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IRAN AS A REGIONAL MILITARY POWER (1970-78)

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This thesis is my own original work.

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INTRODUCTION
After 1970, Iran under the Shah started acquiring most of the attributes of a major regional power in the Persian Gulf region. As compared with its neighbours, it had a relatively larger population, a better developed techno-industrial base and a higher oil production rate (second only to Saudi Arabia). After the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the excess of oil revenues as a result of the oil price increase was used to convert the Iranian oil wealth into a sizable military machine. This was mainly carried out through a rapid weapons acquisitions programme. Earlier, the strategic factors i.e. the announcement of Britain's withdrawal from the Persian Gulf in January 1968 and the actual withdrawal in December 1971 gave Iran an opportunity to fill the military vacuum by increasing its military strength. Thus by 1978 Iran had achieved an almost unchallenged status as the principal power in the Persian Gulf. This was mainly because:

(1) It possessed armed forces (army, navy and air-force) which were both quantitatively and qualitatively superior to those of most countries in the Persian Gulf.

(2) No country in the Persian Gulf (or even the Middle East except Israel) since World War II had developed and maintained such deep-rooted political, economic and strategic links with the United States.

(3) It made itself responsible for the overall protection and security of the Gulf region, particularly in safe-guarding the free passage of oil
through the Persian Gulf to Western Europe, Japan, South Africa and Israel. On this unimpeded flow of oil depended the economic and ultimately the political health of these countries.

(4) It took a leading role in the forging of regional security moves in the Persian Gulf and on few occasions employed its armed forces as protector of the regional status quo and a counterpoise to emerging radical regimes.

(5) On the economic front, it embarked on financial aid giving programmes to countries in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East and even the Indian sub-continent; politically it exerted an invisible but a palpable presence behind the governments that favoured a moderate solution to Middle East problems.

(6) As the monarch of an oil rich state, the Shah's pronouncements were heeded by world statesmen. These pronouncements ranged from an international scheme for the price-indexing of developing countries' primary commodities, to support for proposals of regional economic cooperation, Third World demands for a new international economic order, and the future pricing of oil.

The purpose of this study is to examine the growth and development of Iran as a regional military power from 1970 till the end of 1978. Although the main focus are these eight years, the study is carried forward into the first quarter of 1979 due to the momentous development in Iran,
i.e. the Islamic Revolution which led to the overthrow of the monarchy. The emphasis is exclusively on the military aspect rather than the economic, though the development in the former could not have been possible without the latter.

Before going into the summary of different chapters, an explanation of certain key terms frequently used in the study may be useful.

The region to which Iran is viewed as belonging is the (Persian) Gulf sub-system. The 'boundaries' of the Persian Gulf sub-system are demarcated by the outer limits of all those states that border the Persian Gulf: Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Dubai. The 'elements' of this sub-system are those which result from the interactions of the states mentioned, and the global or trans-national inter-actions of actors who exert considerable influence in the region, e.g. the superpowers, multinational oil companies, revolutionary movements such as the Omani rebels, and nations-without-states such as the Kurds, Palestinians and Baluchis.

'Power' in the Persian Gulf region is viewed as primarily 'military power' although it assumes the presence of an economic base from which this 'military power' is ultimately derived.

The thesis is divided into the following six chapters:

Chapter I deals with the sources and types of threat perceptions which Iran experienced under the Shah.

Chapter II describes the rapid growth and modernization undertaken by the Shah for the Iranian armed forces (army,
A section also discusses the nuclear programme. The chapter also takes into account the military capability desired and ultimately achieved.

Chapter III analyses the projection of military strength of Iran across its borders: the forcible occupation of three islands in the Persian Gulf and sustained military intervention in Oman. Finally, the main motivations behind these military moves and the reasons for success are considered.

Chapter IV explores the Iran-U.S. military relationship and the evolution of U.S. military programmes in Iran; the U.S. military presence; and the diverse political, economic and strategic interests that brought both of them together.

Chapter V attempts a critique of the Shah's threat perceptions and his huge armament programme. In addition, other arguments justifying the Shah's military buildup are brought under scrutiny.

Chapter VI reviews in detail the events in Iran (1978-79) when Iran faced the Revolution leading to the overthrow of the monarchy. The chapter brings into focus the main sources of 'internal threat' to the Shah; the role and conduct of the military during the mass upsurge; the new perceptions regarding security by post-revolutionary Iran, and the politico-strategic implications of the Revolution in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East.

In brief this study attempts to describe how the Shah goaded by geo-political incentives, encouraged by vast financial resources, and inspired by a vision of launching Iran into an age of 'Great Civilization', set upon
an ambitious course to see its greatness reflected as a regional power in the area. In this quest for 'greatness' he seemed to approve of the sentiments once expressed by another self-confident monarch, Frederick the Great of Prussia: 'Do not forget the great guns that are the most respectable argument of the rights of Kings'.
CHAPTER I

IRAN'S THREAT PERCEPTIONS
UNDER THE SHAH
Introduction

After the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, Iran under the Shah embarked upon a hectic military buildup programme. The sheer size and rapidity of this massive buildup seemed to suggest that Iran was primarily motivated by grave threats to its national security. This theme of national insecurity becomes apparent from the various speeches and statements of the Shah. In these he frequently referred to 'different threats' posed to Iran from across the borders.

In this chapter an attempt is made to identify the various sources and types of threats to Iran as perceived by the Shah.

Threat to the Oil

Till 1978 Iran had the world's fourth biggest oil reserves (approximately 60 billion barrels) after Saudi Arabia, U.S.S.R. and Kuwait and was the fourth biggest producer after the U.S.S.R., Saudi Arabia and U.S.A. It was the second biggest exporter and in normal times nearly six million barrels of oil daily left the Persian Gulf terminals. Iran then obtained over eighty per cent

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1 The term 'Persian Gulf' is controversial. While some of the Arab countries have tried to rename it as the 'Arabian Gulf', it is used here as the 'Persian Gulf' for historical reasons. For the purpose of this study it is used to include Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

(cont'd)
of her foreign exchange reserves from oil exports. The total Gulf oil approximating 30 million barrels a day passed through the Straits of Hormuz, supplying 70 per cent of Western Europe's and 90 per cent of Japan's requirements. The most tangible threat to Iran concerned the vulnerability of her oil economy. According to the Shah, the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz in truth constitute Iran's life line. If this area were in any way threatened our very life would be endangered.

1 (cont'd)

The Persian Gulf extends from the Hormuz Straits sweeping in a north-westerly direction, all the way to Iraq. It is about 800 kilometres long from the Hormuz Straits to the Karun River; about 180-250 kilometres wide and has an approximate area of 250,000 square kilometres. Its depth is about 100 metres, at its deepest near the Straits, but due to the Karun River which deposits about 725 million cubic metres of alluvial silt every year, the north-western tip of the Gulf is becoming shallower every year, and the area of the Gulf is shrinking. The delta moves forward at an average annual rate of 53 metres. The important islands in the Gulf are Hormuz, Qishm, Larak, Kish, Kharg and the Greater and Lesser Tumbs. (See Iran Almanac 1976 and book of facts, Fifteenth Edition, Tehran: Echo of Iran, July 1976, p.60.)


3 According to the National Iranian Oil Company, the exports earned by Iran during 1974 accrued to the tune of $20 billion - a sum greater than the total earnings from oil exports during the previous 65 years. A $65 billion development project designed for completion in five years was launched. It is the oil exports and imports worth around $7 billion a year that make the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea and the sea lanes leading into the Indian Ocean vitally important to Iran's growth and survival. (Amir Taheri, 'Policies of Iran 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, pp.259-260.)

Iran's oil was thought to be vulnerable to different forms of threats at various points in the oil flow cycle i.e. the oil fields, the collecting system, the local terminal facilities and the oil sea lanes along which the supertankers transhipped the oil to Europe, Asia, North America, Israel and South Africa. Although Iran's responsibility ended after its territorial waters, safe sea lanes in the north-western half of the Indian Ocean remained her major security concern.

As far as the oil fields are concerned, the most important of them are located in the foothills of the Zagros Mountains in the southwest of the country at the head of the Persian Gulf. Due to the hilly terrain, these oil fields were not considered as vulnerable as the major Saudi oil fields or other targets in the oil cycle, although they are close to the Iraqi border. There was, however, a perception of an ever present danger of sabotage and Iraqi airstrikes threatening the oil wells and the oil field pumps, although it was difficult for Iraq or any other adversary to occupy these fields without mounting a major military offensive.

The collecting system (pipelines and pumps) and local terminal facilities were also deemed more vulnerable to the disruption of the oil cycle. The major refineries are located at Abadan on the Shatt-al-Arab waterway adjacent to Iraq, at Kerman Shah, a little over one hundred miles from the Iraqi border, and at Tehran. The collecting system was thought to be vulnerable to air attacks as the refineries stood within Iraqi artillery range.
Moreover, Iran's neighbours, i.e. Saudi Arabia and Iraq, had alternative routes for exporting their oil through pipelines to the Mediterranean while Iran did not. All of its oil exports and incoming imports had to be shipped through the Persian Gulf. In anticipation of increased production, it had become necessary to construct additional terminal facilities. In 1959, commercial and strategic considerations necessitated the construction of terminal facilities on the island of Kharg, about 30 miles off the Iranian mainland, which today is the largest and most up to date terminal in the world. Hence, the necessity to safeguard these terminal facilities, which were an enormous enterprise, also accounted for Iran's vigilance in the Persian Gulf.\(^5\)

The other threats related to the sea lanes and the oil tankers as they sailed from Kharg island down to the Persian Gulf and through the Straits of Hormuz into the Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. The Straits are an important choke point along the route linking the Persian Gulf with the Sea of Oman.\(^6\) No wonder its protection and free passage became a pervading security obsession with Iran. They were termed as Iran's 'jugular vein' and the Shah had said that Iran would stamp out


any terrorists threatening the Straits of Hormuz even if
the Persian Gulf countries from which they operated did
not consent to Iran's intervention. In another interview
with the West German weekly Die Zeit he also said that Iran
would prefer to take action against the terrorists at the
country's own request if they faced such a problem.  

According to the Shah's threat scenario, the Straits
could pose two types of identifiable problems. The deep
water channel could be mined and the plying tankers could
be threatened or attacked in several ways. The tankers
were vulnerable to artillery and missile attack from the
land, attacks from submarines and surface ships which
could use a variety of weapons, including mines, torpedoes,
missiles, guns and frogmen. In short, the existence of
a choke point such as Hormuz presented, supposedly, a
number of opportunities and temptations to would-be attackers
which were less readily available at other points. Perhaps
the most important contingency was that they could be mined
either from the sea or the air. However, unlike certain
other strategic straits such as the Straits of Tiran leading

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8 See United States Senate, U.S. Military Sales to Iran -
A Staff Report to the Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance
of the Committee on Foreign Relations, 94th Congress, 2nd
Session, July 1976, p.9. (Hereafter referred to as U.S.
Military Sales to Iran.)

9 It was feared that if Baluchistan and Oman, two trouble-
prone areas adjoining the Gulf of Oman, came under a radical
government's control, a serious threat would be posed to
the maritime traffic in the area.

10 U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.9.
into the Gulf of Eilat or Bab el Mandeb or the Jubal Straits leading into the south and north end of the Red Sea, it is impossible to block Hormuz by sinking a tanker in the navigation channel. 11

It was also apprehended that after crossing through the Straits of Hormuz, the oil tankers were again exposed to a new type of threat. This threat, however, was rated as diffuse as the tankers sailed through the Sea of Oman and proceeded into the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. In the Indian Ocean they bifurcated; some bore to the east and sailed for Japan and East Asia; others, the majority, proceeded around the Cape of Good Hope into the South Atlantic and on to Europe and North America. Along these two lanes of communication, different countries with different political groups could pose varied problems. It was felt by the Iranian leadership that potential threats from these littoral states could not be ruled out. The Kayhan International summed up this when it wrote:

By virtue of its vast communication lines and because of historic and geographic facts, whatever goes on in the Horn of Africa is of direct concern to Iran. 12

It was probably with this potential threat in his mind that the Shah stated in November 1974 that

11 This is because the Straits of Hormuz are fairly wide and deep and are not easily susceptible to physical obstruction. Refer to No. 6 above.
Iran's peace keeping role not only covered the Persian Gulf and the nation's territorial waters but also extended to the Indian Ocean region.13

On another occasion, he declared:

We have no reason to be ashamed of our [military] presence in the Indian Ocean. We have our rights to the Ocean certainly more than any foreign power does.14

Hence, Iran's interest in the [East] African continent also partly stemmed from the importance to Iran of secure sea routes along the Cape and the Horn of Africa.15 In fact as early as 1973, the Shah in an interview with Newsweek emphasised the growing responsibility of Iran towards securing these oil routes and mentioned:

We have not only national and regional responsibilities but also a world role as guardian and protector of 60 percent of the world's oil resources.16

This concern was further shown when a naval exercise MIDLINK (sponsored by CENTO) was held in 1974 to demonstrate strength in sea lanes carrying Persian Gulf oil to Western countries.17 With this end in view, Iran started building

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13 The Shah, speaking at the ceremony marking the 42nd anniversary of the establishment of the Imperial Iranian Navy, ibid., 9 November 1974.
14 ibid., 4 May 1974. Shah speaking to a West German weekly Die Zeit.
15 ibid., 2 July 1977.
a defence capability that would allow it to protect tankers bound for Europe as far as the tenth parallel (i.e. just north of Malagasy). This increased capability to protect came through extending the patrol radius of Iranian Air Force to over 1,400 nautical miles and the gaining of port facilities in Mauritius in return for economic assistance to that country. Furthermore, Iran also considered the possibility of a triangular arrangement for surveillance of the Indian Ocean jointly with the participation of South Africa and Australia. In February 1971, the Natref Oil Refinery at Sasolburg was opened. Later the same year, Iran and South Africa established diplomatic relations, and in early January 1973, the South African Consul General in Tehran, Mr J. Oxley, said that Iran had been quicker than many other Middle Eastern countries to appreciate the strategic position of South Africa and the essential value of South Africa in the aspect of protecting its vital westbound exports.

Further evidence of cooperation and defence coordination was shown by the appointment of Lieutenant General Charles Fraser, the former officer commanding joint combat forces in South Africa, as South Africa's first Ambassador to

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20 ibid.
Tehran. While the response from South Africa to the idea of joint surveillance of the Indian Ocean was quite warm, the Whitlam government in Australia did not intend to participate in any type of defence arrangements with that government.\(^{21}\)

Iran's stakes in the Persian Gulf were considered greater than the other neighbouring Gulf states. This was because of its large population, holding large reserves of oil, great deposits of natural gas, and occupying the entire northern boundary of the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman (about 1,950 kilometres), including the Straits of Hormuz.\(^{22}\)

According to Ramazani, the Iranian interests in the Gulf are historical, economical and strategic.\(^{23}\)

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\(^{21}\) The Australian government's attitude to South Africa was clearly demonstrated on the occasion of the 19th Commonwealth Conference in Ottawa from 2-10 August 1973 when Prime Minister Whitlam took a strong and independent stance against South Africa's racist policies and minority rule; solidarity with the developing African and Asian countries and keeping Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. (See *The Canberra Times*, 10, 13 August 1973.)


It is claimed that the Achaemninian empire, which was founded by Cyrus the Great in 533 B.C. had recognised the vital importance of the Persian Gulf and gave special attention to the expansion of overseas commerce, acquisition of strong naval forces and merchant fleets, promotion of ship construction, improvement in navigational techniques, coastal surveys and maritime exploration.  

Economically speaking, the area bordering the Persian Gulf is important. The triangle formed by Khorram Shahr, Govatar and Shiraz comprises a vast region equal in area to France. In this region live nearly 4 million Iranians whose livelihood directly or indirectly depends upon Iran's southern waters. It was estimated that the majority of Iran's population by the end of the century may be living

24 Mahmoud Faroughi, 'Iran and the Persian Gulf', Australian Outlook, Vol.31, April 1977, p.142. However, the above fact can be challenged on historical grounds. In the heyday of the Achaemninian empire the naval activity was mainly in the Mediterranean Sea and not the Persian Gulf. Its overthrow by Alexander the Great and subsequent battles in India were through land routes and not by sea. This suggests that the Gulf itself, as opposed to the land routes between Persia, India and China was not so important as to be legitimately described as 'vital' during the Achaemninian Empire. However, the Gulf assumed importance in ancient and classical times with active navigation between Mosopotamia and India; between the ninth and fifteenth centuries A.D. when Arab trade reached large proportions; in the sixteenth century with the Portuguese explorers; and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the English and Dutch tried to establish trading monopolies in the Gulf. (See Iraq and the Persian Gulf, B.R. 524, Geographical Hand Book Series: Oxford sub-centre of the Naval Intelligence Division, September 1944, p.127.)
in the southern half of the country. It was estimated that Iran would invest about $30 billion in southern provinces during the coming eight years after 1975. Moreover, the Persian Gulf was increasingly becoming the focus of commercial and industrial development activity. Also, the heart of Iran's railway and transport network was moving southwards for better connection with the hinterland. Port congestion had become a serious problem and the extension of old and the construction of new ports were planned to take a heavy volume of traffic. The nation's rapidly growing province of Khuzestan was directly on the Persian Gulf while the

25 Iran's population is expected to reach 60 million by the end of this century. The port of Bandar Abbas on the Strait of Hormuz has had its population grow from less than 12,000 in 1960 to 200,000 in 1974. The Shah had said that Bandar Abbas would have a population of one million before the end of this current decade. In 1974, something like 15,000 workers were brought into the coastal province of Khuzestan. (For details see Taheri, op.cit., p.260.)

26 ibid.

27 For example, vast projects for tapping under ground water resources, huge desalination plants and nuclear generating plants were being planned on the Persian Gulf through foreign technical know-how. Also, of the four new direct reduction steel mills already planned, three were supposed to be in the Persian Gulf. Huge copper deposits, believed to be among the world's largest discoveries, were found near Kerman. Iran's petrochemical industries were also being exclusively sited on the Persian Gulf. The Gulf also brought to Iran an annual earning of $1 billion in export earnings from fish. (ibid., p.261.)
coastal provinces of Sistan and Baluchistan were tipped as the 'Khuzestans of the 1980s'.

Iran's interest in the Persian Gulf was also linked to the people of Iranian origin, nearly a million living on the other side of the Persian Gulf. Many Iranian banks, businesses, schools and hospitals were opened in the Arab states of the Gulf. With the increasing affluence, resulting from oil wealth by the end of the 1960s, many Iranians had started emigrating back home from these states. And since then, those who stayed abroad had begun to assert their national identification with Iran more forcefully.

Strategically, the Iranian interest in the Gulf was kindled when in July 1958, the Iraqi monarchy was overthrown and replaced by a radical regime. This initial threat to the monarchical principle and traditional regimes was exacerbated when in the 1960s President Nasser engaged first in a propaganda battle against traditional, that is

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Baluchistan and Sistan, though one of the least developed regions of the country, comprised 11 per cent of total area with population of approximately 500,000 with density of 2.8 persons per kilometre. The areas are rich in mineral resources and bear a good potential for handicraft and carpet industry. (For further details see Khoşrow Mehrabi, 'Sistan-Baluchistan Week', Kayhan International, 15 December 1973.)

In Bahrain, for example, Iranians form a sophisticated and thriving community; in Kuwait they comprise one sixth of the total population; in Batinah sector of Oman they constitute a sizable section of bazar bourgeoisie and in Qatar and the United Arab Emirate they form a significant part of the total labour force. (Taheri, op.cit., p.261.)

'reactionary', regimes in the Arab world and Iran, and later on, in an actual military battle against the religio-loyalist forces in Yemen. This was followed by a more active role for Iran when in January 1968 Britain announced its intention to withdraw from the Gulf by 1971. Iran was concerned that the potential power vacuum should not invite extra-regional powers. It wanted the Gulf states to assume responsibility for the security of the Gulf and it was prepared to do so either in concert with other Gulf states, as it proposed in March 1970, or alone, when it forcefully seized the strategic islands of Abu Musa and the two Tumbs in the strategic Straits of Hormuz in November 1971.\(^{31}\)

The Soviet Threat

The Shah perceived 'threat of encirclement' mainly from the Soviet Union.\(^{32}\) Iran shares its longest border with the Soviet Union, i.e. about 2,500 kms. Most Iranians regarded the Soviet Union as their most likely potential adversary because of the past history of Iranian-Soviet relations. It is no doubt a historical fact that modern Iranian history has been largely shaped by the Great Powers pursuing their vested interests in the Middle East.\(^{33}\)

Until the early part of the 19th century, large portions

\(^{31}\) Further examined in Chapter III.

\(^{32}\) U.S. News and World Report, 26 June 1978.

of bordering lands and areas, e.g. Caucasian provinces (now well within Soviet boundaries) were under the Iranian jurisdiction. In the early 20th century, the Russians had invaded and occupied Iranian territory three times from 1909 to 1911, 1914 to 1918 and 1941 to 1946. Since the 1917 Revolution, the Russians have tried to establish two separate Soviet republics, one in Mahabad and the other in Azerbaijan. The Iranians vividly recall the Soviet occupation of northern Iran in both wars and their refusal to evacuate till May 1946 after World War II. With the military capabilities of the Soviet Union, the Iranians believed that in the event of direct military confrontation between the two countries, on their own they would not stand a chance. Thus Iran's options for coping with a Soviet direct attack were limited. The strategy was to raise the threshold of Soviet attack by building up its armed forces thus delaying the Soviet advance as long as possible and then either accept defeat or hold out until the U.S. intervened. Iran's perceptions of threat from the Soviet Union were great when Iran joined the Baghdad Pact in 1955. Although there was an improvement in relations by the early 1960s, there was a growing apprehension leading to a climax in the years 1971-73.

34 Ahmad Ghoreyshi and Cyrus Elahi, op.cit., p.371.

35 Shahram Chubin, Iran's Military Security in the 1980s, The California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy, Discussion Paper No.73, California, September 1977, p.6.

36 This threat explained Iran's membership of CENTO, and its bilateral agreement with U.S.A. for help in the event of Soviet aggression.
The Indo-Pakistan war of December 1971 resulted in the dismemberment of Pakistan and led to the growth of a separatist movement in Iranian and Pakistani Baluchistans; the Soviet Union signed a 15-year Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation with Iraq on 9 April 1972. In March 1973 Iraqi armed forces invaded Kuwaiti territory, threatening to continue their advance unless Kuwait would be willing to grant some territorial concessions, which included handing over the islands of Warhah and Bubiyan (off the port of Umm Qasr) to Iraq. Also, border clashes between Iraq and Iran flared with greater frequency and the Kurds (Iraqi and Iranian) became restless. In July 1973, the regime of king Mohammad Zahir Shah was overthrown in

37 Articles 8 and 9 of this treaty were exclusively concerned with mutual assistance and co-operation in defence.

38 The degree of Soviet involvement in the incident, however, remains uncertain; but the fact that the then Vice-President of Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, Siddam Hussein Takriti, flew to Moscow the day before the invasion, and the fact that the Soviet naval C-in-C Admiral S.G. Gorshkov arrived in Baghdad suddenly on 3 April, were not lost on Tehran. In reality, the U.S.S.R. did not approve of the irresponsible action of Iraq. Not only were most Arab countries, including Syria, opposed to the Iraqi action, but Saudi Arabia and Iran actually threatened to take action against the Iraqis and moved troops near the Kuwaiti border. Admiral Gorshkov's visit was connected to Soviet attempts to augment their presence in Iraq but was utilized to influence the Iraqis to adopt a more reasonable stance. The Soviet endeavour to convince Iraq not to force a confrontation upon her neighbours became even more apparent in the discussions held during Brezhnev's visit to the United States in June and from Soviet activity and efforts in the Gulf proper to prevent an escalation of the situation. (See A. Yodfat and M. Abir, In the Direction of the Persian Gulf: The Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf, London: Frank Cass and Co., 1977, pp.86-87.)
Afghanistan and the war in Dhofar continued to challenge the Sultan of Oman's rule through outside military and moral support. More recently, the April 1978 coup in Afghanistan and the Soviet-Cuban operations in the Horn of Africa had magnified the Iranian fears of the Soviet 'encirclement'. In all these developments, the Shah saw the guiding hand of the Soviet Union. According to

39 See, for example, the Shah's interview with Arnaud de Borchgrave, 'Tea with the Shah', *Newsweek*, 20 November 1978. The exaggerated Iranian fears are sometimes attributed to previous 'Russian aggrandisement' at its expense and the Soviet desire, expressed in the Molotov-Ribbentrop talks of November 1940, that the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf should be recognised as a centre of Soviet aspirations. However, the truth is that a secret protocol to a draft agreement between Germany, Italy, Japan and the Soviet Union was in fact prepared by the Germans. The protocol defined the spheres of the territorial aspirations of each participant as 'apart from the territorial revision in Europe to be carried out at the Conclusion of Peace'. Accordingly, Germany's 'territorial aspirations centre in the territories of Central Africa'; Japan's 'in the area of Eastern Asia to the south of the Island Empire of Japan'. The Soviet Union 'declares that its territorial aspirations centre south of the national territory of the Soviet Union in the direction of the Indian Ocean'. (See Raymond J. Sontag and James S. Beddie (eds), *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939-1941*, Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office, Washington: Dept. of State, 1948, p.257.)

Apparently the draft was the topic of a conversation between Molotov and the German Ambassador in Moscow, von Schulenburg, on 26 November 1940. Von Schulenburg reported to the German Foreign Office that Molotov stated that the Soviet government was prepared to accept the draft of the Four Power Pact on the following conditions:

1. 'The establishment of a base for land and naval forces of the U.S.S.R. with the range of the Bosporus and the Dardanelles by means of a long-term lease' in the Turkish Straits.

2. 'Provided that the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf is recognised as the centre of the aspirations of the Soviet Union'. (ibid., pp.258-259. Two other conditions related to Finland and Japan.)

(cont'd)
the Shah's perceptions, the Soviet Union would regard a pro-Moscow regime in Iran as definitely advantageous. Firstly, it would change the balance of forces and give her a tremendous advantage over the U.S. and China.  

39 (cont'd)

Though the German proposals were supposed to distract attention from Europe, the Soviets remained attentive to Europe, perceiving that their main interest lay there rather than in the Middle East. Hitler decided to discontinue negotiations with them, and a month later, on 18 December 1940, he issued his 'Operation Barbarossa' order to attack the Soviet Union (ibid., pp.260-264).

It should be noted that a great number of Western and Iranian history books that deal with that period describe in detail the parts of those German-Soviet negotiations that refer to the Middle East, but most of them refer to the German proposals as though they were Soviet ones, ignoring the unsuccessful German attempts to distract Soviet attention from Europe to the Middle East.

40 There was a marked identity of views between Iran and China on various issues. In June 1973, the Chinese Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei visited Tehran and expressed support for Iran's military buildup. In return the Shah had stated that any collective security discussion in Asia must include China. Peking had also expressed support for the Iranian view that the security of the Persian Gulf area should be left to the littoral states themselves. Both Peking and Tehran were believed to have given tacit approval to plans for the approval of expansion of the U.S. facilities at Diego Garcia. Neither of them wanted to see a super power naval race develop in the Indian Ocean but neither did they want (as the majority littoral states of the Gulf) the Soviet Union to gain an exclusive naval dominance in the area. The Iranian-Chinese relations were further reinforced when Chairman Hua Kuo-feng visited Iran from 29 August to 1 September 1978. His visit ended with the signing of a cultural agreement and detailed talks on co-operation in science and technology. It is also said that the mutual discussions covered the regional talks on Gulf security which have been stalled since November 1976. (See Burrell and Cottrell, op.cit., p.37; Tehran Radio, 31 August 1978, quoted in the American Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Middle East (ME), 31 August 1978, pp.R1-R2, New China News Agency (Peking) in English, 2 September 1978, quoted in FBIS (PRC), 7 September 1978, pp.A23-A25; and D.L. Price, 'Moscow and the Persian Gulf', Problems of Communism, March-April 1979, Vol.XXVIII, pp.12-13.)
Secondly, it would grant Moscow control over Iran's petroleum resources. And thirdly, it would give her control over sea lanes with an immediate access to the Indian Ocean.

The Arab Threat

Iran also perceived a threat from the West. This was because of potential and existing military rivalries with the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, especially Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Before Iran reached the political accord with Iraq, the relations between the two countries were poor, often leading to open hostilities. Iran's fears were heightened with the Iraqi-Soviet Treaty of 6 April 1972. This was followed by visits of Soviet naval ships to the Iraqi ports of Umm Qasr and Basra. With the Soviet supply of military hardware to Iraq the tension along the borders of the two countries increased. To take an example, between October 1972 and May 1974 there were at least 10 major

41 Although the Soviet Union is the world's leading producer of petroleum and coal, it faces the risk of fuel shortage when (along with its allies) it would need to import about 100 million tons of oil annually by 1980. (For example, see Boris Rochkov, 'The Russian Stake in the Middle East', *New Middle East*, No.8, May 1969, pp.36-37. Also read Yodfat, op.cit., pp.1-20.

42 Although Iran had reached political accord with Iraq over the Shatt al Arab river dispute in March 1975, a durable pattern of friendly relations could not be predicted. Iraq had often been termed as a 'political maverick' of the Arab world.

43 Contrary to Iran's threat perceptions, most of these visits were made by the Soviet oil tankers and not warships. (For details see *Australia and the Indian Ocean Region* - Report from the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1976), Appendix A, pp.211-235.
exchanges of fire, with greatest concentration between December 1973 and April 1974. In February 1974, 41 Iranians were reported killed in a battle at Badra, some 100 miles east of Baghdad. Later in the same month, over 60 Iranians and 20 Iraqis were killed in another flare-up. In March, a battle at Tangeb resulted in 56 Iraqi deaths, and fighting continued during the visit of Dr Luis Munuz; the person chosen by the U.N. to resolve the border issue.  

The Iranian fears were further raised when Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait in March 1973, ostensibly to gain control of the two islands of Bubiyan and Warba, which dominate the approaches to the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr. In fact, the whole idea behind building the port of Umm Qasr was to reduce the Iraqi navy's dependence on Basra, only 20 miles up the Shatt al-Arab, which might become unusable in the event of a war with Iran. The Iraqis have always regarded Kuwait as an artificial British creation and have been making historical claims for annexation since 1961 (the latter's independence). This was on the ground that Kuwait was included in the 'Wilayat' of Basra in the Turkish empire before the creation of Iraq as an independent state. Soon after the incident

44 Burrell and Cottrell, op.cit., p.5.
45 'Wilayats' were administrative units under the Ottomans.
the Shah categorically mentioned that Iran would not tolerate Iraq's seizure of Kuwait and renewed Iraqi attack would ensure Iranian military involvement.  

Iraq had given support to subversive movements in the region. At one time or the other, Iraq supported many subversive movements giving credence to the theory that it had taken over Egypt's former role of 'exporting revolution in the area'. Iran viewed with particular alarm these subversive and terrorist movements which aimed at Khuzestan, Baluchistan and the Gulf area.

In spite of the political accord of March 1975 and Iraq's moderating policies afterwards, a lingering distrust

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47 The London Times, 1 April 1974. At present Iraq does not maintain effective control of the two islands, although it has periodically placed police on Warbah. Kuwait has, however, refrained from garrisoning the islands and offered to lease the islands to Iraq while retaining Kuwaiti sovereignty over them. (See U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Review of Recent Developments in the Middle East, Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on International Relations, 95th Congress, 1st Session, 8 June 1977, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, p.101.)

48 Some of the movements which were supported by Iraq were the Palestine Revolution Political Committee, the Iranian national front, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Arabistan (Khuzestan), the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran, the 'Popular Front for the Liberation of Baluchistan', (Pakistani and Iranian), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf, the Eritrean Liberation Front, the Front for the Liberation of Chad, and the United Front for the Liberation of West Somalia. (Al Nahar Weekly Arab Report, 28 January 1974 as cited in Burrell and Cottrell, op.cit., p.7.)

remained on both sides. This distrust was reflected in the Shah's reply to a correspondent whether Iran, in spite of its acquisition of the sophisticated weaponry, was not 'crying wolf'. According to the Shah, the Iraqis had the surface-to-surface SCUD missiles and the chances of a surprise attack on Iran still remained.

In fact, Iran's greatest fears of Iraq's design emanated from Iraq's strong links with Moscow, particularly in the field of military co-operation.

Iran's relations with its other Arab neighbours were also far from friendly. The foci of misunderstandings between Iranians and Arabs span a broad spectrum and are

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50 For example, even after the March Agreement the Society for the Defence of the Arabism of the 'Arabian Gulf' established a representative office in Basra, which was responsible for spreading [revolution] throughout the Persian Gulf (Kayhan International, 30 July 1977).


52 Since 1972, Iraq and the Soviet Union have enjoyed a treaty of friendship and cooperation intended to remain in force for 15 years. For 20 years, Moscow had supplied 90 per cent of Iraq's defence hardware needs. Among Iraq's trading partners, the Soviet Union ranked sixth as supplier and seventh as customer (non-oil). See David Lynn Price, 'Moscow and the Persian Gulf', Problems of Communism, Vol.XXVIII, March-April 1979, pp.1-13. Also see Kayhan International of 23 October 1976 regarding an arms agreement signed on 17 August 1976 between Iraq and the Soviet Union.
rooted in past history. Iran nursed grievances against various Arab states, who for the past 15 years had been espousing irredentist claims against Iran. For example, Syria and Egypt launched the 'Arabian Gulf' campaign in the 1960s in an effort to rename the Persian Gulf when President Nasser began his Pan-Arabism. Since then Arab radical groups had been increasing their criticism over Iranian 'hegemonic designs' in the Persian Gulf area. Libya's Colonel Qaddafi once called the Persian Gulf a 'second Palestine'. Saudi Arabia, a conservative power, had often expressed displeasure at Iran's contacts with Israel. In spite of common perceptions about preservation of monarchies, reliance upon the West and

53 The main irritants between the Arabs and Iranians were the religious and ethnic cleavages; (the Iranians belong to the Shiite sect while the Arabs are mostly Sunni Muslims. Ethnically the Iranians consider themselves Aryans and hence distinct from the Arabs); the language differences; still undemarcated maritime boundaries with the Gulf states; Iran's occupation of 3 islands near the Strait of Hormuz; Iran's trade and diplomatic relations with Israel and the dominant military role acquired in the Persian Gulf region.

54 Syrian geography and history texts depicted the Iranian province of Khuzestan (called Arabestan) as an Arab territory forcefully occupied by Iran. (Kayhan International, 30 July 1977.)

55 Qaddafi had strongly denounced what he termed as Iran's occupation of the southern section of the Arab peninsula and called for concerted action by non-aligned nations against Iran at the non-aligned summit meeting in Colombo 1976. (ibid., 28 August 1976.)
deep distrust of pro-Moscow forces in the area, the points
of difference between Iran and Saudi Arabia were
significant.\textsuperscript{56}

\textbf{The Threat from the East and the Southeast}

Iran under the Shah perceived yet another source of
threat from its eastern neighbour, Afghanistan. The
threat perceptions intensified from the fact that the
Afghan army was Soviet trained and equipped with Soviet
arms, that the Soviet Union was one of the first countries
to grant diplomatic recognition to the new regime in Kabul
in July 1973 and April 1978 coups.\textsuperscript{57} Also, the Soviet
Union's aid to Afghanistan had exceeded that of all other
donors combined. Although Iran and Afghanistan in recent

\textsuperscript{56} The major points of difference between the economic and
political roles of Saudi Arabia and Iran stemmed from the
following facts. Saudi Arabia has the world's largest
proven reserves of oil (130 billion barrels) with only 6.5
million population. Enormous oil revenues are left surplus
and invested abroad. Saudi Arabia is not keen to embark
on a crash modernization programme like Iran, for fear
of upsetting political stability. By contrast, Iran's oil
reserves (65 million barrels) cater for a relatively larger
population of approximately 37 million. Iran desperately
needed oil revenues for its ambitious development plans
launched by the Shah. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia was less
interested in raising oil prices whereas Iran wanted a rise
in prices due to its diminishing oil reserves and increasing
rate of inflation. The OPEC Conferences since 1975 had
demonstrated these differences between the two countries.
(For details see Mehrdad Khonsari, 'Differing goals draw
Iran-Saudi oil policies closer', \textit{Kayhan International},
30 April 1978.)

\textsuperscript{57} The first country to accord diplomatic recognition in
July 1973 was India.
years (1973-76) had tried to improve their relations through promotion of economic co-operation, yet Iran's fears over Afghanistan related to Afghanistan's claim of Pukhtoonistan, which was assumed to affect Iran's security.

58 In February 1974, Iran and Afghanistan signed a common agreement. In May, the then President Daud sent his brother Sardar Mohammad Naim to Tehran for improving political relations because of a border incident in which 70 Afghans were reported killed. There were talks in May about granting landlocked Afghanistan a duty-free export outlet in the southern coast of Iran. A pact was signed over sharing of Hirmand river waters between the two countries on 13 March 1973 and ratified in 1975. There were also pledges by Iran to offer financial and technical grant to Afghanistan. (For details see Burrell and Cottrell, op.cit., pp.42-43 and Kayhan International, 4 June 1977, and 21 June 1978.)

59 The Pukhtoonistan issue is concerned with Pathans, a people who exist on both sides of the Durand Line, the boundary between British India and Afghanistan established in November 1893. Pakistan inherited the border on the partition of British India in 1947 but the Afghan government has reportedly claimed the non-validity of this line as dividing the people who wish to be united. Pathans in Afghanistan number about 7.5 million (about 40% of the total population) and about one third of them are nomadic or semi-nomadic. Pathans represent only 13% of the population of Pakistan and although they resent the Punjabi domination of Pakistan, there is little evidence that they want to opt out of Pakistan. In Afghanistan, the Pathans provide the politico-military elite of the country and are keen to increase their number as well as strengthen their power and sense of identity. The Afghan leadership has never defined the exact boundaries of the proposed 'Pukhtoonistan state'. Probably the existence of rich minerals and securing an outlet to the Arabian Sea are the main motives behind Afghanistan's claim of Pukhtoonistan. (For details see P.I. Cheema, 'Irredentism and Afghanistan's claim for "Pakhtoonistan", Scrutiny, Islamabad, Vol.IV, No.3, 1978, pp.63-70.)
The province of Baluchistan (in Pakistan) was also considered a potential trouble spot. The province is bordered by Iran in the West and Afghanistan to the north. The province shares nearly 500 miles of border with Iran and is sparsely populated. The Baluchi demand for more autonomy from the central government in Pakistan had become more pronounced since the 1971 Indo-Pakistan War. Pressures from the Shah also contributed directly to the heavy-handed posture against local autonomy assumed by former Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. When the elected state government in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan resisted political and economic controls by the central government in early 1973, Bhutto, prodded by the Shah, ousted the state cabinet, imprisoned the principal Baluch leaders on sedition charges, imposed emergency central rule, and sent 70,000 troops to the province to quell Baluch insurgency. It is estimated that nearly 55,000 Baluch were fighting in late 1974, some 11,500 of them in organized, hard-core units. At least 3,300 Pakistani military men and 5,300 Baluch guerrillas as well

60 Baluchistan comprises 40% of the territory of Pakistan. It is estimated that nearly 5 million Baluch tribesmen live in the inaccessible mountain and desert country of western Pakistan, eastern Iran, and southern Afghanistan, an area that stretches for nearly 750 miles along the Arabian Sea and the Sea of Oman. (Selig S. Harrison, 'Nightmare in Baluchistan', *Foreign Policy*, No.32, Fall 1978, p.137.)

61 ibid., p.138.
as hundreds of women and children caught in the cross-fire, were killed during the four-year war. A total of 178 major engagements and another 167 lesser incidents during the insurgency are said to have taken place.\textsuperscript{62}

Due to this turmoil, Iran feared that the insurgency may spill over into the neighbouring Iranian Baluchistan. Historically, the Iranian Baluchis have been an unimportant tribal group living in a backwater province far from Tehran. But the province is contiguous to the Gulf of Oman which links Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean. In a world acutely dependent on oil and in which over half of the world's oil reserves were concentrated in the Persian Gulf area, Iranian Baluchistan was accorded high strategic value by the Shah's regime.\textsuperscript{63}

Iran also believed that a rebel movement inspired by Iraq or Russia may attempt to inspire such a degree of dissension in Iranian Baluchistan that it could lead to the dismemberment of the Baluchi province within Pakistan and thus create problems on Iran's eastern borders.

\textsuperscript{62} ibid., p.139.

\textsuperscript{63} Sistan and Baluchistan, one of the least developed regions comprise 11\% of Iran's total area with a population of approximately 500,000. The provincial capital is Zahid and a strategic north to south road connecting Zahid to the port of Cha Bahar, (a tri-service defence installation) on the Sea of Oman, was nearing completion. (Mehrabi, op.cit., p.8.)
This could in turn act as a base for infiltration and sabotage among Iranian Baluchi tribes. Already involved in the Persian Gulf region via his intervention in Oman against the Front for the Liberation of the Arab Gulf (PFLOAG), the Shah did not wish for either a 'second front' in Baluchistan or difficulties in Pakistan. A fundamental tenet of Iranian security policy had been the territorial integrity of Iran's Muslim but non-Arab neighbours, i.e. Pakistan and Turkey.\(^{64}\) In the wake of the 1971 crisis and Pakistan's dismemberment, the southeastern borders emerged as an area of special concern to Iran. For Iran, the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 demonstrated the ineffectiveness of military alliance and bilateral agreements with the U.S. as a measure to ensure national security. The then Prime Minister Hoveyda commenting on this aspect voiced Iran's fears by saying:

> Pakistan, an ally of the U.S. through two multinational and one bilateral treaty, has been attacked and dismembered without as much as a ripple of serious protest. There is no reason why Pakistan's plight should be treated as an isolated case that could not be repeated elsewhere in the region.\(^{65}\)

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Even before the 1971 crisis, Iran attached great importance to Pakistan's security in its strategic planning.\textsuperscript{66} In September 1965 and December 1971, Iran gave substantial material and moral support to Pakistan. In 1966, the Iranian government supplied some Sabre jets to Pakistan. And in 1974, it was reported that Iran had agreed to supply F-5 jet fighters to Pakistan.\textsuperscript{67}

After 1971, Pakistan's national security assumed a new dimension for Iran. Hence Iran's concern centred on preserving the internal integrity and political independence of Pakistan. According to the Shah,

\begin{quote}
the integrity of Pakistan is vital for us. If it were threatened and some separatist movement started, this would create an absolutely intolerable situation for our eastern frontiers.\textsuperscript{68}
\end{quote}

The Shah reiterated these fears in June 1974 although the situation in Pakistan had by then achieved a certain measure

\textsuperscript{66} Iran and Pakistan were both members of CENTO (military alliance) and RCD (economic alliance). Iran's unequivocal support for the right of self-determination of people of Kashmir and denunciation of Pukhtoonistan were evidence of sympathy for Pakistan.

\textsuperscript{67} Washington Post, 8 March 1975.

of stability. He declared that Iran would 'intervene militarily' if the situation became intolerable.\textsuperscript{69}

Regarding the prospective supply of arms to Pakistan he said:

... We shall never assist Pakistan if they start an aggressive war on India, and I am sure that India is not going to threaten Pakistan just for the sake of it.\textsuperscript{70}

On another occasion he emphasized the need for indigenous armament saying,

We desire to become self-sufficient in armaments. A joint arms industry may be considered on both a bilateral basis between Turkey and Iran or a tripartite basis to include Pakistan as well.\textsuperscript{71}

Thus Iran under the Shah desired a strong and united Pakistan for security and stability in the Persian Gulf area. The security of Iran's southeast province of Baluchistan, which is a geographical and ethnic extension of Pakistan, provided a buffer between Iran and India. Moreover, Iran was dependent on cheap labour from Pakistan whereas Pakistan was a recipient of economic aid from Iran and also a territorial reinsurance against Indian attack in case of war.\textsuperscript{72}

\textsuperscript{69} Interview to the French daily, \textit{Le Monde} as cited in Kayhan International, 29 June 1974.

\textsuperscript{70} Shah's press conference in New Delhi. ibid., 12 October 1974.

\textsuperscript{71} \textit{The Middle East}, London, January 1976, pp.29-31.

\textsuperscript{72} Pakistan lacks geographical depth; some of its major cities are right on the border and most of its territory is within the easy range of air attacks from India as evidenced in the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pakistan wars.
The April 1978 coup in Afghanistan with Soviet backing\textsuperscript{73} and the political uncertainty in Pakistan following the ouster of Bhutto's government in July 1977 had further reinforced Iran's fears along its eastern borders.

The Shah also perceived various other rather vague and ill-defined threats to Iran's security which were never spelled out clearly by him. For example, on one occasion he referred to 'a country' laying great importance on chemical warfare\textsuperscript{74} and on another he referred to the threat of growing terrorism and lack of law and order.\textsuperscript{75} He also saw potential threat from left wing communist guerrilla groups (the 'Red' threat) and right wing Muslim guerrilla groups (the 'Black' threat).\textsuperscript{76}


\textsuperscript{74} See \textit{Kayhan International}, 19 November 1977.

\textsuperscript{75} ibid., 12 November 1977.

It was again the Shah's perceived dangers which prompted Iran to initiate a leading role in the plan for collective security in the Persian Gulf. Although Iran started promoting the concept as early as March 1970, it was only after March 1975 that the proposal took on some form of defence cooperation amongst the Gulf states. During a visit to the United States in May 1975, the Shah announced that 'in the Persian Gulf we seek collective security'.

Two months later [July], the Gulf foreign ministers met in Jeddah for the defence summit. The following six main issues were examined:

1. Limitations on foreign powers in the region;
2. A guarantee of the territorial integrity of all states, presumably to nullify border disputes;
3. A non-aggression pact among the states;
4. Mutual assistance against subversion and cooperation in military and intelligence affairs;
5. Freedom of navigation; and
6. Territorial divisions of the waters of the Gulf and limits of the continental shelf.

However after July 1975, the momentum of the talks regarding Gulf security slowed down.

77 ibid., p. 80.
78 ibid.
The last serious consideration came in November 1976 when the foreign ministers of the eight littoral states of the Persian Gulf ended their talks without a formal settlement, but with pledges for further talks. There were divergences among Iraq and the other seven littoral states. The general feeling among the ministers was that the conference on Gulf security had come prematurely and a complex subject like coordination among eight littoral states could not be completed within such a short time.\(^79\)

Except for Oman's unequivocal support, the other Gulf states maintained their reservations about the Iranian proposals for Gulf security.\(^80\) These reservations stemmed from various political, military, economic and cultural factors which determine the policies and perceptions of different Gulf states.\(^81\) Also, there was no specific or

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80 E.g. in this regard see the Shah's interview to Newsweek as quoted in Kayhan International, 12 December 1977.

common source of threat among the Persian Gulf nations. This was demonstrated when Iran reacted with urgency to the rebellion in Oman in providing military help, while the other Arab states generally remained hesitant. (For details see Chapter III.) On the other hand, Iran did not share the Arab view regarding the oil embargo in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Barring Oman, none of the Arab states had shown any enthusiasm for a formal security pact, although several of them were prepared to collaborate informally on an ad hoc basis. In addition, from the point of view of the smaller powers of the Gulf, any regional grouping meant a domination by the larger powers (i.e. Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq) at their expense. For them a formal political/military pact would legitimize, sanctify and freeze the division of power in the region, i.e. formalize the existing hierarchy of power. And lastly, a security pact could only follow once a complete agreement on territorial boundaries and termination of

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82 Joint Communique issued at the end of the Shah's visit to Oman reaffirming Iran-Oman joint security in the Persian Gulf, Kayhan International, 10 December 1977.

83 The leading regional power or core-actor has difficulties in attracting other states into a system which is likely to be hierarchical and not egalitarian. (See George Liska, 'The Third World: Regional Systems and World Order' in Robert Osgood (ed.), Retreat from Empire: The First Nixon Administration, Baltimore, 1973, pp.279-343.)
disputes on islands was reached. Despite the considerable progress elsewhere, the Iraq-Kuwait border dispute including two islands, still persists.  

Thus finding difficulties in promoting the concept of Persian Gulf security, Iran put forward the proposal for the Indian Ocean Common Market in 1974 which envisaged bilateral cooperation among the littoral states of the Indian Ocean evolving gradually into discussions of mutual security problems. This proposal did not evoke any concrete response. However in the case of the Persian Gulf proposal there have been some efforts at cooperation in the non-military fields.  

Conclusion

The above discussion of Iran's threat perceptions reveals that the Shah perceived diverse forms of threats from all directions. These threat perceptions included:

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84 See Owen, op.cit., p.267. Also at the base of the Musandum peninsula there is a confusing jigsaw puzzle of sheikhdoms and enclaves that cause occasional wrangling between Ajman, Dubai, Sharjah, Fujairah, and Oman. Price, Oil and Middle East Security, p.26.


the fear of stoppage of oil from the Persian Gulf through the Straits of Hormuz to the Indian Ocean; the abiding security concern for its economically rapid developing area adjacent to the Persian Gulf; the possible danger of military intervention by Iraq and the Soviet Union; the pervading anxiety regarding the spread of subversion and likely secession in Baluchistan from the neighbouring Pakistani Baluchistan; and the diffused fear of the emergence of radical governments in the Persian Gulf area.
CHAPTER II

THE IRANIAN ARMED FORCES -
MAJOR DEFENCE AND NUCLEAR PROGRAMME
Introduction

After the fall of the Mossadeq government in August 1953 and the Shah's firm grasp on the decision making of his country, Iran's defence was focussed on the expansion and modernization of the armed forces. The major upgrading and buildup of the airforce did not begin until the mid-1960s while the expansion of the navy began to gather momentum late in that decade.¹

Out of the three services, i.e. land, air and sea, the Imperial Iranian Airforce (IIAF) was modernized to the greatest extent.² Between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s the number of combat aircraft almost doubled and included the most sophisticated vintage of American fighters. The army did not increase in numbers as much as the other services, but was transformed from a largely infantry based force to an army built around armour and mechanized elements. And the Imperial Iranian Navy (IIN), with its primarily coastal orientation, was markedly upgraded and expanded to offer a deep-water capability.³

By the middle of 1976, the rapid acquisition of sophisticated weapons and equipment resulted in about 24,000 U.S. foreign military and civilian advisers,⁴ and

² U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.25.
³ Lenczowski, op.cit., p.418.
⁴ U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.33.
by the end of 1978, this total number had increased to nearly 41,000 U.S. residents in Iran out of which 5,000 were military personnel alone.\(^5\)

The Imperial Iranian Ground Forces (IIGF)

The Iranian ground forces by the end of 1978 comprised a total of 285,000 and were grouped into three field armies. They included 3 armoured divisions, 3 infantry divisions, 4 independent brigades (1 armoured, 1 infantry, 1 airborne and 1 special force), 4 surface-to-air missiles battalions equipped with HAWK missiles and an Army Aviation Command.\(^6\) Like many other countries with compulsory national service, it was the infantry divisions which had absorbed most of the two-year conscripts. The basic infantry weapons were the 7.62 mm Heckler, Koch G3 rifle and MG3 machine gun, produced locally in Iran, while heavy weapons came from a variety of sources. 120 mm mortars were manufactured in the country while in the anti-tank missile field, French SS-11s and -12s delivered since 1970 were supplemented by substantial numbers of the American Hughes Heavy Antitank Weapon (TOW).\(^7\) Infantry Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC's) were of three main types. They were tracked U.S. M113s

\(^5\) *Newsweek*, 20 November 1978.


(many fitted with TOW), tracked Soviet BTR-50s and wheeled Soviet BTR-60s. The administrative transport vehicles were of the same mixed origin with older U.S. jeeps and trucks being supplemented and replaced by the Soviet material provided in part-payment for Iranian natural gas. 8

Iran ordered about 800 Chieftain tanks from Great Britain in 1971. 9 However it was in 1973 when it began to take delivery. In May 1975 Iran reportedly ordered another 1,200 Chieftains. 10 These medium-weight Chieftains were equipped with 120 mm guns and fitted with laser range-finders. Iran's armoured force of 3 divisions by the end of 1978 was equipped with 760 medium Chieftains and 250 Scorpion light tanks from Britain together with 400 M-47/-48 and 460 M-60A1 medium American tanks. 11

The artillery, in terms of personnel, accounted for about 30% of the Iranian army. Each of the three Army corps

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8 This was as a result of a $110 million agreement signed in February 1967 which stipulated the exchange of Soviet military equipment, i.e. non-armoured vehicles, troop carriers and anti-aircraft guns for the Iranian natural gas and other raw materials. (Leslie M. Pryor, 'Arms and the Shah', Foreign Policy, Vol.31, No.31, Summer 1978, p.58.) In this regard also see SIPRI, The Arms Trade with the Third World, New York: Humanities Press, 1971, p.578.


10 According to a US Senate report, out of a total of 2,250 Chieftain medium tanks ordered by Iran, 435 had been delivered by February 1976. See U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.17.

had an Indirect Fire Support Group of 4-8 battalions with a further two Groups at the Artillery Training School in Isfahan. Each division was provided with 4-6 battalions for direct fire support. In addition, a SAM battalion equipped with HAWK was deployed to protect the oil installations at Abadan and Kharg.\textsuperscript{12} The inventory at the end of 1978 included 710 guns/howitzers (75 mm Pack, 85 mm), 440 (M-109, 155 mm) 38 (M-107, 175 mm) and 14 (M-110 203 mm SP).\textsuperscript{13} Surface-to-surface artillery was mainly American with a few exceptions.\textsuperscript{14} Among the newer self-propelled guns obtained from the U.S., the M109s (155 mm SP) were notable. The first of these were purchased in 1968 and delivered in 1971. Some more were purchased in 1972, 1973 and 1974. By the end of 1978, the Iranian army had a total of 440 M109s.\textsuperscript{15}

Although purchases of the M109s represented a modernization of an existing capability, extensive training in vehicle operation and maintenance was required. This training was conducted at the Artillery School in Isfahan

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[12] Furlong, op.cit., p.725.
\item[14] The notable exceptions were the Russian M-46 130 mm towed gun and the 40-tube, 122 mm BM-21 version of the truck-mounted KATYUSHA rocket family. (Furlong, op.cit., p.725.)
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
with the assistance of U.S. advisors. Maintenance training was conducted at the Combat Support Training Centre at Tabriz.\textsuperscript{16}

For artillery spotting and forward air control, the Imperial Iranian Armed Aviation (IIAA) branch maintained 10 Cessna 0-2A fixed wing light aircraft, 40 Cessna 185s and 6 Cessna 310s.\textsuperscript{17}

The army had also developed an airborne and a special forces brigade along American lines against counter-insurgency operations. The Army Aviation Command with headquarters at Isfahan had a total of about 600 helicopters which provided transport, command and close fire support elements to the sky cavalry Brigade.\textsuperscript{18}

Iran intended to expand her army aviation strength from approximately 8,000 men and 406 aircraft from July 1976 to 14,000 men and over 800 late model helicopters by 1978. The initial cost of this programme for procurement, installation and training was estimated to be about $4 billion.\textsuperscript{19}

The IIAA-U.S. programme concept was generally agreed to in the fall of 1972. A contract was signed between Bell Helicopter International (BHI) and the Government of Iran

\textsuperscript{16} U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.18.
\textsuperscript{17} Air Force Magazine, December 1978, p.89.
\textsuperscript{18} Lenczowski, op.cit., p.420.
\textsuperscript{19} U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.17.
(GOI) on 21 February 1973 to train both pilots and training personnel. The training started for both groups on 10 April 1973. The concept for the development of the IIAA was perceived in the requirement for highly mobile tactical forces in a country of limited lines of communication and extensive border areas. The Shah established guidelines for the IIAA that called for a capability to (1) airlift (security deletion) infantry battalions; (2) support ground operations by armed helicopters (conventional and anti-tank roles); (3) support ground operations with air cavalry; and (4) provide for helicopter evacuation of battle casualties and resupply operations.

By the end of 1978 the Imperial Iranian Army had on its inventory 202 AH-IJ, 210 Bell 214A, 21 HUSKIE, 88 AB-205A, 70 AB-206 and 30 CH-47C helicopters.

The Iranian army also started purchasing TOW missiles/launchers in 1973, and delivery of 4,760 was completed in early 1975. The Hughes Aircraft Company was equipping a maintenance support facility at Shiraz for TOW missiles. The Iranian Government contracted a coproduction agreement with Emerson Electronics for TOW launchers.

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20 ibid.
The Iranian forces were used when in November/December 1973 Iran sent a task force of about 1,200 men to Oman to assist the Sultan to quell the insurgency in the province of Dhofar. (For a detailed discussion see Chapter III.)

Regarding the general disposition of the Iranian troops, initially, after the Second World War they were mainly deployed in the northern section. However, after the Iranian-Soviet rapprochement of 1962 the ground forces were shifted along the border with Iraq and generally towards the south. By mid-1976 most of these ground forces were deployed in the western part of the country due to the perceived Iraqi threat. In the northwest, the troops were based at Rezaiyeh, Sanandaj, and Qazvin; in the west at Khorensabad, Kerman Shah and Ahwaz; and in the northeast at Mashad. There was also evidence that the defence establishment intended to build many of its future bases in the southeastern part of the country. One of these bases (Chah Bahar) on completion was supposed to have a distinctive tri-service (army, navy, airforce) character.

To sum up it can be said that the Iranian army was the largest and the most established of the three services.


It also accounted for the bulk of Iran's military manpower. It had purchased some of the latest American artillery and missiles; the British Chieftain Tank and Scorpion Light Tank; and American and Italian helicopters. Although it had not fought any major war, it had gained some military experience in border fighting against Iraq and counter-insurgency operations against Oman. Despite its sophisticated equipment, it was heavily dependent on foreign military advisers and lacked adequate training, technical manpower and basic infrastructural facilities. But on the whole it can be said that the Iranian army was developing as a heavily mechanised and primarily air mobile force designed to have the capacity for projecting itself rapidly and efficiently in the direction of any conflict which could arise within Iran's growing security perimeter. Iran's massive import of heavy and light tanks, armoured personnel carriers and armoured cars in combination with its big fleet of helicopters (which were being delivered on a rush basis) provided the army's growing equipment base for an effective offensive capability.

The Imperial Iranian Airforce

The Imperial Iranian Air Force did not receive separate service status until August 1955.\textsuperscript{26} It was, however, organized as a branch of the army already before World War

\textsuperscript{26} John Paxton (ed), \textit{The Statesman's Yearbook 1973/74}, p.675.
II. After that war and especially after the Baghdad Pact in 1955, the U.S. military aid programme enabled Iran to develop her airforce with the F-86 fighter as its workhorse. The primary mission of the airforce was to provide air defence and close air support for the ground forces. It was only in 1965 that the government allocated some $400 million to its expansion and modernization.

The phenomenal growth and sophistication of the airforce can also be ascribed to the personal interest taken by the Shah in its buildup.

The airforce by the mid-1970s consisted of more than 60,000 personnel and was mainly patterned on the American model. It had a projected strength of approximately 500 combat aircraft, including F-4 Phantoms, F-5 Tiger-Fighter-bombers and F-14 Tomcats, all of which were equipped with air-to-air missiles.

By the end of 1978 the most spectacular items among Iran's purchases had been the 56 swing-wing F-14A Tomcat, 177 F-4E, 32 F-4D, 16 RF-4E, 140 F-5E and 13 Boeing 747.

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27 Lenczowski, op.cit., p.420.
28 ibid., p.421.
29 It was said that the Shah was very knowledgeable about modern weapons technology and used to read *Aviation Week* regularly before he read the Iranian press. (U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.7.)
The Shah's selection of the F-14A Tomcats was based on his consideration that its performance, armed with the Phoenix missile, could successfully counter the Soviet MIG-25 advanced fighter aircraft, and the fact that the Soviet Union had a number of bases near the Iranian border which were within advanced fighter operational range of Iran's major population and industrial centres.32 Besides, the F-14 also requires less pilot skill than the air-superiority fighter, the F-15. Its stand off capability with the Phoenix missiles is valuable in the low density threat, less-cluttered environment of Iran's air space, and it can be used best at maximum range in a setting where air threats are reasonably predictable. However, the main criticism against the procurement of the aircraft was its high technology, difficult maintenance and high cost.33

The Letters of Offer were signed in January and June 1974 for 80 aircraft at a cost of $1.94 billion. Purchase of the Phoenix missile system and support contracts increased the cost of the programme to $2.338 billion. Deliveries were planned from January 1976 through July 1978 at a rate of two per month for the first year, and three per month thereafter. By November 1976, 21 aircraft had been delivered and were mostly based at Khatami Air Base at Isfahan and Shiraz.34

34 United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, pp.148-149.
The programme originally had anticipated that base construction, training, and aircraft delivery would coincide. But slippages occurred, and without the catalyst of the first deliveries of F-14, Khatami Air Base would have been unsuitable for receiving the aircraft because of construction delays.35

It was, however, the F-4 aircraft which formed the backbone of IIAF. It purchased 32-F4D and 177 F-4E aircraft at a total cost of $1.05 billion. The F-4D was first introduced in Iran in 1968, all were delivered and based at Bushehr. The F-4E first arrived in 1971 and the remainder during 1977. They were mainly based at Mehrabad Shahrokhi, Shiraz and Bandar Abbas.36 The F-4Ds were capable of delivering laser-guided bombs. But almost all of the F-4Es had leading edge slats for increased manoeuvrability and were equipped with Maverick air-to-ground missiles and electro-optical target identification system.37

Yet another addition was the F-16 lightweight fighter aircraft. The Shah expressed interest in March 1975 on the basis that the aircraft would augment the F-14 in an air defence role and, in addition, perform air defence and close support missions currently being performed by the IIAF F-5 aircraft. It was stated that eventually the IIAF would need to replace the F-5 in its inventory. In

35 ibid., p.149.
36 ibid., p.148.
37 U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.29.
June 1975, Vice Minister of War General Toufanian indicated Iran's desire to purchase 160 F-16 aircraft. This was followed up in February 1976 by another order for the purchase of 300 aircraft.\(^{38}\)

By the end of 1978 Iran had ordered additional aircraft, including 160 F-16s, 5 RF-4E Phantoms and E-3A AWACS aircraft.\(^{39}\) Out of these aircraft ordered, the AWACS was clearly the most expensive and sophisticated. AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) is a Boeing 707 equipped with complex radar and guidance system. Costing $112 million apiece, the AWACS was one of the most complicated and expensive aircraft used by the U.S.A. With its look down radar capability the AWACS could spot low flying planes and missiles which often escape detection by ground based radars.\(^{40}\)

Many of these aircraft were scheduled to replace Iran's older planes and make Iran's airforce quantitatively and qualitatively the most advanced force in the Indian Ocean and Middle East area.

On the missile side, the IIAF employed shortrange, IR-homing AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles on its F-5s. The AIM-9 was also used on its F-4s. These F-4s were additionally armed with the AIM-7 SPARROW 2/3 for long-range

\(^{38}\) United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.150.

\(^{39}\) Air Force Magazine, p.89.

\(^{40}\) See Kayhan International, 30 April 1977, p.1. The Iranian government was reported negotiating for 3 more AWACS by late 1977. (ibid., 12 November 1977, p.3.)
intercepts. For the ground strike, some F-4Es had been fitted to carry the Hughes Mavericks. The IIAF also wanted to buy the anti-radar SHRIKE and stand-off CONDOR air-to-ground missiles. The low level airfield AA defence was provided by Shorts TIGERCAT SAMs and Oerlikon cannon controlled by Contraves SUPER FLEDERMAUS radar systems but by late summer 1973 these were supplemented by 2 Rapier SAM batteries ordered in 1971.

The IIAF's transport element by the end of 1978 consisted of 64C-130 EH, 10 HH-43F Huskies, 6 AB-205 and 84 AB-206A Jetrangers, 5 AB-212, 39 Bell 214C SAR, 2 CH-47C CHINOOKS, 16 Aerospatiale SUPER FRELONS and 2 S-61A helicopters.

The IIAF purchased the Improved Hawk (I-Hawk) in 1973 and received its first delivery in March 1975. This

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41 Furlong, op.cit., p.728.

42 The SHRIKE missile would be mounted on F-4Es and used for what is called 'radiation suppression'. The SHRIKE is a supersonic weapon designed to home in automatically on enemy radar stations. The Pentagon had asked Congress to oppose the sale to Iran of an additional 31 F-4E Phantom fighter-bomber and 1,000 SHRIKE missiles for $454.4 million. The F-4Es and the SHRIKE missiles were to be purchased instead of the more advanced F-4G WILD WEASEL fighter bombers sought by the Shah. (International Herald Tribune, 15 September 1978.)

43 The Rapier missile system offered a low level air defence system mounted on a movable vehicle which offered protection for tanks against a low level attack. Apart from Iran, the sophisticated Rapier missile had been sold to Abu Dhabi, Oman, Australia and to the British armed forces in NATO. (Kayhan International, 27 November 1976, p.1.)

programme was one of the largest and most complex of all programmes undertaken by the Iranian military. There were, however, initial difficulties in running the system.

To summarise, the IIAF had purchased the most advanced equipment which had prestige and deterrent value, although it was highly questionable whether such systems, particularly the F-14 and I-HAWK would have been effectively operating before the early to mid-1980s.

This acquisition pattern also extended to the support systems as well. The anticipated IIAF purchase of Project Peace Log (a programme to develop a functional logistics organization costing $300-$500 million dollars) would have required about 14,000 Iranian personnel by 1981.

There were slippages in nearly all major programmes due to shortfalls in training, construction, maintenance and logistical support. As a result of the shortage of trained personnel and other training delays, already trained

45 For details in the improvement of air defence also see 'USAF Pushes Iran Air Defense System', Aviation Week and Space Technology, 24 March 1975, p.23.

46 These difficulties resulted from a number of factors like construction delays, non-operational training equipment, lack of a formal on-the-job training programme, allocation of qualified students to higher priority programmes and a faulty automated logistics system that had resulted in some instances in up to a year's delay in the supply system. (U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.31.)

47 ibid., p.32.

48 ibid.
personnel were being shifted from their current programmes to those of higher priority e.g. trained air and maintenance crews from the F-5E to the F-14. Similarly, the better new personnel were assigned to the prestige programmes, engendering further delays in programmes such as I-HAWK, which were immensely complicated, but apparently of lesser priority.\footnote{49}

Self-sufficiency was therefore not easily attainable, even if the IIAF made no additional major purchases. Continued U.S. involvement and a concomitant dependency of the IIAF on the U.S. was unavoidable until the mid-1980s.\footnote{50}

The Imperial Iranian Navy

The Imperial Iranian Navy (IIN) traces its origin to 1927, when the Ministry of War ordered two frigates for its recently established Southern Command. The two gun-boats delivered in 1932 were followed in subsequent years by other ships until, in 1941, the Southern Command had four squadrons at its disposal. Each squadron included one frigate and at least two sloops.\footnote{51}

After 1970 the IIN had undergone a major modernization programme. While in terms of manpower it was the smallest among Iran's armed forces, nevertheless it had grown into

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item ibid. \footnote{49}
\item ibid. \footnote{50}
\item Lenczowski, op.cit., pp.422-423. \footnote{51}
\end{itemize}}
a respectable ocean-going force. By 1976 it already constituted by far the most impressive fleet in the Persian Gulf and no combination of the forces of the littoral states could offer the IIN a serious challenge.

By the end of 1978 the naval fleet included 1 ex-British destroyer (armed with Seacat SAMs); 2 ex-U.S. destroyers; 4 new Vosper Thornycroft MK.5 fast frigates (armed with Seakiller SSMs and Seacat SAMs); 4 ex-U.S. corvettes; 5 ex-U.S. minesweepers (3 coastal and 2 inshore); 7 large patrol craft, 5 Combattante II class FPBG with Harpoon SSM and 8 SRN-6 and 6 Wellington SH-7 hovercraft.

To help protect the sea lanes of communication through the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf, Iran had also bought 3 Tang class diesel submarines from the U.S. Also, on order were 4 Spruance-class destroyers fitted with the

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52 In this regard, refer to the remarks of Rear Admiral Mird-Habibullah while addressing the symposium on Iran's foreign policy. (Kayhan International, 12 March 1977.)


55 These submarines were of late World War II vintage. Valued at $54 million, they were supposed to be overhauled and then handed over to the Iranian Navy. (U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.23.)

Shah's objective of developing a naval capability for sustained operations in the Indian Ocean and protecting shipping and the sea approaches to the Gulf. Armament for the destroyers was supposed to include configuration for antiair warfare (AAW), antisubmarine warfare (ASW), torpedoes, electronic countermeasure (ECM) equipment, acoustic gear, helicopter landing platform, and the Harpoon missile.

The light naval forces included patrol craft and patrol boats. This was with a view to supporting the army in local intervention. In 1976, Iran operated the largest military hovercraft force in the world and the Iranian navy was the first to acquire a hovercraft fleet for patrol purposes. These hovercraft were first used when Iranian troops landed on Abu Musa and the Tumbs islands in November 1971.  

The Iranian navy had by mid-1970s acquired an air arm of aircraft of various types which included fixed wings and helicopters. These were used principally for purposes of antisubmarine warfare and for the escort of tankers sailing through the Shatt al-Arab. They could also be employed to support amphibious landing operations. By 1978 the strength of these aircraft included 1 ASW squadron

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57 These hovercraft (totalling 14 and all built in Britain) go scudding about the Persian Gulf on the cushion of air faster than any conventional ship. ('Iran's New Window on Persian Gulf', The Hindu, Madras, 13 February 1975, p. 6.)
with 12 SH-3D; 1 transport squadron with 6 SHRIKE COMMANDER, and 1 MR squadron with 6P-3F Orions. A fleet of 28 helicopters comprised 5 AB-205A Hueys, 7 AB-212s and 10 Agusta-Sikorsky SH-3D SEA KINGS for ASW.  

The mission of keeping the sea lanes open was assigned to the minesweepers and the larger ships of the fleet. Almost all of them had an extensive ASW armament as well as anti-aircraft, anti-ship and shore bombardment facilities. This was supposed to work in close co-operation with the airforce whose air support could be quickly sought since an IIAF Phantom squadron was based on the island of Kish, a mixed Phantom/F-5 squadron was at Bandar Abbas, and an F-5 squadron was at Bushehr. A major airstrip was also built on Abu Musa, and the Tumb islands and Abu Musa were fortified.

For maritime patrol duties, 6 long-range P-3 Orion aircraft were purchased. The long-range Orion, which was operated by the airforce, could stay aloft for seventeen hours, and thus could be used for maritime missions well beyond the Gulf. Stressing the Iranian navy's role beyond the Gulf, the Shah once said that Iran's security perimeter no longer stopped at the Strait of Hormuz but formally extended to parts of the Indian Ocean.

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59 Furlong, op.cit., p.726.
60 Lenczowski, op.cit., p.424.
In fact the Iranian strategic position was that it expected to be able to counter threats as far south into the Indian Ocean as 10th degree north latitude, which crosses the edge of Somalia and passes into the Indian Ocean from the Gulf of Aden.\(^6^2\)

To support the Iranian navy, a network of bases were being built after 1970. Fleet headquarters were kept at Bandar Abbas while Bushire and Chah Bahar acted as the main subsidiary operating bases. The base at Chah Bahar, situated in the southeast and close to Pakistani Baluchistan, was being built to accommodate the Spruance class destroyers and the diesel submarines purchased from the U.S.\(^6^3\) Till March 1976, work in the naval facilities had not begun and no contract for construction had been signed, though the Air Force base at Chah Bahar was finished. It was estimated that it would require an absolute minimum of 5 to 7 years to make ready the facilities to accommodate the Spruance class destroyers.\(^6^4\)

By the end of 1976 the IIN operated naval bases of which Bandar Abbas, Bushehr, and Khorramshahr were the


\(^{63}\) U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.22.

\(^{64}\) ibid., p.19.
most important. There was a training base at Bandar Pahlavi on the Caspian Sea and smaller bases on Kharg Island and Hengam Island in the Persian Gulf. However, the very rapid Iranian naval buildup during the past few years had created some problems. Crews lacked experience and there was a dearth of highly trained cadres to provide them with the necessary training for their new tasks. Added to this was the need to create infrastructural facilities for the upkeep and repair of vessels as well as for the local manufacture of spare parts.

Nevertheless, although the Iranian navy by the end of 1976 was young and lacked experience, it was the most modern and the best equipped of the Indian Ocean navies after that of India. By 1978 it had established a capability to patrol the shallow Gulf waters and to project Iranian military forces onto the Arab side of the Gulf. The acquisition of larger surface vessels was intended to give the Iranian Navy a growing equipment base from which to contemplate a 'blue water' naval presence in the Indian Ocean. The procurement of P-3C maritime patrol aircraft complemented Iran's growing surface vessel presence in the Gulf of Oman-Indian Ocean area by adding a capability for

65 ibid., p.19.


maritime reconnaissance. And lastly, the purchase of fast patrol boats armed with the latest types of naval armament provided Iran with the equipment necessary for vigorous coastal protection and Gulf surveillance.

Iran's Nuclear Programme

Iran in the 1970s had embarked upon an ambitious atomic power generation programme aimed at building 20 nuclear power stations generating 23,000 megawatts of electricity by 1994.68

Iran's decision to go in for a major nuclear programme was made when in February 1974 she entered into a bilateral agreement with France whereby French firms would build several nuclear power stations in Iran with a total output of 5,000 megawatts and a cost of $1,200 million.69 Again in June 1974, the foreign ministers of both countries signed an agreement under which France was to build five nuclear power stations in Iran.70 Since then Iran has concluded nuclear power agreements with West Germany, Great Britain and the United States. The most important of these was with the U.S., signed in March 1975, according to which


70 Ibid.
the U.S. was to export nuclear power stations and fissile material enough for eight complete plants. 71

Iran's Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) in July 1976 signed two contracts with the German company Kraftwerk Union (KWU) to obtain on a turnkey basis, two nuclear power plants and fuel. 72 In addition to this, the KWU had also agreed to supply the initial load of fuel for both reactors, plus reloadings for the first 10 years of operation. Iran had also negotiated the purchase of two, 900-megawatt, pressurized water reactors from France's Framatome. 73

The position of raw materials, particularly uranium, is not good in Iran. It was estimated that Iran would require 100,000 tonnes of uranium by the end of the century. 74

In November 1974, documents were signed under which the French Atomic Energy Commission was to help in supplying Iran with uranium for the two nuclear plants. One document also specified French assistance in exploiting the uranium deposits which might be discovered in a third country. 75

71 ibid.
72 Labelled 'Iran 1' and 'Iran 2', the 1,200 MW plants were located near the Persian Gulf port of Bushehr. Work on these plants began in 1975 and they were supposed to become operational by the early 1980s.
73 Fallah, op.cit., p.240.
74 ibid.
75 Beri, op.cit.
Australia had also agreed to sell uranium to Iran. In this regard, the two governments had drawn up a nuclear safeguards agreement, which if finalised, could clear the way for the purchase of up to $2 billion in uranium ore. The talks between the two governments had continued for four years and there was a deadlock due to Iran not being allowed to reprocess any Australian uranium without prior consent. Iran was also interested in purchasing between 15,000 to 20,000 tons of uranium, making it by far Australia’s largest customer. It is estimated that Iran had already stockpiled another 30,000 tons of uranium purchased from a number of African and Western countries. Besides this, a major $300 million uranium exploration programme was launched at home. Meanwhile, Iran had entered into discussions with a number of Western European countries, including France for investment in uranium enrichment facilities. A ten per cent share was acquired in the Eurodif gaseous diffusion enrichment plant under construction in Tricastin, France. Other shareholders included France, Spain, Belgium and Italy and the plant was expected to reach a full capacity of 10.8 million of separative work units at the end of 1981.

77 The Age, 29 November 1978.
78 Rahmani, op.cit.
Iran was keen to acquire expertise in research and training in the atomic field. Although Tehran University was involved in atomic research for almost 20 years, a new government institution, the Atomic Energy Organization was set up in 1974.\(^\text{80}\) This organization was to bear complete responsibility for planning and implementing all programmes related to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. In October 1975, Iran and Britain signed two nuclear cooperation deals covering cooperation in nuclear research, including training for Iranian specialists at the Harwell nuclear research centre, and technical assistance in establishing and managing control and safety systems of the nuclear facilities.\(^\text{81}\)

Iran is a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency and signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968.\(^\text{82}\) Iran is also on record as favouring a so-called nuclear free zone in the Middle East region.\(^\text{83}\) The Shah had frequently stressed the fact that Iran would not go for nuclear armaments. In September 1974, while addressing a press conference in Australia he said:

\(^{80}\) Beri, op.cit., p.6.

\(^{81}\) Reza Fazli, op.cit., p.241.

\(^{82}\) Ibid. Nuclear Fact Sheet for Iran, Appendix D, p.443.

\(^{83}\) E.g. see Mr Abbas Ali Khalatbari, the Foreign Minister of Iran's address to the 30th Session of the U.N. General Assembly in Iran Almanac 1976 and book of facts, 15th edition, Tehran: Echo of Iran, July 1976, p.158.
Our air force will be very well equipped in five years time. And this is needed because we just have a look around us and see what others have in order to equip [ourselves] with what we can. There is nothing more dangerous for a vitally important country geographically like mine to be unable to defend not only its borders but also its interests ... From those nuclear reactors we are not going to try to make bombs. And this is a cardinal point in our national policy.84

He also referred to depending on the nuclear power of the United States to offset potential nuclear threats, arguing in effect as follows:

First of all we have very close relations with the United States. Probably we could not do without them, because the present world is confronted with a problem of some countries possessing nuclear weapons and some not. We are among those who do not possess nuclear weapons so the friendship of a country such as the United States with their arsenal of nuclear weapons ... is absolutely vital.85

However, it can be said that Iran did not like the controls imposed by the provisions of the NPT on the possible misuses of transferred technology. In order to break the hold of the nuclear powers, she has used the lure of petro-dollars in bypassing super-powers and entered into big financial deals with West Germany and France for building nuclear power plants.86

84 Kayhan International, 5 October 1974, p.4.
85 ibid.
86 In this regard see, 'Iran keen on Indian Aid to Buildup Uranium Resources', The Hindu, Madras, 24 December 1975.
Iran may have eventually opted for nuclear weapons if she had attained the technology for harnessing power. The Shah had already demonstrated his willingness to do everything in his power to safeguard the security of his country against all palpable contingencies. In this connection the Shah said:

> If 20 or 30 ridiculous little countries are growing to develop nuclear weapons, then I may have to revise my policies.\(^{87}\)

To sum up it may be mentioned that Iran's dwindling oil resources and a desire to attain an industrial power status prompted the programmes for nuclear energy. Although the Shah advocated the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only, it could not be said that Iran would not eventually opt for the development of nuclear weaponry. This could be safely speculated in the light of its expanding military programme and assumption of regional responsibilities for security in the Persian Gulf. But the switch from peaceful uses of nuclear energy to nuclear weapons needs a technological base, trained manpower, financial resources and a political decision. Although Iran under the Shah had sufficient financial resources and a strong leadership, it lacked a techno-industrial base and trained manpower.\(^{88}\)

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\(^{87}\) Kayhan International, 5 October 1978.

CHAPTER III

IRAN'S OCCUPATION OF THE GULF ISLANDS
AND MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN OMAN
Introduction

Iran's military occupation of the three islands in the Persian Gulf and military intervention in Oman were the two notable instances when its armed forces were used outside the borders. While the former was a sudden military operation lasting for a few hours, the latter was a sustained case of military intervention for many years. In this chapter the focus of study is to analyse the different events leading to these two events; the conduct of operations by Iran; the reasons for Iran's successful military involvement (in Oman); and how far these moves served to fit in the context of expanding security horizons of Iran which followed the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf.

Throughout the mid and late 1960s, Iran's major preoccupation in foreign policy was the future of the Persian Gulf.\(^1\) Iran's rapprochement with the Soviet Union enabled it to focus attention towards security in the south. The primary objectives in the south (i.e. gulf area) were mainly three: (a) to safeguard the regime against internal subversion sponsored directly or indirectly by hostile Arab states or groups or by Soviet proxy; (b) to ensure free transit through the Straits of Hormuz, the Gulf and the Shatt-al-Arab; and (c) to protect Iranian

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oil resources and facilities on and offshore against any
deliberate or accidental disruption. A decision to seek
a dominating role in Gulf affairs was taken before the
announcement of Britain's withdrawal from the Persian
Gulf was made in January 1968. The fact that Iran was
contemplating these moves before the British withdrawal
gave it a great advantage in seeking to shape the future
events.

It forfeited its historical claim to Bahrain which
gained independence in May 1970 through the tripartite
negotiations among Iran, Britain and the United Nations.
This forfeiture of historical claim to Bahrain, considered
by many Iranians as the fourteenth province of Iran, was
rumoured at that time, (but discounted by British
authorities) to have come about through Iran's tacit
understanding with Britain. For Iran believed it had
obtained a tacit understanding of Britain, whereby its
historical claim to the Great and Little Tumb Islands and
Abu Musa was to be satisfied as a compromise for it to
permit the people of Bahrain to decide their own political

2 Rouhollah K. Ramazani, 'Emerging Patterns of Regional
Relations in Iranian Foreign Policy', Orbis, Vol.XVIII,
No.4, Winter 1975, p.1052.

3 In March 1965, the Shah had declared that in future Iran
would focus her military planning on the Gulf, and in
February 1967, a new Third Army Corps complete with
paratroop units was created in Shiraz, Iran's major city.
(Burrell, Cottrell, op.cit., p.1.)
future. However, the Shah in a speech delivered in New Delhi on 4 January 1969 rationalised the dropping of the Iranian claim saying:

If the people of Bahrain did not want to be unified with Iran, they would be free to remain separate. It was against Iran's principles to use force to acquire territory against the wishes of the people of that country.

In November 1970, the striking power of the augmented Iranian forces was demonstrated in a major military exercise held near the island of Beni Farur, an Iranian possession in the Gulf. The manoeuvres, which involved units from all the three services, were praised in the Tehran press as showing that Iran's military planning had begun to bear fruit and that the country would be in a position to exercise undisputed leadership in the Gulf after the British withdrawal.

Before this incident, the Iranian government in a statement on 1 April 1968 had said that it would 'reserve all its rights in the Persian Gulf' and would in no way tolerate the 'historical inequity and injustice' of the proposed Union of the Gulf states. Similarly, on various occasions during the summer of 1971, the Shah of Iran,

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5 *Times of India*, 5 January 1969.

6 Lenczowski, op.cit., p.403.

7 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* 1971, p.24500.
then Prime Minister Mr Hoveida and the then Foreign Minister, Mr Ardeshir Zahedi, all made statements asserting Iran's rights to Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tumb islands, when the British withdrew from the Gulf at the end of the year. They also intimated that Iran would, if necessary, exercise its claim by force. In making this claim the Shah and his Ministers stressed that the islands were Iranian before they fell into the hands of the present Arab owners in the 19th century at a time when Iran was politically weak; and that it was only the British pacification of the Gulf which secured de facto administration of Abu Musa and the Tumbs by Sharjah and Ras al Khaimah respectively.8

On 11 June 1971, an Israeli tanker, entering the Red Sea through the Bab El Mandeb Straits, had been fired on with rockets from a small boat which appeared to come from the island of Perim (owned by the Peoples' Democratic Republic of the Yemen, PDRY). A Palestinian guerrilla group claimed responsibility for the attack. This event hardened the Shah's resolve and he made it clear that he would oppose any union of the Gulf Arab Emirates unless his demands for the islands were met.9

The British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf, a corollary of its east-of-Suez policy, which was completed

8 ibid., 1971, p.25010.

on 30 November 1971. The same day Iran occupied the three disputed barren Gulf islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tumbs near the narrow 21-mile-wide entrance to the Straits of Hormuz.

Abu Musa, recognized by Britain as belonging to Sharjah had as its only resource iron oxide worked for three months in each year, the product of which was reputed to be used in the manufacture of cosmetics for a well-known European fashion-house. A last minute compromise agreement between Iran and Sharjah was achieved largely through the efforts of Sir William Luce, a former Political Resident on the Gulf, working on behalf of the British government. According to the terms of the agreement reached, the ownership would in practice be shared (with Iranian troops stationed on the island) and the income from any future oil discoveries divided equally. In the case of the two Tumb islands - one of which boasted a manned lighthouse and an Arab fishing village, the other

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11 Abu Musa's population was then not more than 500 people; the Greater Tumb had about 150 inhabitants while the Lesser Tumb was uninhabited. (Lenczowski, op.cit., p.404 and Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1971, p.25010.)


13 ibid. For details of the agreement also see Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1971, pp.25010-25011.
being uninhabited - no agreement was reached with Ras al Khaimah, whose ownership of the Tumbs was recognized by the British government.\textsuperscript{14}

The Iranian troops landed on 30 November 1971 and occupied both islands meeting resistance from a police post maintained by Ras al Khaimah on the Greater Tumb. The local police had opened fire on Iranian troops, killing a naval officer and two soldiers and wounding another soldier. The Iranian troops had returned the fire, killing four island policemen and injuring five others.\textsuperscript{15}

The military operations were carried out by an Iranian naval task force. The navy's amphibious capability had been increased through the formation of the Sea Ranger Battalion (formed and trained along the lines of Britain's Royal Marine Commando units) which was employed in the landings on these islands.\textsuperscript{16}

Iran's military occupation of the islands was strongly defended by its own government. According to two Iranian scholars,

\begin{quote}
the Iranian Government's arguments in support of its claim to the islands ranged from the purely historical to the frankly pragmatic.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{14} ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1971, p.25010.
\textsuperscript{16} The hovercraft fleet was used to transport the Sea Rangers for amphibious assaults on the islands. It is said that the fleet, based in the northern part of the Gulf, could carry the Sea Rangers across the Gulf within 2 hours. (R.D.M. Furlong, 'Iran - a power to be reckoned with', International Defense Review (Geneva), Vol.6, No.6, December 1973, p.726.
\textsuperscript{17} Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, The Foreign Relations of Iran, Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1974, p.222.
\end{footnotes}
In addition to the Iranian historical claim that these islands had been under the Iranian sovereignty until 80 years ago, Tehran used the argument of the geostrategic necessity of occupation, since the islands were at a critical 'choke-point' near the strategic Straits of Hormuz.\(^\text{18}\) It was also argued that since Iran was vitally dependent on the free flow of oil and other commodities through the Straits, it had to be in physical control of these islands.\(^\text{19}\)

The Iranian seizure of the islands provoked an immediate and hostile response in most of the Arab world. Within the Trucial States themselves minor riots occurred and property belonging to Iranian banks and merchants was destroyed. In Baghdad, the Iraqi government condemned Iran and her 'flagrant aggression in collusion with Britain' and accused Britain of not fulfilling the obligation to preserve 'the Arab character of the islands'. On a more concrete plane, a campaign of harassment and expulsion was started against the Persian community in Iraq, and diplomatic links with London and Tehran were severed by Baghdad.\(^\text{20}\) Saudi Arabia and Kuwait joined in the condemnation but in more muted tones.\(^\text{21}\) In the Peoples'

\(^{18}\) The geo-strategic importance of the islands, particularly Abu Musa, was realised by the United States' Navy when in the year 1955 it considered a scheme to establish a naval base there. (R.M.Burrell, *The Persian Gulf*, New York: The Library Press, The Washington Papers, No.1, 1972, p.44.)

\(^{19}\) Chubin and Zabih, op.cit., p.223.


\(^{21}\) ibid.
Republic of the South Yemen an interesting volte-face was performed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG) - a Chinese aided revolutionary movement, which now called for British action to expel the Iranian invaders. In Cairo, the official reaction was very subdued for it was believed that the islands were small, distant and unimportant, and that any major diplomatic protest move would only serve to distract attention from the crucial confrontation with Israel. Such opinion did not, however, prevail in Libya where Colonel Qaddafi offered to send Arab guerrillas to retake the islands. He also condemned the British role in the affair and on 7 December nationalized the assets belonging to the British Petroleum Company in Libya.

But on the whole, despite some of these initial violent responses, the Iranian action seemed to have passed off barely noticed in international circles. This could be attributed to the following factors:

Firstly, Iran had greatly increased her military powers in the Persian Gulf over the last 3-4 years and the neighbouring states had generally acquiesced in her position of dominance. This position of dominance was

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22 ibid.
23 ibid.
24 ibid., p.46.
25 R.M. Burrell, 'Iranian foreign policy during the last decade', *Asian Affairs*, No.61, February 1974, p.11.
assured by the Shah's leadership in the oil negotiations which resulted in the Tehran Agreement of 14 February 1971 thus holding prospects of a significant increase in revenues for the Arab oil producing states in the area. Furthermore, by 1971 the Iranian airforce with its 30 F-4 and 100 F-5 fighters and fighter-bombers, and a growing transport force was more than a match for the combined Arab forces in the Gulf area. The navy, greatly improved, though lacking in experience, completely outclassed any possible Arab rival. The army, at 150,000 strong, was twice as big as that of Iraq and was in a process of reorganization.  

Secondly, from the position of the smaller states of the Persian Gulf, unable to look after their own defence, Pax Iranica was not much different from Pax Britannica.

Thirdly, immediately before and after occupation of the islands, Iran launched a strong 'diplomatic offensive' justifying occupation on historical and strategic grounds.

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28 The inability of the Gulf states to defend themselves and their heightened sense of insecurity was demonstrated by the fact that shortly after Prime Minister Wilson spoke in parliament about Britain's withdrawal, the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi flew to London to confer with the British and offer - in general terms and in the name of other Trucial Sheikhs - to pay the entire cost of Britain's military presence in the Gulf if only it could stay. (See The New York Times, 23 January 1968.)

29 Besides historical and strategic interests, the islands had been a thorn in the side of the Iranians because of the activities of the Arab inhabitants who earned a profitable livelihood from the smuggling of high dutiable articles from Dubai into selected creeks along the southern shores of Iran. It was, therefore, not surprising to learn that the Arabs promptly abandoned the island as soon as it was occupied by the Iranian troops. (Owen, op.cit., p.77.)
Also, the sudden occupation 24 hours before the termination of the British Treaty of Protection was apparently motivated by a desire to show that the dispute over their ownership was with Britain rather than the Arab Sheikdoms.  

And finally, Iran's dropping of its historical claim to Bahrain assuaged to a greater extent the fears of neighbours about Iran's overt, expansionistic designs in the Gulf.

In contrast to the sudden occupation of the islands in the Persian Gulf, Iran's military involvement in Oman was more systematic and prolonged. Although the rebellion in Oman started in 1965, it was only in 1972 that Iran's aid began, in the form of supply of military equipment when

30 ibid.


32 In fact, the roots of the rebellion can be traced even further back when a large number of Dhofaris joined the influx of workers accompanying the Gulf oil boom in the 1950s. They, along with others, absorbed the ideas of Arab nationalism and Marxism. (For details see Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1974.).
Sultan Qubbus ben Said's troops could not quell the insurgency. The Iranian troops (a battle group of about 1,200 men) landed in the Dhofar coast of Oman in November 1973 when the Sultan's plea for military support was not heeded by other Arab states. Early in February 1974, Iranian troops freed the entire Salalah-Tamarit road, splitting the rebel forces into two groups and isolating them on the eastern side of Mount Qoreh. The Iranian battle group left Oman on 10 October 1974 but was replaced at the end of the year. By 1975 the rebellion had lost its momentum, and the insurgents' rout became certain after

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33 The Iranian involvement followed the previous unsuccessful efforts by other nations e.g. Great Britain, Pakistan and to a lesser extent India in helping the Sultan to quell the rebellion. The British provided the key positions in the command and ranks of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF); a great proportion of the non-commissioned officers and ordinary enlisted men were Baluchis; and a few Indians performed important roles in the fledgling navy. (John Duke Anthony, 'Insurrection and Intervention: The War in Dhofar', in Abbas Amirie (ed.), The Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics, Tehran: Institute for International Political and Economic Studies, 1975, p.287.)


36 Price, op.cit., p.9.
the fall of its main stronghold, the port of Rakhyut in January 1975. In a series of pincer attacks, Iranian soldiers cleared a 3,000 sq km area of the insurgents, killing and capturing 250 of them. The remaining insurgents believed to number about 750, were pushed into a narrow strip between the border with South Yemen and the Damavand Line.\textsuperscript{37}

The Iranian forces suffered losses in January 1975 when some of their soldiers were reportedly killed in an ambush near Raysut. It was estimated that the total number of dead by January 1976 was not above 500.\textsuperscript{38}

The Sultan made an announcement in December 1975 saying that the rebellion was defeated. It was however in 1976 that the rebel forces were in dire straits; many were forced back into their sanctuary in the Peoples' Democratic Republic of South Yemen (PDRY) and many others defected.\textsuperscript{39}

With regard to weapons and equipment, the rebels were reported to have a large number of Soviet made weapons which included SAM 7 anti-aircraft missiles, Katyusha rockets, 82 mm mortars and heavy cannon with sophisticated

\textsuperscript{37} Kayhan International, 1 February 1975. The Damavand Line built in 1975 by the Sultan's forces created a series of small but linked military outposts extending from the coastal plain into the mountains. The first was, however, the Hornbeam Line constructed in 1973. By means of these positions in the mountains, the camel and mule tracks leading into Dhofar from the PDRY were sealed.

\textsuperscript{38} Lenczowski, op.cit., p.411.

\textsuperscript{39} ibid.
fragmentation projectiles. Highly disciplined guerrillas were given ideological training in 'Lenin and Lin Piao schools' in Hauf and Al-Kaida in South Yemen. Between 50% and 70% of the rebels had RPG mortars; others were armed with ZPU aircraft weapons. According to a defence correspondent, the total number of Dhofaris active in various political, military and intelligence fields of the war was estimated to be about 4,000. But the total fighting force did not seem to exceed 2,000.

In comparison to this, the Iranian forces by 1976 were reported to be ranging between 1,500-2,000 men supported by a substantial number of helicopters. By rotating its forces every three months, Iran was supposed to have given counter-insurgency training to between 15,000-18,000 troops which served in Dhofar from 1974 to 1977. There

40 ibid.
41 Kayhan International, 1 February 1975.
42 ibid., 8 February 1975.

On the contrary, the PFLO in their Gulf Bulletins, published in London gave the figure of Iranian forces as 8,000 while Fred Halliday in his book Arabia Without Sultans, adduces the figure as 10,000.
44 ibid.
were also reports that Iranian F-5 Phantom jets had been carrying out unannounced simulated combat missions twice a week near Oman's borders with South Yemen although there was no possibility of any large-scale South Yemeni attack. Furthermore, a particular show of military strength came when in October 1975 a squadron of Iranian destroyers appeared off the Dhofari coast. Within two days they fired 1,500 four- and five-inch shells into a six-mile-long strip of inland territory between the coastal villages of Dhalqut and Rakhyut. The heavy bombardment was not announced by the Iranian and Omani Governments, apparently to avoid fanning further resentment in other Arab nations over the military presence of Iran in an Arab country.

However, this Iranian involvement in Oman became controversial in the adjoining Gulf states and stirred atavistic fears of the Persian-Arab rivalry. In a press statement the Sultan said:

The fact that we sought the assistance of Iranian troops was in reply to the alliance of the so-called Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf with Iran's Tudeh Party.

The neighbouring Arab states, e.g. Kuwait, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, also carried shrill anti-Iranian propaganda in their press.

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46 ibid.


48 ibid.
The Dhofar rebellion ended in 1977 when Iranian troops were formally withdrawn after suppressing the rebellion successfully.\(^49\) The main reasons for successful military intervention by Iran can be described as the following:

a. Since no help was forthcoming from Oman's Arab neighbours when the Sultan made an impassioned plea for it, Iran was tacitly taken as the protector of the status quo.

b. The Iranian intervention was facilitated to a great extent by the absence of any Iranian irredentist claims over Oman unlike Bahrain, Iraq, Ras al Khayma and Sharjah.

c. The strong overlapping security interests of Iran and Oman also contributed to Iran's successful military performance. Of all the states in the Gulf, Iran and Oman are states whose territorial waters overlap as they do in the strategic Straits of Hormuz, and in which oil tankers traverse at the rate of one in every 12 minutes. Emphasizing this point the Shah once said:

\[
\text{Our role in Oman has not ended ... whenever the Sultan of Oman desires our assistance, we are ready to return there, and as long as the Straits of Hormuz are threatened,}
\]

\(^{49}\) The successful suppression of the Dhofar rebellion was mainly due to: the lack of cohesion among the rebel groups, shortage of military supplies, and withdrawal of international support. (For an exhaustive elaboration of the reasons for Dhofar rebellion's failure see Anthony op.cit., pp.287-295 and Bard E. O'Neill and W. Brundage, 'Revolutionary Warfare in Oman: A Strategic Appraisal', Middle East Review, Vol.X, No.4, Summer 1978, pp.51-55.)
the Sultanate of Oman and its stability will be important to us.\textsuperscript{50}

Besides the security interests, they also shared a common desire about the perpetuation, of their respective monarchies from radical threats in the area.

d. The presence of British officers in the Omani army in senior positions obviated direct contact between the Omanis and the Iranians.\textsuperscript{51} This diminished to a great extent the possibility of a clash between the two groups along nationalistic lines.

e. The lack of international sympathy and support for the rebels also helped the task of Omani and Iranian forces in finally quelling the rebellion. In 1970 (5 years after fighting had begun) none of the Arab governments of North Africa supported the guerrilla

\textsuperscript{50} The Shah's interview to Egyptian daily \textit{Al-Ahram} as quoted in \textit{Kayhan International}, 12 June 1976.

\textsuperscript{51} Oman's treaty relationship with the United Kingdom began in 1798 in order to preempt French interest in the territory. Since then, British-Omani links have acquired a special relationship, covering economic and political affairs. The British military involvement in Oman was formalised in July 1958 in an Exchange of Letters. In this document, the U.K. agreed, at Oman's request, to provide regular officers on secondment from the British army; to provide training facilities for Oman's armed forces' and to advise on training and other matters. By January 1975, about 500 British officers and NCOs in all were seconded or individually contracted to Sultan's armed forces (SAF) and the other sections of the Sultan's government. (See Price, \textit{Oman: Insurgency and Development}, p.14.)
movement. Yet these states, particularly Egypt and to a lesser extent Algeria, had extended decisive aid to revolts in the PDRY from 1964-67, who were engaged in armed conflict against the British in Aden colony. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and the UAE in the past had supported guerrilla struggles of other Arabs. In the case of Oman they either ignored their appeals for support or in some cases actually aided and abetted their principal adversary, the Omani government.52

China, at one time a strong supporter of the guerrilla movements, terminated its assistance in the spring of 1973.53 The Iraqi-Iranian rapprochement in March 1975 over the Shatt-al-Arab dispute was also a major blow to the rebel cause as Iraq had been a major source of funds, training and propaganda for the rebels.54 In February 1976, Iraq took the initiative in resuming diplomatic links with Oman.55

Saudi Arabia established diplomatic ties with South Yemen in early 1976 and embarked on a project for the construction of an oil pipeline to transport

52 Anthony, op.cit., p.287.
53 Like Bangladesh and Ethiopia in 1971 and 1972 respectively, China probably saw more advantage in promoting state-to-state relations with Iran rather than supporting a doubtful insurgency.
54 In this connection see Shah's interview to C.L. Sulzberger in International Herald Tribune, 23 April 1973.
55 Price, Oil and Middle East Security, p.62.
crude oil from its fields, through the South Yemen territory to the Bay of Aden.\footnote{56}

And finally in late 1975 South Yemen backed down from its open and extensive support for PFLO.\footnote{57}

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\footnote{56}{A good part of the Saudi crude is exported through a pipeline to the Mediterranean but this pipeline is susceptible to closure in case of war. The new route, if completed, would provide a safe alternative to the Saudi crude export, in case the entrance to the Persian Gulf is blocked. \textit{(Kayhan International, 10 April 1976.)}}

\footnote{57}{An important initial signal in this regard was the main speech delivered in November 1974 at the Seventh Annual Celebrations of the PDRY's independence from Great Britain by President Salim Rubaya Ali. On that occasion, the President indicated that the day was approaching when the Aden regime would seek to establish diplomatic relations with the UAE, Qatar and Bahrain. This hint of a major policy shift was given further momentum a few months later when the PDRY's Foreign Minister Salih Mufti visited these states to prepare the way for eventual establishment of diplomatic relations. \textit{(Anthony, op.cit., p.295.)}}

It may also be mentioned that since 1967, the PDRY had been the only serious Marxist regime in the area. In its support for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO) insurgency in Oman's Dhofar province, Aden had provided every kind of assistance, from indoctrination to military training. Before the rebellion was defeated, PFLO's seven-man central committee was based in Aden. Recruitment into the PFLO was done at an early age by a combination of coercion and invitation. Jabali (mountain) children were sent to the People's School, formerly Lenin School, at al-Gheidha. Further training in weaponry and fieldcraft was provided at the Revolutionary Training Camp near Hauf. The hard-core PFLO recruits then went to the Soviet Union for further training. Finances for the movement were mainly provided by the PDRY in the form of a monthly budget or through donations from PFLO members and supporters. The PDRY also provided the PFLO with passports and its Kuwait embassy was used to maintain contacts with PFLO members in the Gulf. East Germany assisted in training the PDRY police and security forces, and Cuba mainly trained pilots and gave some military and medical instructions. \textit{(Price, Oman: Insurgency and Development, p.7.)}
f. Besides the fizzling out of international support, the Sultan's strong and effective counter-insurgency programme emerged as a critical variable. As Walter Soderlund reminds us:

... as soon as the challenge is in the open, the success of the operation depends not primarily on the development of insurgent strength, but more importantly on the degree of vigour, determination, and skill with which the incumbent regime acts to defend itself, both politically and militarily.\(^5^8\)

Politically, the Sultan after 1970 embarked on a serious effort to reduce the insurgents' active popular support by, inter alia, bringing modern economic planning and techniques to the Jebal and other fertile areas, promising Jabali participation in the running of their own affairs.\(^5^9\)

In the military sphere, the new counter-insurgency policy stressed solid and well-established counter-


\(^5^9\) Within this context, the role of the Civic Action Teams (CATs) stands out prominently. Especially conceived for pacification activities, the CATs drilled wells for the Jabalis (a major demand) and operated government centres, schools, clinics and stores. Compared with the gross neglect of the past, this 'benign attention' to the popular needs was well appreciated. (For details regarding the Sultan's pacification measures see Price, *Oman: Insurgency and Development*, pp.9-12.) For the policies of neglect and the incompetence of the previous Sultan, Said bin Taimur, also see R.P. Owen, 'Developments in the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman', *The World Today*, Vol.26, No.9, September 1970, pp.379-383.
guerrilla techniques, including aggressive small-unit patrols from secure bases in insurgent areas; the construction of barriers (the Hornbeam and Damavand line) across the PFLO's main camel-train supply routes to the more populous eastern sector of Dhofar; and the use of local militia (Firqats), half of whom were defectors from the PFLO, to provide security and permanent government presence.

Conclusion

Iran's occupation of the islands in the Persian Gulf was an arbitrary act while the intervention in Oman was based on a request for help by the Sultan's government. Both these military undertakings by Iran were motivated by a cumulative set of factors. They can be enumerated as under:

(a) The Shah's moves served to demonstrate that he considered the Persian Gulf to be within Iran's security


61 Although the role of Iranian intervention in Dhofar was successful, the Iranian troops had to operate under certain limitations. These limitations were: the fear of political opposition from Iran's seven immediate neighbours; the desire to prevent the Aden government from being provoked to a point where they would be compelled to intervene on behalf of the side of the rebels; and the climatic and topographical features of Dhofar which limited the free mobility and maneuverability of the troops. (For details see Anthony, op. cit., pp.300-302.)
purview and that he would act quickly in face of likely threat in the Persian Gulf or in its vicinity. He underlined this point when he said:

Sometimes, the national interest requires the commitment of the armed forces outside the country's borders; such was the case for Iranian military operations in [the Omani southern province of] Dhofar.62

(b) The occupation of the islands served to demonstrate dramatically and with considerable psychological and political impact, (coming as it did just one day before the treaties giving Britain control of the external affairs of the Trucial Sheikdoms were to expire), that Iran was preparing to assume Britain's role as protector of the Persian Gulf.63

(c) Besides strategic considerations, the military intervention was to give the Iranian army combat experience in counter-insurgency operations.64 By undertaking a commitment in Dhofar the Shah was providing valuable

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63 In this regard note the Shah's statement in which he said in unequivocal terms that the United States should not and could not step into the 'vacuum created by the British withdrawal'. (New York Times, 26 April 1970.)

64 According to some writers even if Dhofar had not existed, Iran would have invented it. Dhofar provided a good fighting experience and a trial of her newly acquired weaponry. (Anthony, op.cit., p.308.)
operational training for an army heretofore untested in combat, logistics, and local maintenance and support - all crucial factors in the establishment of a potent offensive capability. This, in turn, helped to justify her future purchase of armaments. Notwithstanding the fact that the combat performance of Iranian troops was, at times, described as lacklustre,\(^{65}\) they were instrumental in opening the transportation links with the interior by establishing forward helicopter bases, control over the road to Midway, in seizing and holding the PFLO's self-proclaimed capital of 'liberated Dhofar' at Rakhyut, and in building the Damavand line.

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\(^{65}\) *Washington Post*, 16 December 1974. This report by Jim Ho'agland indicates that the 3-4 month troop rotation policy, over-reliance on fire power in line of pursuit and general inexperience accounted for many of the Iranian difficulties.
Introduction

An objective analysis of Iran as a regional military power cannot be carried out adequately without studying the United States military relationship with Iran. The United States has played an important role in strengthening Iran which has tried to protect American interests in the Persian Gulf area.

Although Iran and other Persian Gulf states gained importance among the American public in the winter of 1973-74, active American interests began early in the Second World War. In this Chapter an attempt has been made to discuss Iran-United States military relationship under the following main headings:

A. The Evolution of U.S. Military Programmes in Iran.
B. The U.S. Military Presence in Iran.
C. United States Arms Policy: Main Interests and Objectives.

Evolution of U.S. Military Programmes in Iran

Although the beginnings of the United States-Iranian relationship can be traced back as early as the year 1851, the official U.S.-Iranian military cooperation dates from

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1 This was when a draft treaty was negotiated between the American and Iranian envoys to the Sublime Porte at Constantinople. For a brief historical overview of Iran-U.S. relations from 1851 till the end of the Second World War see, Mahmoud Foroughi, 'Iran's Policy Towards the United States' in Abbas Amirie and Hamilton A. Twitchell (eds.), Iran in the 1980s, Tehran: Institute for International Political and Economic Studies, 1978, pp.339-349.
World War II when the first U.S. mission went to Iran. This military cooperation has undergone six principal phases during the course of the past 34 years.²

**Phase I : 1942-45.** The United States and Iran signed an agreement on 27 November 1943, establishing the U.S. Military Mission to the Imperial Iranian Gendarmerie (GENMISH). The purpose of the Mission was to advise and assist the Ministry of Interior of Iran in the reorganization of the Gendarmerie and to advise on organizational and training matters. The initial agreement was for two years and was extended on an annual or biennial basis until the organization was deactivated on March 21, 1976.

**Phase II : 1945-50.** This was a period of extension and formalization of the U.S. military mission to Iran. Following the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947,³ the United States and Iran signed an agreement in October of that year establishing a U.S. Army Mission Headquarters (ARMISH) to enhance the efficiency of the Iranian Army. An agreement, subsequently, was signed extending credit to the Iranian Government for the purchase of U.S. war surplus equipment. President Truman in July 1949 submitted a message to the Congress on military assistance

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³ From *Department of State Bulletin* XVI, No.409 (Supplement, 4 May 1947), pp.829-832.
that included a proposal to supply additional military items to Iran to strengthen her ability to defend her independence. 4

Phase III: 1950-60. The United States aid programme significantly shifted to military assistance through the inauguration of the mutual defence assistance programme. Under the United States-Iranian Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement, signed in May 1950, the United States agreed to provide the technical personnel to discharge its responsibilities for administering the grant assistance programme and a Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) was established. Iran joined the Baghdad Pact and the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO) on 3 November 1955. 5

In April 1956, the United States agreed to establish a permanent military liaison office at the permanent headquarters of the Pact. 6 In January 1957, Iran, together with other Baghdad Pact members, endorsed the Eisenhower Doctrine. 7 The then Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, on 27-30 January 1958 addressed the Baghdad Pact meeting

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6 Earlier in the first annual meeting of the Pact Council held in Baghdad on 21-22 November, the U.S. Government, in addition to maintaining permanent political and military liaison with the Council of the Pact, also declared its intention to establish permanent liaison with the Economic Committee (ibid., 3 December-10 December 1955, p.14565.)

in Ankara informing the delegates that the Eisenhower doctrine committed the United States to their defence as effectively as would U.S. membership in the Pact; and in July of the same year Secretary Dulles told the Pact members that the United States would not fail to act in defence of their independence and integrity. The bilateral agreements of cooperation with the Pact members were signed by the United States on March 1959 just prior to Iraq's withdrawal from the Pact on 24 March. On 19 August the organization was renamed as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) following Iraq's withdrawal. Vice President Richard Nixon in October reaffirmed U.S. support for Iran's efforts to maintain its independence.

Phase IV: 1960-64. The U.S. viewed with disfavour the Iranian Government's outlays for its armed forces, its perennial budget deficits, and its failure to undertake economic and social reforms. The Kennedy administration urged the Shah to undertake such reforms and initiated cut-

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backs in U.S. military assistance. The consolidation of ARMISH and the MAAG into a single organization was completed in 1962.\(^{12}\) In July 1962, the annual payments of $30 million toward the support of the Imperial Iranian Army was terminated.\(^{13}\) The Vice President, Lyndon B. Johnson, visited Tehran in August 1962 and reaffirmed continuing U.S. support for Iran's independence.\(^{14}\) While the Shah accepted the cutback in military aid, he pursued a more independent course in foreign affairs. In September 1962, he notified the Soviet Union that no missile base would be permitted on Iranian soil.\(^{15}\) President Kennedy in November 1963 remarked that about 70 per cent of the U.S. military assistance went to nine key countries located on or near the borders of the Communist bloc including Iran.\(^{16}\)

The organization entitled ARMISH-MAAG performed the primary functions, e.g. (1) to advise the Iranian Armed Forces, primarily the Vice-Minister of War, General Hassan Toufanian, on weapons procurement; (2) to process government-

\(^{12}\) United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.134.

\(^{13}\) ibid.


\(^{15}\) In an exchange of Notes on 15 September 1962 at Tehran, the Iranian Government gave the Soviet government an assurance that Iran would 'not allow any foreign power to establish rocket-launching site of any kind on Persian territory' and also declared that Iran would never be a party to any aggression against the Soviet Union. (See *Keeling's Contemporary Archives*, Vol.XIII, 15-22 September 1962, p.18986.)

\(^{16}\) United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.134.
to-government Foreign Military Sales (FMS); and (3) to assist Iran in assimilating equipment purchased from the United States.

Phase V: 1964-69. This was a period of changing U.S.-Iranian relationship marked by the phasing out of U.S. grant military assistance in favour of cash and credit purchases of military equipment, and by an increasingly independent national policy in Iranian foreign relations. The factors influencing this changing relationship included: (a) increasing oil revenues, permitting Iran to purchase some of its military requirements; (b) United States-Soviet detente policy; (c) increasing U.S. preoccupation in Southeast Asia due to the Vietnam war; (d) Iranian concern over Egyptian President Nasser's policies in the Middle East; and (e) Iranian displeasure over the U.S. shift to arms sales and a desire to diversify the sources of arms supplies. 17 A United States-Iranian Memorandum of Understanding of July 1964 stipulated that Iran was expected to purchase most of its military requirements and that the U.S. Government would assure and facilitate credit arrangements for such purchases. 18


In February 1967, Iran and the Soviet Union signed an agreement whereby Iran would purchase and/or barter $110 million in arms and supplies. The U.S. economic assistance was terminated in November 1967 on the grounds that Iran no longer constituted a 'less developed country and therefore was eligible for Export-Import Bank financing'. Grant military assistance was ended in 1969 by virtue of Iran's ability to finance its own needs. In an interview with an American magazine, the Shah defined Iran's position saying:

We do not want to see Britain leaving and then come in by the back door, still pulling strings from London. But we don't want any Big Powers trying to replace Britain.

Phase VI: 1969-present. The U.S. arms sales to Iran stemmed from the Guam doctrine of July 1969 of building...

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19 The arms equipment consisted of 'non sensitive' supplies of anti-aircraft guns, trucks and armoured troop carriers. Burrell, op.cit., p.17.


22 In terms of defence procurement this strategy, also called the 'Nixon Doctrine' was spelled out in 1970 by the then Deputy Secretary of Defence, David Packard:

I believe that the best hope of reducing our overseas involvements and expenditures lies in getting allied and friendly nations to do even more in their own defence. To realize that hope, however, requires that we must continue, if requested, to give or sell them the tools they need for this bigger load we are urging them to assume. That is why, in the interests of maintaining an adequate defence posture at minimum cost, the growing use of credit-assisted sales of military equipment, as well as increased military assistance, seem clearly indicated for the immediate future.

(cont'd)
up local powers which would be expected to assume increasing responsibility for collective security with U.S. arms, but without direct participation of U.S. forces and adoption of the 'twin-pillar' policy in the Persian Gulf region.

In May 1972, President Nixon and the then National Security Adviser, Henry Kissinger, agreed for the first time to

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22 (cont'd)


23 Since 1971, the U.S. arms sales policy in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula was defined as an essentially two-pillar policy focusing on Iran and Saudi-Arabia. In 1975, the former Under Secretary of State, Joseph J. Sisco, stated this policy in the following way:

... our whole policy ... has been based on the major premise that the two key countries in this area are Saudi Arabia and Iran and that to the degree to which the United States could promote cooperation between these two major countries, we would be contributing to stability in the area ... We believe that arms policies that we have pursued in relationship to Iran and Saudi Arabia in particular have contributed not only to this greater regional cooperation, but to help to meet what they consider and perceive to be their security concerns in the area.

(Taken from United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.7.)
sell Iran virtually any conventional weapons it wanted and so instructed the bureaucracy in a memorandum in late July 1972.\textsuperscript{24}

The oil price increase of 1973-74 provided the Iranian government with vastly increased means to purchase equipment it considered necessary to meet its requirements including some of the most sophisticated systems in the U.S. inventory.

After Nixon, the Ford and Carter administrations went ahead with arms supplies to Iran. They were either little influenced by the increasingly widespread expressions of concern about American weapons sales to the Middle East or unable to stop the transfers, even with the help of restrictive legislation, such as the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976.\textsuperscript{25}

This act, an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Foreign Military Sales Act, was passed by Congress during Gerald Ford's tenure as President (a fact frequently obscured by the impression that no significant arms control measures had been implemented prior to the accession of the Carter administration). The act asserts that:

\[\ldots\text{it shall be the policy of the United States to exert leadership in the world community to bring about arrangements for reducing the international trade in implements of war and to lessen the danger of outbreak of}\]

\textsuperscript{24} U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.vii.

regional conflict and the burdens of armaments. U.S. programmes for or procedures governing the export, sale, and grant of defense articles and services to foreign countries shall be administered in a manner which will carry out this policy ... The President shall seek to initiate multilateral discussions for the purpose of reaching agreement among ... arms suppliers and purchasers and other countries with respect to the control of the international trade in armaments ... 26

Also provided for is the denial of U.S. security assistance to countries which 'engage in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights'. 27

The human rights provision was obviously ignored in the case of Iran, and perhaps other Middle Eastern countries. It can be assumed that the military sales were being made under the authority of Section 102 of the act, which allowed the President to authorize arms transfers to a country if he feels that 'an unforeseen emergency exists which requires immediate military assistance' and that a failure to respond immediately to that emergency will result in serious harm to vital U.S. security interests. 28 Despite the administration's apparent use of the loophole, however, the only unforeseen emergency requiring military assistance to Iran at its present level existed solely in the Shah's

26 ibid., p.734.
27 ibid., p.759.
28 ibid., p.730.
mind. And, contrary to the intentions of the act, the sales could seriously harm vital U.S. interests.

Under President Jimmy Carter the policy of arms aid to the Middle East continued as before. But the Carter's guidelines of May 1977 attempted to shift the burden of proving that new weapons technology was necessary to those who requested it, and they stated that arms transfers would henceforth be an exceptional instrument of foreign policy. The guidelines also offered useful restraints in six areas: the volume of sales, the introduction of advanced weapons systems into a region, the development of weapons for export, coproduction of arms, the resale of American arms to third parties and weapons sales promotions by U.S. diplomats and manufacturers.  

The United States Military Presence in Iran

The American community in Iran

The United States Embassy in Tehran acknowledged the difficulty of estimating the total number of U.S. citizens in Iran because of a general lack of data, and noted that the American community should be regarded as a fluid entity. The majority of U.S. citizens in the country belonged to what the Embassy termed 'the resident American Community in Iran' which comprised: (a) official U.S. personnel

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attached to the various elements of the mission, including the Embassy and the uniformed military and Department of Defence civilians with the Security Assistance Advisory effort; (b) employees of U.S. defence contractors assisting with the training of the Iranian personnel, and the adaptation of systems and military hardware; and (c) members of the private sector, including businessmen, oil company personnel, teachers, and missionaries. The Embassy estimated this 'resident' group, including dependents, to be about 31,000 in October 1976, with the official community comprising 14 per cent of the total, defence contractor personnel 36 per cent, and members of the private sector 50 per cent. These figures were besides the tourists and transient businessmen who came for brief visits and were not required to register at American consulates upon entry in Iran.

The Embassy estimates indicated that the resident U.S. community, which had risen from about 15,000 in 1972 to its 1976 level of 31,000, was expected to increase to about 35,000 by 1981. It was thought that the number would then level off and start declining with the completion of civil and military programmes and growing numbers of trained Iranian personnel. Some observers, however, pointed to the structural weaknesses in Iran that had caused delays in the attainment of ambitious project schedules

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30 United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.139.
31 ibid.
and continued shortages of technically qualified manpower. Even by disregarding the acquisition of new weapons systems Iran was likely to continue to remain dependent upon American personnel well into the 1980s. These observers considered the total American community rising to as many as 50,000-60,000 by 1980. According to reliable sources, the total number of Americans in Iran was estimated to be between 40-41,000 by November 1978.

United States Security Assistance Advisory effort

Military and Department of Defence civilian personnel comprising the Security Assistance Advisory effort in Iran consisted of the U.S. Army Mission Headquarters-Military Assistance Advisory Group (ARMISH-MAAG), Technical Assistance Field Teams (TAFTs), and the U.S. Defence Representative (DEFREP). The primary functions of ARMISH-MAAG included supervision of U.S. military security assistance matters required to foster Iran's military competence and further U.S. national policies and interests; advising the Iranian Armed Forces on weapons procurement; processing government-
to-government (FMS) arms sales; and assisting the Iranian
Armed Forces to assimilate equipment purchased from the
United States. 35

Before the phasing out of grant Military Assistance
Programme (MAP) aid to Iran, ARMISH-MAAG had played a
significant role in influencing procurement decisions.
Its influence declined after 1972, when decisions on
purchases of very sophisticated weapons systems were
reached and large programmes were established, although
its objective remained the achievement of a balanced
procurement programme for the Iranian Armed Forces. The
ARMISH-MAAG mission often met with criticism from elements
in the Department of Defence and with conflicting influence
from U.S. weapons manufacturers. 36

Although most of the reputable U.S. firms did make
contact with ARMISH-MAAG, many contractors did not follow
the procedural guidelines that had been established. A
number had pursued their activities without Government
approval and had directly contacted some Iranian government
leaders. 37

35 United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.140.

36 For a detailed analysis of the competing roles of the
most important U.S. actors (the President, State Department
and Department of Defence) see U.S. Military Sales to Iran,

37 For example, Mr Jones of the Northrop Corporation
approached the Iranian Government directly to carry out a
sales campaign for the F-18L aircraft. (See United States,
House of Representatives, Review of Recent Developments in
the Middle East - Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe
and the Middle East of the Committee on International
Relations, 95th Congress, 1st Session, June 8, 1977,
During the 10-year period of 1961-71, the number of personnel assigned to the MAAGs had been reduced by the Department of Defence by some 75 per cent. In 1972, the Congress had directed further personnel cuts. Following the Congressional directive for the reduction of MAAG personnel, and in order to avoid increasing the number of personnel assigned to ARMISH-MAAG, the U.S. Government signed a TAFT agreement with the Government of Iran (GOI) in January 1973 for 552 personnel at a cost of $16.6 million.38

This step was taken at a time when it was apparent that Iran would require substantial assistance, on a much greater scale than before, in assimilating specific equipment, technology and supporting systems emanating from projected purchases from the United States. Thus, whereas the number of authorised U.S. personnel assigned to ARMISH-MAAG since 1973 remained at 209 (191 military; 18 civilian), the number of TAFT personnel increased from the initial 552 in 1973 to 921 in 1976.39 The TAFT concept, therefore, had been the principal means for providing U.S. military personnel to assist the Iranian Armed Forces in in-country training, management, maintenance, and utilization of U.S. equipment, weapons and supporting systems.40

38 U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.35.
39 United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.141.
40 ibid.
The importance attached to the above advisory groups can be gauged from the following table which indicates the projected numbers of personnel assigned to them through fiscal year 1981.

Table 1
Authorised U.S. Military and Civilian Personnel in Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current fiscal year 1977</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARMISH-MAAG:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army section</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy section</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force section</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>209</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFT-IRAN:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>255</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>136</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>321</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support activities</td>
<td>151</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>1,782</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


CARMISH-MAAG operated under the direct military command of U.S. Commander-in-Chief, Europe and under supervision of the U.S. Ambassador to Iran and the Defence Representative. He commanded the ARMISH-MAAG and the TAFTs and, as deputy of the DEFREP, maintained supervision and co-ordinating authority over all other Department of Defence
elements related to security assistance. The ARMISH-MAAG/TAFT organization was as follows:

Table 2

ARMISH-MAAG/TAFT ORGANIZATION

The CARMISH-MAAG was faced with the task of assuring that the efforts of ARMISH-MAAG and TAFT personnel were combined into a cohesive and effective advisory programme. The Department of Defence made a conceptual distinction between ARMISH-MAAG and the TAFTs, namely: that ARMISH-MAAG was concerned with advisory and staff functions of a continuing nature, whereas the TAFTs were 'short-term' teams focusing on the introduction of new equipment and associated logistics systems, i.e. to 'train the trainers'. Iran paid all expenses associated with the TAFTs and 70 per cent of the cost of the MAAG. The MAAG was largely located in Tehran whereas 40 per cent of the TAFTs were located in the country.41

These distinctions were generally valid, but it should be noted that in the 1950s and early 1960s, when MAAG strengths were generally larger worldwide, a large number of MAAG personnel performed the same tasks currently assigned to the TAFTs in Iran.

The 'short-term' description of the TAFTs in Iran implied that any specific TAFT job or function would probably last for two or three years. It was, however, envisioned that new TAFTs would be constantly required over the next five to ten years if the major U.S. military programmes in Iran were to succeed. It was also thought that logistical and maintenance support for major systems would be a primary area in which the TAFTs would continue to play an essential role.42

41 U.S. Military Sales to Iran, p.35.
42 ibid.
The Iranian Government paid the costs for all but eight spaces in ARMISH-MAAG.\textsuperscript{43} It paid for the entire costs of the TAFTs, including direct and indirect costs such as pay, allowances, and retirement benefits; special training associated with particular missions in Iran; and transportation and administrative costs. From the initial $16.6 million in 1973, the cost to the Iranian Government for TAFTs - as FMS TAFT and support cases - increased to $93.4 million in 1976.\textsuperscript{44} TAFT performed the following main functions in the various services:

**TAFT FUNCTIONS**

**AIR FORCE**
- Communications/Electronics
- F-4 Maintenance
- F-5 Maintenance
- Aircraft Warning and Control
- Logistics
- Training and Administration
- F-14 Programme
- 1-Hawk Programme
- TAFT support

**ARMY**
- Aviation
- Logistics
- Maintenance
- Misc
- Signal
- 1-Hawk Programme
- TAFT support

**NAVY**
- Logistics and Supply
- Civil Engineering
- Communications
- Personnel
- Training and Training aids
- Financial MGMT
- TAFT support
- Ship Operations
- Helo Operations
- Aviation Maintenance
- Repair
- Maintenance
- F-14 Programme\textsuperscript{a}
- P-3 Programme\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a, b} Under operational control of Air Force


\textsuperscript{43} This figure has subsequently been reduced to 4 slots.

\textsuperscript{44} *United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf*, p.143.
A U.S. Defence Representative (DEFREP) was appointed to provide advice and information in defence matters to the U.S. Ambassador to Iran. He was also required to provide information to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the CARMISH-MAAG of Defence Department activities. He was also supposed to take local initiative toward improving the interface between noncombatant Defence Department elements, the U.S. Ambassador, and the Iranian defence establishment; and to perform representational responsibilities to the Iranian defence establishment and to the U.S. Ambassador not otherwise assigned. 45

The DEFREP arrived in Iran in September 1975 as a consequence of growing concern on the part of Secretary of Defense Schlesinger and Assistant Secretary of Defense/International Security Affairs Ellsworth over management of the rapidly increasing array of FMS programmes that had been initiated with the 1973 rise in oil prices and fast expansion of the Iranian Armed Forces. Some American officials had considered that the military sales programmes lacked essential controls, that neither the Embassy in Tehran nor Washington officials were receiving full information on some arms sales to Iran, and that some elements of the Defence Department were cooperating with private U.S. firms in promoting arms purchases.

45 ibid., p.143.
With the increase in the volume of cash sales of highly sophisticated equipment, the Secretary of Defence’s concern focused on the potential problems Iran might face with respect to resource allocation and assimilation and an erosion of Iranian confidence in the U.S. Government that could raise serious policy questions regarding the U.S. Government’s credibility. Prior to the DEFREP's appointment, Secretary Schlesinger had dispatched an unofficial representative to the Iranian Government, a retired U.S. Army colonel, Richard Hallock, with the mission of informing the Office of the Secretary of Defence on Iranian arms programmes and of advising the Iranian Government at the highest levels on its defence procurements.

The DEFREP's appointment was made for one year. Mr Eric von Marbod was selected for this assignment. His terms of reference had been negotiated within the Defence Department and with State Department officials. Following his arrival in Tehran, the DEFREP sought to keep the Iranian Government fully informed on all perceived problems and constraints involving acquisitions of new U.S. weapons systems. His mission, in the main, was to identify these problem areas and recommend solutions, together with insuring that the Defence Department remained an 'honest broker' in arms transactions between Iran and the United States. At the same time, he was charged with emphasizing that arms procurement decisions remained the responsibility of the Iranian Government, and that
his mission in no way represented a change in basic U.S. policy.\textsuperscript{46}

It was found that the broad supervisory responsibility of CARMISH-MAAG had not been complemented by a requisite command authority. His coordination authority was inadequate for the scope and diversity of security assistance activities in Iran and, therefore, he did not possess full supervision of support units or, in many cases, of offices monitoring and managing key FMS programmes in the country. The ARMISH-MAAG lacked sufficient staff to adequately develop and implement some programmes.

Mr von Marbod completed 6 months over his 1-year term and returned to the United States in March 1977. The position of DEFREP was not refilled after his departure. A considerable number of observers have considered the appointment of a DEFREP to have been a positive and useful step, particularly in light of the problems that have emerged with respect to the management and implementation of the FMS programme.\textsuperscript{47} Von Marbod had told the Iranian Government of actual or potential problem areas with weapons systems under contract, including those arising from

\textsuperscript{46} For details of the role of the Defence Representative in Iran also see \textit{U.S. Military Sales to Iran}, pp.47-48.

construction of support facilities and manpower and logistics shortfalls. In addition, the Iranian Government had been made aware of perceived problems and constraints that might emerge from the introduction of new U.S. systems.

**United States Defence contractors**

ARMISH-MAAG had estimated that the civilian defence-oriented U.S. community in the country would increase to at least 34,000 including dependents, by 1980. After 1975 more than 40 U.S. firms were engaged in military contracts in Iran. However, the best estimate as of October 1, 1975 was that forty-four firms employing 2,941 personnel were operating in Iran. Sixty per cent of these personnel were located in Tehran. Their geographical distribution was as follows:

**Table 3**

Location of Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tehran</td>
<td>1,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isfahan</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandar Abbas</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiraz</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharobi</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masjid-e-Soleman</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushehr</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabriz</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vahdati</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandar Pahlavi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,941</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *U.S. Military Sales to Iran*, p.36.

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49 *U.S. Military Sales to Iran*, p.36.
The major U.S. firm involved in the larger military programmes was Bell Helicopter International. It was obligated to furnish in-country training and the development of a complete maintenance and logistics support system for the Imperial Iranian Air Force, and had about 2,400 personnel in Iran. More than 50 per cent of these employees were retired military personnel. Bell administrative facilities were located in Tehran; its technical training centre was at Isfahan, and a logistical division at Mehrabad. The Grumman Aircraft Corporation, in conjunction with the F-14 programme had by October 1977 about 460 personnel at Isfahan, and anticipated that its Iran-based employees would reach about 1,000, not including dependents, by mid-1981 before the programme's scheduled phase-down.

There were always problems in the involvement of a U.S. contractor, technical and advisory personnel in the operation, training, maintenance, and logistics of weapons systems sold to Iran. The large involvement of U.S. technicians could restrict U.S. foreign policy options, especially in the event of regional conflict. In addition, if the programmes did not develop as scheduled, Iranian attitudes towards the United States could become less favourable and, coupled with the expected growth of numbers of U.S. personnel, the chances of friction at the working level could increase.

50 United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.146.
51 ibid.
A large number of contractor personnel arriving in Iran experienced sociological and cultural difficulties, and attrition rates were reported to be high among those unable to adjust to the Iranian environment. An issue of particular concern with management and employees of U.S. firms was the change in the Tax Reform Act of 1976 which (1) reduced the amount of income U.S. citizens working overseas were permitted to exclude from reported earnings; (2) excluded the application of foreign taxes as a credit against U.S. income taxes; and (3) made the tax change retroactive to 1 January 1976.\footnote{The provisions of the Tax Reform Act 1976 that caused major problems overseas were:

(1) The reduction of foreign source income inclusion from $20,000 ($25,000 after 3 years) to $15,000 for bona fide [U.S.] residents of a foreign country;

(2) Requirements that housing or other services in kind furnished to an employee be reported as income and taxed accordingly; and

(3) The provision taxing education assistance provided by employers as income to employed parents.

(See United States, Senate, Report (together with Dissenting Views) to the United States Senate of the Senate Delegation on American Foreign Policy in Europe, the Middle East and India, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, September 19, 1978, p.41.)}
monies transferred back to the United States. More serious, however, was the fact that United States firms, to meet these extra costs, were pricing themselves out of the Gulf markets to European and Japanese competition. In recognition of this, the Congress rescinded these provisions in 1978.  

The following listing indicates American firms with contracts in Iran and the number of personnel employed by each, as of October 1975:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Major field of activity</th>
<th>Number of Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAI Corp</td>
<td>Aircraft Electronics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augusta Bell</td>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avco Corp/Lycoming</td>
<td>Aircraft Engine Maintenance</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell Helicopter Int.</td>
<td>Flight Training</td>
<td>1,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booz Allen &amp; Hamilton</td>
<td>Programme Management</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowen-McLaughlin-York</td>
<td>Tank Rebuilding</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown &amp; Root E&amp;C</td>
<td>Shipyard Construction</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cessna Aircraft Co.</td>
<td>Aircraft</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collins Radio</td>
<td>Communications Electronics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Sciences Corp.</td>
<td>Computers Software</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerson Electric</td>
<td>Armament Maintenance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epsco Inc.</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Dynamics</td>
<td>Missiles</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Electric</td>
<td>Engines and Armament</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Motors/Allison</td>
<td>Aircraft Engine Maintenance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grumman Aerospace Corp.</td>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazeltine Corp.</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hughes Aircraft</td>
<td>Aircraft Electronics and Munitions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITT</td>
<td>Communications Electronics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Technical Product</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itek Corp.</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Major field of activity</th>
<th>Number of Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaman Aerospace Corp.</td>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litton</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockheed</td>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics Support Corp.</td>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin-Marietta</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonnell Douglas</td>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northrup</td>
<td>Missiles/Aircraft Maintenance</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page Communications</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philco-Ford</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratt-Whitney</td>
<td>Aircraft Engine Maintenance</td>
<td>.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raytheon</td>
<td>Missiles</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCA Corp.</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDC</td>
<td>Air Defence System Training</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singer Co.</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanwick</td>
<td>Shipyard Construction</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvania Corp.</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Instruments</td>
<td>Armament</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westinghouse</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2,728</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *U.S. Military Sales to Iran*, p.59.

**United States Arms Policy: Main Interests and Objectives**

The main interests and objectives of the U.S. arms policy towards the Persian Gulf, particularly Iran, can be gauged from a review of the volume of arms transferred.

The arms sales agreements between the United States and Iran were comparatively modest before the influx of petrodollars. This influx gave Iran the means to purchase almost any conventional weapons system it desired. In 1970, Iran had placed Foreign Military Sales orders with the United States for $113 million; 2 years later, but still before the oil price increase, Iran placed orders for $519 million of material. The trend was definitely upward, but the totals were comparatively small in relation to the
enormous increases during the years that followed. For example, as a result of the oil price increase in 1973, the Iranian orders from the U.S. rose to $2.2 billion in 1973 and $4.3 billion in 1974. The figures decreased in the following two years - $3 billion in 1975 and $1.4 billion in 1976 - probably as a consequence of the world recession and a lessening demand for the Iranian oil. In 1977, however, the total had increased to $5.8 billion while the agreements signed in 1978 showed a significant reduction as compared with the previous year, amounting to some $2.6 billion. In all, the U.S. had signed approximately $20 billion worth of sales agreements with Iran from 1950 to date. For details of arms sales agreements and deliveries see Table 5 below:

56 ibid., p.17.
Table 5
United States-Iranian Foreign Military Sales Agreements and Deliveries
[in thousands of dollars]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Agreements</th>
<th>Deliveries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950-66</td>
<td>292,494</td>
<td>47,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>143,873</td>
<td>38,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>69,038</td>
<td>56,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>251,573</td>
<td>94,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>113,154</td>
<td>127,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>396,841</td>
<td>79,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>519,110</td>
<td>214,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>2,157,355</td>
<td>238,633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>4,373,225</td>
<td>510,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>3,020,979</td>
<td>956,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976a</td>
<td>1,382,062</td>
<td>1,231,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total 1950-76</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,796,327</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,050,103</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1977b 5,465,600 2,433,000

a Includes transitional quarter (fiscal year 1977).
b Estimated figures.


Iran in recent years had become the foremost purchaser of U.S. arms. It is estimated that between 1950 and 1976, the United States had sold arms to Iran valued in excess of $13 billion. The equipment provided included a wide array of items like cargo/transport aircraft, electronic warfare aircraft, fighters, helicopters, patrol aircraft, reconnaissance aircraft, tanker aircraft, utility/ liaison

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aircraft, observation aircraft, destroyers, corvettes, submarines, fast patrol boats, landing craft, armoured personnel carriers, tanks, air-to-air missiles, air-to-surface missiles, drones, smart bombs, howitzers, self-propelled artillery, and radar systems. Under the existing laws, the U.S. Government had the authority to control all military export sales from the U.S., whether on a government-to-government or a commercial basis. Commercial sales, while on a smaller basis than government-to-government sales, have shown a steady increase, as indicated in deliveries since 1972. See Table 6 below:

Table 6
U.S. Commercial Military Exports to Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Thousands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960-66</td>
<td>$ 5,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>2,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>5,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>10,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9,811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>27,059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>36,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>19,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>35,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>49,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$ 201,156


The total dollar value of U.S. military equipment ordered by Iran as of 31 December 1976 is indicated in the Table 7 below:
Table 7

United States-Iranian Military Sales by Category

[in thousands of dollars]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>FMS ordered</th>
<th>FMS delivered</th>
<th>Undelivered balances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft</td>
<td>773,143</td>
<td>2,282,404</td>
<td>2,490,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ships</td>
<td>1,505,253</td>
<td>32,250</td>
<td>1,473,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles/Weapons</td>
<td>538,063</td>
<td>292,764</td>
<td>245,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ammunition</td>
<td>837,416</td>
<td>403,610</td>
<td>433,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missiles</td>
<td>1,207,633</td>
<td>352,026</td>
<td>855,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>367,534</td>
<td>135,569</td>
<td>231,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other equipment</td>
<td>245,987</td>
<td>111,347</td>
<td>134,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair/Rehabilitation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment</td>
<td>132,114</td>
<td>7,688</td>
<td>124,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply operations</td>
<td>522,885</td>
<td>166,490</td>
<td>356,395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>391,272</td>
<td>219,895</td>
<td>171,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services</td>
<td>1,576,726</td>
<td>426,354</td>
<td>1,150,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undefined plus adjustments</td>
<td>345,309</td>
<td></td>
<td>345,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,430,990</strong></td>
<td>8,012,916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Through the 1980s.

Source: *United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf*, p.137.

Iran's rising graph of military expenditure since 1970 showed a marked contrast with its neighbouring countries. All put together, the U.S. arms sales to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea regions occupied a significant portion of the global arms sales. See Table 8.
### Table 8

**Foreign Military Sales Orders of Countries Visited**

[Dollar amounts in millions]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>$113.1</td>
<td>$397.5</td>
<td>$522.1</td>
<td>$2,138.1</td>
<td>$4,270.6</td>
<td>$2,570.3</td>
<td>$1,301.3</td>
<td>$5,000.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>$44.8</td>
<td>$14.9</td>
<td>$459.3</td>
<td>$1,993.5</td>
<td>$1,906.5</td>
<td>$1,549.9</td>
<td>$2,502.5</td>
<td>$979.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>377.8</td>
<td>130.6</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>138.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian Gulf Regional Total</td>
<td>$157.9</td>
<td>$412.40</td>
<td>$981.4</td>
<td>$4,131.65</td>
<td>$6,218.7</td>
<td>$4,499.9</td>
<td>$4,073.1</td>
<td>$6,021.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian Gulf Percentage of World Total</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>58.9</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>$0.006</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>118.8</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World wide Total</td>
<td>$945.5</td>
<td>$1,568.8</td>
<td>$3,297.4</td>
<td>$5,772.1</td>
<td>$10,562.4</td>
<td>$9,862.8</td>
<td>$8,368.5</td>
<td>$9,505.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Less than $550.

Source: United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf, p.50.
Since World War II, the United States has officially viewed the arms transfers as a useful instrument of their foreign policy. American policy-makers have claimed that arms sales strengthen collective defence arrangements, maintain regional military balances, secure bases and operating rights for the United States, and compensate for the withdrawal of American forces. Besides all this, the U.S. had strategic, economic, political and commercial interests in selling arms to Persian Gulf countries, particularly Iran.

Strategically speaking Iran was the most 'important real estate' for the United States which existed between Israel and Japan. Armed with a wide array of sophisticated weapons purchased from the U.S. and Britain, the Shah's empire fulfilled two major political-military missions:

1. As long as the Shah's government ruled, Iran was a bulwark against the spread of communism or radical Moslem nationalism in a key region of Asia, and
2. A militarily effective Iran would safeguard the oil shipments out of the Gulf from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United

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59 K. Subrahmanyam, 'Military Aid and Foreign Policy', Foreign Affairs Reports, Vol.XVII, No.11, November 1968, p.112.
61 ibid.
Arab Emirates and Iran itself to the U.S. and north western Europe.  

While emphasizing the role of Iranian military strength for the stability of the Persian Gulf, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Alfred Atherton, once said that Iran and Saudi Arabia have continued to share 'the primary responsibility for stability in the Persian Gulf'. Describing further the U.S. technical cooperation with states in the Persian Gulf, Atherton said that Iran was 'a special case because of a much higher degree of development and industrialisation.  

On the geo-strategic salience of the Persian Gulf to the U.S., Alvin Cottrell said:  

We have entrusted our policy to two big kingships. If Iran goes under, it would be very doubtful if the Saudi regime could go it alone. The whole area is like a mosaic that can come apart.  

The deep strategic interests of U.S. with Iran have been voiced through pronouncements by every U.S. president since Truman. Jimmy Carter on the eve of the Shah's visit to U.S.A. in 1977 said:  

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64 Alvin Cottrell, as quoted in Newsweek, 20 November 1978.
We look upon Iran's strength as an extension of our own strength and Iran looks upon our strength as an extension to theirs.65

On another occasion, Carter spoke of the deep personal friendship with the Shah and the unshakable military alliance between Iran and the U.S. He later remarked:

We have no other nation on earth with which we have closer consultations on regional problems.66

The most important 'regional problem' for the U.S., obviously, was the protection of sea routes by Iran in the north-west quadrant of the Indian Ocean. In its May 1975 survey of the Persian Gulf region, the Economist noted with sympathy this protective role assigned to Iran and wrote:

These sea-routes are the most unprotected parts of the Western economic system, and so long as inflation continues it is unlikely that the American or British or French navies will be able to afford to give them adequate supervision. The Shah's interest in the Indian Ocean complements the West's very neatly and it should be the aim of governments in Washington and London and Paris to coordinate the two as closely as possible.67

According to Senator Abraham Ribicoff:

Iran is one of the most important allies the United States has. When you realize that 50 per cent of the world's oil comes through the Straits of Hormoz and the only armed forces to protect it are Iran's, to

67 The Economist, 17 May 1975 (Survey Section).
refuse [the Shah] arms would be sheer stupidity on the part of the United States.68

Again, in an evidence given before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee of the Near East in July 1971, J.E. Akins, Director of the Office of Fuels and Energy of the State Department, said:

In terms of present investments as well as future dependence, the Persian Gulf oil fields are an important point of focus for American foreign and defence policies.69

At the same time, American strategic planners cannot ignore the fact that the United States depends on Indian Ocean routes for strategic minerals and materials in Africa, including beryl, chrome ore, copper, lead and uranium.70

This extraordinary importance of the Persian Gulf area, especially Iran, was revealed when President Carter signed a memorandum in August 1977. This memorandum came after a six month National Security Council study that gave Iran and its oil resources a new importance in American strategic planning. The memorandum also ordered 'light deployment forces' to be prepared to protect the Middle East and South Korea in the event of any attack.71

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The U.S. strategic interest in Iran also stemmed from the latter's proximity to the Soviet Union and the Arab world. It is fair to assume that Iran being the closest ally of U.S.A. in the area after Israel must have permitted some U.S. surveillance and monitoring equipment against the Soviet Union. Earlier, Rockwell International had been involved in building an intelligence base from which Iran could monitor military and civilian electronic communications throughout the Persian Gulf region. Besides Iran, the United States had maintained access to four military communications and intelligence facilities in the neighbourhood of the Gulf area. Diego Garcia is the principal American facility in the Indian Ocean region. An agreement was reached in December 1966, between Britain and the U.S. which provided for the construction of this naval facility. In 1975 the U.S. had started upgrading it. A modest upgrading to take larger transport aircraft, and deepening the lagoon to allow anchorage for an aircraft

72 This can be broadly deduced from a television address by President Carter that U.S. would need a year or so to put back the monitoring equipment lost in the recent disturbances in Iran for SALT II. (The Canberra Times, 2 May 1979).


74 These included a naval contingent in Bahrain, landing rights on Masirah Island, Oman and the Kagnew station in the Eritrean Province in Ethiopia. The latter facility for U.S. presence and use was, however, terminated on 23 April 1977 at the direction of the Ethiopian Government when a U.S. reassessment was made. See United States Arms Policy, p.10.)
carrier, met resistance from the U.S. Congress, raised doubts with the 'owners' (the British Labour government) and aroused the condemnation of littoral states including Australia, mostly for the wrong reasons. It was feared that what the Pentagon was really seeking was a capacity to station long-range strike aircraft in the island, and probably also to erect naval facilities for servicing nuclear submarines, and that this would spark off further competitive escalation by the Soviet Union.\(^7\) The upgrading was sought in fact because of the reluctance of the Europeans to allow American war material stockpiled in Europe to be transferred to Israel. This was mainly due to European nations' disillusionment with Israeli intransigence after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Moreover, in the absence of a Jewish lobby comparable to that which exists in the United States, governmental attitude had also shifted somewhat towards the Arabs, particularly after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Hence, it was very probable that the Diego Garcia lobby in the Pentagon exploited the situation created by the 1973 War to further their objectives of upgrading, and to enlist the sympathies of the supporters of Israel in America by linking Diego Garcia to the Middle East situation. At present Diego Garcia deploys numerous surveillance flights, provides fleet replenishment services and is linked with the American


network. It can also apparently receive, process and relay transmissions from aircraft and satellites overflying Communist nations.\(^7^7\)

The Iranian government tended to look upon this American presence in the Indian Ocean as benign and as a necessary antidote to actual or potential Soviet presence in that area. Referring to this point the Shah once said:

I am not opposing the Diego Garcia base as long as there are other powers in the Indian Ocean ...\(^7^8\)

The same theme was underlined by the then Iranian Ambassador to the U.S. when he stated:

As long as one of the super powers [Russia] maintains an active presence in the Indian Ocean it makes it necessary for the U.S. to have its presence there for the maintenance of peace and stability.\(^7^9\)

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\(^7^8\) Shah replying to questions from National Press Club during his visit to Australia. (See *Kayhan International*, 5 October 1974.)

\(^7^9\) As quoted in *ibid.*, 11 June 1977.
The U.S. strategic preoccupation with Iran and the Persian Gulf was validated when a sizable naval exercise MIDLINK was held in late 1974 to demonstrate strength in sea-lanes carrying Persian Gulf oil to Western countries.\textsuperscript{80} Annual naval exercises were held by the CENTO countries in the area. Again in late 1977, concentrated naval and air manoeuvres were held in the Persian Gulf. The manoeuvres, code-named MIDDLING, took place in a real tactical situation which involved the naval and airforces of the member countries, and included exercises in anti-submarine warfare, air defence and anti-submarine attack.\textsuperscript{81} It was thought by some observers that the U.S. had also a contingency plan to despatch 100,000 combat troops to the Persian Gulf at two weeks' notice.\textsuperscript{82}

At least as important as these strategic considerations was America's economic interest in Iran. The revolutionary changes that have occurred in the economics and politics of world oil in the 1970s undoubtedly added a new dimension to the American-Iranian relations. Firstly, Iran emerged as the second largest exporter of crude oil after Saudi Arabia, with a production around 5.5 million barrels a day in the mid-1970s; secondly, it became the main supplier

\textsuperscript{80} This naval exercise was held under the auspices of CENTO, linking the U.S., Britain, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey in a military grouping and designed to help preserve peace and security in the region.

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{Kayhan International}, 26 November 1977.

of America's ally, Japan; thirdly, as of 1970-71 the United States had turned from self-sufficiency to growing dependence on imported oil, a dependence exemplified by over 40 per cent of its requirements being provided by foreign oil in the mid-1970s; and fourthly, the balance of payments of the United States as well as of other major consumers of imported oil was seriously affected by the quadrupling of the prices of crude decreed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), following the Iranian-Venezuelan initiative of the Tehran conference in late 1973. In the late 1970s, the cost of imported oil in the United States was burdening the American economy at the rate of $40-45 billion a year.

From the American point of view, the reliability of the Iranian supply was a critical consideration. Iran did not participate in the 1973 oil embargo and in the councils of OPEC, and held an important swinging position on the

83 Besides Japan, Europe and Israel have a critical dependence on Persian Gulf oil. Israel, for example, depended on Iran for over 70 per cent of its petroleum needs.

84 Till November 1978 the U.S. bought about 919,000 barrels of oil a day from Iran, (less than 10 per cent) its second biggest supplier after Saudi Arabia. It took approximately six to eight weeks for the Iranian oil from the Persian Gulf to reach the U.S. (See Drew Middleton, 'Iran Upheaval Threatens U.S.', International Herald Tribune, 2 November 1978.)

question of pricing. If the Shah chose to side with the price hawks, then there was an excellent chance that oil prices would increase significantly; if he decided to take a more moderate stance and to ally Iran with the Saudis in holding the line against higher prices, there would be no such increases. The latter is exactly what happened in January 1978.

Numerous other mutual economic interests tied America to Iran. The Shah paid premium prices for American military goods, with sales since 1972 amounting to a staggering $14 billion. At a time when increasing payments for foreign oil had contributed to a worsening American balance-of-payments ledger, this kind of recapture of funds was not an insignificant factor.\(^8\)\(^6\)

In May 1975, the two countries signed a trade agreement designating $15 billion over a five year period for American products which included arms, non-military trade products and disbursement for development of Iran's industries, food supplies, housing and public services. An additional $7 billion was agreed to for 6 to 8 nuclear power plants to be provided by the U.S. During 1976, a 4 year trade package involving about $50 billion was being negotiated.\(^8\)\(^7\)


\(^8\)\(^7\) The Middle East: U.S. Policy, Israel, Oil and the Arabs, Congressional Quarterly Inc., Third edition, September 1977, Washington, D.C., p.11.

Also in 1975, Iran proposed and then dropped a $300 million loan-purchase investment in Pan American airways, ailing partly as a result of the higher oil prices. The rescue financing was to be part of Iran's planned $10-12 billion long-range U.S. investments. This scheme was later dropped. ibid.
Until the fall of the Shah hundreds of American banks and businesses were involved in Iran.\(^{88}\) By the end of 1978 over 41,000 American businessmen, diplomats, technical and scientific experts, military advisers and their dependents lived in Iran. On the other hand many Iranians also resided in the United States, including at least 30,000 students.\(^{89}\)

With increased U.S. purchases of petroleum from the Persian Gulf and the rising prices of crude oil, the supply of dollars in Arab hands had been growing at a spectacular rate. Obviously, such a concentration of U.S. currency becomes an independent source of power and a potential threat when one considers the fragile condition of the international monetary system.\(^{90}\) A somewhat cautious assessment of this problem was offered by the Assistant Secretary Sisco in 1973:

> The Saudis and other oil rich [Arabian] Peninsula states have begun to accumulate large foreign exchange reserves well beyond


\(^{89}\) *Bill*, op.cit., p.337.

\(^{90}\) According to the Central Bank Governor, Mohammad Ali Maulawi, Iran's foreign reserves in March 1979 stood at $15,000 million. Also, the latest estimates put Saudi Arabia's holdings at $60 billion, most of which is invested in the U.S. This large reserve fund is besides Saudi investment of a 142-billion dollar in development programmes, vast aid to Arab and African countries, and generous international contributions. (Nation Review, 10 May 1979 and 'Saudi Arabia - How True a Friend?' *U.S. News and World Report*, 2 April 1979.)
their needs. They have now indicated that if [oil] production is to rise beyond their income requirements, they must find productive outlets at home or abroad to invest their surplus revenues. This is a challenge to the consumer countries generally and to our American businessmen specifically.\(^1\)

The U.S.-Iran military relationship also bears a commercial dimension. Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the disposal of surplus weapons, most of which went to the Third World countries, was more of a commercial issue.\(^2\) Again, the shift in Anglo-American policy from arms aid to arms sales that took place in the beginning of the 1960s was the result of accumulated balance of payments and increasing costs of defence burdens.\(^3\)

Ever since October 1971, when America's foreign-trade balance showed a net deficit for the first time since 1893, the Nixon administration had regarded the balance of payment problem as a major foreign policy issue. As one solution to the problem, the Department of Defence launched after 1972 an intensive campaign to expand sales of U.S. military equipment abroad. The Pentagon's hard-sell tactics had not been without success: while foreign sales of most U.S. manufactured goods had declined due to stiff competition

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\(^1\) As quoted in the *Special Oversight Report No.4*, p.227.

\(^2\) For example, see the *White Paper on Export of Surplus War Material*, HMG, London, January 1956.

from Europe and Japan, U.S. aerospace exports were rising and in 1972 were the only commodity to show a positive trade balance.94

When Vietnam-related defence expenditure began to decline in the early 1970s many U.S. aerospace firms experienced significant cutbacks in defence contracting and were forced to order massive layoffs of skilled and semi-skilled personnel. Some companies, particularly producers of attack aircraft and military helicopters predicted that termination of the war would precipitate the closure of entire production lines or even corporate bankruptcy. In order to forestall this eventuality, many companies launched intensive export drives designed to find foreign customers. This effort had been successful in rescuing several production lines scheduled for termination or sharply reduced output. Thus, McDonnell-Douglas kept producing F-4 Phantom jets at the rate of 20 a month (some of which were sent to Saudi Arabia and Iran) even though production was once stated to be cut back to 4-6 aircraft per month. Some production runs are now totally geared to the foreign market: Northrop Corporation, for instance, at one time planned to sell 1,000 to 1,500 F-5E fighters abroad including 170 to Iran and 120 to Saudi Arabia.95

94 This was largely due to the aggressive salesmanship of the representatives of Navy, Airforce and U.S. contractors for pursuing new arms markets in Africa and the Middle East. (See 'Strong Export Drive Dismays Europeans', Aviation Week and Space Technology, 4 June 1973.)

In addition to the above, many other Companies producing weapons were the main interested parties in boosting arms sales. In order to have smooth and expanded business, they have worked in collaboration with civil and military bureaucracies as also the political interests in their respective countries, which created what is widely known as the military industrial complex.\(^9^6\) In Iran, these companies have, on occasions, worked directly without consulting their own governments. This has led sometimes to political and social scandals.\(^9^7\)

The widening of the arms market also enabled the Pentagon and the arms manufacturers to lower the per unit cost of weapons. By acting as a broker between foreign buyers of U.S. arms and the U.S. manufacturers, the U.S. government was able to save on its own military budget. It is estimated that by selling $8 billion worth of arms abroad, the U.S. was able to cut the other military costs by $560 million.

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The above hearings mainly deal with the Grumman's sale of F-14 aircraft to Iran through various sales agents of the company, who made direct contacts with Iranian higher officials in the Government.
On an average a dollar's worth of military sales abroad results in a 14 per cent saving to the Pentagon.98

As aircraft and other military systems incorporate increasingly advanced technological improvements, the costs of research and development (R and D) and production engineering consume a larger share of total acquisition costs. R and D expenditures on the C-5A jumbo transport jet, for instance, amounted to well over $1 billion.99 In order to pass on some of these mounting costs to its Allies, the Pentagon had intensified its sale efforts to some of the wealthy Persian Gulf states. 'The American government has loosened the wraps on what can be sold abroad',100 Aviation Week reported in June 1973. The administration's cost-sharing strategy was more evident in the sale of F-14 Tomcats to Iran. By purchasing these navy jets whose production costs have consistently surpassed every ceiling set by the Pentagon, the Shah helped reduce overall development costs to the U.S. government and eased continued F-14 appropriation requests through the Congress, where opposition to their procurement was stiff.101

The military sales to foreign countries also create the 'ripple effect'. They promote American technology and

99 Special Oversight Report No.4, p.226.
100 Aviation Week and Space Technology, 4 June 1973.
101 Special Oversight Report No.4, p.226.
products from military to non-military fields. It is estimated that for each $1 billion in military sales, approximately 47,000 jobs are filled in the military industry of the supplying country.\textsuperscript{102}

Military sales serve political purposes as well. Arms transfers held keep governments friendly by creating a situation of dependency.\textsuperscript{103} The weapons, along with military and police training, reinforce the internal security system of these governments,\textsuperscript{104} which later act as American proxies protecting American interests. Iran under the Shah was a classic example of this point.

Politically, foreign military sales also act as an instrument of foreign policy in American politics. Testifying before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 26 June 1968, the then U.S. Defense Secretary Clark Clifford observed:


\textsuperscript{103} This is done through the provision of spare-parts, training facilities and the replacement of the weapon-systems to the recipient countries.

\textsuperscript{104} The internal security system is strengthened by rulers in order to promote their perpetuation in domestic power structure. For a detailed analysis of this point see, W. Howard Wriggins, The Ruler's Imperatives: Strategies for Political Survival in Asia and Africa, New York: Columbia University Press, 1969 and Franklin B. Weinstein, 'The Uses of Foreign Policy in Indonesia: An Approach to the Analysis of Foreign Policy in the Less Developed Countries', \textit{World Politics}, Vol.XXIV, NO.3, April 1972, pp.358-381.
The Foreign Military Sales Act will retain all the present controls. In addition, it will establish further restraints designed specifically to ensure that the military sales programmes will continue to be fully and responsively a sound instrument of foreign policy.105

The U.S. interests in West Asia are, however, succinctly summarised by Robert Pranger, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense as follows:

First, the legal and political commitments which we have to states in the area; second, an interest in maintaining a viable military presence; third, an interest in the preservation of friendly governments; fourth, an interest in preventing full Soviet monopoly and reducing undue dependence on USSR; fifth ... access to oil; sixth, the maintenance of lines of communication.106

**Conclusion**

To conclude it can be said that the American relationship with Iran has undergone through various stages of evolution since the beginning of the Second World War. Since then the American presence in Iran had risen significantly, particularly in the '70s. This presence had included people from diplomatic, military and business and contractor class. The American interests in Iran were motivated over these years, cumulatively, by political, strategic, economic and commercial interests. In fact for the U.S., Iran was 'too important in place, in power and in petroleum to lapse into a conflict of moods'.107

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CHAPTER V

IRAN'S ARMAMENT PROGRAMME:

A CRITIQUE
Introduction

Iran's huge military armament programme was justified mainly by the Shah's threat perceptions to Iran's security (Chapter I). In addition, many other reasons were invariably advanced for the arms buildup. While most of these rationalisations of arms acquisition came from the Shah and the Iranian media, the Western press also generally supported this Iranian theme. In this chapter the various reasons put forward for the procurement of sophisticated weaponry by Iran are given. This is followed by a critique of most of these arguments.

(a) The purchase of arms is for political as well as for military ends. Designed for deterrence as well as defence, arms acquisitions clearly have a symbolic prestige dimension. Vis-à-vis the major powers, they are intended to raise the cost of aggression and to complicate the cost-calculations of states contemplating intimidation and pressure. Regionally, they serve notice of Iran's determination to insure its own security. As bargaining-chips, they are viewed as fungible assets, convertible into regional leverage and goodwill.¹

(b) Iran's defence buildup has had a beneficial impact on the Persian Gulf region. Arms, though not directly or solely responsible, have contributed to the stabilization

¹ Shahram Chubin, 'Iran's Military Security in the 1980s', The California Seminar on Arms Control and Foreign Policy, Discussion Paper No.73, California, September 1977, p.12.
of politics in the region (by strengthening already existing political restraints) and have muted any tendency towards polarization.²

(c) As the super-powers are situated asymmetrically in terms of geographic distance from the Persian Gulf and as Iran lacks any tie to the U.S. comparable to that of Israel, it is important to have a strong defence.³

(d) In the light of the uncertainty of arms support in times of conflict and the high speed of modern warfare, it is imperative to stockpile weapons.⁴ Added to this is the continuous threat of embargoes and moratoria by big powers on arms sales to various regions.

(e) The focus on aggregate costs of military expenditures has tended to exaggerate the scope of Iran’s military buildup. The arms purchases are deceptively large because they include training, maintenance contracts and contracts for infrastructure development.⁵ The total cost approach obscures the rise in inflation levels and by blurring orders

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and deliveries it ignores the very long lead-times involved in procuring modern weaponry and then the time-lag before absorption and assimilation.⁶

(f) The military development ultimately leads to economic development of the society e.g. the military construction may lead to the economic infrastructure by construction of roads, ports and airfields and expenditures on dual-purpose items, e.g. air-traffic control and communications equipment.⁷

(g) There is a dire need for replacement, modernization and expansion.

Replacement refers to the numbers of aircraft, tanks, etc., that must be continuously acquired to maintain a stable inventory in the light of normal attrition and wear and tear. Modernization refers to the procurement of follow-on weapon systems to perform the same mission as a weapon in the current inventory. Given the rapid rate of technological change, the life-cycle of modern weapons systems is relatively short (longer for warships and rifles, shorter for aircraft, avionics and missiles. The expansion refers to the expansion of missions not hitherto achieved, enabling the armed forces to undertake new or expanded missions. These include: the acquisition of a limited sea-denial mission for a new blue-water navy; an enhanced air-defence capability including air defence fighters, missiles and radar; improved tactical mobility including the

⁶ Chubin, Iran's Military Security, p.15.
⁷ ibid.
creation from scratch of a sizeable army aviation (helicopter) unit and quick-reaction forces; and better intelligence, including electronic equipment and reconnaissance planes.\textsuperscript{8}

(h) Iran does not have an indigenous military industry capable of satisfying its elementary needs. Therefore, unlike the industrial states of the West, it has to purchase its military requirements from abroad.\textsuperscript{9}

(i) Iran is in a position to buy sophisticated weapons. Among the two groups of countries in the Middle East there are those who have the capacity to absorb the oil revenues (Iran, Oman, Iraq and Algeria) and those who cannot (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Libya).\textsuperscript{10}

(j) The Western nations set up double standards for themselves and the less developed countries.\textsuperscript{11}

A close review of most of these rationalisations reveals that they form corollaries of the central argument

\textsuperscript{8} ibid., p.16.

\textsuperscript{9} Chubin, op.cit., p.333.


\textsuperscript{11} In this the author argues by comparing Saudi Arabia and Switzerland. According to him, both of these countries have approximately the same population while, geographically speaking, Saudi Arabia is 15 times larger and has nearly 4,000 miles of coastline, while Switzerland is landlocked. Saudi Arabia is more vulnerable to direct and indirect threats than Switzerland and yet the latter has a better equipped defence capability. (For details see Amir Taheri, 'Kennedy ignores the "How, Why and Who" on Persian Gulf Arms', ibid., 7 June 1975.)
advanced, i.e. the grave threat to Iran's security from its neighbours, particularly the Soviet Union.

As regards the Shah's fear from the Soviet Union in the north, all evidence of Soviet foreign policy and behaviour during the two decades since Stalin seemed to suggest that there was no reason to assume that it would attack a country situated outside its Eastern European front-yard. The possibility of such an attack on Iran was particularly remote, for the Soviets were getting Iranian petroleum and natural gas at reasonably cheap rates. The historical fear of Soviet encroachment remained the Shah's primary security concern until the early 1960s. By then, Soviet propaganda against his regime had lessened, and the Shah declared his intention not to allow the stationing of American nuclear missiles in Iran. He made official visits to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1965 and 1966, during which he signed a number of commercial agreements. The most important of these provided that the Soviets construct a steel mill at Isfahan, in exchange for the Iranian natural gas.

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13 In an exchange of Notes on 15 September 1962, the Iranian Government gave the Soviet Government an assurance that it would 'not allow any foreign Power to establish rocket-launching sites of any kind on Persian territory'. *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* 1961, p.18986.

14 This draft agreement was signed in Tehran on 5 October 1965. See *Keesing's Contemporary Archives* 1965, p.21010.
The improvement in relations with the Soviet Union was reflected in a speech by the former Iranian Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveida in February 1967 to the Majlis when he categorically said that Iran had no longer anything to fear from the Soviet Union and that the dangers it was facing now came from the south. He also stated that the Government had decided to send the armoured units stationed in the north near the Soviet borders south to the Persian Gulf area. In February 1967, again the two nations announced a $110 million agreement to exchange Soviet military equipment which included non-armoured vehicles, troop carriers, and anti-aircraft guns for Iranian natural gas and other raw materials. By 1970, a gas pipeline from southwestern Iran to the Russian frontier had been completed. In February 1975, major economic agreements involving nearly $3,000 million were reached between Iran and the Soviet Union. In September 1975, Iran and the Soviet Union signed a protocol for the development and modernization of the railway network in the north-western parts of Iran. The agreement provided for the establishment of a new railway line that would connect Qazwin to Astara, the Irano-Soviet border town located on the Caspian sea coast. According to this agreement, the Soviet Union was to participate in

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15 See Asia Recorder, 1967, p.7599.

a joint project with Iran for laying a new set of tracks along the existing 650 kilometer Tehran-Tabriz line. In all, by 1975, the Soviet arms transfers to Iran had amounted to $589 million while the economic aid reached to a figure of $750 million.

The Shah's fears from the Soviet Union were also to a great extent unfounded as the Soviet threat would have caused the Arab states and Iran to embargo Eastern European countries. Also, it could even prompt the Western European nations to retaliate by reducing their purchases of Soviet oil. The loss of oil revenues, which were the largest component of Soviet foreign exchange earnings, would be sorely felt. Oil is not the only restraining factor, for any provocative actions directed against the Shah would upset the Muslim population in southern Russia, where many residents share family ties with Iranian Muslims in Mazandaran and Azerbaijan. Even in 1978, when there was a popular mass


20 Besides the oil and gas flow, there was also a fear of Muslim revivalism spilling over into the Soviet Union southern frontiers comprising Turkoman, Tadjiks, Uzbeks, Azeris and Georgian Muslims. Moreover, if the present differential rates of increase continue for the rest of the century, the Soviet population is expected to rise to about 320 million. Out of this the Central Asians would constitute about 63 million, as compared to approximately 170 Russians. It is estimated (cont'd)
movement against the Shah in Iran, the Soviet Union maintained a generally cautious policy.²¹

The Shah's threat scenario of the possibility of the Soviet attempts to interdict the Western shipping along the sea lanes connecting the Persian Gulf with Australia, Japan and Western Europe (via the Cape of Good Hope) also needs to be closely examined.²² It is doubtful whether this could in any way bring substantial benefits to Moscow. It is difficult to imagine the Soviets to interdict seaborne oil supplies when there exists a strong possibility to counter-interdiction of their own shipping at the choke-points of the Turkish Straits, the entrance to the Baltic, and the entrance to the Sea of Japan. Were circumstances such that they believed this interference necessary, there are three ways in which it might be done. The first would be to use diplomatic pressure, backed by military threats, to persuade the local governments to cut off oil supplies

²° (cont'd)

that by the end of the century the growth rate in Soviet Asian population will level off (like Transcaucasia and Kazakhstan) due to control of endemic diseases, drop in infant mortality and increasing economic prosperity. (For a detailed discussion on the population aspect in Soviet Asia read Geoffrey Jukes, The Soviet Union in Asia, Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1973, pp.30-65.

²¹ However, after the Shah's departure from Iran in January, 1979, the Soviet press begun to criticize him explicitly and to speak favourably of Khomeini. (Further examined in Chapter VI.)

at source. The second would be to bomb the wells, pipelines,
pumping stations and terminals from airfields in the Caucasus,
little more than an hour's flying time away. The third
recourse - naval warfare against tankers - would seem likely
to be more hazardous than either of the first two because of
the long distance from main fleet bases and less effective
because of the possibilities of counteraction. \(^\text{23}\) Furthermore,
the Soviet Union would have no assurance that the resulting
conflict would be localized. Moreover, the Soviet merchant
marine has grown from a strength of 483 ships (1.9 million
deadweight tons) in 1953 to 2,140 ships (15.4 million dead-
weight tons) in 1973. \(^\text{24}\) The Soviet Union has an economic
interest in increasing the income earned by its expanding
merchant fleet. The Soviet trade with the countries of the
Indian Ocean basin has increased from over 200 million
roubles in 1960 to over 1,400 billion roubles in 1973. \(^\text{25}\)

However, sometimes the importance of the Indian Ocean
as a year-round maritime trade route between the European

\(^{23}\) Geoffrey Jukes, 'The Development of Soviet Strategic
Thinking Since 1945', Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence,
No. 2, (Canberra: The Australian National University, 1972),
pp. 41-42. Also for a more detailed examination of these
aspects of Soviet naval strategy see G. Jukes, 'The Indian
Ocean in Soviet Naval Policy', Adelphi Papers No. 87 (London:

\(^{24}\) Robert T. Ackley, 'The Merchant Fleet', in Michael McGwire
and John McDonnell (eds), Soviet Naval Influence, New
York: Praeger, 1977, Table 14.1, p. 293.

\(^{25}\) Richard B. Remnek, 'The Soviet Presence in the Indian
Ocean: Current Realities and Future Prospects', paper
prepared for the annual meeting of the Association for
Asian Studies, San Francisco, California, March 24, 1975,
Figure I, p. 5.
and Far Eastern ports of the U.S.S.R. is unduly emphasized.\textsuperscript{26} The reality, however, is that the overall volume of traffic between the Soviet, European and Far Eastern ports by sea is very little compared with the tonnage that passes by rail through the land. This is because the bulk of internal trade conducted by the Soviet Far East with other parts of the Soviet Union is not with the European U.S.S.R., but with Central Asia and the Ural region. Thus in 1967 nearly 24 million tonnes passed by rail and approximately 120,000 tonnes passed by sea.\textsuperscript{27} This percentage may have increased over the last few years due to the vulnerability of the Trans-Siberian Railway in the event of war with China thus increasing the importance of the sea route. However, the escorting of merchant shipping past the Chinese coast would entail a heavy burden on the Soviet Pacific fleet, given that the Chinese navy is not of negligible size. Hence the capacity of the eastern section of the Trans-Siberian Railway is being increased by progressive electrification and a duplicate line is being built about 200 miles north of it. It is assumed that a war with China will not be a prolonged affair. Hence the Soviets would rely for supply of the Far East on a combination of rail transit to railheads sufficiently distant from the frontier, coupled with road

\textsuperscript{26} For example in this regard see Dmitry Volsky, 'A Strategy without a future', \textit{New Times}, No.33, August 1978, p.5.

\textsuperscript{27} See affirmation of Geoffrey Jukes to the Australian Senate, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, \textit{Australia and the Indian Ocean Region} (Canberra: Government Printers, 1976), pp.673-674.
transit or airlift from there to points nearer the front line; shipping via northern ports and north-south rivers; airlift; transits via the very roundabout Indian Ocean route; or via the slightly shorter northern sea route during the three months of the year when it is open. 28

In addition, the acquisition of Soviet base facilities in the Indian Ocean, particularly Aden, Berbera, Socotra, Visakhapatnam and Umm Qasr have been often cited as a source of increasing threat to the Western interests in the safe passage of the Gulf oil. 29 No doubt the deployment of Soviet naval forces in the Indian Ocean began in 1968 and has led to a sizable presence since then. 30 But reports about Soviet bases need to be evaluated with care. First, the word 'base' 31 is often used in an ambiguous and, therefore, misleading fashion. Mere access to replenishment and repair facilities does not mean the acquisition of exclusive base rights. For example, it would be inaccurate to suggest that India's coast port of Visakhapatnam and Iraqi port of Umm Qasr are, in any meaningful sense, Soviet

28 ibid.

29 For example, refer to Sharnaz Boushehri, 'Australia and Its Allies', Kayhan International, 28 September 1974.

30 By 1969 a permanent Soviet presence had been established. Since then an average of four to six Soviet ships and two to three submarines have been maintained in the waters of the Indian Ocean, with an increase in their numbers during political crises like the October 1973 Middle East conflict and the Bangladesh war. (See Geoffrey Jukes, 'Soviet Policy in the Indian Ocean', in Michael McGwire, Ken Booth and John McDonnell, (eds), Soviet Naval Policy (New York: Praeger, 1975), p.308.

31 A base technically should have facilities for docking, berthing, rest and recreation, radio communication, air communication etc. (See Jukes in Australia and the Indian Ocean, pp.664-667.
bases. Speaking specifically in the case of Umm Qasr, it can be said that most of the visits by Soviet ships to this port from June 1971 to June 1976 were made by oil tankers and not warships. This meant that the Soviets were buying oil in Iraq, and using it to replenish their Indian Ocean squadron at sea or in Berbera.

Moreover, a distinction can be drawn between U.S. bases and facilities (e.g. in Diego Garcia) with those acquired by the Soviet Union at various times in the Indian Ocean. Diego Garcia was granted to one outside power (U.S.A.) by another outside power (U.K.) and not by a sovereign Indian Ocean littoral government. On the contrary, the bases given to the Soviet Union by different governments were withdrawn by Egypt in 1972 and Somalia in 1973. Consequently, Diego Garcia is less vulnerable to the effects of domestic politics as compared to the facilities that the Soviet Union relies upon.

Knowledgeable United States officials have testified that there is no evidence to indicate the existence of Soviet naval bases either in India or Iraq. See for example, Atherton's testimony in U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, South Asia, 1974: Political, Economic and Agricultural Challenges, Hearings before the Subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia, 93rd Congress, 2nd Session, 12 and 24 September 1974, p.32; and U.S. House of Representatives, Review of Recent Developments in the Middle East - Hearing before the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on International Relations, 95th Congress, 1st Session, 8 June 1977, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, p.101.


Second, an examination of Moscow's relationship with countries like Egypt and Somalia suggests that the guaranteed access to military facilities is a function of the Soviet Union's political relationship with the host country. In the case of Somalia, it was reported in 1975 that United States' aerial photographs had revealed the existence of a missile storage and handling facility as well as a runway in Berbera, a port that the Soviets helped to modernize.\(^{35}\) However, as a consequence of Soviet reluctance to allow Somali arms to be used for the 'liberation' of Ogaden, the Soviet-Somali relations deteriorated sharply and the rights acquired in Berbera were nullified.

Thus, while the Soviet Union may have acquired port facilities in a number of littoral states, it does not possess exclusive and guaranteed bases. As Michael Klare has pointed out:

> Nowhere does it [the U.S.S.R.] have access to full service installations that can compare to the United States Navy facilities at Subic Bay in the Philippines, Yokosuka in Japan, or Rota in Spain. United States' bases, moreover, are usually secured by treaty and defended by American forces, whereas many of the ports now used by Moscow would be closed to Soviet vessels in the event of hostilities.\(^{36}\)

Also, the Indian and Pacific Ocean operations play a secondary role in the Soviet depictions of future war.

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This is natural enough, since the Soviet Union has no coastline on the Indian Ocean, and its Pacific provinces are far from its most vital areas. The Indian Ocean ranks even lower in priority than the Pacific Ocean. The small squadron maintained there since 1968 has a flag-showing role, and is probably concerned to accumulate operating experience in case U.S. missile submarines are ever deployed near the Arabian Sea, from where they could attack almost all Soviet targets from Moscow in the west to Central Siberia in the east. It is highly unlikely that the Soviet Indian Ocean squadron is intended for action against Indian Ocean sea routes, or to cut off Western oil supplies. In fact Soviet presence comprises mostly of the fishing fleet. The importance of fish to the Soviet diet is high and the Soviet catch is the third largest in the world. Moreover, because of the country's relative remoteness from the best fishing grounds which are found off the southern coasts of Africa, and west and east of the Cape of Good Hope, a strong and well equipped fleet of trawlers and fish carrier/processing ships is required. Consequently of the 5,924 Soviet ships of over 100 tons registered in 1970, 2,683 were trawlers and 372 fish carriers and/or factory ships; a little under two-fifths of world trawler tonnage and just over four-fifths of fish carrier/factory tonnage.

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37 UN Statistical Yearbook 1968, pp.157-158.

38 Lloyd's Register of Shipping 1970, Statistical Tables; Tables 11 and 12.
While economically fishing accounts for much of the Soviet maritime activity in the Indian Ocean, politically the Soviet Union has continued to play a generally low-key posture in the region. In sum, the entire thrust of Soviet diplomacy since the death of Stalin has been to urge Third World countries towards a non-alignment which is consistent with reception of goodwill visits from Soviet warships, but not with the provision of permanent bases for them.\(^{39}\)

That the Shah's fears of Soviet expansionism were exaggerated and that the Soviet Union generally pursued a cautious and low-risk policy in the Persian Gulf region was made evident by its attitude and relations with the countries in the area. For example, Moscow had not taken open sides in the long-standing Iran-Iraq border dispute; had generally kept quiet about the Shah's military buildup; had refused to support Iraq's claim to Kuwaiti territory; had discouraged Ba'athist adventurism; had urged Baghdad

to come to terms with the Iraqi Kurds; and had provided only token support for the Palestinian Front for the Liberation of the Arabian Gulf in its skirmishes with the Omanis and their Iranian allies. 40

To sum up it can be said that looking backward a decade or two, the conclusion is not unwarranted that the Soviet impact on developments in the Gulf has been insignificant — perhaps less significant than in any other region of the world that has attracted Soviet interest since Khrushchev embarked on a 'forward policy' in the Third World in the mid-1950s. 41

Likewise, Iran's military involvement in the Dhofar province of Oman and the forceful occupation of the three Gulf islands were strongly justified on security grounds. According to the Shah if the Dhofari rebels got control

40 Pryor, op.cit., p.64.

of the Straits of Hormuz, Iran 'could be directly in the line of fire'.

But the fact was that the Dhofari rebels were quite far away from the Straits. In view of the conventional type of weaponry needed, such as artillery and ordnance, besides supply and training, the Dhofari rebels could do little to impede Gulf traffic, even if they were right on top of the Straits. And unlike certain other strategic straits such as the Straits of Tiran leading into the Gulf of Elat or Bab el Mandeb or the Jubal Straits leading into the south and north end of the Red Sea, it is impossible to block Hormuz by sinking a tanker in the navigation channel. The Hormuz Straits are fairly wide and deep for effective physical construction.

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42 In this context also see the Shah's interview with the Saudi Arabian newspaper *Aukaz* as reported in *Kayhan International*, 5 June 1976.


44 *U.S. Military Sales to Iran*, p.9.

There was even less likelihood of attack from Saudi Arabia or the relatively tiny Persian Gulf emirates, for their energies were (and are) still focused on oil production, domestic development, and overseas investment. Afghanistan, Iran's financially deprived neighbour, did not pose any credible military threat. The former President Daud's government significantly improved relations with Iran between 1973 and 1976. Also by 1976, Afghanistan and Iran had signed several cooperation agreements. Iran is reported to have pledged in principle to Kabul an aid project for construction of a railway line which would link Tehran to Kabul. This project with an estimated cost of $1,266 million (based on 1975 prices) was included in Afghanistan's 7 year plan running from March 1976-March 1983. Afghanistan's economic situation has continued to deteriorate over the past few years. During the Daud regime,


47 The relations between the two countries started improving when they signed an agreement for sharing the Hirmand river waters on 13 March 1973. The agreement, consisting of 12 articles and 2 protocols and ratified after two years, called for the distribution of the Hirmand river waters during drought seasons. (See Kiumars Mehr-Ayin, 'Pact seals sharing of Hirmand Waters', Kayhan International, 11 June 1977.)

48 Among these notably were: the trade and technical cooperation agreement signed in October 1975. Iran in January 1976 provided Afghanistan with a $10 million loan for the purchase of buses and to finance certain feasibility studies. Another $10 million loan was extended in May to help Afghanistan establish an export bank. (ibid.)

49 ibid., 21 January 1978.
the number of unemployed Afghans increased to over 300,000. The country's seven-year economic development plan was a shambles. From an anticipated development budget of about $400 million for 1976-1977, only slightly more than one-third was spent, and from a development budget of $570 million for 1977-78, only about one-sixth was spent.

The Shah's fears of large scale insurrection in Iranian Baluchistan were also far from genuine. Baluch was not a major factor in the growing anti-Shah movement. This was because firstly, the Baluch areas constitute a relatively small corner of the country. Secondly, the Baluch have not posed a significant military challenge to Tehran since they were decisively defeated in 1928. Using sophisticated military surveillance, well-directed largesse to tribal chieftains, and a few cautious economic development programmes, the Shah had kept organized opposition to a minimum. Thirdly, unlike the British and the post-independence rulers of Pakistan, who have given the Baluch some access to education, Iran had done little until recently to open up its Baluch areas to the outside world. There is no Baluch intelligentsia in Iran comparable to that found in Quetta and Karachi. And finally, Tehran had also stepped up development spending in the last few years and the Baluchis

51 ibid.
were benefiting from large-scale smuggling operations between Pakistan, Iran and Persian Gulf ports, which the government made no effort to stop.53

As for the Shah's fears of Pakistani Baluchistan, it is worth noting that its population is heterogenous. Besides Baluchis, many other ethnic groups including Brahui, Pashtun, Hindu, Punjabi and Sindhi live in Baluchistan. Moreover, the Baluchis, who constitute less than 50 per cent of the population are divided into 500 tribes and clans. It was this diversity of the ethnic groups which confined insurgency to areas in central Baluchistan in the 1973-76 period. The Mekranis, for example, who are not Baluchis and who occupy the coastal areas of Baluchistan, did not participate in the revolt against the central government. In order for the leftist insurgents in Baluchistan to develop a province-wide organizational network, they would have to overcome the problems posed by ethnic and tribal diversity, and mutual suspicions.54

Iran's threat perceptions from its other immediate neighbour, Iraq, were also sometimes magnified and exaggerated beyond proportions. There is no gainsaying the fact that relations between the two countries remained unfriendly for a long period. Iraq was militarily and economically supported by the Soviet Union; it was responsible for promoting many subversive movements in the area; and it was the only country which rivalled Iran's position in the

54 Negaran, op.cit., p.175.
Gulf. But this hardly justified the Shah's feverish arms acquisition programmes. When asked at a press conference whether the quantities of weapons he was buying were essential and where the threat lies, the Shah said he was unable to name the countries he considered a threat. However, he gave a hint when he referred to a country with one-third of Iran's population which possessed as many tanks and aircraft as he had. The reference was obviously to Iraq which had then a population of about 11 million compared to Iran's about 33 million. The above statement by the Shah needs examination. Though in 1976, there was not much variation in the quantity of tanks and combat aircraft, still as far as quality was concerned the Iranian armed forces were far more modernized than the Iraqis. By the end of 1978, the Iranian inventory of arms showed both a quantitative and qualitative edge over Iraq through the procurement of items like F-14A and Chieftain tanks. (For a comparison of relative military strength see Appendix I).

There have also been some political changes between the two countries which did not justify the arguments advanced in favour of the procurement of arms. On 23 June

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55 The Statesman, New Delhi, 8 August 1976.
1976 Iran and Iraq exchanged documents of an agreement in Algiers ending years of dispute between the two countries. Iraq and Iran have in the main lived up to both the letter and spirit of this Agreement which ended the Kurdish insurrection. Since then the relations between the two countries had been 'correct but on the cool side'. Despite the Shah's fears from Iraq, it was up till 1978 unable to challenge Iran militarily. The Ba'athist leadership appeared constantly absorbed in an unending fight for survival against rival factions in the army, the secret police, and other groups. The regime, narrowly thwarted a 1973 coup, and Ba'athist introspection is reinforced by the realization that any other attempt could be made at any time. More importantly, Iraq would probably have to secure Soviet assent and support before fighting a major war with Iran. For a variety of reasons, Moscow's consent was not likely - most probably due to the fear of upsetting the fruitful economic relationship with Iran.

The Iranian argument that its arms buildup was essentially defensive in nature and that it enhanced the regional stability by deterring aggressive tendencies within the various Gulf states, was also questionable.

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56 According to the Congressional hearings, 'each country recognizes the other as its principal potential military adversary or as its principal rival for political power in the Gulf [and] Iraqi defences are focussed towards Iran but there is not an unusually high number of Iraqi troops on the Iraqi-Iranian border'. (See Review of Recent Developments in the Middle East 1977, p.109.)

57 See Pryor, op.cit., p.53.
In fact, the available evidence shows that as judged by the quality, variety, rapidity, sophistication and the offensive nature of the weapons sought, the Shah's military procurement programme had not been shaped exclusively by defence considerations alone. This becomes obvious when the Iranian capabilities are compared with those of Iraq and Saudi Arabia - the only two major powers in the area. (For a comparison of Iran's military capability vis-a-vis Saudi Arabia, see Appendix 2.) Iran's aggressive military policies were reflected in achieving a capacity for sustained intervention on the Arab side of the Gulf;\textsuperscript{58} along her eastern borders in any likely subversive movement in Baluchistan;\textsuperscript{59} and the commitment to a big power Iranian role in the north-western quadrant of the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{60} Also, the Iranian purchase of some weapon systems could hardly

\textsuperscript{58} The military involvement in Oman is a notable example. On the capability for intervention outside its borders, the Shah once said that Iran could land an armoured division on the other side of the Persian Gulf in a few hours' time by landing craft, which it did not possess then. See the Shah's interview to the Chicago Tribune in Tehran as reported in the Kayhan International, 19 November 1977.

\textsuperscript{59} At the height of fighting in Pakistani Baluchistan in late 1974, American-supplied Iranian combat helicopters, some of them manned by Iranian pilots, joined the Pakistani airforce in raids on Baluch guerrilla camps. These AH-IJ Huey-Cobra helicopters provided the key to victory in a crucial battle at Chamalang in early September when a force of some 17,000 guerrillas of the Marri tribe, one of the 27 major Baluch sub-divisions, was decimated. (See Harrison, op.cit., p.139.)

\textsuperscript{60} For example, in this context refer to the Shah's speech in which he stressed the fact that Iran's security perimeter no longer stopped at the Strait of Hormuz but extended beyond to the Indian Ocean. (Kayhan International, 5 November 1972.)
be justified on defensive grounds alone. For example, the Spruance class destroyer seemed superfluous for a military establishment designed primarily for territorial and maritime defence. On the contrary, they were armed for coastal bombardment, anti-shipping attacks as well as anti-submarine warfare. At 7,800 tons, they are heavy vessels with more than twice the displacement of America's World War II destroyers and equal in weight to the Soviet light cruiser. The opponents of this weapon-system, led by the Republican Les Aspin (D, WCS) argued that the vessel had no conceivable defence function in the Persian Gulf proper (where the largest Iraqi and Saudi warships are patrol boats and minesweepers), and presumably were intended for the Indian Ocean.  

The F-4 fighter bombers which were designed primarily for the deep-penetration airstrikes and a capability enhanced by the inflight refuelling capacity had developed an operational range upto 1,400 miles permitting attacks as far as Cairo, New Delhi and Istanbul. Similarly, the buying of the F-14 Tomcat and F-16s was questionable for defence purposes only.

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62 Ibid.

63 The offensive nature of these weapon systems is implied in the criticism of their being 'high technology, heavy, and difficult to maintain, underpowered, and expensive'. (Chubin, *Iran's Military Security in the 1980s*, p.19.)
The procurement of the Hovercraft could also be criticized on the grounds that they had no defensive function and were meant to be used for amphibious assaults on the other Gulf states. Moreover, the interest in acquiring the Boeing AWACs was criticized on reasons of advanced technology, lack of training and maintenance facilities and the possibility of their being used in an aggressive mode not only against the U.S.S.R. but also against the Persian Gulf states.

On some occasions Iran's heavy arms buildup was defended for promoting regional stability in the area. In some parts of the world, a balance of arms can help to confer stability - as in Europe, and at times even in the Arab-Israeli conflict. But for this several conditions are necessary: among these, for both sides the performance of weapons must be related closely to the ability to command and control them. Weapons must not be so powerful or distances between contending military forces (or cities) so short that the nation striking first could gain a decisive advantage, for this could lead to hair-trigger reactions and even war by accident.

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64 For example, in a smoothly-executed combined operation on 29 November 1971, just prior to the British withdrawal from the Persian Gulf, the Iranian Navy hovercraft disgorged troops on the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tumbs. (See R.D.M. Furlong, 'Iran - a power to be reckoned with', International Defense Review, Vol.6, No.6, December 1973, p.719.)

65 Chubin, Iran's Military Security in the 1980s, p.20.

But in few countries of the Persian Gulf do any of these conditions for a stable balance of military power exist; and all of these conditions exist in no local state. The command and control arrangements tend to be poorly situated to the high performance equipment they are intended to manage. The terrain along the Persian Gulf generally tends to be flat while along the Iranian borders with Afghanistan, Turkey, and Iraq, it is generally treeless. Distances are too short between potential adversaries in the Persian Gulf region, as much of the equipment was designed for use in Europe. Moreover, the area generally lacks the natural barriers that in other places could serve to separate potential opponents.

In fact Iran's military buildup did more to threaten regional stability rather than promote it. The 1974 report of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

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67 Pryor, op.cit., p.67.


Also for a perceptive analysis of the main factors leading to violent outbreaks in the Persian Gulf see Ferenc A. Vali, 'Conflicts and Arms Races Between Littoral States of the Indian Ocean', a background paper for the Conference on 'Arms Proliferation in the Indian and Pacific Ocean Area', Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, The Australian National University, 26-28 July 1977, pp.24-29.
studied the effects of conventional arms transfers on regional stability in the Persian Gulf's military environment. The report concluded that while massive arms transfers were seldom the primary cause of regional conflict, they do increase the likelihood of hostilities by altering the power-balance and increasing regional concern about the recipient's military intentions. Also, the report warned that acquisitions of advanced weapons system may result in miscalculations by the countries involved and lead to open hostilities.\footnote{For a statistical analysis of the effects of sharp increases in military assistance on international conflict and cooperation on the part of recipient nations see Donald A. Sylvan, 'Consequences of Sharp Military Assistance Increases for International Conflict and Cooperation', \textit{The Journal of Conflict Resolution}, Vol.XX, No.4, December 1976, pp.609-636.}

In this investigation, twenty-five annual observations, from 1946 through 1970, of 15 Asian nations serve as the data base. The key findings are: (1) sharp increases in military assistance tend to change decidedly the recipient nation's international conflict and cooperative behaviour; (2) in a substantial majority of cases examined, the direction of that behaviour change is toward increased conflict and decreased cooperation; and (3) a two-year lag between military assistance and behaviour change of recipient nations is statistically supported. The effects of increased capabilities as well as bureaucratic politics, habit, expectation, and prior deals are offered as possible reasons for these results. The findings seem to refute the argument that giving military aid to a nation not involved in a war will help strengthen that nation and thereby avoid future conflict.

The Iranian stock argument for quick stockpiling of weapons (due to the uncertainty of arms support in times of conflict and the threat of embargoes) also needs a close scrutiny.

As mentioned earlier, in the beginning of 1973 the Shah embarked on a vast expansion and modernization programme for the airforce, army, and navy simultaneously. The initial assessments of this strategy in 1976 revealed serious absorptive problems, a finding which was confirmed in a December 1977 study.  

The Imperial Iranian Air Force had been the Shah's personal priority and faced fewer problems than the other services in attracting qualified recruits and retaining talented and imaginative personnel. However, both studies revealed shortages of trained pilots and trainable candidates, shortage of instructor pilots, shortages of ground crews and maintenance personnel, and severe difficulties for the logistics system in locating and providing spare parts to individual units. On the one hand, the training of new pilots was not able to keep up with the expanded number of planes. On the other hand, the arrival of new generations of aircraft frequently resulted in a degradation of military capability as the best pilots from existing programmes were diverted to new programmes.

The best documented example of this 'degradation' phenomenon had been the shift of the most capable air crews

70 See U.S. Military Sales to Iran and United States Arms Policies in the Persian Gulf.
from F-5Es to the more sophisticated F-14s. But the problem of pilots for the F-14 programme was not unique. The same process of 'poaching' took place with regard to maintenance crews for the F-5Es. Programmes of lower priority to the Shah than the F-14 (e.g. the I-Hawk air defence package, one of the largest and most complex of the programmes undertaken by the Iranian military) had faced similar or larger difficulties.  

One could hypothesize on the basis of data from the airforce experience that expansion and modernization problems would be even more severe in the services that received less personal attention from the Shah. The evidence available through the end of 1977 from the ground forces and the navy is consistent with that hypothesis, with major absorptive problems in the helicopter programme (army), self-propelled howitzer programme (army), tank programme (army, with most of the armour provided by the British), and naval training and electronics programme.  

After the initial surveys of 1976 and 1977, there was some improvement in the worst areas, and some decline in other areas. The problem was not lack of effort on either the U.S. or the Iranian side, but rather the unavoidable strain associated with so massive a military buildup. Thus, even before the social upheavals of 1978, the pattern of lowering current combat capability in order to make room for ever larger amounts of new military

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71 ibid.
72 ibid.
equipment cast doubt on the proposition that 'more is better' in the Iranian context. Rather, from a purely military point of view (laying aside for a moment the argument about the need to shift expenditures from the military to the civilian sector) the strategy of slowing down and drawing out the pace of new weapons acquisitions had much to recommend it. A more temperate approach to arms buildup would have allowed the Iranian armed forces to focus their efforts on (1) improvement in the ability to handle equipment already delivered on order; (2) building a reliable logistics system; (3) broadening repair and maintenance programmes; (4) strengthening command and control; (5) conducting more practical exercises and practice operations; (6) hardening military facilities; and (7) extending the road, railroad, and airport networks in a way that would provide major military as well as civilian benefits.

Moreover, a military argument could be made in favour of a more moderated and better balanced approach to the Iranian defence buildup programme. It would have strengthened regional stability in a crisis situation. In fact the

73 That Iran faced serious problems of absorbing large amounts of sophisticated equipment, even simple equipment, was not merely restricted to the military sector. Iranian economists described the same problem in the civilian sector, e.g. 'to allay the transportation bottleneck, 2,000 trucks were ordered. When they arrived, there was a shortage of drivers. When the drivers were imported, there was a shortage of garages, spare parts and so forth'. (See Amirie and Twitchell (eds.), Iran in the 1980s, p.126.)
pattern of rapid equipment accumulations by Iran and other Persian Gulf nations made them highly vulnerable during an emergency. It was very likely that in an actual combat setting most of the weapons in Iran, Iraq, or Saudi Arabia would not survive much beyond the first strike or two. This led to a highly unstable environment for crisis management, with a strong motivation on all sides for preemptive attack whenever tensions mounted. Better logistics and improved maintenance programmes would have reduced the vulnerability of existing weapons. A broader infrastructure with a network of roads, railroads, and aircrafts would have allowed for more measured patterns of mobilization and a less precipitous response to a threat.

The contention that military development eventually leads to the economic development of a society merits a close analysis. No doubt the military in a developing state is called upon to perform certain useful functions during peace time. But the role of military assumed by many as the champions of modernization, stability and industrialization in the Third World is not wholly true. This nature of modernization and industrialization, wherever

These may include promotion of literacy and health facilities in the rural areas, building of road and dams in difficult terrain and provision of relief opportunities in times of emergencies, e.g. earthquakes, floods, droughts and epidemics.
brought about by the military regimes in the Third World, needs to be evaluated cautiously and carefully. 75

Some writers assume a negative correlation between military expenditures and development. 76 The 'guns vs butter' analogy is used in the economic context of resource scarcity and opportunity costs 77 to explain why this negative relationship exists. The proponents of this school of thought assume a zero-sum social market-place: what is spent in one sector is taken away from another. They maintain that buying arms utilizes scarce foreign-exchange resources that could be used for more constructive developmental purposes in industrializing countries. Even


76 Fred M. Cottheil, 'An Economic Assessment of the Military Burden in the Middle East, 1960-80', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, September 1974, pp.502-513. 'Whatever else may be said about the economics of national security, few would disagree with the proposition that opportunity costs associated with military expenditures are positive for any size expenditure and for any nation' (p.502).

77 The term 'opportunity costs' refers to the economic concept that if resources (labour, capital, etc.) are scarce, then an increase in the production of one commodity (e.g. guns) requires a reduction in the output of some other commodity (e.g. butter). The amount of 'butter' which must be foregone is the opportunity cost of the additional 'guns'. See Stephen P. Dresch, 'Disarmament: Economic Consequences and Developmental Potential', paper submitted to the Center for Development Planning, Projects and Policies, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, December 1972.
military grant-aid programmes require expenditures on infrastructure, the diversion of skilled manpower from the civilian sector, and operation and maintenance costs not covered by military programmes. Whatever positive spin off effects military expenditures may have, these analysts argue, they cannot be as productive as direct investment in development. 78

Arms buildup may be viewed as having stimulated modernization impulses. It can be agreed that arms buildup has created channels for the transfer of ideas and technologies to the Third World. 79 However, the ideas and

78 The United Nations has also presented this argument: 'One aspect of the economic and social impact of the arms race is the constraining effect on consumption, private and public, and on growth. The considerable importance of this factor is already suggested by the size of military expenditures. In individual countries these vary greatly. In extreme cases, it was noted, upwards of 30 per cent of the output is devoted to military purposes; in other cases, the diversion is small, less than 1 per cent. Typical figures are in the range from 2 to 6 per cent. In all cases resources are involved which could be put to better use'. (See Economic and Social Consequences of the Armaments Race and Its Extremely Harmful Effects on World Peace and Security - Report of the Secretary-General, August 12, 1977 (A/32/88), recently revised and published as Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race and of Military Expenditures, Report of the Secretary-General, 1978 (A/32/88/Rev.1).

79 For example, the defence programme like the construction of Khatimi Air Base outside Isfahan has transformed within a thirty-month period, an isolated sixty-four mile patch of 'desert' into an area which will serve as a commercial airport as well as military facility. (For details see Stephanie Neuman, 'Security, Military Expenditures and Socio Economic Development: Reflections on Iran', Orbis, Vol.22, No.3, Fall 1978, pp.588-592.)
Technologies flowing through such channels have neither been of the desired kind (so as to encourage need-based and self-reliant development) nor gone to the areas where it is required within. Hence the development resulting from such channels in the Third World tends to be lopsided and dependent. It has created centre-periphery relations within the societies giving rise to inequality, displacement (migration from rural to urban areas), tensions and violence. Edward Kennedy emphasized the same point when he said:

... military modernization that is out of step with the modernization of society as a whole must be a risky gamble in the Persian Gulf.  

Conclusion

It becomes obvious in the light of the above discussion that Iran under the Shah faced no real military threat from Russia, Iraq or Afghanistan. Its relations with Iraq improved considerably after the March 1975 accord. Hence most of the Shah's threat perceptions were either unfounded or exaggerated beyond proportions. This becomes understandable in the context of his highly personalised nature of rule which did not have any feedback from domestic sources. It seems that while the issue of regime security was foremost in Iranian defence planning, the Shah's priorities reflected threat perceptions more appropriate

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80 Kennedy, op.cit., p.23.

to the past than the present. Historically, the Shah's problems have stemmed from separatist movements and armed tribal rebellion, of question of loyalty inside the military, and from an inability to control Iranian territory in terms of communications and transport. As the Shah faced no genuine military threat from across the borders in military terms, various ingenious arguments were marshalled as justification for his ambitious armament programme.
CHAPTER VI

THE REVOLUTION OF 1978-79:

A CHANGE IN PERCEPTIONS
Introduction

The fundamental characteristics of Iran until the 1978-79 Revolution seemed fixed and familiar. It was a country that was strong, proud, confident and yet militaristic, repressive and self-centered. It was a price 'hawk' on oil, but a dependable supplier to the United States, Israel and South Africa. It was paranoid and interventionist around the Gulf, but a supporter of conservative pro-Western regimes. For more than a decade, both critics and admirers of the Shah's regime tended to take the benefits of a stable Iran for granted. For, Iran was a guarantor of the regional status quo and a counterpoise to emerging radical regimes. It was a secure supplier of oil to all parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict and an invisible but palpable presence behind the governments that favoured a moderate solution to Middle East problems. And finally, it was a dampener of Soviet ambitions and a dependable ally of Europe and Japan as well as of the United States on most geopolitical issues.¹

In terms of essentials of political power, the Shah appeared to hold all the trump cards. He had absolute control of the organized state machinery, exercised direct command over the impressive military establishment (255,000 army, 100,000 airforce, and 28,000 navy), had a

ubiquitous security apparatus and enjoyed unprecedented wealth from oil revenues (averaging nearly $20 billion a year from 1974 through 1978). An authoritarian system so meticulously built up and sustained was not expected to succumb to civilian revolution short of a lost war with foreign powers.

And yet in the course of 1978 this imposing power structure crumbled with a speed that was astonishing. The Shah left Iran on 16 January 1979, after nearly a year of turmoil, ostensibly on a vacation but probably never to return. The Regency Council and the Cabinet of Shahpur Bakhtiar which he left in a caretaking capacity lasted hardly a month. By 11 February 1979, the regime collapsed and the army surrendered to the revolutionary group rallied around Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a 78-year old religious leader returning to Iran after a 15-year exile. It is indeed ironical that the Shah who always perceived security threats to Iran mainly from external sources was visibly shaken when the opposition came from internal sources, i.e. his own people. Thus his glorious image of a 'Great Civilization' came crashing down in the wake of nation-wide disturbances which started in early 1978.

In this chapter an attempt is made to analyse the role of internal 'threats' to the Shah's regime during the Revolution; the conduct and role of the armed forces during and after the Revolution; the new security outlook of the present regime and the resulting implications for Persian Gulf countries and the Super-Powers.
The Shah believed that the threats to Iran and to himself were mainly from sources outside Iran. He thought that these threats could be neutralised by seeking support from outside forces, i.e. from the West and especially from the U.S.A. He blamed the U.S.S.R. for the events in Iran. He linked the developments in Iran to a grand conspiracy involving the Soviet and Cuban presence in the Bab al-Mandeb region. He also saw the 27 April 1978 coup d'état in Afghanistan as a part of the main plot and tried to revive the old slogan of 'threat of encirclement' to gain the support and sympathy of the West. He threatened the West that if he went not only would Iran be split into three or four autonomous pieces but part of it might even be acquired by the U.S.S.R. as 'Iranistan'. He also threatened the West that a change in Iran would mean 'either the beginning of World War III or the strategic surrender of the Western world'. The Shah thus equated his survival as a monarch with the survival of Western security. He believed, or pretended so, that only a small minority was opposed to him and that the people were with him. In answer to his increasing unpopularity he is reported to have said that it was only a minority which was against him.

2 The Shah in fact assumed that a threat to monarchy was also a threat to Iranian security and national integrity.

3 See the Shah's interview with U.S. News and World Report, 26 June 1978.

while the majority were his supporters.\(^5\) On another occasion he apparently referred to his popularity saying:

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Nobody can overthrow me. I have the support of 700,000 troops, all the workers and most of the people.\(^6\)
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It may not be possible to assess the relative strength and importance of the various opposition groups that formed a loose coalition in removing the Shah from his throne. But it is not difficult to identify these main opposition groups. They were: the middle class, the Islamic religious classes, the workers and the students.

The Middle Class

The Iranian middle class consisted of low and medium level bureaucrats, teachers, technicians, the professional class, and small businessmen including the 'Bazaris'.\(^7\) Due to rapid modernisation of Iranian society the professional middle class more than doubled in size between 1956 and 1976, leaping from six per cent to thirteen per cent of the total employed population. When the merchants and businessmen are brought into the calculations, the percentage of middle

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\(^7\) These 'Bazaris' were adversely affected by the Shah's economic policies that had progressively elbowed out this traditional merchant class in Tehran's downtown Bazaar in favour of the nouveau-riche businessmen. This new business class was facilitated by Western education and engaged in lucrative import-export ventures. (See Kai Bird, 'Making Iran Safe for Theocracy', *The Nation*, New York, 19 May 1979. Also see Don A. Schanache, 'Iran's Bazaars Reveal Power', *International Herald Tribune*, 16 January 1979.)
classes in Iran increases to over 25 per cent of the population which is a very large middle sector for any developing society. Not only was the middle class\(^9\) denied political participation but it also suffered due to economic hardship. The fixed-income group was crushed by the rising inflation, while lack of suitable employment for educated Iranians added to the growing discontent. An analysis of the social background of several hundred active opponents of the regime apprehended, imprisoned or executed by the Iranian police between 1972 and 1976 indicates that well over 90 per cent were young men and women of this professional middle class.\(^{10}\) The Shah and his ruling group called this section the 'pseudo-intellectuals' and 'negative people'. In this way he underestimated the power of the disgruntled middle class in a developing society.

The liberal-democratic groups in Iran sprang from the middle class. The groups to occupy prominence in liberal democratic group in Iran were: the Iran Nationalist


\(^9\) Members of this class also included the foreign-trained engineers and scientists who did not want to return to Iran from abroad, the physicians who returned but then refused to stay, the professional administrators who passively opposed a system they despised, and the teachers who used their positions to undercut a government they considered unresponsive to their needs.

\(^{10}\) Bill, op.cit., p.334.
Party of Dariush Farouher, the Iran Party of Shahpur Bakhtiar, and the Society of Iranian Socialists of Dr Karim Sanjabi. These groups comprised the Union of National Front Forces, or the National Front as it was commonly called. It lost some of its strength and cohesion when Bakhtiar agreed to the Shah's request to form a government just before he left Iran. Another very important liberal-democratic group was the Iran Liberation Movement led by Mehdi Bazargan which had been formed in 1961. Among the liberal-democratic groups it was closest to the Islamic Movement and also had links with the 'Mujahedeen', a guerrilla organization. Some of the members of these liberal-democratic groups also formed the Iranian Committee for the Defence of Liberty and Human Rights, which acted not only as a new pressure group against the Shah and a channel of Communication with pro-nationalist elements outside Iran (especially in the U.S.A.) but also as a forum which helped to consolidate the operational unity of various political groups in Iran and thus helped to evolve a common front.

Another group was the Pan-Iranist Party led by Mohsen Pezeshkpour. Standing on the extreme right this party

11 On 4 January 1979 an Imperial decree formally appointed Shahpur Bakhtiar as the new Prime Minister of Iran following the resignation of General Golam Reza Azhari. (See Chronologies of Major Developments in Selected Areas of Foreign Affairs, January 1979, Foreign Affairs Committee Print, p.9.)

12 'Bubbling to the Surface', The Economist, 3 February 1979.
unblushingly modelled itself on the Nazis with the same type of uniform, salutes and slogans: 'Blood, earth, race'. The very much larger Iran of its dreams would comprise areas where Persian or Persian dialects are spoken and would thus include Tadzhikistan, Afghanistan, the Pushtu, Baluchi areas and Bahrain. It was used as a pressure by the Shah whenever he wanted to assert his claim over Bahrain. This group, though active, was not reported to have played an important role in the Iranian revolution.

Till the last few months of the Shah's reign, the liberal-democratic groups were more inclined to work within a framework that would retain the institution of constitutional monarchy but with in-built restraints on the absolute powers of the monarch. As late as November 1978, Dr Sanjabi was arguing for the return to a constitution and, by implication, to constitutional monarchy. Dr Sanjabi was also supported by some important Islamic leaders like Ayatollah Shiariatmadari who, while supporting the constitution, was also demanding the formation of the council of the Ulema, as provided for in the constitution, to review the laws from the angle of Islamic justice. The Shah, however, reacted too slowly to their demands and finally Ayatollah Khomeini, who had been working not only for the removal of the Shah but also for an end to the monarchy in Iran, steamrolled his point of view. Thus this became the basis of the Iranian movement during the last two months of the Pahlavi dynasty.

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13 ibid.

The liberal-democratic groups used the Human Rights movement,\textsuperscript{15} especially in the U.S.A., to gain limited political support from the American administration, a limited freedom of action in Iran as well as a forum to air their political views abroad. This resulted in the expression of concern for human rights violations in Iran by a number of private and international organizations and even sparked interest in the Congress. In its Briefing Paper on Iran and its 1977 Report, Amnesty International described arbitrary political arrests, the alleged use of torture, the lack of legal safeguards and unsatisfactory trial procedures. In 1976, two reports of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) also discussed violations of civil and political rights in Iran, although they praised other aspects of Iran's judicial system and her encouragement of women's rights. In 1977, representatives of both organizations visited the Shah, who expressed a willingness

\textsuperscript{15} The Human Rights Movement in U.S.A. gained momentum when in the early 1970s, U.S. Congress took the lead in enacting legislation dealing with the protection of Human Rights. This was primarily in the form of amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. One such amendment was Section 32 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1973, which tied United States foreign aid to the incidence of political prisoners in foreign countries. By 1976, the two principal sections of the 1961 Act as amended were Sections 116, which bans bilateral economic assistance to any government consistently engaging in gross violation of internationally recognized human rights. It also calls on the Secretary of State to prepare an annual report on the international status of human rights. The Section 502 states the framework for United States human rights policy (United States House of Representatives, Human Rights Conditions in Selected Countries and U.S. Response, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 25 July 1978, p.7).
to receive suggestions about improving the situation. The Shah also invited the Red Cross to inspect Iran's prisons.

Subsequently, Iran took other steps to protect the human rights of her citizens. According to the State Department report on human rights practices in Iran in 1977 some 'potentially significant improvements' were made in the military court system, which heard state security cases.\textsuperscript{16} To some degree, these improvements were influenced by an increased awareness worldwide of the need to protect human rights, emphasized by United States policy. They came, moreover, at an opportune time, when the liberal-democrats had also started publicising their cause more openly. The Shah was thus caught in the web of a Human Rights programme. Even Dr Henry Kissinger, in an interview with \textit{Trialogue}, accused President Carter of encouraging revolution in Iran by making Human Rights a vocal objective of U.S. foreign policy. He preferred quiet diplomacy to achieve the same objective.\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{17} \textit{International Herald Tribune}, 6 February 1979. \textit{Trialogue} is the publication of the Trilateral Commission, a non-partisan organization focusing on North America, Europe and Japan.
Another important political group that also staked a claim of being anti-Shah was the Tudeh Party, as the Iranian Communist Party is known. Though treated as a major threat to the monarchy in the 1940s and 1950s, the Tudeh did not play a very crucial role in the final overthrow of the Shah's regime. There were several reasons for the Tudeh's inactivity. It was banned in 1949 following an assassination attempt on the Shah. It had been suppressed so long by the Iranian security forces that it had ceased

18 The Iranian Tudeh Party (Party of the Masses) was formed by a group of German-educated Marxist intellectuals in 1941.

19 This is, however, not to deny the significant role of the Tudeh Party's weekly publication called Navid, which started appearing regularly in the streets of Tehran in 1978. It is said that the KGB's covert publishing efforts were also involved in this publication. Unlike the bulletins of other Left-wing groups which are crudely roneoed and often semi-legible, this Tudeh Party organ was beautifully typed, reduced in size by photographic process, and printed by offset. It carried messages from Iraj Eskandary, the Moscow-based First Secretary of the Tudeh Party, in support of the pro-Soviet regimes in Afghanistan, South Yemen and Vietnam, while censoring the Chinese.

In an article that appeared in issue No.48, published on 1 October 1978, Navid attacked the Iraqi regime for what it called a 'dirty conspiracy' against Ayatollah Khomeini who was expelled from Iraq for refusing to give up his campaign against the Pahlavi dynasty. The attack on Iraq came in the wake of the Iraqi purge of Communists and the quest for Western arms and nuclear reactors. Every issue of Navid carried slogans demanding a political general strike and appeals to the armed forces to mutiny against the Shah. It specialized in disinformation themes and defended the concept of a convergence between Islam and Communism. (See Robert Moss, 'The Campaign to Destablise Iran', Conflict Studies, No.101, London: Institute for the Study of Conflict, November 1978, pp.7-8.)
to be an effective force within Iran. Moreover, the Soviet-Iranian rapprochement of 1962 indirectly hurt the party's image when the U.S.S.R. began to openly support the Shah in his domestic policy, especially the 'White Revolution'. This led to a split in the party and the more radical factions broke off. During these days of forced inactivity in Iran the Tudeh was not able to maintain an effective power base. The Tudeh, however, did claim influence among the workers, especially the oil workers.

Nourredin Kianouri, one of the leaders of the Tudeh Party, in an interview with Edward Behr of Newsweek, maintained that the old Tudeh members among the working class had once again become active and indirectly claimed that the workers in the oil field obeyed the Tudeh party members. This claim is, however, difficult to substantiate. The Tudeh also delayed joining the anti-Shah movement till very late. But, once the Iranian Revolution was nearing its final victory, the Tudeh not only came out in support of the Revolution but Nourreddin Kianouri vehemently assured Tudeh support even for the Islamic movement led by Ayatollah Khomeini. He even supported the Ayatollah's demand for an Islamic republic and said:

I believe that there are no overwhelming differences between scientific socialism on the one hand and the social content of Islam on the other. On the contrary, they have much in common.

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20 'We must guard against a coup', Newsweek, 29 January 1979.

21 ibid.
Besides the Tudeh's role, it would be in order to mention the Soviet Union's role in the Iranian revolution. The 1978 disturbances in Iran brought a complex reaction from the Soviet Union. Generally, the Soviet Union followed a restrained, watchful and 'wait-and-see' policy towards Iran. But the Soviet information media did not hide their sympathy with the opposition forces. The use of phrases such as the 'popular struggle', 'clashes between population and police' and 'mass actions of the working people demanding democratic liberties' showed clearly enough the sympathies for the side they favoured. The Soviet media generally ignored and sometimes denied the fact that the opposition came initially from religious circles opposing the Shah's reforms. At the same time, they were careful to give the appearance of having nothing to do with these events, generally quoting what others said about them and keeping their criticisms indirect. Also used was the device of attacking others while meaning the Shah (in the same way, that they had attacked National Security Adviser Brzezinski while meaning President Carter, or, after the deterioration in Soviet-Egyptian relations, attacked Egyptian journalists while meaning President Anwar es-Sadat). For example, *New Times* attacked Mahmoud Jafarian (Deputy General Secretary of the ruling Rastakhiz party and Chief of the Pars state news agency) in what seemed to be a reply to statements by the Shah.

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By a similar token, great care was taken by the Soviets not to support directly and officially the Communist Tudeh party or any other opposition or revolutionary group. But relations with Tudeh representatives were maintained. They appeared in the U.S.S.R. at CPSU Congresses and meetings and opportunities were given to them to express themselves in the Soviet press. For example, a statement of the Tudeh Central Committee was published in the Paris Communist newspaper _L'Humanité_ on 6 September 1978 and called for the overthrow of the Shah's monarchy and expulsion of the American military advisers and officials. This was quoted in part in _Pravda_, which omitted direct calls for the overthrow of the regime in order to prevent Iranian accusations that the Soviets endorsed such calls.  

**Resistance Movements**

A major component of the anti-Shah movement in Iran was the clandestine armed resistance movement. These groups included the 'Mujahedeen' and the 'Fedayeen'. Both were not monolithic structures but were composed of factions based upon personal loyalties and ideological orientations. The 'Mujahedeen' was reportedly formed in 1965 and wanted an Islamic republic which would emphasize the egalitarian elements in the original doctrine of Islam. Its symbol

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was a clenched fist holding a gun. The Mujahedeen further spawned a group called Mujahedeen-Marxist, whose objective is a people's democratic republic. But from it another faction, called the Struggle for Freedom, further split off. This last group goes in for armed action and large-scale recruitments, mostly of the oil workers in Iran.

The 'Fedayeen' was from the beginning a left-wing movement and believed in Marxism-Leninism. Also formed in the late 1960s, the 'Fedayeen Khalq', (Fighters of the People) regarded the 'Mujahedeen' as a useful staging post from religious to secular socialism. The two groups have invariably cooperated closely. Although they have been fairly active for about eight years, they recently split into three main groups. One was close to the Tudeh Party; the second was led by Bijan Jazani; and the third was formed by Ahmedzade and Pouyan (both killed now) and was believed to be the extreme radical wing preaching the principle of armed uprising. There was also another, radical group, Cherikh-e-Feda-ye Khalq (The Guerrilla Organization of the Devotees of the People) which emerged in 1971. It was reported to have been trained by the radical Palestinian group, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). It was subsequently implicated in the attack on the American Embassy in Tehran on 14 February 1979.

25 'Bubbling to the surface', op.cit., p.36.

26 ibid. The Left claimed that out of the 60 members of the strike committee in Abadan (a major town of oil refineries) as many as 55 were leftist, including Tudeh party members. (ibid., p.37.)

27 ibid., p.37.

The resistance movement thus reflected the wide spectrum of political groupings in Iran, ranging from extreme left to ultra right. The liberal-democratic groups, except that of Bazargan, did not have links with the resistance groups, maybe because of the ideological constraints of the liberal-democratic movement itself. The resistance groups had their links with the Palestinian guerrilla organizations, especially the PLFP and Al-Fatah (PLO). The PLO had close ties with the Islamic groups as was reflected by the close contacts between Yasser Arafat and Ayatollah Khomeini after the Revolution. These resistance groups became active in the seventies when they shifted their area of operation into the urban areas from organising bases in the mountainous terrain in the north, near the Caspian Sea. In February 1971, a small band of guerrillas attacked a gendarmerie post at Siakhal in the northern province of Gilan. In military terms the attack

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29 *International Herald Tribune*, 19 February 1979. In the words of Ahmed Jibril, of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine: 'We trained them [the resistance groups] in everything from propaganda to the use of weapons'. For details see 'Arafat and Khomeiny add up to a deadly duo', *The Age*, 24 February 1979. Also see PLO Chief, Yasser Arafat's interview in *Time*, 9 April 1979.

30 The area of operation was the big cities and urban areas where they tried to intensify their guerrilla activity. In Maoist terms, opposition to the Shah had reached stage two, i.e. guerrilla warfare (the Maoist conception is subversion, guerrilla activities, then, finally, open warfare at a conventional level). See David Lynn Price, 'Oil and Middle East Security', *The Washington Papers*, Vol.IV, No.41, (Beverly Hills, London: Sage Publications, 1976), p.49.
was indecisive, but it became mythified in the guerrillas' hagiography. After two years, the guerrillas claimed to have killed over 200 'enemy troops, police and Savak thugs', to have carried out 81 bomb attacks and to have expropriated over 40 banks. An American military adviser, Colonel Hawkins, was killed on 3 June 1973 and two American army Colonels, Turner and Sheafer, were murdered on 21 May 1975. It was felt that by the summer of 1975, the Iranian security forces had begun to close in on the terrorist networks. But although there was a marked diminution in terrorist activities after mid-1975, following a strong campaign against leftist activities, incidents of guerrilla attacks and terrorism continued to take place. For example, 10 terrorists were sentenced to death on 1 January 1976 for murdering the U.S. advisers.

The terrorists played an important role during the last days of the Pahlavi dynasty when their military training proved useful in fighting against the troops loyal to the Shah. The unity of purpose, however, failed to consolidate the resistance movement into a cohesive force capable of projecting itself as an independent factor in Iranian politics.

31 ibid.
32 ibid.
33 Conflict Studies, p.8.
The resistance movement disintegrated after the 1978-79 revolution and each group went back to its old linkage with the parent group and started making a bid for power.

The Student Community

The Iranian student community has been among the most vocal groups against the Shah's monarchy. Of the estimated 50,000 overseas Iranian students, several thousand were believed to have enlisted in revolutionary and terrorist organizations, including some 500 who gave up their studies some years ago and had become, in effect, professional revolutionaries. It was estimated that more than 100 anti-Shah publications were issued in West Europe and the United States, many of them subsidised by Libya.

Among left-wing Iranian student groups (which also included Iranian exiles) abroad that had played a significant anti-Shah role were the following:

(a) The Iranian Student Association (ISA) in the United States, which organized demonstrations in step with the growing unrest in Iran in the third quarter of 1978. On 1 September 1978, 500 supporters of the ISA clashed with

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35 George Lenczowski, however, thinks that the number of overseas Iranian students was about 70,000. See George Lenczowski, 'U.S. Policy Towards Iran' in Abbas Amirie and Hamilton A. Twitchell, *Iran in the 1980s*, Tehran: Institute for International Political and Economic Studies, 1978, p.370.

36 *Conflict Studies*, p.10.

37 *ibid.*
police outside the *Los Angeles Times* building in Los Angeles to protest against what was described as 'impending military intervention of the United States in Iran'. Banners with the slogan 'Victory to the Armed Struggle in Iran' and bearing the insignia of the Organization of the People's Fedayeen Guerrillas (OIPFG) - crossed Kalashnikov rifle and sickle - were carried during the march.  

(b) The Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran (CAIFI) led by Reza Baraheni, had succeeded in attracting an impressive range of radical American support. The 'Paris network' included a number of prominent 'Islamic Marxists' such as Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, who was reported to have placed his house at the disposal of Ayatollah Khomeini after he was expelled from Iran and was refused right of residence in Kuwait and Turkey (the countries to which he first applied).

(c) Confederation of Iranian Students National Union (CISNU). One of the most articulate of the foreign-based dissenting voices was that coordinated by the Confederation of Iranian Students based in Frankfurt, Germany. It was a loose organization with branches in other countries, particularly in Britain and the U.S.A. Frequently, CISNU attempted to disrupt the Shah's state visits to European countries and the United States. In 1977 there were 15 extremist Iranian

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39 ibid.

40 ibid.
organizations in West Germany, with 86 branches and an estimated membership of 1,500. However, CISNU was riven by internal dissensions between 'social revolutionaries' (Frankfurt Group, with branches in 16 German cities) and various Maoist Groups (Aachen, Mainz and Hamburg) with between them some 23 local branches. 41

(d) Islamic Group. Probably the most important component of the anti-Shah movement was the Islamic Group. The Shah's most serious failure of policy was the complete and bitter opposition he engendered from the religious classes. Unlike most of the Muslims of the Middle Eastern world, most Iranians are the adherents of a minority sect of Islam known as Shi'ism. 42 Their religious leaders, reverently called 'Mujtahids' are generally men of great learning, integrity and popularity. They are renowned for the simplicity of their standard of living and are among the most democratically chosen grassroots leaders in the contemporary Middle East. Millions of dollars pass through

41 Conflict Studies, p.12.

42 Shi'ism traces its heritage back to Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad. In Iran, the descendants of Ali represent a chain of charismatic leaders (imams), the twelfth of whom went into occultation in 940 A.D. The Shi'ite leaders today, known as 'mujtahids', are representatives of this last imam and wield great spiritual, economic and political power. Since 1501 when Twelver Shi'ism became the state religion of Iran, the secular Shahs have ruled partially in the shadow of the 'mujtahids'. Iran has been the scene of tension between the secular and religious leaders ever since. For details of the history and philosophy of Shi'ism read, 'Iran's brand of Islam as a religion of opposition', The Times, 24 November 1978.
the hands of Iran's top 'Mujtahids' every year, for they serve as social welfare agents throughout the country, accepting the religious dues of the faithful and then distributing them to the needy. In this sense the 'Mujtahids' are quite different from the masses of Shi'ite clerics or mullahs, some of whom are corrupt and espouse socially regressive policies.  

The 'Mujtahids' have on occasion opposed a number of the Shah's reform programme, specifically with respect to land reform and women's rights. Although they deny this, there is little doubt that they felt threatened by the forces of modernization. In 1977-78 the cabinet of Premier Jamshid Amouzegar reduced a $80 million subsidy given regularly to mosques and religious foundations to a reported $30 million. The Shah, instead of reaching an accommodation with the powerful religious establishment, chose to crush it. Recalcitrant 'Mujtahids' were harassed;

43 The mullahs have also played an important role in orchestrating and mobilising the anti-Shah movement. For example, see Joseph Kraft, 'Mullalahs Make Case for Shah', International Herald Tribune, 1 September 1978, and Nicholas Gage, International Herald Tribune, 11 December 1978.


45 One reason why Ayatollah Shariatmadari turned against the Shah's regime was that troops reportedly entered his home and killed one of his followers before his eyes. Ayatollah Khomeini's father was reportedly killed by agents of the Shah's father, King Reza Shah, and it is believed that the secret police, Savak was implicated in the death of his elder son in 1977, though he was supposed to have died of a heart attack in prison. Ayatollah Khomeini himself was exiled after the religious riots of June 1963 and lived abroad for almost fifteen years till his triumphant return after the departure of the Shah. Ayatollah Taleghani was another notable religious figure who was imprisoned and harassed by the Shah's security forces.
some were imprisoned and others executed. The government took greater and greater control of the religious endowments and the Shah appointed men of military background to positions of authority over holy shrines in cities such as Mashed. The religious presses were closed down while religious gatherings were regularly broken up by security forces.

In May 1976 the Shah replaced the Shi'a Islamic calendar based on the solar year since Prophet Muhammad's 'Hijra' by the Imperial calendar dating from the foundation of the Iranian Empire by Cyrus the Great. Thus the Islamic year 1355 became the Imperial year 2535, a difference of 1,180 years. It was a grand symbolic assertion of the Achemenian legacy as the central spiritual fact in Iran's history.

The Shah's press frequently indulged in attacking and casting serious aspersions on the character and personality of the religious leaders. It was, in fact, the publication of such provocative material that triggered the first anti-government riots in the holy city of Qom on 9 January 1978. According to the 'Iranian Liberation Movement', then based in Paris, more than 100 demonstrators were killed, 500 wounded and 4,000 arrested by the security forces. This was followed by violent demonstrations in Tabriz where by 2 June the death toll had risen to 5,000.

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46 The new calendar system came into effect on 20 March at 3.30 p.m. after having been approved by a joint session of the two Houses of Parliament. See Iran Almanac 1976, p.54.
47 See Lenczowski, op.cit., p.806.
By the end of August 1978, the Shah was forced to reverse his campaign against the Shi'ite establishment. He sought to placate the rioting masses whose religious feelings were greatly excited during the Muslim fasting holy month of Ramzan. The portfolio of the Minister of State for Women's Affairs was abolished in the new cabinet of Sharif Enami while a new one was created for dealing with the Waqf i.e. the religious endowment organization. The controversial Imperial calendar introduced two years before, which had greatly evoked the resentment of the clergy, was scrapped in favour of the traditional Islamic calendar. The new government also banned the casinos and gambling houses. Enami reiterated the Shah's promises about liberalising the political situation and said that all political parties would be allowed to operate freely in Iran. Consequently it was reported on 29 August that fourteen political parties had expressed their desire to operate openly. The opposition, however, was sceptical of the offers of the new government. While Ayatollah Shariatmadari said that he and his supporters would give the new government three months to meet their demands, Ayatollah Khomeini denounced them as a plot to destroy the Islamic movement.

50 See The Canberra Times, 30 August 1978.
51 Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1979, Vol.XXV, p.29386.
52 ibid.
The Armed Forces

The armed forces kept on supporting the Shah's regime till the last. On 6 November 1978 the Shah handed over the task of running the country to General Gholam Reza Azhari, the then Chief of Staff. The role of the military in Iran at that juncture could be divided into two main categories. In one case the military acted as an instrument of the regime to control a difficult situation, and if need be, to form a caretaker government on behalf of the Head of State till a civilian government could take over. In another case, the military elite sought to control the civilian government either by offering it conditional support or by intervening militarily in certain situations and thereby trying to force the civilian government to follow a course determined by the military group. The military government of General Azhari illustrated the first case while the role of the military group after the departure of the Shah represented the second facet of the military rule in Iran.

By handing over the administration to the army the Shah hoped to gain some tactical advantage. He hoped to bring relative stability by following a tough policy against the riots and mass demonstrations. The new government paraded tanks and APCs in the cities in a massive show of strength and an eight-hour night curfew was imposed.  

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53 The Canberra Times, 7 November 1978.
54 See The Canberra Times, 12 November 1978.
General Oveisi,\textsuperscript{55} the former Chief of the Iranian Land Forces, was appointed as the new Labour Minister to restore law and order and handle the striking oil workers by forcing them to once again start oil production. The new government used force in controlling demonstrations. Several of the liberal-democrat leaders, including Dr Karim Sanjabi, were arrested. All educational institutions were closed and important newspapers, radio and TV stations were controlled by the army.

The Shah, taking advantage of the new military government, tried to do some spring cleaning. He ordered the arrest of twelve leading Iranian personalities, including Gen. Nasiri, the ex-Savak chief and Dr Hoveyda, the former prime-minister and private adviser to the Shah.\textsuperscript{56} The Shah also set up two boards to investigate the property and holdings of the members of the royal family and to turn them over, if and when necessary, to charitable organizations. He also promised to clean up the Pahlavi foundation that was associated with the corruption in royal circles. The Shah sought this opportunity to gain sympathy from the masses and restore his lost credibility. He said:

\begin{quote}
I commit myself to make up for past mistakes, to fight corruption and injustice and to form a national
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{55} General Oveisi had also played a key role in suppressing the June 1963 riots in Qom that were inspired by the religious leaders, and was known for his tough policies.

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{The Canberra Times}, 10 November 1978.
government to carry free elections
... Your revolutionary message has
been heard. I am aware of everything
you have given your lives for.\(^{57}\)

The military government was the last ditch stand of
the Shah. Since it was working under the shadow of the
the Shah it could not be an alternative to the political
system that had become the target of popular opposition.
The anti-Shah forces rejected the military government as
they had rejected the Enami government earlier. The military
government could neither control the street demonstrations,
and coerce the oil workers so as to increase production,
nor could it obtain the cooperation or at least the neutrality
of the opposition groups. After General Azhari's resignation,
the civilian government of Shahpour Bakhtiar relied on
the reluctant support of the U.S.A. and unpredictable pro-
Shah elements in the armed forces. He was faced with a
military group that was beyond his control and which was
prepared to push him to the extreme in its fight against
the anti-Shah forces. Bakhtiar, however, succeeded in side-
tracking the hard-liner, General Oveisi, and instead got
General Abbas Gharabaghi as the new Chief of Staff. But
Bakhtiar never had real power. It rested with the armed
forces loyal to the Shah. He was seen

at best, as a Kerensky, a social-
democrat caught up in a revolution, or,
at worst, as a post-imperial front-man.\(^{58}\)

\(^{57}\) Quoted in 'Showdown for the Shah', Newsweek, 20 November 1978.

\(^{58}\) 'The coming of an obdurate messiah', The Economist, 3 February 1979.
Since Bakhtiar was a nominal head of the government and because the real power rested with the armed forces, the main struggle was between the army and the opposition. The direct confrontation between them could be traced back to the riots in Tabriz on 18 February 1978 when the army was called to restore order. Since then the army was increasingly used to quell the demonstrations, often brutally, leaving behind thousands of dead and wounded. For example, the suppression of the demonstration in Tehran on 8 September 1978 by the army resulted in more than 50 dead. Subsequently, martial law was decreed for six months. Gradually, the context of this confrontation began to change. It was no longer the armed forces versus the masses but the pro-Shah elements in the army versus the forces allied to the opposition. This change had come about because of the split in the armed forces as was shown in the fighting at the Doshan Tappeh airbase, Lavizan barracks and at the Niavaran Palace. During these incidents, the units of the Imperial Guard, the 'Javidan', still loyal to the Shah, were confronted by the civilians, including the members belonging to the 'Mujahedeen' and 'Fedayeen' groups and the pro-Khomeini elements in the airforce. The defeat of these troops meant the end of the Pahlavi dynasty. The

59 According to the opposition, nearly 100 people were killed and about 650 wounded as a result of the army action. The official sources, however, placed the figures to 9 dead and 200 wounded. (See Asia Recorder 1979, Vol.XXX, No.7, p.14739.)

60 The Canberra Times, 9 September 1978.

Shah, who had so laboriously built up his armed forces, was no doubt disillusioned when they collapsed in the face of a popular revolution.

Many reasons suggest themselves for the Iranian armed force's failure to uphold and protect the system. Primarily, the Iranian military proved to be an inadequate instrument against the mass movement. Military force might be used to coerce the population, especially in big cities, but it cannot make the people support the regime. It cannot even prevent the surreptitious undermining of the system through passive resistance, strikes, sabotage, terrorism and finally popular rebellion. The army was brought to break up the anti-Shah demonstrations but it could not produce oil, or re-open schools, shops, banks or government offices. Moreover the army, by siding with the Shah, even lost the chance of acting as an independent political force capable of taking over the control of the situation through a military coup d'etat. By supporting the unpopular and crumbling monarchical system it had lost its credibility and legitimacy as an independent entity.

Even though some members in the top leadership may have wished at some point to stage a coup they were prevented from doing so.\textsuperscript{62} The Iranian armed forces lacked cohesion.

\textsuperscript{62} In this context the role of General Huyser, the American Deputy Commander in NATO, can be pointed out. The General arrived in January when the Shah was about to leave Iran, and is reported to have conferred constantly with Iranian military leaders for over a month. According to reports he or others warned the top Iranian military leaders against staging a coup and possibly even threatened to withhold military supplies if a coup was attempted.
The Shah, as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, took personal interest in defence affairs. The Shah spent more than two days per week on military matters and had very ably fractured the command structure of the three services (army, navy and airforce) with no intermediate levels of communication between their headquarters in Tehran. They maintained liaison through the Shah's command staff which was headed by the Premier. It is said that not only were all important military decisions taken with the Shah's concurrence, but the mere movement of a company from one location to another had to be cleared by him in advance. The three services were compartmentalised and the Shah, who 'ruled with the best talents of the lion and the fox'. would play off one group against the other very ably.

A significant factor in preventing military officers from gaining power independent of the throne was their professional insecurity. High ranking officers could be subject to imprisonment, retirement, or exile. And officers, who acquired skill in working with extra-military groups, were particularly suspect.

The major test of the Shah's regime after he assumed the throne in 1941 was the Mossadeq crisis of 1953. In that crisis, the army remained basically loyal to the Shah.

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63 Yousef M. Ibrahim, 'Army's Loyalty to Shah is basis of New Regime', *International Herald Tribune*, 16 November 1978.
64 Bill, op.cit., p.325.
Yet, many high-ranking officers who had played prominent roles in removing Prime Minister Mossadeq and restoring the Shah found that their influence cost them their positions.

While the Shah was out of the country in August, 1953, the army, under the direction of United States advisers and Iranian officers loyal to the Shah, arrested Mossadeq and defeated his followers. Several loyal officers became extremely powerful as a result of the August 'coup', including General Fazollah Zahedi, who was appointed Prime Minister to replace Mossadeq. Upon his appointment, Zahedi purged the General Staff, the National Police and the Gendarmerie, removing anyone who appeared to be disloyal to the Shah and arresting 600 members of the army who were accused of being Communists. Because the Shah was clearly dependent on Zahedi at a time when the Shah had determined to rule rather than reign, he forced Zahedi to resign in 1955.

In the 1978 uprising, many high government officials were removed by the Shah. One of them was General Nematullah Nassiri, who had been head of Savak for 14 years. The

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66 It was Nassiri's attempted arrest of nationalist Premier Mossadeq which precipitated the CIA-assisted coup of 1953 restoring the Shah to power. A classmate of the Shah's at Tehran Military Academy and one of 170 Iranian police officers to receive training in the U.S. and AID's Public Safety Programme, Nassiri served as Chief of the State Police before taking over the reins of Savak in 1965. It was in this capacity that General Nassiri gained worldwide notoriety for routinely employing the most barbaric forms of torture imaginable against the Shah's political opponents. (See Christopher Paine, 'Shah's crisis shakes the West', *Nation Review*, 25 January 1979.)
Shah later agreed to bring Nassiri to trial, even though a trial would subject his regime to potentially damaging scrutiny.

It is no wonder that the Western officers sent to Iran for training programmes found the Iranian army to be one of the most secretive and introverted of any armies in the non-Communist world. The Shah had perfected and over-insured the security apparatus to keep a tab on the loyalty of his all key military figures. At the same time he did not want to depend upon one intelligence organization for all information. Hence the army's intelligence organization was rivalled by the Shah's special office organization and the State Security and Information Organization (SAVAK). All these organizations reported to him directly. Other people, who reported to the Shah directly were: the Air-force Commander, the Chief-of-Staff, the Minister of War, the heads of the Gendarmerie, City Police, and the Imperial Guard. In this manner, their reports could be checked and cross-checked. Hence politically ambitious officers in the Iranian armed forces, if they existed, had to be extraordinarily sycophantic in order to succeed.

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67 For example, every officer promoted over the rank of major was personally endorsed by the Shah; no officer, not even a General, was allowed to leave Iran without the Shah's personal permission; and every morning a private parade of 90 minutes was held by the commanding officers in which the troops recited the prayers and slogans of 'Khoda, Shah, Nishan' (God, Shah, Fatherland). The Times, 28 November 1978.

The Iranian armed forces were also suffering from other major weaknesses. It was a conscript army and assuming that even one third of the armed forces was composed of the conscripts, who probably reflected more sharply the growing discontent of the masses, it constituted a grave political risk. It was the army, supposedly the 'least westernized' of the three services, which contained 30 per cent as draftees with little or no education, which was ultimately called upon to face demonstrations in the streets. The Shah's regime's penchant for exaggerating Iran's military capabilities, coupled with the fact that arms purchases have often lavishly lined high officials' pockets, was very demoralizing for the mid-echelon officers and soldiers. For example, it is reported that about $253 million were transferred hurriedly to the foreign banks from Iran in September/October 1978 by 13 high ranking military men. These included Generals Hassan Toufanian, Nematollah Nassiri, and Gholam Ali Oveisi. In addition, thousands of Americans in Iran had contributed to the inflation of housing and food costs in Tehran, and their Iranian counterparts had not been able to keep up with American

69 Ibrahim, p.2.

70 A partial list of such transfer of accounts for September/October 1978, compiled by workers at Iran's central bank, however, pushes the figure to US$2.4 billion. (For details of the personalities involved in high corruption and ill-gotten wealth see Paine, op.cit., p.280.)
lifestyles. This lavish style of living by the foreigners was seized upon by Khomeini in inciting the soldiers against their high officers.

Another source of political weakness in the Iranian armed forces was the result of its rapid expansion and modernization. The Iranian armed forces expanded from 161,000 in 1970 to 413,000 in 1978. The Army doubled in strength to 285,000 but the Airforce increased to 100,000, which meant an expansion of 600 per cent. The armed forces' budget increased from $880 million in 1970 to $9.4 billion in 1977, an almost 1100 per cent increase in these seven years. This rapid expansion and modernization of the armed forces, especially of the Airforce, introduced into the armed forces young Iranians from the lower and middle classes. They had acquired a relatively higher (technical) education and were more politicised. This group also began to act within the armed forces as an articulator of anti-Shah feelings and finally supported

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71 According to a Senate Report, due to a significant housing shortage throughout Iran, a 3-bedroom apartment would cost a rent of about $2,000 per month in Tehran. Some Iranians blamed the influx of U.S. personnel for their high cost. (See United States Senate, Senate Delegation Report on American Foreign Policy and Non Proliferation Interests in the Middle East - Report pursuant to Senate Resolution 167 of May 10, 1977; 95th Congress, 1st Session, June 1977, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, p.24.)


the opposition against the pro-Shah forces. The role
of these technicians and other officers during the fighting
between the pro-Shah 'Javidan' and the Airforce troops
at the Doshan Tappeh airbase illustrates this point vividly.

Finally, the task of protecting the dynasty was
specifically assigned to the Imperial Guard and the
Rangers - elite forces that remained loyal to the Shah
till the last. They were also the most favoured troops.
Thus they became the final targets of attack and when
they ultimately gave in, the final collapse of the monarchy
came.

New Outlook after the Revolution

The successful Iranian revolution of 1978-79 brought
some fundamental shifts in Iran's foreign policy posture.
As a new regime its policies and perceptions were radically

74 For example, the strike of 3,800 Iranian Airforce
officers and enlisted men at the West Iranian airbase of
Shasrokh and the Gulf base of Bandarabbas was directed
at the expulsion of U.S. military advisers from Iran.
(See International Herald Tribune, 22 January 1979.)

75 'Can the Army Hold?' Newsweek, 12 February 1979 and

76 For an analysis of the collapse of the Shah's armed
forces read 'Too many swords too little spirit', The

77 According to reports the death toll in the Iranian
Revolution had reached 10,000 killed in the last 15 months.
It is also estimated that in the final 48 hours 860 people
died and 3,500 were wounded. The Australian, 15 February
1979.

The Iranian Revolution has been called 'as the first
Third World revolution, one which is neither Marxist nor
capitalist but indigenously Islamic'. For the unique
aspects of the Iranian Revolution see the Special Report on
different from the Shah's 37-year old monarchy which had built up Iran into a regional power. The main features of the new regime are:

(1) Abolition of the monarchy and promulgation of the Islamic order in Iran.

(2) A policy of political non-alignment and policies less favourable to Western interests.

(3) Complete severance of diplomatic and economic links with Israel and South Africa.

(4) Militancy on oil prices and conservation in production policy, and

(5) Direct interest in the Arab-Israel conflict signified through the visit to Iran of Yasser Arafat, the PLO chief.

Iran's new military role is different from the regional military role previously pursued by the Shah. Iran is at present following a neutralist or non-aligned policy and has left the Central Treaty Organization.\textsuperscript{78} The definition of her security has narrowed down and now coincides with her national territory. This had become apparent when Prime Minister Bakhtiar served notice on the U.S. saying: 'We will not, from now on, be the policeman of the Persian Gulf'.\textsuperscript{79} This probably meant that Iran from then onwards would neither play an active part in the Persian Gulf nor

\textsuperscript{78} \textit{The Canberra Times}, 15 March 1979.

extend assistance to nearby states threatened by subversion. Furthermore, her military build-up would be arrested and fewer resources spent on defence. Earlier in November 1978 in an interview with the Shah the *Newsweek* summed up:

> What was planned on paper was too ambitious. Iran will now have to lower its sights across the board, from nuclear-power plants to advanced military aircraft. By forcing the pace of modernization and industrialization ... too many corners were cut with arbitrary decisions. 80

The revolutionary government, by early February 1979, had cancelled about $7 billion worth of contracts with the United States out of about $12.1 billion. 81 The biggest single order of cancellation was for the 160 F-16 fighters ($3.6 billion) whose delivery was expected to start in 1980. The order for an advanced air defence system based on 7 E-3 AWACS aircraft ($1.3 billion) had not actually been placed but it was so close that everybody had been counting on it. Besides these two major cutbacks, Iran has already cancelled half of the $800 million contract for 4 destroyers and seems likely to cancel the other 2 as

80 Arnaud de Borchgrave, 'Tea With the Shah', *Newsweek*, 20 November 1978.

81 In fiscal year 1978 the U.S. Defense Department sponsored foreign military sales of $13.5 billion to all nations. Of that total, Iran accounted for $2.6 billion, or 19.1 per cent. In terms of actual undelivered orders now pending from U.S. companies the total worldwide is $44.1 billion. Of that sum, Iran's portion is $12.1 billion, or 27.4 per cent. (See Alexander Cockburn and James Ridgeway, 'Exporting Iran's Wealth', *Nation Review*, 25 January 1978.)
well. One of the 3 submarines on order from America has been dropped along with a job lot of lesser deals on military vehicles and spares.\footnote{The Economist, 10 February 1979.} Earlier in early January the Iranian government also cancelled a $575 million contract with Bell Helicopters to produce nearly 400 helicopters by 1973. Previously the Shah had decided to postpone a $1.4 billion contract with Grumman and Hughes to produce F-14 fighters for the airforce.\footnote{Time, 8 January 1978.} This was done in the face of a widespread criticism of his economic policies which diverted large sums for the defence buildup.

The Iranian government also wants to cancel most, if not all, of its defence contracts with Britain. The government-to-government deals are dominated by orders worth roughly $2 billion for 1,300 Shir-1 and Shir-2 tanks scheduled to be delivered in the spring of 1979 and running till 1985. Other orders were: 4 naval support ships to be built by Yarrow for about $140 million; about $160 million for building a base maintenance facility for tanks at Darud in Iran; and commercial defence contracts for Rapier short-range anti-aircraft missile systems for $800 million with the British Aeroscope. Finally, Swan Hunter had a fleet support ship almost completed and Vosper Thornycroft stands to lose a contract of about $20 million to refit British-built ships in Bandar Abbas.\footnote{The Economist, 10 February 1979.}
Furthermore, it is likely that a major sales agreement between U.S. and Iran for over $25 million in 1978 and a proposed sale of $1,255 million in 1979 will be severely cut back.\(^\text{85}\)

Iran's regional role in the Persian Gulf has been adversely affected by the disintegration of the armed forces. The new regime came into being successfully only after the Revolution had eroded the two major national institutions, the monarchy and the army. The new government faces a challenging task of creating anew a superstructure because the old one has been completely destroyed. Most of Iran's airforce has been grounded because of lack of spare parts for its American-built aircraft. According to the Assistant Prime Minister, Mr Entezam, about 95 per cent of the country's huge military helicopter fleet was out of action in March 1979 and the bulk of the airforce was 'a useless heap of scrap material'.\(^\text{86}\) Up to June 1979 as many as 291 higher officials of the Shah's regime had been sentenced and executed by the Islamic revolutionary courts.\(^\text{87}\) This included at least a dozen of the top officers of the Armed Forces. Moreover, 250,000 i.e. about 60 per cent of soldiers had either deserted or gone home.\(^\text{88}\)


\(^{86}\) The Age, 19 March 1979.

\(^{87}\) The Australian, 7 June 1979.

\(^{88}\) International Herald Tribune, 24 April 1979.
According to a Western military attache,

The command structure has collapsed.
Each unit now votes for its officers
and the 'Komiteh' in the barracks
decides what the troops will do.89

The soldiers that will serve the army will presumably
belong to one of the three factions: pro-Khomeini,
pro-radical and, quite possibly, pro-Shah elements biding
for time. Undoubtedly, some elements in the armed forces
were opposed to the Shah and joined with Khomeini to
overthrow the old system. But it would be wrong to assume
that all of them would unquestionably support the leadership
of the new Islamic group. The better educated and politicised
among them, especially the technicians, the NCOs and even
some junior officers might well support the liberal-democrats
or even the radicals. Any attempt to weed them out would
further erode the efficiency of the Iranian armed forces.
Thus, even if the Islamic group recognises the armed forces
it does not necessarily mean that it would strengthen it like the
Shah. This is one reason why the new regime is trying
to create other institutions like the National Guard. The
present regime has started taking cautious steps to reorganize
the armed forces. General Mohammed Wali Qarani, a close
supporter of Khomeini, was appointed as the new Chief of
Staff. But he could not do much without an officer corps
which he had no power to create. Moreover, it was reported
that he could not restrain the Islamic Group from interfering

89 See 'Is Time Running Out for Iran's New Rulers?'
in military matters. He was assassinated soon and succeeded by General Nasser Farbod who was prepared to go along with the Islamic group. He wanted to organize the new army on the basis of Islamic principles. He had also promised to equip it with the latest equipment and weaponry.

The present regime has also tried to use the army to bolster its image, as the old regime did. It ordered the army to parade in the cities, before the March referendum, and to demonstrate not only its strength but also its solidarity with the new system. The military parade was a poor show, and it probably had the same effect upon the Iranian people as similar parades held during the previous regime. The present regime is faced with a dilemma: if it creates a really effective military machine it cannot be sure that the machine will not turn against it. And, if it does not create an efficient army it cannot rely solely upon the National Guard and the Islamic militia to counter the possible threat from the minorities as well as other political opponents in Iran.

The new regime, like the Shah's regime, has on a number of occasions taken recourse to the use of the armed forces in dealing with its minorities. In Iran, the Persian heartland is surrounded by non-Persian minorities like the Arabs in Khuzistan, the Baluchis, the Turcomans, the Azerbaijanis and the Kurds. They are ethnically, linguistically and culturally different from the Persians.

91 Also for details of the various tribes inhabiting Iran see Iran Almanac 1976, pp.356-357.
Most of them belong to the Sunni variation of Islam. The Pahlavi kings had subjugated them by force of arms and by other means like demographic redistribution of population and grant of economic, administrative and social incentives. They also tried to inculcate in them a sense of Iranian national consciousness. The process had not been completed fully and, therefore, after the overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty these minorities started to reassert their identity and began demanding autonomy. Their main demands were recognition of their separate cultural identity which included the recognition of their language for educational purposes, a greater share in government revenue and a larger participation in the decision-making process.

The Kurds were the first among the other non-Persian minorities to demand autonomy in Iran. It is estimated that out of a total of nearly 14 million Kurds spread throughout the adjacent areas of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey and the Soviet Union, the Iranian Kurds constitute some 2 million. The fighting started soon after the Revolution when the Kurds raided police and gendarmerie posts and government offices and also attacked pro-Khomeini militia that was despatched to quell the movement. The towns of Sanandaj and Naqadeh became the main centres of Kurdish resistance. The Iranian armed forces even used helicopter gunships to dislodge the Kurds but they held to their position. Their demand for autonomy was accepted by the

government before the March referendum but was subsequently rejected.  

Another ethnic group, the Turcomans, came into conflict with the new regime. This trouble in the north can be traced not so much to the Turcoman nationalism per se but to the disputes between the Turcomans who had lived there and the Persians who moved there during the days of the Pahlavi dynasty and were given a favoured treatment by the regime. The new Islamic regime also tried to strengthen the hands of the Persian population living there. Arms were handed over to them and the newly formed militia was also composed of Persians. The tension that was being generated exploded on 26 March in armed conflict between the Turcomans and the Persians. Gonbad-e-kavus became the centre of Turcoman resistance. The Iranian forces used the Scorpion light tanks, APCs as well as aircraft against the Turcomans. An estimated 200 people were killed in the battle.  

An uneasy cease-fire was announced on 2 April but there is no reason to believe that the mutual hatred that was accentuated by the recent fighting would subside. Turcomans, like the Kurds, had boycotted the March referendum and there is no sign that they will easily give up their demand for autonomy.

94 See 'Iran Military Moves North as Turkoman Battle Ends', International Herald Tribune, 4 April 1979, and 'Turkoms, Militiamen Ignore Iran Cease-Fire', ibid., 3 April 1979.
In Khuzistan, or Arabistan as the Arabs used to call that area, the demand for autonomy is a reflection of the impact of Arab nationalism and pan-Arabism that was promoted by Iraq and which became a part of the Iraq-Iran rivalry. The Arabs of Khuzistan are not only conscious of their Arab heritage but are well aware of the fact that they also occupy the major oil-bearing area of Iran. When Arab workers, who represent at least 20 per cent of the work force in the oil industry, challenged the new government, Khomeini ordered troops to quell the unrest ruthlessly. Backed by tanks and helicopters, the government forces fired into Arab strongholds in the southern port city of Khorramshahr, where leaders of Iran's nearly 2 million Arabs were demanding autonomy. Their religious leader, Sheikh Shabbir Khaghani, warned that the Arabs might strike unless the government halted its attacks and agreed to safeguard minority rights. The Arab extremist groups have also threatened to sabotage key oil installations, which has led to a state of emergency in Khorramshahr, the first anywhere in the country since the overthrow of the Shah.  

According to a self-appointed spokesman of the Arabs, more than 170,000 AK-47 rifles have found their way into Arab hands since the fighting erupted in June.

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95 'Iran: Challenging the Ayatollah', *Newsweek*, 11 June 1979.

96 The town of Khorramshahr is reported to be extremely tension-ridden because of the recent happenings, and has all the signs of racial and class struggle. See Liz Thurgood, 'Crushing dissent', *The Australian*, 7-8 July 1979.
The contraction of Iran's regional responsibilities has reduced its importance in the Persian Gulf area and has affected both the political balance in the Middle East and the East-West strategic balance. It is assumed that Iran's foreign policy will be more concentrated, with less emphasis on military security and more on declarations of militant nationalism. At best, this sensitivity to the condition of the Third World could produce an Iranian foreign policy comprised of equal parts of nationalism and pragmatism, similar to Algeria's. At worst, it could degenerate into indiscriminate interference and the export of revolution, on the Libyan model.97

Most of the governments in the Middle East have experienced the shock-waves of the Iranian revolution. However, the immediate effects of the crisis will be felt most by Iran's smaller neighbours in the Gulf. Due to the relinquishment of its regional responsibilities, internal weakness, domestic preoccupations, and a somewhat neutral foreign policy, the balance of power in the Persian Gulf will be altered. The Saudi-Arabian monarchy has most to fear from the developments in Iran. According to some opinion the Saudi monarchy is reasonably safe from a mass upheaval like Iran because of more revenues, co-optation of the religious establishment in planning modernization, the hold of important political positions by the military and the

absence of a strong middle class. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabian government can be criticized on human rights issues, corruption, an unequal income distribution, over-rapid growth and especially, subservience to Western influence. In varying degrees all the oil-producing states are vulnerable to domestic ferment with increased economic growth but relatively also political development. In addition, the effect of strikes in Iran on the attitude of workers in key industries may have an enduring legacy in the Gulf.


99 A good instance of this over rapid growth is the proposed plan to set up two new industrial cities at an approximate cost of $70 billion. These cities, conceived as modern industrial settlements in which Bedouins and immigrant workers (at an estimated ratio of 30 per cent Saudis to 70 per cent immigrants) would work in huge state-owned petrochemical enterprises. A high-powered commission comprising European, Arab and American experts, have given a totally negative view of the project (if it goes as it was planned), for economic and sociological reasons. (See Arnold Hottinger, 'Does Saudi Arabia Face Revolution?' The New York Review of Books, Vol.26, No.11, 28 June 1979, p.14.

100 The rapid economic growth has come about with substantial increase in oil revenues to the Middle East countries. There is a strong likelihood of a widening gap between rich and poor, powerful and powerless, personal and intergroup competition for power. (For details read Ian Smart, 'Future Political Patterns in the Middle East', The World Today, July 1976, Vol.32, No.7, pp.243-250.)
This has caused apprehension among most of the Persian Gulf Sheikdoms, including the fear of Soviet encirclement and of U.S. vacillation in times of need.  

The Iranian revolution has brought change thus affecting the overall balance of forces in the Middle East, whereby the position of 'moderates' has weakened. This might have a strong impact on Saudi Arabia. First, with the common bond of monarchy between Iran and Saudi Arabia having been snapped, the chances of future rivalry may increase. Second, Iran no longer shares a common security theme with the Saudis, having broken away from the West, the bilateral dialogue may now be more direct and firm thus increasing the possibility of friction. Third, Iran's reversion to neutralism exposes Saudi Arabia's uncomfortable isolation in the Persian Gulf and OPEC politics. This exposure and pressure is further increased by the Iraqi-Syrian rapprochement since November 1978, and by the failure of the Camp David formula to bring peace in the Middle East. There will be considerable incentive for Saudi Arabia not to isolate itself further by supporting Camp David or by increasing her production so as to freeze oil prices.

101 'Elsewhere on the Persian Gulf - More Fear and Suspicion', U.S. News and World Report, 2 April 1979. Also see the interview of Khalifa bin Sulman al Khalifa, Prime Minister of Bahrain in ibid., p.29.


The low profile military role now taken by Iran has, perhaps, the most strategic significance for any one country in the case of Oman. It was Oman which was Iran's closest Arab ally before the revolution and the one most exposed to local subversion. Iranians' decision not to continue support for that government has underscored the effect of the regime change in Tehran on Gulf security. Overlooking the main shipping channel from the Musandam Peninsula, Oman has few sources and fewer friends to secure her against either internal disorder or subversion instigated from across the border in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), where a Soviet-Cuban presence has increased in recent years. This withdrawal of the Iranian guarantee leaves few options for Oman. Britain is unwilling to increase her commitment, and Saudi Arabia cannot provide military assistance. However, to fill the void in Oman, Egypt has offered, at considerable political risk, to act as an all-purpose policeman, in exchange for modern weapons, worth billions of dollars, from the United States. This offer, contingent on the achievement of a peace settlement with Israel, reflects Egypt's changed security perceptions.

104 It was estimated that about 2,000 Iranian soldiers had agreed to stay in Oman until the Sultan requests their departure. The withdrawal of the contingent was ordered by the new government in Iran following the Shah's downfall in January 1979.

105 For the Sultan of Oman's threat perceptions after the Iranian revolution read excerpts of his interview in Time, 4 June 1979.
and as an earnest Cairo has dispatched 200 troops to Oman to replace the contingent withdrawn by Iran.\textsuperscript{106}

The change in Iran may also have implications for Iraq, its immediate neighbour and a

... principal potential military adversary or ... principal rival for political power in the Gulf.\textsuperscript{107}

The relations between the two governments have been 'correct, but on the cool side' since the Algiers Agreement which was signed on 6 March 1975. However, if the new regime in Tehran saw itself as the protector of the Shia population the most natural focus for its attention would be Iraq, the place of the sect's most holy shrines. The ruling Ba'ath Party belongs to the Sunni sect whereas the majority of Iraqis are Shias. The discrimination against them by the ruling elite has led to their greater radicalization as is seen from their increasing involvement with the Iraqi Communist Party.\textsuperscript{108} Neighbouring Turkey, whose

\textsuperscript{106} Chubin, op.cit., p.100.


\textsuperscript{108} The Iraqi Communist Party is a strong opponent of the ruling Ba'ath Party. It is estimated that nearly 3,000 Communists have been killed or executed in Iraq since 1963. The latest reprisals against them were taken in May 1978 when 39 alleged Communists were executed and 8 of them arrested by the ruling Ba'ath Party. (See Time, 12 February 1979; and The New York Times, Weekly Review, 7 January 1979. Also see Thomas W. Lippman, 'Iraq Accuses Communists of Planning Coup d'Etat', International Herald Tribune, 9 April 1979.
persistent economic woes and endemic political violence has led to the imposition of martial law in many provinces, faces the potential for discord between rival factions. Similarly Pakistan, whose former popular Prime Minister was executed by the military government in April 1979, is vulnerable to a Left-Right coalition able to exploit the gulf between rich and poor. If the central governments in Islamabad and Tehran weaken, this may induce the Baluchi populations straddling their border to co-ordinate their efforts for an independent Baluchistan. Likewise a weakening of the government in Tehran would further strengthen the separatist tendencies of the Kurd population. This revival of Kurdish nationalism in Iran could have profound effects in Iraq and Turkey, whose Kurdish populations number two and three million respectively. Also, the pro-Moscow regime in Afghanistan is coming under strong pressure from the rightist elements, who derive inspiration materially and morally from the Islamic fundamentalist governments in Iran and Pakistan.

109 See John Torode, 'The coming crisis is of Turkish democracy', The Guardian, 10 June 1974; and Michael Getler, 'Turks Apprehensive about Nation's Future - Iranian Unrest is a factor', International Herald Tribune, 6 February 1979.


The immediate practical problems created for the United States by a neutralist regime in Iran were clear: to minimize the disruption in the relationship so as to conserve access to oil, protect U.S. technological secrets (e.g. in the avionics packages on the F-14s), protect its citizens, and salvage as much as possible in the way of bases, facilities and monitoring stations on Iranian territory. Despite the estrangement in relations with the U.S.A., Iran still needs to be dependent upon the West in general and U.S.A. in particular because of the educational, economic and military infrastructure having roots in the West. It was with this background that the new Chief of Staff after the revolution, General Qaraney, indicated that hundreds of U.S. military advisers would be asked to return so that Iran could once again start using even part of its military equipment. He also admitted that Iran could not do without foreign advisers. Nevertheless, the withdrawal of guaranteed access to Iranian air and naval facilities, on which much of American contingency planning for the Persian Gulf was based, means Washington has to revise her assumptions and probably search for substitutes. Besides this, the setback in Iran has challenged the United States' assumptions of the 'regional security' and the 'twin-pillars' policy. More fundamentally, it raises questions about the precise meaning of security in areas undergoing rapid economic growth through ambitious industrialisation programmes. According to Robert McNamara of the World Bank,

the nations of the world are spending over $400 billion [on weapons] a year - more than is spent on research for the production of fuel, health, education and food combined.\textsuperscript{113}

The failure of America in South Viet Nam and Iran underline the fact that security is not possible through the acquisition of weapons only.

The Iranian crisis has also dealt a severe blow to the issue of American influence and commitment to its allies. It was an Iran on the brink of civil unrest that the Carter Administration inherited and embraced as an ally, despite doubts about her human rights record. Yet as events unfolded in 1978, the Administration's policies appeared half-hearted and contradictory.

There were errors of omission and commission; foremost among them was the failure to appreciate the gravity of the situation in time and devote systematic presidential attention to it. Washington's assessments were generally naive than those of other governments and independent observers and this failure in analysis narrowed its existing policy options. These options were further squandered by the style in which the Administration conducted its foreign

policy. Inconsistent statements, contradictory assessments and a half-hearted approach had a negative effect on America's credibility as an ally.\textsuperscript{114}

This loss of will by U.S.A. for its allies in time of need was particularly noted by Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government not only faulted the U.S. for failure to help the Shah in time to save his nation from revolutionary chaos but also believed that America lacked the will to stop Russian encroachment on the Persian Gulf and Red Sea. The Saudis have seen Soviet gains in Ethiopia, South Yemen and Afghanistan as part of an overall Kremlin design to encircle the Arabian Peninsula and topple its conservative regimes,\textsuperscript{115} and gain control over the West's oil lifelines. A degree of confirmation of these fears came in late February, when South Yemen, a base for Soviet activities in the region invaded North Yemen, a close ally of Saudi Arabia.

\textsuperscript{114} For the fallacies of American perception about Iran and the vacillating policies followed during the last days of the Shah, see Nicole Ball and Milton Leitenberg, 'The Iranian Domestic Crisis: Foreign Policy Making and Foreign Policy Goals of the United States', \textit{Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies}, Vol.11, No.3, Spring 1979, pp.36-56; also see Bill, op.cit., pp.338-340.

In this context also note Brzezinski telephoning the Shah on President Carter's behalf (in November 1978) and reportedly telling the Shah that whatever action he thought necessary to restore order would be supported by the U.S. (See Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, 'U.S. Policy on Iran: Back to Fundamentals', \textit{Washington Post}, 8 November 1979.

The U.S. government has, however, tried to allay these Saudi anxieties. On 25 February 1979, Energy Secretary James R. Schlesinger and Defense Secretary Harold Brown affirmed U.S. vital interests in the Persian Gulf and the use of military force to protect these interests, if threatened. The same theme was reiterated more emphatically by President Carter in a televised news conference on 27 February 1979.

By mid-March, an American naval task force, made up of the aircraft carrier CONSTELLATION, a guided missile cruiser and three other combat ships, was on patrol in the Gulf of Aden. Loud suggestions were also made by the U.S. to permanently station an Indian Ocean task-force, based probably at Diego Garcia. This policy was explained as follows:

The carrier force is intended to warn the Soviet Union against nourishing South Yemen in its new war with Yemen, the naval presence to help fill the gap in American contingency planning left by the transformation of Iran, from a well-armed ally standing between the oil-rich states of Middle East and the Soviet Union and

116 A good reflection of Saudi Arabia's anxieties can be found in 'How Far Will U.S. Go to Protect Mideast Oil?' and Saudis 'No Longer Have Confidence in U.S.', U.S. News and World Report, 12 March 1979.

117 See 'Mixed Signals from Washington', ibid., pp.24-25.

Afghanistan, into an Islamic Republic unfriendly to the United States and hostile to Israel.\textsuperscript{119}

By mid-1978, Saudi Arabia was the third largest purchaser of American armaments after Iran and Israel and its request to buy 60 F-15s, the world's most advanced fighter plane, had finally been proved.\textsuperscript{120} These planes are scheduled to be delivered in 1981 under a $2.5 billion deal that was concluded in 1978. Other contracts approved last year include $460 million for building aviation facilities, $272 million for a naval expansion programme, $800 million to strengthen naval shore establishments and $200 million for Army logistics training and maintenance.\textsuperscript{121}

The U.S. military sales to Riyadh from 1975 through 1978 totalled $15.3 billion. Out of this, arms worth $5.1 billion have been delivered and paid for in cash.\textsuperscript{122}

Although the Saudis clearly favour a heightened American role along the Persian Gulf, they have failed to spell out publicly what they want the U.S. to do. They are reluctant about having American forces on their soil and want no part

\textsuperscript{119} Drew Middleton, 'Showing the flag isn't what it used to be', \textit{New York Times}, Weekly Review, 11 March 1979, p.21E.

\textsuperscript{120} 'Focus on Saudi Arabia: Part One', \textit{International Herald Tribune}, Supplement, 15 February 1978, p.45.


\textsuperscript{122} ibid.
of any Washington-backed regional-security scheme. The recent re-activation of U.S. Government plans drawn up four year ago to dispatch a 110,000 man task force to 'go to any hotbed of tension in the oil-rich Persian Gulf' is the latest attempt to reassure the Gulf governments of U.S. resolution of help in case of need.  

As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it stands to gain from the revolt in Iran. Broadly speaking, the Soviet Union always liked to see the following developments in the Persian Gulf area: increased conflicts between the countries of the area and the Western world; an undermining of traditional pro-Western conservative regimes; a complete removal of China's influence from the area; and an expansion of the area's ties with the U.S.S.R. 

More specifically, in the case of Iran it wanted a diminishing of the ties between Iran and the U.S.A., between Iran and Western Europe, and between Iran and the PRC. It wanted to see a reduced Iranian intervention in the region's affairs; less Iranian accumulation of Western-made arms; and closer relations between Iran and the Soviet Union.

123 According to the new NATO Commander, General Bernard Rogers, the force would be based in the 82nd Airborne Division whose headquarters are located at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. (The Australian, 4 July 1979.)


125 Ibid., p.64.
Since the Shah was closely identified with the West, his removal was widely considered a direct set-back for his Western allies. It exposed the limits of their influence and undermined the credibility of their commitments. In addition, the upheaval in Iran was anti-Western in a deeper cultural-spiritual sense; as a protest movement against indiscriminate modernization it served as a warning to other Muslim nations.

The current political situation in Iran is unpredictable. For both the Soviet Union and the West the outcome is uncertain, and they both share a desire for some predictability or stability. Continued turmoil, economic dislocations and national disintegration pose problems for both blocs, interrupting the supply of oil to the West and gas for the East. But this shared interest, whether for access to resources or in the avoidance of super-power confrontation, does not go much further. The West's desire for a strong centre to ensure Iran's national unity and the maintenance of her territorial integrity contrasts with the Soviet preference for a weak central government with looser control.

Soviet support for the revolutionary opposition is, therefore, understandable. Despite the religious overtones which give the opposition a semblance of legitimacy, it lacks the attributes of a strong stable Islamic government. At present the opposition has splintered into groups of varying degrees of radicalism and secularism which cannot

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126 Chubin, op.cit., p.103.
guarantee a stable coalition and strong government able to challenge the Soviet Union. Iran will now be much weakened in its relations with Moscow, more susceptible to pressures and more tempted to accommodate her interests. The one important exception is the price of gas supplied to the southern provinces of the Soviet Union, which will be increased to the prevailing world price. The new government is going to be more militantly nationalistic with regards to its natural resources and may, therefore, be reluctant to engage in the barter of Iran's oil for East European goods like the previous regime.

127 For a survey of different political parties and groups challenging Khomeini's rule in Iran see 'Bubbling to the Surface', *The Economist*, 3 February 1979, pp.36-37; Kai Bird, 'Making Iran Safe for Theocracy', *The Nation*, 19 May 1979; and *The Australian*, 1 June 1979. In the words of Professor Ann Lambton: 'Factional strife, in one form or other, has remained a feature of Persian life down to modern times'. Quoted in Ervand Abrahamian, 'Factionalism in Iran: Political Groups in the 14th Parliament (1944-46)', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.14, No.1, January 1978, pp.22-55.

128 Chubin, op.cit., p.103. The export of Iranian gas to the Soviet Union started in 1970 and is due to expand with the completion of a second pipeline in 1981. By this practical, if uncomplicated, arrangement both Iran and the Soviet Union gain hard currency. The price Iran has charged for gas delivered for Soviet consumption has nonetheless been below world market price. This reflects not merely the Shah's acknowledgement of a political relationship, but the hard commercial fact that the Soviets are the only likely buyer of natural gas from Iran.
Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that the Iranian Revolution of 1978/79 has demonstrated the Shah's gross misperceptions of security threats to Iran. While he assumed the foreign military threat as the sole danger to Iran, it was the internal threat of his own people (the religious class, the middle class, the resistance groups, students and workers) which challenged him and his regime directly. Thus his armed forces, trained and armed to counter external threats and project Iran's regional power across the borders, were called to suppress the demonstrations in the streets. The troops, generally, remained loyal to him but could not hold out for long in face of the popular upsurge of the masses. They were handicapped by a lack of co-ordination at the higher levels, the desertion of conscripts, politicisation at the junior levels and the general inability to perform a task for which they were not trained. The new regime assumed power after destroying the two strong institutions of the monarchy and the armed forces. However, the new regime had again to rely on the armed forces to suppress dissident forces and assert its legitimate authority. There have been some fundamental shifts in the foreign policy posture of the new government in Iran. Among other changes, the concept of 'security' has been redefined. Iran has now renounced the claim of acting as a guardian of the Persian Gulf region; adopted a non-aligned foreign policy position quite unsympathetic to the West, particularly the U.S.A.; severed its diplomatic
and economic links with Israel and South Africa; aligned itself more with the Arab-Israeli settlement in the Middle East through recognition of PLO and adoption of a militantly national policy over its oil production and conservation.

After reversal of American influence in Iran, the Persian Gulf may attract a larger and more visible Western presence. This may include, in addition to arms sales to friendly regional states (the Yemen Arab Republic, Egypt and Turkey) new military bases and more frequent naval deployments by the U.S.A. Diego Garcia might be expanded to facilitate access and airlift into the area, or Oman's Masirah island further developed. But the increased involvement may not be given a purely military dimension as was shown in the case of Iran.

The generally inward orientation of Iran's policy (due to internal problems) and the contraction of its regional responsibilities are likely to have wide-ranging repercussions in the Middle East. Besides creating something of a power vacuum in its own area, it may alter the balance of power in the Persian Gulf and the overall strategic balance. However, future increased pressures from the Soviet Union and Iraq, the economic imperatives of cooperation with the West and a possible emergence of moderate regime in Iran may lead to a new pragmatic shift in its foreign policy.
The Shah's heavy and hectic military buildup programme was motivated by a combination of varied factors. Amongst these were Britain's announcement of military withdrawal from the Persian Gulf in January 1968 followed by the actual pull-out in December 1971 thus creating a vacuum; the decision taken by President Nixon in May 1972 to sell Iran virtually any conventional weapons it wanted; the Shah's desire to buy top-of-the-line military equipment from ready cash available as a result of the quadrupling of oil prices after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war; the threat perceived to the safe passage of Iranian oil in the Persian Gulf through the Straits of Hormuz to the Sea of Oman and the north west quadrant of the Indian Ocean; the rise of separatist movements in Pakistani Baluchistan and Oman; the fear of military intervention from the north (by the Soviet Union) and the west (Iraq); and the thrusting political, strategic and commercial interests of the West, particularly the U.S. in providing armaments to Iran.

Most importantly, it seemed that the Shah's arms acquisition programme was primarily designed to preserve his regime and his nation and only secondarily to promote a 'Pax Americana' in the Persian Gulf. By linking the obscure and the obvious threats, the Shah perceived dangers from all directions. The weapons he had purchased, the way he organized the military and the police, and the experience that the Iranian military gained in armed combat all pointed to the high priority he assigned to the security of the monarchy.
While the issue of regime security was foremost in Iranian defence planning, the Shah's priorities reflected threat perceptions more appropriate to the past than the present. Historically, the Shah's problems had stemmed from separatist movements and armed tribal rebellions, from questions of loyalty inside the military, and from an inability to control Iranian territory in terms of communications and transport.

Thus by 1978 Iran's weapons inventory included a wide array of sophisticated weapon systems. While the other Gulf states (except Iraq) were planning to develop military responses limited to specific scenarios, Iran had been aggressive in purchasing equipment suitable for diversified and multifaceted military responses. In the style of the U.S. and the Israeli armies, Iran was keen on establishing a potent offensive capability to project its military strength beyond its borders.

Thus Iran's security doctrine was different from those of its Arab neighbours. In the last eight years, the Iranian Air Force had acquired a marked capability for air-superiority, interception and close air support. Armed with different kinds of missile systems, the Air Force was acquiring the equipment necessary to control the regional air space and to move large quantities of men and material rapidly by air.

The Iranian Army was developing a heavily mechanised and primarily air mobile force designed to have the capacity for projecting itself rapidly and efficiently in the direction
of any conflict which might arise within Iran's growing security perimeter. For example, by undertaking a military commitment in Dhofar province of Oman the Shah was providing valuable operational training for an army heretofore untested in combat, logistics, and local maintenance and support - all crucial factors in the establishment of a potent offensive capability. Also, Iran's massive import of heavy and light tanks, armoured personnel carriers in combination with a large number of helicopters provided the army's equipment base for an effective offensive capability.

The Iranian Navy, which was also procuring the variety of equipment necessary for the maintenance of several missions, had already established a capability to patrol the shallow Gulf waters and to project Iranian military forces onto the Arab side of the Gulf. The acquisition of larger surface vessels, such as U.S. 'Spruance' class destroyers, was intended to give the Iranian Navy a growing equipment base from which to contemplate a 'blue water' naval presence in the Indian Ocean. The acquisition of P-3C maritime patrol aircraft complemented Iran's growing surface vessel presence in the Gulf of Oman-Indian Ocean area by adding a capability for maritime reconnaissance. Furthermore, the purchase of fast patrol boats armed with the latest types of naval SSMs provided Iran with the equipment necessary for vigorous coastal protection and Gulf surveillance.
Thus Iran's security doctrine underwent the most extensive transformation of all the Gulf states since 1970. The Shah felt Iran's responsibilities to include protection of the oil lanes and the Gulf; intervention on behalf of the conservative Arab states across the Gulf if threatened with internal or external overthrow; a vigilant stance against Iraq, cooperation with Pakistan to contain secessionist sympathies along their joint border; and the extension of Iran's military power into the Indian Ocean.

However, the Iranian armed forces faced problems i.e. lack of a sound infrastructure (communication facilities like roads, ports and railways); trained technical personnel; maintenance facilities and an efficient administrative cadre. The large quantity of arms bought within a short span of time led to slippages in nearly all major programmes. These slippages resulted from shortfalls in training, construction, maintenance and logistical support. In this case the Iranian Airforce, to which the Shah gave personal priority, faced comparatively lesser problems than the other services in attracting qualified recruits and retaining talented and imaginative personnel. However, there was a general shortage of trained pilots and trainable candidates, shortages of instructor pilots, a dearth of ground crews and maintenance personnel, and acute difficulties for the logistics system in locating and providing spare parts to individual units.

It can be deduced from the airforce experience that the strains of expansion and modernization were more
seriously felt by other services e.g. army and navy which did not receive so close an attention by the Shah. For example, the helicopter, self-propelled howitzer and tank programme (in the army); and naval training and electronics programme (in the navy) faced serious problems of absorption and maintenance.

The Iranian Revolution of 1978/79 has brought into focus certain important issues. Firstly, the question of 'national security' has been seriously challenged. While the Shah was feverishly arming Iran in face of perceived external threats, it was his own people who revolted, fought against the armed forces and ultimately brought down the monarchy.\(^1\) Secondly, Iran was a classic case of the militarization of a developing nation going beyond its security needs. It also demonstrated that military modernization, if carried out in isolation of the society as a whole

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may lead to harmful consequences. And where the growth of imported arms continues on an exponential course, a developing country will outstrip its ability to overcome economic, political and social handicaps. In their pursuit for more armaments, civilian aristocracies and military elites will find themselves more isolated from the people who prefer bread to weapons. Lacking democratic institutions and processes of advice and consent, many leaders of the developing nations are convinced, short­sightedly, that it is to their advantage to suppress by force any popular movement for reform. The recent experience in Iran proved that even the most modern army cannot depend on arms alone to defend itself against a popular movement. Thirdly, no armed forces can retain popular support for a long period on borrowed concepts of security. The Shah and his military policies came to be closely identified with the strategic and political interests of the U.S. in the Persian Gulf. In fact his elaborate armament acquisition programme to meet declared security threats to Iran had little meaning for the common man.

The new Islamic Government assumed power in Iran after destroying the two strong pillars of the Shah's regime: the armed forces and the monarchy. The new government has given up the military role of acting as the guardian of the Persian Gulf. It has dropped its membership of CENTO and has made drastic cuts in future arms purchase programme. With its contracted regional responsibilities, its definition of security has narrowed to coincide with a
more realistic appraisal of national security. Due to the weakness of the army (as a result of 1978/79 Revolution), the rising unrest of minorities and the estrangement from the U.S., Iran's foreign policy has become non-aligned, yet militantly nationalistic on issues like oil prices and conservation of resources. However, this posture may change significantly as a result of the economic realities which the new government may be called upon to face in the near future.

The Iranian Revolution is also bound to have wide-ranging implications for the Persian Gulf and the Middle East region. In the light of the recent Iranian experience most of these states would have to reassess afresh their concept of security and review with increasing scepticism their heavy arms buildup programmes.
APPENDIX 1

IRAN

Population: 36,365,000.
Military service: 2 years.
Total armed forces: 413,000.
Estimated GNP 1977: $72.6 bn.
\[ \$1 = 70.45 \text{ rials (1978)}, \; 71.2 \text{ rials (1977)} \]

Army: 285,000.
3 armd divs.
3 inf divs.
4 indep bdes (larmd, 1 inf, 1 AB, 1 special force).
4 SAM bns with HAWK.
Army Aviation Command.
760 Chieftain, 400 M-47/-48, 460 M-60A1 med tks, 250 Scorpion
1t tks, Fox, Ferret scout cars, about 325 M-113, 500
BTR-40/-50/-60/-152 APC; 710 guns/how, incl 75mm pack,
85mm, 330 105mm, 130mm, 155mm, 203mm towed, 440 M-109
155mm, 38 M-107 175mm, 14 M-110 203mm SP, 72 BM-21 122mm
RL; 106mm RCL; ENTAC, SS-11, SS-12 Dragon, TOW ATGW;
1,800 23mm, 35mm, 40mm, 57mm, 85mm towed, 100 ZSU-23-4,
ZSU-57-2 SP AA guns, HAWK SAM, ac incl 40 Cessna 185,
6 Cessna 310, 10 Cessna 0-2, 2 F-27, 202 AH-IJ, 210 Bell
(1,297 Chieftain/Shir Iran med, 110 Scorpion 1t tks,
BMP MICV, ASU-85 SP ATK, 100 ZSU-23-4 SP AA guns, Rapier
Improved HAWK, SA-7/-9 SAM, 163 Bell 214A, 350 Bell 214ST
hel on order).

Deployment: Oman: 2 coys, 1 hel sqn (400), Syria (UNDOF):
385, Lebanon (UNIFIL): 1 bn (524).

Reserves: 300,000.

Navy: 28,000.
3 destroyers (1 ex-British Battle-class with Seacat SAM,
2 ex-US Sumner-class with 1 hel, all with Standard SSM/SAM).
4 frigates with Mk 2 Seakiller SSM and Seacat SAM.
4 corvettes (ex-US patrol frigates).
7 large patrol craft.
5 Combattante-ll-class FPBG with Harpoon SSM
5 minesweepers (3 coastal, 2 inshore).
2 landing ships logistic.
2 landing craft utility.
2 log spt ships.
8 SRN-6, 6 Wellington BH-7 hovercraft.
(3 Tang-class trg, 6 Type 209 submarines, 4 Spruance-class
destroyers, 6 Lupo-class frigates, 7 FPBG with Harpoon
SSM, 4 log spt ships on order).
Naval Air:
1 MR sqn with 6 P-3F Orion.
1 ASW sqn with 12 SH-3D.
1 tpt sqn with 6 Shrike Commander, 4 F-27.
Hel incl 5 AB-205A, 7 AB-212, 6 RH-53D, 10 SH-3D.
3 Marine bns.
(39 P-3C MR ac, 15 SH-3D hel on order.)

Air Force: 100,000; 459 combat aircraft.
10 FB sqns with 32 F-4D, 177 F-4E.
10 FGA sqns with 12 F-5A, 140 F-5E.
3 fighter sqns with 56 F-14A Tomcat.
1 recce sqn with 16 RF-4E.
1 tanker sqn with 13 Boeing 707-320L.
4 med tpt sqns with 64 C-130E/H, 6 Boeing 747.
4 lt tpt sqns with 18 F-27, 4 F-28, 3 Aero Commander 690,
4 Falcon 20.
10 HH-43F, 6 AB-205, 84 AB-206A, 5AB-212, 39 Bell 214C SAR,
2 CH-47C, 16 Super Frelon, 2 S-61A hel.
Trainers include 9 T-33, 28 F-5F, 49 Bonanza F33A/C.
Phoenix, Sidewinder, Sparrow AAM, As 12, Maverick, Condor ASM.
5 SAM sqns with Rapier and 25 Tigrercat.
(5 RF-4E, 24 F-14, 160 F-16A/B fighters, 7 E-3A AWACS ac,
3 F-27 tpts, 4 Boeing 747 tpts, 50 CH-47 hel; Blindfire
SAM radar on order.)

Para-Military Forces: 74,000 Gendarmerie with 0-2 lt ac
and hel; 32 patrol boats.

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IRAQ

Population: 12,470,000.
Military Service: 2 years.
Total armed forces: 212,000.
Defence expenditure 1977-78: 491.5 m dinars ($6.66 bn).
     $1 = 0.290 dinars (1978), 0.296 dinars (1977).

Army: 180,000.
4 armd divs (each with 2 armd, 1 mech bde).
2 mech divs.
4 inf divs.
1 indep armd bde.
1 Republican Guard mech bde.
1 indep inf bde.
1 special forces bde.
1,700 T-54/-55/-62, 100 T-34, AMX-30 med, 100 PT-76 lt tks,
120 BMP MICV; about 1,500 AFV, incl BTR-50/-60/-152,
OT-62, VCR APC; 800 75mm, 85mm, 122mm, 130mm, 152mm,
guns/how; 90 SU-100, 40 ISU-122 SP guns, 120mm, 160mm mor;
BM-21 122mm RL; 26 FROG-7, 12 Scud B SSM.; Sagger, SS-11
ATGW; 1,200 23mm, 37mm, 57mm, 85mm, 100mm towed, ZSU-23-4, ZSU-57-2 SP AA guns SA-7 SAM (T-62 med tks, Scud SSM on order).

Reserves: 250,000.

Navy: 4,000.
3 SO-1 submarine chasers.
6 Osa-1, 8 Osa-II FPBG with Styx SSM.
10 P-6 torpedo boats.
2 large patrol craft (ex-Soviet Poluchat-class).
6 coastal patrol boats (under 100 tons).
5 minesweepers (2 ex-Soviet T-43, 3 inshore).
3 LCT (Polnocny-class).

Air Force: 28,000 (10,000 AD personnel); about 339 combat aircraft.
1 bbr sqn with 12 Tu-22.
1 lt bbr sqn with 10 Il-28.
12 FGA sqns: 4 with 80 MiG-23B, 3 with 60 SU-7B, 3 with 30 SU-20, 2 with 20 Hunter FB59/FR10.
5 interceptor sqns with 115 MiG-21.
1 COIN sqn with 12 Jet Provost T52.
2 tpt sqns with 10 An-2, 8 An-12, 8 An-24, 2 An-26, 2 Tu-124, 13 Il-14, 2 Heron.
8 hel sqns: 35 Mi-8, 14 Mi-6, 80 Mi-8, 47 Alouette III, 8 Super Frelon, 40 Gazelle, 3 Puma.
Trainers incl MiG-15/-21/-23U, Su-7U, Hunter T69, 10 Yak-11, 12 L-29, 8 L-39.
AA-2 Atoll AAM, AS 11/12 ASM (R 550 Magic AAM, Exocet ASM on order).
SA-2, SA-3, and 25 SA-6 SAM.
(32 Mirage F-1C fighters, 4 Mirage F-1B trainers, 11-76 tpts on order).

Para-Military Forces: 4,800 security troops, 75,000 People's Army.
Magister, Falcon ST 2, 20 SF-260, 17 Galeb.
4 hel sqns with 13 Alouette 11/111, 6 AB-47, 9 Super Frelon, 10 CH-47C.
AA-2 Atoll, R 550 Magic AAM.
3 SAM regts with 60 Crotale and 9 btys with 60 SA-2, SA-3, and SA-6 SAM.
(32 Mirage F-1AD/ED fighters, 6 Mirage F-1BD, 150 SF-260 trainers, 20 CH-47C, 1AS-61A hel on order.)

APPENDIX 2

SAUDI ARABIA

Population: 7,730,000.
Military service: voluntary.
Total armed forces: 58,500.
Estimated GNP 1977: $55.4 bn.

Army: 45,000.
2 armd bdes.
4 inf bdes.
2 para bns.
1 Royal Guard bn.
3 arty bns.
6 AA arty btys.
10 SAM btys with HAWK.
250 AMX-30, 75 M-60 med tks; 200 AML-60/-90 armd, Ferret,
50 Fox scout cars; 300 AMX-10P MICV, M-113, Panhard M-3
APC, 105mm pack how, 105mm and 155mm SP how, 75mm RCL,
TOW ATGW; M-42 40mm SP, AMX-30 SP AA guns, HAWK SAM.
(175 M-60 med tks, 50 Fox scout cars; 200 AMX-10P MICV,
Dragon ATGW, M-163 Vulcan 20mm SP AA guns Redeye, Shahine
(Crotale), 6 btys Improved HAWK SAM on order).

Deployment:
Lebanon (Arab Peace-keeping Force): 700.

Navy: 1,500.
3 FPB (Jaguar-class).
1 large patrol craft (ex-US coastguard cutter).
4 coastal minesweepers.
2 utility landing craft.
(6 corvettes with Harpoon SSM, 4 FPBG, 4 gunboats, 4 landing
craft on order).

Air Force: 12,000, 171 combat aircraft.
3 FB sqns with 60 F-5E.
2 COIN/trg sqns with 35 BAC-167.
1 interceptor sqn with 16 Lightning F53 2 T55.
3 OCU with 24 F-5F, 16F-5B, 16 Lightning F53, 2 T55.
2 tpt sqns with 35 C-130E/H.
2 hel sqns with 16 AB-206 and 24 AB-205.
Other ac incl 4 KC-130 tankers, 1 Boeing 707, 2 Falcon 20,
2 Jetstar tpts; 22 Alouette III, 1 AB-206, 1 Bell-212,
2 AS-61A hel.
Trainers incl 12 T-41A.
Red Top, Firestreak, Sidewinder R 530, R 550 Magic AAM;
Maverick ASM.
(45 F-15 fighters, 15 TF-15 trainers, 1 Boeing 747, 4KC-130H
tpt ac; 6 KV-107 hel on order).
Para-Military Forces: 35,000 National Guard in 20 regular and semi-regular bns with 150 V-150 Commando APC, 6,500 Frontier Force and Coastguard with 50 small patrol boats and 8 SRN-6 hovercraft.

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