance Soviet power in the Indian Ocean area.<sup>22</sup>

On the U.S. domestic level, the only cost, other than the one associated with military assistance, stems from small groups which resent American support for the Shah's style of governing. Given the current lack of enthusiasm for a crusade to "democratize" the world, such groups would seem to have little chance of mobilizing substantial backing from either Congress or the mass public. Indeed, if anything, the concern of both Congress and the public with adequate oil supplies through the mid-1980's seems to militate strongly against any suggestions that the United States should confront Iran over the latter's internal policies.

The major risk that the United States faces as a result of its strong link with Iran is that the Shah might be overthrown by domestic insurgents. Although the present revolutionary groups in Iran are generally isolated and impotent, it is generally agreed that as modernization proceeds it will expand the ranks of key functional groups (technocrats, a larger working class, etcetera) which will demand more participation in politics. Should the Shah fail to accommodate legitimate demands by opposing the development of political institutions, frustrations may arise that could strengthen insurgent organizations—a development which is not unfamiliar in 20th century politics.<sup>23</sup>

In our view, this scenario is unlikely to unfold in Iran for a number of reasons. For one thing, Iran, in contradistinction to many Third World states, has committed a good portion of its resources to economic and social development. If the present growth rate continues, it is probable that the regime will have supplemented its present traditional and personal bases for legitimacy by adding an instrumental dimension, something that many developing countries have been unable or unwilling to do.<sup>24</sup> Should the regime gain further

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popular support in the manner just suggested, the opportunities for successful revolutionary warfare would be severely undercut.

One possibility which cannot be easily dismissed, however, would be a change in existing authorities.<sup>25</sup> Should the Shah's rule be suddenly terminated because of a physical infirmity or untimely death, it is possible that the military might assume power either by itself or in conjunction with the Crown Prince or Regent, the Empress Farah (the Shah's wife). Unlike a revolutionary situation, however, there would probably be little change as far as Iran's domestic and international policies are concerned.

Aside from its traditional orienta-

tions, the military has been a primary beneficiary of the Shah's current policies. Moreover, as the preceding discussion suggests, the Iranian military forces are heavily dependent on the West, particularly the United States for major weapons systems, training, and spare parts. Indeed, if the Iranian military were to turn away from the West, it would be undermining its own capabilities.

In summary, the strong American relationship with Iran is not without its risks. Yet, since those risks are largely related to a change of authorities rather than of the system itself, they would seem to be acceptable, especially when related to the obvious gains and minimal costs associated with the current United States-Iranian relationship.

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### BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Maj. Bard E. O'Neill, U.S. Air Force, earned his Ph.D. in international relations from the Graduate School of International Studies, Denver University. His major fields of interest are the Middle

East, Africa, and comparative politics and political theory; he has written and lectured widely to both civilian and military groups on these topics. Major O'Neill is currently serving on the faculty of the U.S. Air Force Academy, has published a number of articles in scholarly journals, and is co-author of and contributor to two forthcoming books—*Political Violence and Insurgency: a Comparative Approach* and *The Energy Crisis and U.S. Foreign Policy*.

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### BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Capt. Paul R. Viotti, U.S. Air Force, is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and holds a master of arts degree in political science from Georgetown University and a master of science in ad-

ministration in international commerce from George Washington University. His operational specialty has been intelligence; he has served as the current intelligence desk officer at the 7th Air Force Headquarters, Tan Son Nhut AB, Republic of Vietnam (1968-69) and more recently covered the Iranian and Syrian desks for the Defense Intelligence Agency. Captain Viotti is serving on the faculty of the U.S. Air Force Academy.

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### NOTES

1. James Akins, "The Oil Crisis: This Time the Wolf Is Here," *Foreign Affairs*, April 1973, pp. 462-468; R.M. Burrell, "Producers and Consumers of the World Unite!" *New Middle East*, September 1972, pp. 32-33. For alternative perspectives on oil, see M.A. Adelman, "Is the Oil Shortage Real?" *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1972-73, pp. 69-107; and Stephen D. Krasner, "The Great Oil Sheikdown," *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1973-74, pp. 123-148.

2. Akins, p. 466.

3. See Juan de Onis, "Rogers Terms U.S. Arms Sales to Persian Gulf 'Stabilizing,'" *The New York Times*, 12 June 1973, p. 10:3.

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4. Iraqi machinations in the Baluchistan area are probably less publicized than their conventional operations against Kuwait and their subversive activities directed against Oman and Iran. Besides allowing the Baluchistan "liberationists" an office in Baghdad, thus tacitly supporting efforts to unite Baluchis from Iran and Pakistan into a single nation, Iraq was caught funneling arms into Pakistan via diplomatic bags on 10 February 1973. On this and other aspects of Iraqi subversive activities, see Alvin J. Cottrell, "From Iraq with Love," *Near East Report*, 21 March 1973, p. 48; "Viewing the News," *Near East Report*, vol. XVII, No. 8, pp. 29 and 32; "Under the Velvet Glove," *Time*, 5 March 1973, pp. 24-25; Interview of the Shah by Girilal Jain, *The Times of India*, 29 June 1973; Bernard Weintraub, "Pakistani Leader Ends Stay in Iran," *The New York Times*, 15 May 1973, p. 7:1; Juan de Onis, "Modernizing Iran Seeks Dominant Role in Region," 4 July 1973, p. 3:1.

5. See "The U.S. Navy Stakes Out the Indian Ocean," *Business Week*, 27 March 1971, p. 66.

6. Walter Laqueur argues that "while there is U.S.-Soviet rivalry in the Persian Gulf, there are also common interests." See Laqueur, "Détente: What's Left," *The New York Times Magazine*, 16 December 1973, p. 27. For a different perspective, see J. Tim Tennell, "Soviet Ambitions in the Mideast," *The Alternative Magazine*, January 1974.

7. Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East and the West* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 120.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 120-121; and David S. McLellan, "Who Fathered Containment," *International Studies Quarterly*, June 1973, pp. 210-215.

9. Statement by Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco Before the House Near East Subcommittee, Department of State No. 197, 6 June 1973, p. 3.

10. For an excellent treatment, see R.D.M. Furlong, "Iran—a Power To Be Reckoned With," *International Defense Review*, December 1973, pp. 719-729; cf. International Institute of Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: 1973-74* (London: 1973), p. 32; Arnaud de Borchgrave, "Colossus of the Oil Lanes," *Newsweek*, 21 May 1973, pp. 40-44; Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Iran Spending Billions for Defense," *Washington Post*, 7 November 1973.

11. The Soviet Navy has made ship visits to the gulf and reportedly has used facilities at the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr. The U.S. Navy's force in the gulf until recently consisted of two destroyers and a limited number of auxiliaries which use the port at Bahrain. These units are commanded by a rear admiral—an attempt to substitute exaggerated influence for lack of actual naval power. Of course, the presence of a rear admiral is suggestive of the United States signaling its intention to step up the size of its forces, if provoked by the U.S.S.R. See "If Suez Canal Is Opened," *U.S. News & World Report*, 24 December 1973, pp. 27-28.

12. See De Onis, "Modernizing Iran Seeks Role."

13. See *Baltimore Sun*, 14 January 1974.

14. For information concerning dissident groups, see De Onis, "Modernizing Iran Seeks Role." Criticism of the Shah's internal policies has been voiced by a number of scholars and observers. See, for example, the remarks of Marvin Zonis in U.S. Congress, Subcommittee on Near East and South Asia, *New Perspectives on the Persian Gulf*, Hearings (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1973), pp. 65-68.

15. The order is for about 30 F-14's at a \$900 million total cost. See *Washington Post*, 31 January 1974.

16. See "A Boon from Iran," *Newsweek*, 19 November 1973, p. 33.

17. See John W. Finney, "Iran Will Buy \$2-Billion in U.S. Arms Over the Next Several Years," *The New York Times*, 22 February 1973, p. 2:3; Bernard Weintraub, "U.S. Quietly Sending Servicemen to Iran," *The New York Times*, 20 May 1973, p. 3:1.

18. See Herbert J. Coleman, "Iran Seeks International Aircraft Role," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 21 May 1973, pp. 60-61; cf. Furlong, p. 726.

19. Furlong, p. 729.

20. The Omani Sultan also has support from conservative Arab states such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia. See De Onis, "Modernizing Iran Seeks Role"; and *Washington Post*, 10 February 1972.

21. Most experts on Soviet foreign policy point out that Moscow views Europe, especially Eastern Europe, as vital to its security, an outlook which stems from the fact that major invasions of Russia have in the past come from Europe (e.g., Napoleon and Hitler). At present the Soviet concern for Europe is clearly manifested in its attempts to get the Conference on European Security and Cooperation to sanction the post-World War II division of Europe. The Soviet concern with its eastern borders is also well known and is currently reflected in its extensive troop deployments in the Far East. The priority which Europe and China have in Soviet foreign policy calculations may be one reason why Moscow has supported a settlement of the

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Arab-Israeli conflict. Finally, the Soviet desire to strengthen détente with the United States in order to have access to American technology and cybernetics would seem to militate against making the Iranian military buildup a *cause celebre*. Such a Soviet policy is based on the assumption that Iran will not use its superior military capabilities for expansionist purposes. That the Iranians are aware of this is suggested by the restraint they exhibited during the border clashes with Iraq in late 1973 and early 1974.

22. According to "A Nod from Peking," *Newsweek*, 4 March 1974, p. 15, a Chinese diplomat in Europe has revealed that Washington secured Peking's tacit approval for the expansion of the military facilities on Diego Garcia. It seems likely that China's main motivation would be to counter Soviet influence in the area by relying on the United States during a period in which Peking is unable to project its own naval power.

23. Whether the Shah or his successor will encourage political institutionalization is an open question. One possibility here is for the monarchy to recede into the background while still retaining its respect and appeal. The role of the Thai King is instructive here. Given the present outlook of the Shah, however, such a development seems unlikely in the immediate future.

24. For a discussion of the types of legitimacy, see Charles F. Andrain, *Political Life and Social Change* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Press, 1970), pp. 140-144. Instrumental legitimacy has two facets: acceptance of the regime's moral right to rule because of a respect for the expertise of the individuals in positions of power or because the material outputs of the system are satisfactory.

25. The regime refers to the norms and structures of the political system whereas "authorities" refers to specific individuals in power. Given elites may lose their legitimacy without the regime losing its moral acceptance. On this distinction, see David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York: Wiley, 1965), pp. 190-219; cf. Andrain, p. 138.

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