

Middle East Powers Make Important Shifts

Whose Job to Keep Peace in Area Is Topic for Program

(Editor's note: This is the fourth in a series of Great Decisions program discussions. Today's topic is "Peace in the Middle East—Whose Job?" The discussion information is prepared by the general extension division, Oregon state system of higher education, in cooperation with the Foreign Policy Association, New York.)

The political and military lineup of powers in the Middle East has undergone some important shifts in the last six months—not only between East and West, but also within the Arab bloc. This picture has become even more confused in the past few weeks as the Mid-East power contest reached out to neighboring Iran, and aroused concern in Turkey and Pakistan as well as in Western capitals. The always fluid Middle Eastern situation has never been more uncertain, experts agree.

The July 14 revolution in Iraq and the simmering civil war in Lebanon removed from power two governments committed to the West. U.S. troop landings in Lebanon failed to accomplish any lasting political objectives for the West, most observers agree, although simultaneous British intervention in Jordan is believed to have saved the pro-Western government of King Hussein.

Serious Blow to West
One of the most serious blows to Western strategy in this part of the world was Iraq's virtual rejection in mid-February of the Western-sponsored Baghdad pact. This military alliance linked Iraq (the only Arab member) with the NATO powers, Turkey and Britain, with the South-East Asia treaty partner Pakistan, and with Iraq's pro-Western neighbor, Iran. The United States, although not a formally a member, has been a vigorous supporter of the pact and participates in all its committees.

Iraq's rejection of alliances with non-Arab nations is an obvious blow to the Baghdad Pact. At the same time, Iraq has turned to Moscow for military and economic aid. An estimated 15,000 to 20,000 tons of Russian arms have already arrived in Iraq. It is this combination of factors which raises alarm among the pact nations.

Iraq's Communist-financed military build up, and growing Communist influence in Iraq's economic and political life, are disturbing to Turkey and to Iran because of the recently revived "Kurdistan" question.

Semi-nomadic People
The Kurds are a semi-nomadic people scattered among Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran and the Soviet Union. The revolutionary constitution of Iraq recognizes the "national rights" of these people—a policy which, if brought to its logical conclusion, could lead to the partial dismemberment of some Middle Eastern nations. Many observers detect Moscow's hand in current agitation for Kurdish nationalism.

Recent developments have also produced new stresses within the Arab bloc. As the revolutionary government in Iraq has leaned further in Moscow's direction, the United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria seems to have had second thoughts about its long friendly relations with Moscow.

Since 1955 President Gamal Abdel Nasser has depended heavily on the Soviet bloc for arms, markets for Egyptian cotton and economic assistance. Communist party activity in Egypt and Syria has been sharply restricted throughout this period, but not until recently has the UAR permitted open criticism of Moscow's "interference" in Arab internal affairs.

It is difficult, in other words, if not dangerous, to try to explain current Middle Eastern developments in simple terms. In one sense, the contest is between East and West, for influence if not dominance in the area. In another sense, the issue is between various Arab leaders and interests. The challenge to the West is to sort out the various pieces, and to develop policies to deal with the total complex problem—Arab nationalism as well as communism, regional economic prob-

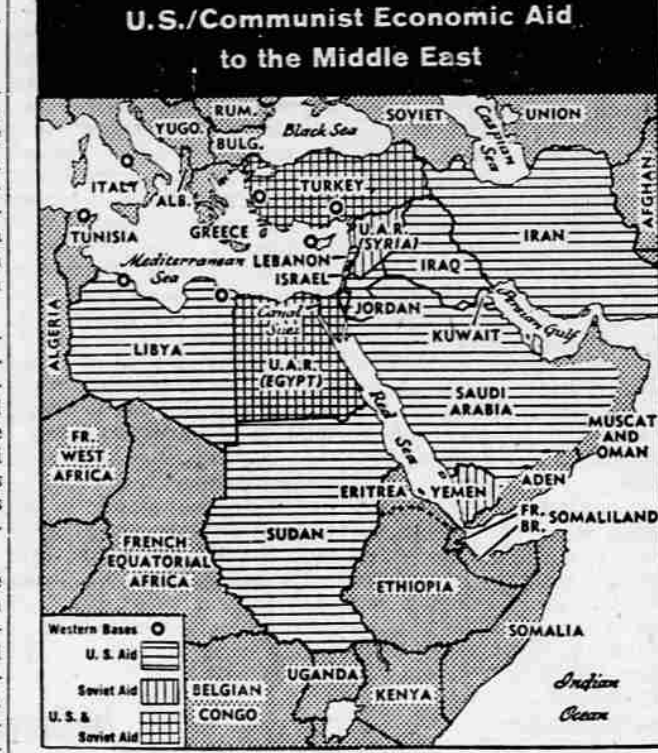
lems as well as military questions.

Arab Nationalism
Nasser has long been identified as the chief spokesman and inspirational leader of Arab nationalism—a program which, in his mind, will ultimately unite the Arabic-speaking peoples of Africa and the Middle East, from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf.

Nasser's leadership of Pan-Arabism has been acknowledged by Algerian revolutionaries, Tunisian politicians and even by spokesmen for the feudal government of Saudi Arabia. His leadership rests primarily, however, on his appeal to the masses throughout the Arab world.

The revolutionary regime in Iraq has been equivocal in this respect. Known pro-Nasser elements in the Army and government have been purged and in some cases, brought to trial. Recent cabinet shake-ups and military and economic aid deals with Moscow, in the opinion of Western observers, have actually moved Iraq further from the Nasser camp and closer to the Soviet Union.

Balancing the Trend
As if to balance this trend, Nasser's controlled press has launched its first vigorous



criticism of Communist meddling in the internal political affairs of the Arab states. At the same time, Cairo propaganda against the "imperialist" western powers was noticeably softened.

There has been no obvious breach in political or economic relations between Cairo

and Moscow. Nor has Cairo's relations with the West returned to pre-Suez war normality although a number of outstanding economic issues have been resolved through negotiation.

In the rest of the Arab world, Nasser's pan-Arabism has made little progress in the last six months. A jointly financed regional development bank was launched by the Arab league (excluding Iraq) on Jan. 12, and some regional economic cooperation will undoubtedly follow. But there have been no political moves toward Arab unity since the kingdom of Yemen federated itself with the United Arab Republic of Egypt and Syria, March 8, 1958.

Grumbling Heard
There has, in fact, been some grumbling among dissident politicians in the Syrian

province of the UAR. And many observers believe that the military coup in the Sudan last November successfully sidetracked pro-Nasser forces in that country.

Moves and counter-moves among Arab leaders, in other words, leave unanswered such questions as the future course or leadership of pan-Arabism, and the role Moscow is playing in this rivalry. Nasser's new friendliness to the West prompts some experts to recommend taking advantage of this turn of events, and to use Nasser as a counterweight to Communist pressures and influence in the area. Others point out that Nasser has proved, even to Moscow, that he is not easy to "use," and that he is still tied militarily and economically to Moscow.

Yet another group argues that Nasser is near the end of the road as dominant Arab leader; that Western interests would not be served by propping him up economically or politically.

Policy To Be Willing
It is apparently present U.S. policy to be willing to "normalize" what our relations with Cairo, to negotiate regarding the release of frozen Egyptian funds in this country, and to consider the resumption of modest aid programs for community development in Egypt. The State department also welcomed the shift in Cairo's propagandist line. None of this, however, has been construed as warmth or eagerness on Washington's part.

U. S. policies toward Iraq are equally difficult to project. Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact is obviously a blow to the pact's original conception—an unbroken "northern tier" of allies, stretching from the Mediter-

anean to Pakistan in South Asia, and insulating the Arab Middle East from Soviet border pressure.

On the other hand, observers point out that the Baghdad pact did not prevent the Soviet Union from "leapfrogging" into its arms-for-cotton deal with Nasser, nor has it prevented growing Communist pressure from within the Arab states—the kind of pressure now apparent in Iraq, and which the Cairo press has recently criticized in regional terms.

Concept Outlined
The original concept of the Baghdad pact, in other words, may have outlived its usefulness under any circumstances. Military security against aggression, however, remains a major concern in Washington, and in the capitals of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan.

During January conferences of the Baghdad Pact Ministerial Council, in Karachi, the United States reinforced its commitments to help defend Turkey, Iran and Pakistan from external Communist aggression. Turkey and Iran in particular, however, are just as concerned about aggression which may be neither Communist nor external.

Any military explosion in the Middle East—whether a Kurdish nationalist rebellion or a conflict between Arab states—could spread quickly, involving possibly Israel, and perhaps other neighboring states. Russian arms and agitation contribute to both the possibility and the danger of such developments.

Furthermore, any close partnership between an Arab nationalist government and Moscow—short of actual Communist take-over—is an automatic defeat of Western ob-

jectives in the region.

Yet either of these two possibilities is covered by present U.S. commitments to Turkey, Iran, Israel or any other Middle Eastern nation. An entirely new treaty would be required, the State department points out, unless the "aggression" is clearly sponsored by "international communism."

Washington has offered no new treaty. In recent weeks, however, the United States successfully discouraged Iran from negotiating a new non-aggression treaty and economic aid agreement with the Soviet Union.

Military, Economic Aid
The Soviet Union is using both military aid and economic assistance, as well as internal Communist agitation, to gain influence in the Middle East. The West has also used military and economic assistance to maintain its influence and to restrain Communist penetration.

The present level of East-West competition, according to many observers, may leave the United States no alternative but stepped-up investments on both fronts—military and economic.

Even if U.S. policy makers were to adopt this approach, they would still face other difficult questions. For example, what is a proper balance between military and economic aid? How much—in long-range terms—can actually be accomplished by military agreements, in view of the festering economic and political problems of the region? What positive steps can the United States take to insure that Arab nationalism is a constructive force, rather than a tool of Communism? What common cause can the United States find with non-Communist Arab leadership?

Today & Tomorrow

By Walter Lippmann

THE WESTERN INVITATION

At least in its method the Allied note to the Soviet Union, which was published this week, is new and different. It is an invitation to hold a conference about Germany which does not lay down in advance what can be and what cannot be discussed, what must be agreed to.

This does not mean that the Allies no longer have positions from which they will not retreat, as for example that they will not withdraw their troops in West Berlin until the whole of Berlin becomes once again the capital of a reunited Germany. The novelty and the difference in the present approach is that the note is not a broadside in a propaganda game but a simple and unconditional invitation to confer and to negotiate.

This would not have been possible if the Western powers had not reached the conclusion that there are in fact subjects to negotiate about. Behind the simple words of the note there lies the fact that we have now agreed among ourselves that we can protect our vital interests in Europe while we negotiate on a number of subjects which have until recently been regarded as untouchable.

This is the so-called new flexibility. It covers, for example, the idea that reunification need not begin with free elections although some day the reunited Germany must have free elections. It covers the idea that it is possible to negotiate de facto with the East German state. It covers the idea that it is possible to discuss a regional agreement for the reduction and limitation of armaments in Central Europe.

WE MUST now wait to see how the Kremlin reacts. It can accept the invitation to confer and negotiate, reserving its own position for the conference which must, if it is to be at all useful, be carried on confidentially in the preliminary and exploratory stages. Or the Kremlin can issue a new public broadside of its demands and its terms, in which case it will be painfully clear that the Kremlin does not now want to negotiate. Or the Russians can negotiate confidentially, say through Mr. Macmillan or through diplomatic channels, about the circumstances of the conference to which the West has invited them. Let us hope that in making

up their minds how to react the Russians will not draw the wrong conclusion from the fact of Secretary Dulles' illness. The wrong conclusion would be that the less Mr. Dulles is able to participate, the more flexible and the more disinclined will be Western policy. The exact opposite is the truth. The less able Mr. Dulles is to over-see American and Allied policy and to cover it with his special authority, the more rigid will be the American position, the more intransigent will be Mr. Adenauer. It is Mr. Dulles who has made possible the new flexibility in Western policy, and much may depend upon whether Mr. Mikoyan realized that when he was here and has made it plain to Mr. Khrushchev.

THE Russians could easily misunderstand this crucial fact. They have their own long standing stereotype that Mr. Dulles is unyielding and implacable. They have highly simplified views of human character and of human behavior, and they have a rather dangerously simplified view of Mr. Dulles, who is in fact a complicated man. The Russians may not be able to appreciate quickly enough that their view of Mr. Dulles as a monolithic character is a mistaken one.

They may be confirmed in their prejudice by much that is being printed in this country. In many quarters Mr. Dulles is being pictured as a kind of granite monument which never changes and never bends no matter what the winds that blow. This is mythology, and although it is intended as adulation, it does less than justice to this worldly and experienced man. The myth has little relation to the fact that John Foster Dulles is and always has been a very practical man who measures the strength of the forces about him and sets his course accordingly.

IF THE Kremlin does not misjudge the situation, there will be a conference. If there is one, it is, of course, improbable, indeed impossible, that the conference will produce a grand settlement of the German question. But, on the other hand, once both sides commit themselves to a conference, they cannot break it up in total and in angry disagreement without running the gravest risks. Once they meet, they cannot do less than to work out arrangements about Berlin and the two Germanys which, though tentative and provisional, could evolve in the course of time into something more acceptable and more permanent. Copyright 1959, New York Herald Tribune Inc.

Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

"POSH" is a very British word indeed, defined by Webster as "smart and elegant in appearance." Know its origin? Well, in the good old days, when British aristocrats were boarding ships to go and rule India, the legend was that they should book cabins on the port side on the way out (thereby getting the shady side on the hot trip through the Suez Canal) and, by the same token, nail down starboard cabins on the way home. In other words, "Port Outside, Starboard Home," and the abbreviation, P-O-S-H, became identified with the top dogs of the foreign service. All clear?



Mr. Hayden's wife left the house to take the family car out of the garage. A moment later he heard a horrendous crash. "Did you knock it down?" he called fearfully. "No," she galled back, "just over."

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