NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

IRAN'S SECURITY DILEMMA

by

Dale R. Davis

June 1994

Thesis Advisor: Peter Lavoy

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Unclassified
SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified		1b. RESTRICTIVE MARKINGS Unclassified	
2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY		3. DISTRIBUTION/ AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.	
2b. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE			
4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)	
6a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION Naval Postgraduate School	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL *(If Applicable)* 38	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION Naval Postgraduate School	
6c. ADDRESS *(city, state, and ZIP code)* Monterey, CA 93943-5000		7b. ADDRESS *(city, state, and ZIP code)* Monterey, CA 93943-5000	
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL *(If Applicable)*	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	
8c. ADDRESS *(city, state, and ZIP code)*		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS	
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.	TASK NO.	WORK UNIT ACCESSION NO.
11. TITLE *(Include Security Classification)* Iran's Security Dilemma			
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Davis, Dale R.			
13a. TYPE OF REPORT Master's Thesis	13b. TIME COVERED FROM TO	14. DATE OF REP*(year, month,day)* June 1994	15. PAGE COUNT 128
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.			

17. COSATI CODES			18. SUBJECT TERMS *(continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)*
FIELD	GROUP	SUBGROUP	Iran's national security policy, strategic motivations, beliefs, capabilities and intentions. Impact on U.S. interests and foreign policy options.

19. ABSTRACT *(Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)*

Since the fall of Mohammed Reza Shah in 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran has remained politically isolated from the United States and the West. After eight years of brutal war with Iraq, Iran has embarked on a major effort to rebuild its devastated military. A major element of its military reconstruction has been the acquisition of advanced weapons systems with strategic applications, such as long-range bombers, submarines, advanced underwater mines, and ballistic missiles. Iran is also suspected of pursuing the development and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. Given Iran's latent hostility towards the United States and its past willingness to engage in terrorism, these activities are a most serious concern. This thesis will examine Iran's strategic motivations, beliefs, intentions, and capabilities, as well as the impact of these capabilities on U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf. It will also examine a range of U.S. policy options in response to Iran's pursuit of strategic military capabilities.

20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT [X] UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED [ ] SAME AS RPT. [ ] DTIC USERS	21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Unclassified	
22a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUAL Pete Lavoy	22b. TELEPHONE (Include Area Code) (408) 656-2143	22c. OFFICE SYMBOL Code NS/LA

DD FORM 1473, 84 MAR 83 APR edition may be used until exhausted SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE
All other editions are obsolete Unclassified

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

IRAN'S SECURITY DILEMMA

by

Dale Robert Davis
Captain, United States Marine Corps
B.S. Electrical Engineering, Virginia Military Institute, 1983

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
June 1994

Author: _____
Dale R. Davis

Approved by: _____
Peter Lavoy, Thesis Advisor

_____
John Arquilla, Second Reader

_____
Thomas C. Bruneau, Chairman,
Department of National Security Affairs

ABSTRACT

Since the fall of Mohammed Reza Shah in 1979, the Islamic Republic of Iran has remained politically isolated from the United States and the West. After eight years of brutal war with Iraq, Iran has embarked on an effort to rebuild its devastated military. A major element of its military reconstruction has been the acquisition of advanced weapon systems with strategic applications, such as long-range bombers, submarines, advanced underwater mines, and ballistic missiles. Iran is also suspected of pursuing the development and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. Given Iran's latent hostility towards the United States and its past willingness to engage in terrorism, these activities are a most serious concern. This thesis will examine Iran's strategic motivations, beliefs, intentions, and capabilities, as well as the potential impact of these capabilities on U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf. It will also examine a range of U.S. policy options in response to Iran's pursuit of strategic military capabilities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Iran is a state with a xenophobic security perspective. It sees itself as being historically isolated, and unjustly denied its rightful role in the regional power structure. Recent history has served to confirm and reinforce Iran's sense of isolation and embattlement. The failure of the international community to condemn Iraqi aggression, and use of chemical warfare, is seen as evidence of an international conspiracy to suppress and destroy Iran. This notion is confirmed by the U.S. policy of "Dual Containment".

Further exacerbating Iran's xenophobia are its real national security problems. Iraq retains sufficient military strength to threaten Iran. Afghanistan and the Central Asian republics continue to be embroiled in internal conflicts that threaten to spill across borders and sensitize Iran's heterogeneous population to volatile ethnic cleavages. The Arab Gulf states are arming themselves to the teeth. The enlarged U.S. military presence threatens to permanently exclude Iran from any security role in the region.

Iran's response to these threats has been conditioned by the lessons of the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf war. Iran has rejected its earlier strategic philosophy which relied on Islamic fervor and revolutionary zeal in favor of technology and a trained, professional military force. Special emphasis has been placed on the acquisition of strategic capabilities

which are believed to deter strategic threats.

Underwater mines, submarines and anti-ship missiles reflect the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf for Iran. Ballistic missiles are seen as a necessary deterrent to future Iraqi aggression and possibly as a deterrent against an Israeli preemptive strike. Chemical weapons are seen as an evil necessity in order to deter the future use of such weapons against Iran. Finally, Iran's growing nuclear infrastructure indicates that Iran is pursuing, over the long term, a nuclear weapons capability. The primary objective of its nuclear weapons program would seem to be deterrence.

Iran's attempts to deter future aggression have only served to heighten suspicion concerning its intentions. Iran's revolutionary political ideology is an anathema to the rulers of the Arab Gulf states. Suspicion has led to a regional arms race, which exacerbates Iran's security dilemma.

Iran seems to be seeking a role in the political, security, and economic structures of the region that is commensurate with its size, resources and population. Estimates of the scope and purpose of its conventional military buildup have been exaggerated. Even its growing strategic capabilities reflect more of a concern for deterrence than any inherently aggressive tendencies.

The U.S. policy of Dual Containment assumes that Iran is an expansionist state that must be contained. Its success relies on strong support from U.S. allies, which has failed to

materialize. It assumes that the political and military status quo of the Persian Gulf will remain fundamentally unchanged. However, there is no evidence that the status quo of such a volatile region will remain constant. Finally, it depends on a long-term, high profile, U.S. military presence in the region, despite reduced defense budgets and manpower reductions. The net result is the creation of strong incentives for Iran to acquire nuclear weapons as quickly as possible.

If the major goal of U.S. policy is long term stability in the Persian Gulf, then an alternate strategy must be considered. The critical objective of the policy would be the creation of a viable regional security organization. The United States would seek to gradually reduce its security role in the region. Iran would not be denied the means to provide for its defense in a reasonable conventional manner. Expansion of non-military economic ties with Iran would be encouraged.

At the same time, the U.S. position on the issues of proliferation, subversion, terrorism, and military aggression would be made absolutely clear. The U.S. would continue to conduct bi-lateral relations with the states of the region and remain openly committed to the stability of the region. By focusing on the mutual U.S.-Iranian interests of regional security, reduced U.S. military commitment, and the expansion of economic ties, the United States could unilaterally lay the foundation for long term regional stability and rapprochement.

I. INTRODUCTION

Fifteen years after the Islamic Revolution, Iran remains politically isolated and continues to view the United States as the "Great Satan", whose regional presence is a direct threat to the security of the state and the revolution. Iran's security concerns are manifested in an ambitious campaign to rebuild its armed forces. In addition to rebuilding its conventional capailities, Iran is striving to generate strategic military capabilities.[1] Submarines, sophisticated underwater mines, anti-ship missiles, intermediate range ballistic missiles, and advanced attack aircraft, in addition to chemical, biological and possibly nuclear weapons will provide Iran with a respectable strategic force structure that deeply concerns U.S. policy-makers. Despite its vehement rhetoric, Iran's security policy is not, however, driven solely by its concerns about the United States.

Iran's quest for security has its roots in a 2500 year old national history that has recorded the ravages of foreign invaders and successive occupations. Historically, Iran's security concerns have resulted in a foreign policy that seeks

---

[1]For the purpose of this thesis strategic military capabilities will be defined as those capabilities that allow a state to control the course of a military or political situation by deterrence of aggression, denial of victory, and/or enforced compliance.

to maintain national security by limiting the influence of great powers in the region, along with the development and maintenance of military capabilities sufficient to ensure regional hegemony. In light of Iran's strategic location and proven animosity towards the West, its pursuit of strategic capabilities is of justifiable concern. These concerns are further exacerbated by Washington's uncertainty over Iran's intentions. Is Iran's drive to rearm based on its concerns about possible foreign aggression? Or is Iran pursuing strategic capabilities in support of its stated goal of expansion of Islamic revolution?

From Tehran's perspective, efforts to modernize and improve its military capabilities are well justified. Prior to its defeat in the second Gulf War, Iraq was very close to developing a nuclear weapons capability. Its chemical weapons program was already well established. Despite the allied victory and subsequent embargo, Iraq continues to maintain a substantial military capability that will certainly increase when the U.N.-sponsored embargo is lifted.[2]

With the waning of the Iraqi threat, Israel has identified Iran as its most dangerous enemy and has employed its extensive facilities and influence in an effort to convince the West of the evil nature of Iran. In the post-war period, the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have embarked

---

[2]For a summary of Iraq's present military capabilities see The Military Balance 1993-94, (London: Brassey's Ltd, 1993), p. 117.

on a massive arms build-up, focused mainly on countering Iran's emerging military superiority in the region. To the north and east, Afghanistan and many of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union are embroiled in civil war. These conflicts have burdened Iran with millions of refugees[3] and create speculation about future Russian intervention in the region. To the southeast, Pakistan and India are now considered capable of employing nuclear weapons and have dangerously teetered on the threshold of nuclear conflict over the Kashmir issue.[4]

A special concern for Iran is the widely expanded security role the United States plays in the region. Prior to the second Gulf war, U.S. presence in the region was relatively small. The Arab regimes could be counted on to openly oppose the permanent basing of foreign forces in the region. Since 1991 the U.S. presence has grown significantly, not only in the Gulf but also in Northern Iraq and Turkey. The U.S. Navy maintains a carrier battle group in the region which can easily strike Iran - a point brought strongly home to Tehran by the 1993 cruise missile attack on the Iraqi intelligence service headquarters in Baghdad.

---

[3]According to the U.N., Iran presently hosts 4.1 million refugees. See "Iran Ranks Unenviable First," Iran Times, Washington, D.C., 19 November 1993, p. 16.

[4]See Seymour M. Hersh, "On The Nuclear Edge," The New Yorker, 29 March 1993, pp. 56-73.

Washington's perspective on Iran's military buildup and Gulf security is much different. Tehran's venomous rhetoric towards the United States, its regional allies, and Israel, on the one hand, and Iran's implicit and explicit support of subversion and terrorism, on the other, provide sufficient cause for U.S. skepticism regarding Iranian intentions. The Western press routinely characterizes Iran as a revolutionary regime which seeks, as its ultimate goal, the destruction of Western culture.[5] This image is hard to refute when these arguments are presented in isolation from wider political issues and based solely on evidence of Iran's involvement in the support of revolutionary Islamic movements, political assassinations, and interference in the domestic affairs of other states.[6]

These concerns are further complicated by the lack of direct dialogue between Tehran and Washington. This lack of communication has forced a capabilities-driven assessment of

---

[5]See Dr. Assad Homayoun, "Iran's Administration Persists In Searching For Jihad While Neglecting Its Domestic Base," Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy, 31 July 1993, p. 8.

[6]It is interesting to note that the five central issues over which the United States opposes Iran - proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, conventional proliferation, support for terrorism, opposition to the Arab-Israeli peace process, and subversion of friendly governments - reflect a good deal of inconsistency on the part of the United States. If applied as broad criteria for U.S. support, Israel, Saudi Arabia and many of the United States' other regional allies would not qualify.

Iran's intentions.[7] Unable to determine Iran's intentions regarding issues of security and foreign policy through dialogue, U.S. policy-makers tend to assume a worst-case scenario based on Iran's specific military capabilities. The vision of a nuclear-capable, revolutionary, expansionist Iran dogmatically adhering to the concepts of radical jihad and martyrdom strikes fear in Western hearts. The policies which result from this type of analysis create a more threatening image of the United States in the Iran's eyes.[8] Consequently, Iran reacts with increasing belligerence towards U.S. presence and perceived interference in the region.

Many analysts have concluded that Iran's desire to acquire strategic military capabilities is based on its belief that these capabilities will provide it the requisite freedom of action to intimidate U.S. allies, deter or diminish U.S. regional influence and engage in the expansion of its revolutionary role.[9] The present U.S. Middle East policy of "dual containment" is based on this reasoning.[10] Despite its

---

[7]For an example of a capabilities-driven analysis see Michael Eisenstadt, "Deja Vu All Over Again? An Assessment of Iran's Military Buildup," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994), pp. 93-151.

[8]For an explanation of present U.S. policy towards Iran see Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 73, No. 2, March/April 1994, pp. 45-55.

[9]Eisenstadt, pp. 94-95.

[10]The policy of "dual containment" was first outlined by Martin Indyk, Special Assistant to the National Security

(continued...)

political appeal, careful study reveals the fallacies upon which this policy is based. Shahram Chubin, a respected analyst of Iranian security policy, has eloquently expressed the weakness of this form of policy formulation.

> The labelling of some as "rogue" or "backlash" states, the tendency to infer intentions from capabilities, to exaggerate those capabilities, and to assume a similarity in states assigned to this category, often leads to an expectation of uniform behavior... Oversimplification of problems that are multi-dimensional will lead to poor policy. [11]

Although Iran's support of revolutionary movements and terrorism appears undeniable[12], the problem lies in the assumption that Iran's motivations for engagement in these activities are primarily revolutionary and ideological, with no foundation or roots in traditional Iranian national interests.[13] While revolutionary ideology has at times seemed

---

[10](...continued)
Council for the Middle East Policy, in a special report to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 21 May 1993.

[11]Shahram Chubin, "Iran's Strategic Aims and Constraints," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994), p. 66.

[12]The 1983 bombings of the Marine Barracks and the American Embassy in Beirut are just two examples of Iran's sponsorship of terrorism. Additionally, the State Department has identified Iran as a state that sponsors terrorism. For an analysis of Iran's recent campaign of political assassination see Thomas Sancton, "Terrorism, The Tehran Connection," Time, 21 March 1994, pp. 51-55.

[13]Dr. Assad Homayoun, p. 9.

to lead Iran down a politically confrontational path, these instances have been few (the Salmon Rushdie affair seems to be the most obvious case), and have not seriously damaged Iran's interests over the long term. Despite the outcry from the West, the Rushdie affair has served Iran's national interest within the Islamic and Third World and has not seriously damaged its ability to conduct vital economic transactions with the West. The ideological contradictions of Iranian foreign policy suggest that its formulation is a very pragmatic and realistic process.

As the only "legitimate" Islamic Republic,[14] Iran holds a unique position of leverage in relation to its regional rivals. It applies its leverage by pointing out the Islamic illegitimacy of regimes that it fears or wishes to influence. Iran's application of this political-religious leverage is very selective and is by no means ideologically driven. This fact is illustrated by the dichotomies within Iran's foreign policy. Iran pursues close relations with secular, authoritarian Syria and criticizes similar, perhaps more tolerant regimes in Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria. Iran supports monarchial rule in Oman, the Emirates, and Qatar, while it denounces the monarchy in Saudi Arabia, which is arguably a more devoutly Islamic state than Iran itself. Iran's rivalry

---

[14]Within the Muslim world , the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is widely viewed to be the creation of the reactionary regime of General Zia Al-Haq, and does not enjoy the prestige accorded to Iran for its revolutionary struggle.

with Saudi Arabia reveals the purely nationalist goals of Iranian foreign policy and the negative effects true expansion of the Islamic Revolution would have on Iran.

Iran would stand to gain very little from expansion of the Islamic Revolution. In the event that revolutionary Islam were to succeed, the cleavages created by the Shi'a - Sunni split, and the historical animosity between the Arabs and Persians would likely deny Iran the prestige it now holds. Worse, such a revolution would deprive Iran of its most powerful tool of leverage in regional politics - sole possession of Islamic legitimacy. It is unlikely that an Islamic Republic in Egypt would become a staunch ally of Iran.

If Iran is not pursuing a revolutionary agenda, why does it seemingly pursue regional autonomy? A careful analysis of the determinants of Iran's security perspective and its threat perceptions may reveal that its present security policy is based more on a historical quest for national security and traditional fear of foreign domination and less on ideological and revolutionary factors. The importance of determining the actual reasons for Iran's rearmament program cannot be over-emphasized. U.S. policy must be based on a sound understanding of Iran's motivations. Policies based on the assumption that a Iran is an aggressor might produce unexpected and perhaps undesired results if in fact it is not an aggressor state.

A. HYPOTHESIS

Answering the question of why a nation would choose to pursue the acquisition of strategic military capabilities is no simple task. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) has recently become a priority international concern. To this end theories of proliferation are being actively pursued.[15] It is my hypothesis that Iran's pursuit of strategic capabilities is the result of a security dilemma. This security dilemma rises out of the mutual misperception and distrust that exists between Iran and its international and regional rivals. These misperceptions are rooted in the dichotomy created by Iran's pursuit of traditional strategic objectives and western interpretation of the Islamic Republic's rhetoric and actions as indicative of its pursuit of revolutionary goals.

This thesis will focus on three basic issues: Iran's security perspective, its perception of threat, and reaction to these perceived threats. I will explain why Iran seems to be a state which suffers from xenophobia regarding its national security, followed by an analysis of Iran's present threat perceptions. I will then argue that Iran's pursuit of specific strategic capabilities results from its failure to break out of its security dilemma through diplomacy and

---

[15]For a discussion of the prominent theories of proliferation see Peter Lavoy, "Nuclear Myths and the Causes of Nuclear Proliferation," Strategic Studies, Numbers 3/4, Volume 2, Spring/Summer 1993.

alliance formation and its inability to balance internally by conventional means. In conclusion I will discuss the implications of Iran's security policy for the United States and attempt to apply the insights gained to a range of U.S. policy options concerning Iran.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. NEOREALISM AND THE SECURITY DILEMMA

How does a state ensure its own security without threatening the security of other states? This is the basic question underpinning the security dilemma. The security dilemma was perhaps first recognized by Thucydides. Describing the cause of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides states:

> The real cause (of the war) I consider to be the one which was formally most kept out of sight. The growth of power of Athens, and the alarm which this inspired in Lacedaemon, made war inevitable.[1]

Thus Athens' efforts to increase its security led it into war with Lacedaemon, which feared Athenian power.

Kenneth Waltz defines the security dilemma as a natural result within an anarchic international system:

> Even if every state were stable, the world of states might not be. If each state, being stable, strove only for security and had no designs on its neighbors, all states would nevertheless remain insecure; for the means of security for one state are, in their very

---

[1]Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, John H. Finley, Jr., transl. (New York: Modern Library, 1951), Ch. 1, p. 24.

existence, the means by which other states are threatened.[2]

Waltz's theory of international relations, Neorealism, breathed new life into the realist school of international relations theory. Neorealism is a modification of Hans Morgenthau's concept of realism, which contends that states seek to maximize power in an anarchic international system.[3] Waltz recognized many of the flaws of traditional realist thought and modified the theory based on the premise that states do not necessarily seek to maximize power but only strive to achieve relative power. In other words, each state, acting rationally, does not necessarily attempt to become a world or regional hegemon. Instead, a state seeks that level of power required to balance the threat from other states. From this concept is born Waltz's theory of the balance of power and alliance formation.

Waltz emphasizes the systemic approach to analysis. It is the international political system that constrains states and leads them to behave in a predictable manner. Waltz admits that unit-level factors may also constrain a state's foreign policy but asserts that if these unit-level factors cause a

---

[2]Kenneth N. Waltz,"Reductionist and Systemic Theories," Theory of International Relations, reprinted in Neorealism and Its Critics, ed., Robert O. Keohane, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 51.

[3]Hans Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, (New York: Knopf, 1967), p. 5.

state to pursue policies harmful to its national interests, either these policies will be altered or the state's power will inevitably decline.

Neorealism explains the behavior of states when confronted by external threats does not provide a clear understanding of the spectrum of factors which influence a state's foreign policy, and consequently many of the important factors involved in the concept of the security dilemma.[4] It does not consider the role of misperception of threat in the security dilemma.

B. THREAT PERCEPTION AND MISPERCEPTION IN THE SECURITY DILEMMA

A critical element of the security dilemma is a state's misperceptions concerning other states' intentions. These misperceptions arise from a number of factors including historical animosities, and ideological and cultural cleavages. Robert Jervis emphasizes the impact of a state's geopolitical situation and the significance of perception of threat as important elements of the security dilemma. He argues that there are basically two factors that create misperception of intent within the security dilemma. The first being the difference of opinion about the levels of security required by a state.

---

[4]Waltz does not intend his theory to be a tool for the analysis of a state's policy development process. It is simply a tool for predicting the long term behavior of states within the international system.

> The more states value their security above all else the more they are likely to be sensitive to even minimal threats, and to demand high levels of arms.[5]

The second aspect focuses on a state's strategic predisposition towards other states.

> The second aspect of subjective security is the perception of threat (that is, the estimate of whether the other will cooperate). A state that is predisposed to see either a specific state as an adversary, or others in general, as a menace, will react more strongly and more quickly than a state that sees its environment as benign. Indeed, when a state believes that another not only is not likely to be an adversary, but has sufficient interests in common with it to be an ally, then it will actually welcome an increase in the other's power.[6]

These factors help explain a state's reaction to its perception of threat but do not explain why a particular state might tend to react more strongly to even minimal threats than other states, or why a state would perceive other states to be predisposed adversaries. Does the misperception that drives the security dilemma result simply from a worst case assumption of intent based on analysis of the military capabilities of a state without regard to that state's historical behavior and relations with other states? The realist school of international relations would argue that

---

[5]Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under The Security Dilemma," World Politics, Vol. 30, No. 2, January 1978, p. 174.

[6]Ibid., p. 175.

this is the only prudent course, since intentions are at best vague and subject to change over time.

> In 1933, although the British army was willing to assume war with France was out of the question, the air force and the navy were not. Maurice Hankey, the influential secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, agreed with them: his subordinate noted that "Hankey's opinion is that we cannot neglect France completely - times change and policies with them; there are plenty of examples of that in the past, and the changes can be rapid." The year before the United States staged a war game in the Pacific Ocean in which the envisaged enemy was an Anglo-Japanese coalition. In the 1920's Canada's only war plan held that the principal external threat to the security of Canada lay in the possibility of armed invasion by the force of the United States.[7]

Despite the humorous implications of these displays of extreme "realism" in military planning, assumption of intent based on analysis of military power is not the chief source of misperception between states.

Stephen M. Walt addresses the sources of threat in his book The Origins of Alliances.[8] Walt asserts that threat perceptions are not based simply on a state's power but on the *nature* of a state's power. Specifically, whether a state's power is threatening or not. According to Walt, the four

---

[7]Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 62.

[8]Stephen M. Walt, The Origins of Alliances, (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1987).

factors which create a threatening power are *aggregate power, proximity, offensive capability,* and *offensive intentions*.[9]

Walt's theory clearly recognizes the importance of geographic location in addition to aggregate military power. Despite this improvement on Jervis' explanation, Walt struggles to determine how a state perceives "offensive intentions" on the part of another state. He notes that "birds of a feather" (ideologically or culturally similar states) may flock together for the purpose of alliance formation but suggests that ideology is, at best, a subordinate factor in the assessment of threat.[10] Walt suggests that the effect of ideology on threat perception is exaggerated by the tendency of states to assign too much importance to the political rhetoric of foreign leaders.[11]

Despite Walt's skepticism, the fact remains that historical ideological and cultural cleavages are inextricably linked to the issue of misperception. Without recognizing the significance of these factors in the perception of "offense intentions", Walt would be hard pressed to explain why Canada does not view the aggregate power, proximity, and offensive

---

[9]Stephen M. Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," International Security, Spring 1985 ,Vol. 9, No.4, pp. 8-13.

[10]Ibid., p. 18-20.

[11]Ibid., p. 26.

capability of the United States as a realistic threat.[12] Or more appropriately, why Iran views Iraq's nuclear program with so much more concern than the nuclear program of Pakistan. In an attempt to analyze a state's intentions, decision-makers are unable to ignore the geopolitical, historical, ideological and cultural factors involved. The significance of these factors seems to be at least as important as issues of military capability.

C. SECURITY PERSPECTIVES

It is apparent that in addition to the analysis of intention based on military capabilities, an equally important source of misperception is the divergence of security perspectives between states caught in the security dilemma. In order to explain a state's behavior within a security dilemma, one must answer two questions. How does a state define its security? And what strategies does it employ to gain security? The answers are linked to the state's security perspective.

A state's security perspective may be defined as its view of its position in relation to neighboring states, great powers and alliances and how these international actors affect the pursuit of its strategic objectives. When a state believes that its strategic objectives are strongly opposed by other

[12]In its early history the United States even exhibited a fair amount of offensive intent towards its neighbors. The United States did invade Canada twice and failed both times. The United States also annexed as much of Mexico as it thought was worth taking.

states it will likely adopt a xenophobic security perspective. The strategies that emerge from a xenophobic state will likely appear aggressive and threatening despite the defensive intentions of the state. Understanding the specific causes of the security dilemma requires an understanding of the development of a state's security perspective - the events and factors that have influenced its strategic view. Iran appears to be a classic case of the xenophobic state - a state that views its environment as generally hostile and *seemingly* over-reacts to its perceived threats.

III. DETERMINANTS OF IRAN'S SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

President Clinton's National Security Advisor, Anthony Lake has described Iran's security perspective as being equivalent to a "siege mentality"[1]. He argues that Iran's xenophobia results from the isolation the international community has imposed upon it for its failure to conform to recognized standards of conduct. While Mr. Lake may be correct in his description of Iran's security perspective as "xenophobic", his analysis of its cause is only partially correct. Iran's security perspective; its view of its strategic position relative to other international and regional actors, has long appeared "xenophobic" and is not entirely the result of the political events of the last 15 years.[2]

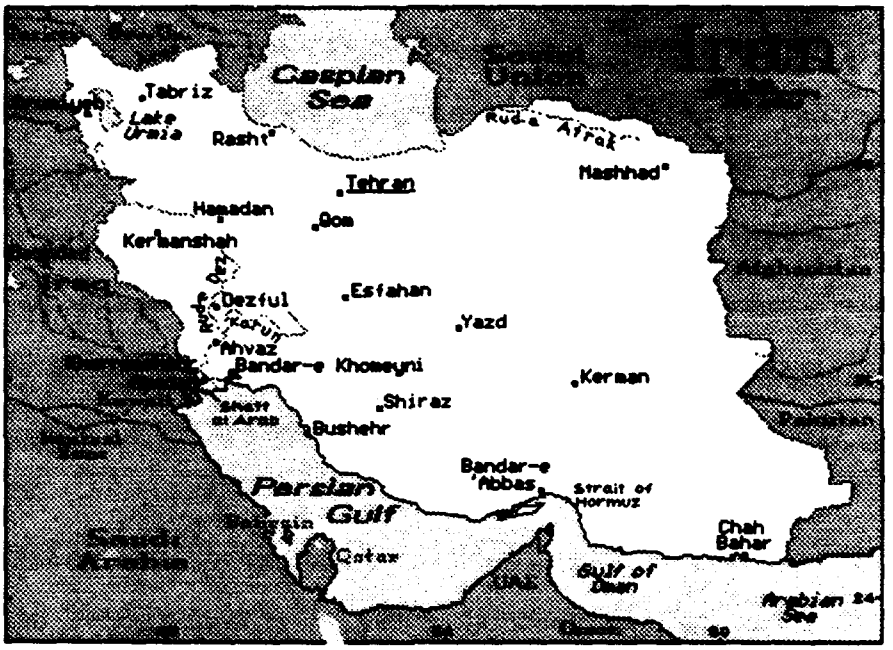
Is Iran really "xenophobic"? Or are its reactions to perceived threats well justified? Explanations of Iran's security perspective that ignore the influence of geography, history, ideology, and culture are not well founded and do not provide a sound basis for the development of policy.

---

[1]Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 73, No. 2, March/April 1994, p. 46.

[2]Iran's security policy under Mohammed Reza Shah was far more ambitious and aggressive than that of the present regime. The Shah sought to make Iran the dominant power in not only the Persian Gulf, but also in the Indian Ocean. See Shahram Chubin,"Iran's Security in the 1980s," International Security, Vol. 2, No. 3, Winter 1978, pp. 50-80.

MAP 2.1



Source: World Atlas, The Software Toolworks, Chatsworth, CA., 1990.

A. GEOGRAPHY

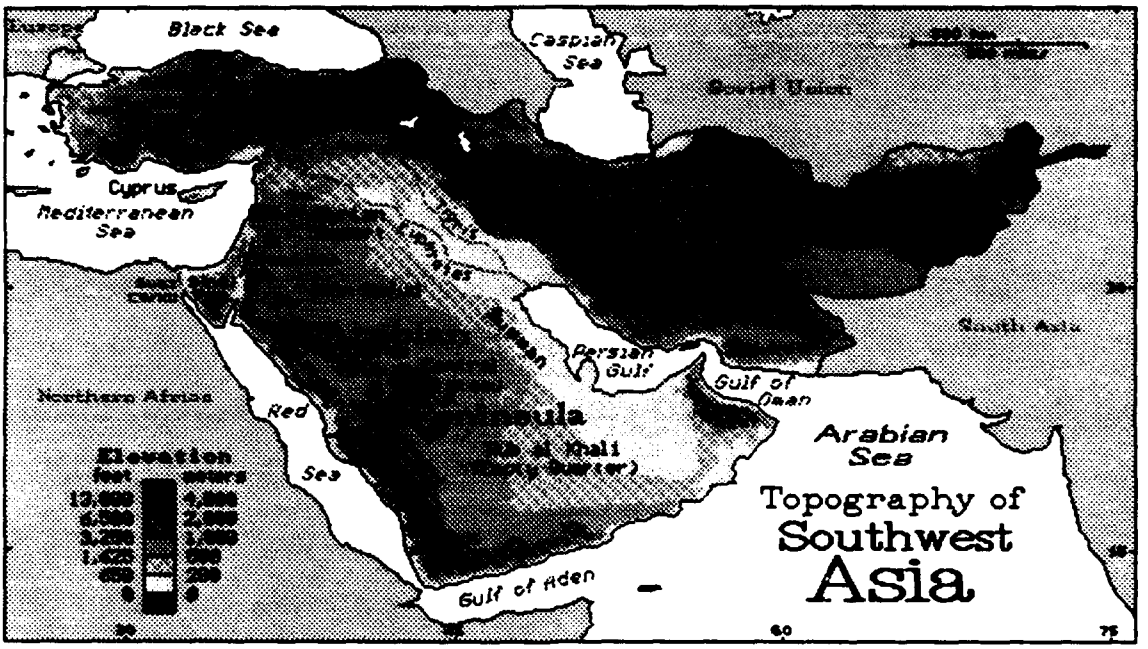
> Although the entire policy of a state does not derive from its geography, it cannot escape that geography. It can deal with the challenges of its geographic predicament skillfully or ineptly; it can modify the challenges; but it cannot ignore them. For geography does not argue. It simply is.[3]

The Persian phrase *Iran-zamin* literally means the land of Iran but figuratively refers to a region that extends beyond the boundaries of the present day state of Iran. *Iran-zamin* represents the greater region of similar culture and heritage, linked linguistically and historically to the Aryans and Medes. This area is generally recognized to extend as far west as the mountains east of the Tigris-Euphrates river valley and as far North as the Caucasus, and steppes of Central Asia. To the southeast it is bordered by Pakistan, and southern Afghanistan, while extending all the way to Tajikistan in the northeast. In reality these boundaries are vague, as contained within them are significant numbers of non-Persian peoples. Only along the Gulf coast is the boundary relatively finite, although it could be extended to some of the islands of the Gulf that continue to be largely influenced by Persian culture.

---

[3]Nicholas Spykman, The Geography of Peace, (New York: Harcourt Brace Javonovich, 1944), p. 25.

MAP 2.2



Source: World Atlas, The Software Toolworks, Chatsworth, CA., 1990.

Today, the state of Iran occupies the heartland of *Iran-zamin*, encompassing the geographic center of Persian culture, language and religion.[4]

The modern state of Iran is an extremely mountainous and arid country. The mountain ranges represent formidable barriers to transportation and naturally divide the different high plains or steppes. This rugged topography is responsible for the general isolation of Iran from the north, west and southwest.

> Persia is exceedingly difficult to enter from the Persian Gulf on the south, the Bushire-Shiraz route being one of the very worst in the world. It is also difficult of approach from the Caspian Sea on the north, from Arabistan on the west and from Baluchistan on the east. Indeed, few countries are by nature more isolated.[5]

The ruggedness of the terrain combined with the shortage of water has ensured the wide dispersion of population centers. The majority of the rivers and streams that have their source in the Alborz and Zagros mountains drain into the interior desert. This fact has led to the establishment of population centers along the inside of the V created by the Alborz and Zagros mountain ranges. Within this V, Persians settled along the high rims of compartmentalized valleys. The

---

[4]John W. Limbert, Iran, At War with History, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), p. 1.

[5]Sir Percy Sykes, A History of Persia, Volume I, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969), p. 28.

isolation of their existence demanded a high level of self-sufficiency, which in turn, contributed to "historical continuity, preservation of racial stocks and comparative safety and independence in periods of foreign invasion."[6]

The isolation created by rugged topography has significantly aided the preservation of Persian culture. Paradoxically geography also weakens Iran's position in relation to invading armies. The great central plain of Iran is an uninhabitable wasteland, and as such does not provide strategic depth in the event of invasion. Mohammed Reza Shah accurately described Iran's lack of strategic depth:

> The weakness of our position is that the center of Iran is a vast plateau, on a northwest-southeast axis, with steppes and salt deserts. The plateau is surrounded on all sides by chains of mountains: the Elburz mountains more or less cover the northern frontier, the Zagros mountains lie to the west and the Baluchistan mountains to the southeast. With the exception of a few large towns (Isphahan, Kerman) the center of our country is empty and barren, and the population, activity, wealth and culture are concentrated in the surrounding provinces.[7]

The strategic significance of the desert was not lost on Sir Percy Sykes.

---

[6]Donald N. Wilber, Iran: Past and Present, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 10.

[7]Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, Answer To History, (New York: Stein and Day, 1980), p. 35.

> This huge desert has left a deep mark on its inhabitants. Separating north from south and east from west more effectively than high ranges of snow-clad mountains or a gulf of equal size..., and it has influenced the habits, the outlook, and even the physique of the Persian; for it lies close to his cities, to Tehran and Mashad on the north, to Qum and Kashan on the west, to Yazd and Kerman on the south, and to Kain and Birjand on the east. In short, the desert is the "Dead Heart of Persia".[8]

As a result of the uninhabitable interior, the population centers are concentrated along the terrain features that form the frontier and provide the natural defensive barriers for the country. This has exposed the majority population of Iran to the ravages of war and invasion and sensitized Iranians to their nation's lack of strategic depth.

Ironically, the lack of strategic depth which hinders Iran's security also makes it difficult for conquerors to rule. The great central desert is a major obstacle to the consolidation of power, requiring a conqueror to garrison the entire country at great cost and effort. For this reason the invaders of Iran have historically sought to coopt regionally based Iranian support. Traditional regional tribal leaders would be retained to act as the agent of the new central government. This is another reason for the persistence of Persian culture.

The geopolitical centrality of Iran serves to further complicate Iran's geographic dilemma.

---

[8]Sir Percy Sykes, p. 20.

> Situated in that part of the Middle East which was the cradle of the great Western civilizations, we find ourselves at the crossroads which unite Europe and Asia, the Indian sub-continent and Africa. Our shores are washed by three seas - the Caspian to the north, the Persian Gulf to the southwest and the Gulf of Oman to the south - and we are only separated by Syria and Iraq from the Mediterranean, which was for centuries the center of the civilized world. This is the strength of our position. It allowed us, during the great moments of our history, to conquer, trade with, influence and civilize neighboring countries.[9]

Unfortunately for Iran, the strength of its position has also led others to covet it or at least covet the routes of access it provides. Iran at its strongest moments during the Archaemenian and Sassanid dynasties, was still confronted with the challenge of great powers in the west and warlike nomads of the Asian steppes, and expended great effort and resource defending against them. At weaker moments, Iran found itself under the domination of foreign forces that sought access to India, China, Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf.

In the past, foreign irredentist ambitions focused on monopolizing the lucrative silk and spice trade routes to India, China and the Persian Gulf. Today Iran's predicament is no different except that oil is the commodity of international interest. In this regard geography further weakens Iran's security. The majority of Iran's oil wealth is located in the

[9]Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, p.35.

province of Khuzestan[10]. Khuzestan, due to its location west of the Zagros mountains in the Tigris-Euphrates river valley, does not enjoy the natural isolation of the rest of Iran. Its vulnerability underlines the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf for Iran.

The Persian Gulf provides Iran with its only viable outlet for international trade. While overland routes are susceptible to interference by neighboring states, the Persian Gulf provides direct access to international waters and the world. Since Iran's major commercial ports and oil terminals are located well inside the Persian Gulf at Kharq Island and Khoramshahr, the Straits of Hormuz are a strategic chokepoint to Iran. Due to the narrowness of the Straits, they could be denied by a relatively insignificant force. Security of its interests in the Gulf - ensuring access to the Indian Ocean and to international trade - is one of Iran's highest priorities. As Iran's foreign minister noted in 1993:

> Our most important and strategic border is our southern coastline, the Gulf, the Straits of Hormuz and the Sea of Oman. This region is vital to us...We cannot remain indifferent to its fate.[11]

---

[10]Shireen Hunter, "Gulf Security: An Iranian Perspective", The Gulf and International Security, ed., M.E. Ahrari, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 35.

[11]Ali Akbar Velayati, Iran's Foreign Minister, quoted in Mohammed Ziarati, "Iranian National Security," Middle East International, 3 April 1993, p. 18.

Without the international access the Gulf provides, Iran would be at the mercy of its neighbors for access to international markets and commerce. For precisely this reason, the presence of foreign naval forces in the Gulf is extremely threatening for Iran.

Certain facets of geography such as size, demography, topography, natural resources, and central geopolitical location have enhanced and preserved Iran's culture and the independence of its people, in turn reinforcing its sense of regional pre-eminence or "manifest destiny". Other features of geography have served to isolate Iran and sensitize it to the vulnerabilities of its position. The combined result of these factors have contributed to Iran's xenophobia and its ardent nationalism, two factors which push it toward a more aggressive foreign policy.

B. HISTORY

> I saw countless kinds of people with all varieties of different languages and customs and habits and rites and religions who came in one gate and went out another and how often not a single creature had been left alive nor any structure left unrazed. Arabs and non-Arabs, Turks, and Tajiks and Turcomans, Mongols and Afghans, strangers and kinsmen, all came parading through and vanished like phantoms in a dream. The city's history and geography mixed inextricably like fact and metaphor and left my helpless eyes incapable of distinguishing history from legend and truth from falsehood....Our city passed from hand to hand like a polo ball and its peoples suffered agonies and burned in flames. Then as they recovered, the Mongols' unspeakable and conscienceless violence and injustice

descended upon them and their possessions, like a heavenly fire of wrath and rage.[12]

Perhaps due to its longevity as a nation, Iran's security perspective is especially affected by history. The history of Iran spans an incredibly long period; 2500 years. During this time Iran rose to great heights of power and fell under foreign domination numerous times. This cycle of ascension, expansion, decline, and subservience has been indelibly imprinted on the collective memory of Iran.

Iran traces its national origin to the rise of Cyrus II, the Great, the leader who unified Persia, established the Archaemenian dynasty (559-330B.C.), and conquered much of the then-known world. At the peak of power, the Archaemenians' domain extended from "the Black Sea to Central Asia and from India to Libya"[13].

The Archaemenian dynasty found its rival in the form of the Greek city states. For two centuries, Persian kings cleverly exploited rivalry between the Greeks, thus ensuring Persia's security. The rise of Philip of Macedon, and the unification of the Greek city states under his son, Alexander, marked the decline of the Archaemenian dynasty. The Greek challenge was met at the battle of Issus, where a huge Persian army confronted Alexander's forces. Despite an impressive

---

[12]Graham E. Fuller, The Center Of The Universe: The Geopolitics of Iran, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p.18.

[13]Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, p. 36.

numerical advantage, lack of leadership and cowardice by the Persian king, Darius III, proved disastrous.[14] The Archaemenian dynasty fell to Alexander the Great's legions in 330 B.C.. The glorious Persian capital, Persepolis, was burned and for the first time Iran experienced the indignity of foreign occupation and domination.[15] Since the fall of the Archaemenians, Iran has struggled to regain the glory of that distant age.

Beginning in 224 A.D. the Persian empire experienced a renaissance under the Sassanid dynasty. Under the brilliant leadership of Shahpur I, the Persian empire expanded and almost attained the glory of the Archaemenians. Despite these successes, the entire period of Sassanid rule was marked by a continuous and bitter struggle with the Roman and later the Byzantine empire in the west and constant pressure from the warlike nomads that inhabited the Central Asian steppes in the east. These struggles eventually weakened the Sassanids and left Persia vulnerable to invasion once again.

In 637 A.D. Arab forces met and defeated a Sassanid army at the battle of Qaddasiya. By 642 A.D. the Arab conquest of Persia was complete. From 642 A.D. until 1500 A.D. Iran was ruled, more or less, by foreign conquerors. The Arabs (642-1055 A.D.), Seljuk Turks (1055-1258 A.D.), the Mongols (1258-

---

[14]For a detailed account of Alexander's campaign against the Persians see Percy Sykes, pp. 244-263.

[15]Donald N. Wilber, p. 30.

1385 A.D.), and the Timurids (1385-1500 A.D.), in succession, occupied Iran. Some proved more brutal than others, but, these conquests generally wrought tragedy and suffering of untold proportion upon the Persians. The cruelties imposed by the Mongols are legendary and almost unbelievable to this day.

1500 A.D. marked the beginning of the second renaissance of the Persian empire and it is from this date that the history of the modern state of Iran begins[16]. In this year, a descendent of the Prophet Mohammed's son-in-law, and the Fourth Caliph, Ali Ibn Abu Talib, defeated the last of Tamerlane's successors and re-established Persian rule. He took the title Isma'il Shah.

In order to solidify national unity against the Sunni Ottoman empire and further justify his religious claim to the throne, he declared the Shi'a sect of Islam to be the national religion, thus canonizing the relationship between Shi'a Islam and Iranian nationalism. The Saffavid dynasty, as it was known, reached its zenith under Shah 'Abbas (1572-1629) and prospered until the early portion of the eighteenth century, when it collapsed under an invasion by the Afghans.

The Afghans were quickly routed by the first of a new breed of Middle Eastern leader. Setting the example for the likes of Mohammed Ali, Mustapha Kemal, and Reza Shah, Nadir

---

[16]Interestingly, Iran's renaissance coincided with the emergence of the era of the nation-state. The Ottomans were heavily engaged with the West and the Central Asiatics were in a moribund state. This provided a window of opportunity for Iranian resurgence.

Shah rose from within the ranks of the army. By 1736 he had evicted the Afghans and by 1737 had invaded and conquered much of India; returning to his capital at Mashad with the Indian treasury and famed Peacock Throne. His demise at the hands of his own bodyguards ended the last period of great Iranian power.

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Iran's geostrategic importance was delineated in terms of continuing struggles between Russia to the north and western powers over influence and control of the region. Iran was thrust into the "Great Game"; the imperial struggle between Great Britain and Russia over control of South Asia. Iran's experience with Russia during this period was particularly humiliating. The Russo-Iranian war (1804-1828) resulted in major territorial and economic concessions by Iran.

Great Britain's concern about Russian expansion towards India led to British interference in the south and in Afghanistan. A Russian-sponsored Iranian expedition to reclaim the city of Herat from Afghanistan was thwarted by the British military. Over time Iran was effectively divided between Russia and Great Britain. The advent of British-Russian entente in the beginning of the twentieth century led to the official partition of Iran into "spheres of influence" under the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907.[17]

---

[17]Joseph A. Kechichian, "National Security," Iran, A Country Study, ed., Helen Chapin Metz, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), p. 238.

The decision of the British navy in 1913 to switch from coal to oil-fired boilers had a great impact on the sovereignty of Iran. Winston Churchill, then serving as First Lord of the Admiralty, articulated the basis for Britain's foreign policy in the Persian Gulf:

> Our ultimate policy is that the Admiralty should become the independent owner and producer of its own supplies of liquid fuel.... We must become the owners, or at any rate the controllers at the source , of at least a portion of the supply of the natural oil which we require.[18]

As a result Iran became a regional base for the British Empire in the Persian Gulf, with Sir Percy Cox, the British Agent residing in Bushire throughout World War I.

The rise of Reza Shah forced the British to tie their regional policy to the support of the Arab Gulf states. Britain moved to limit Iran's influence in the region. When Iran sought sovereignty over Bahrain, Britain's support of the Al-Khalifa family resulted in Iran's loss of influence.[19] In addition to providing a military deterrent to Iranian irredentism, Britain engaged in a great deal of social engineering aimed at the long term reduction or removal of Iranian influence and culture from Bahrain. Embarking upon a

---

[18]Winston Churchill quoted in R. K. Ramazani, The Persian Gulf: Iran's Role, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1972), pp. 21-22.

[19]Shireen Hunter, "Gulf Security: An Iranian Perspective," p. 34.

campaign of Arabization, Britain closed all Iranian schools in Bahrain and imported teachers from Iraq.[20]

Despite the nationalist accomplishments of Reza Shah, Iran could not resist the allied invasion of 1941, which once again left the country under control of foreign powers. In the aftermath of the war, Soviet irredentist objectives were evidenced by the annexation of Iranian Azerbaijan and the creation of "The Peoples Republic of Mahabad" a communist-influenced, Kurdish state.

After the two World Wars, the "Great Game" continued as the Cold War, with the great powers continuing their efforts to control and limit their rival's access to Iran. Western interference was only slightly less intrusive than that of the Soviet Union. The United States and Britain are now known to have engineered the Shah's counter-coup of 1953 which ousted Prime Minister Mossadegh. The Shah's drive towards modernization brought large numbers of western experts and advisors into Iran. Beyond the implications of western political and economic dominance, the Shah's support of western secularism also created a perception of western cultural dominance.[21]

---

[20]See Fereydoun Adamiyat, Bahrain Islands: A Legal and Diplomatic Study of the British-Iranian Controversy, (New York: Praeger, 1955).

[21]Shireen T. Hunter, Iran and The World, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 9.

The specter of foreign interference continues to haunt Iran. The "imposed war" with Iraq was largely viewed as a western-inspired plot to destroy Iran's new independence. Implicit western support for Iraq combined with the United States' direct involvement in the conflict in 1987-1988 is considered further evidence of anti-Iranian foreign interference.

While the ancient history of the Persian kings, Cyrus and Darius, emphasizes Iran's potential greatness, more recent history, especially that of the Iran-Iraq war, is characterized by struggle, thwarted destiny, injustice and foreign domination. The paradox of Iran's history (greatness thwarted by foreign interference) shapes Iran's security perspective and contributes to its "xenophobia".

C. IDEOLOGY

> Ideology serves to legitimate state power and to rationalize its behavior, and it provides a framework for action, both domestically and internationally. It shapes states' perceptions of the outside world, of their place within it, and the external realities upon which they have to act.[22]

The political ideology of the Islamic Republic is based on the tenets of Shi'a Islam. Widely recognized as a religion of political dissent, Shi'a Islam has served as an outlet for

---

[22]Ibid., p. 15.

expression of Iranian nationalism and the defiance of foreign dominance since the Arab conquest. Although it was not declared the official religion of Iran until the 16th century, Persians were early supporters of Shi'a Islam. Over time the relationship between Shi'a Islam and Iranian identity has become so intertwined as to be inseparable. An indicator of the "Persianess" of Shi'a Islam is evidenced by the subtle blend of Zoroastrian[23] concepts within the tenets of Shi'a Islam.[24] Both Zorastorianism and Shi'a Islam emphasize the struggle between good and evil, the oppressed and the oppressors. Both religions enjoin the faithful to fight injustice and evil at all costs.

Efforts to establish Iranian political ideology based on solely on Shi'ism or Persian nationalism have invariably failed. In order to strengthen the monarchy and diminish the political influence of the clergy, the Shah based his political ideology on a return to the glorious days of pre-Islamic Persian culture and empire. Ayatollah Khomeini attempted to eliminate Iranian nationalism as a barrier to the

---

[23]Zoroastrianism is the original religion of Iran. It was monotheistic and was founded by the prophet Zoroaster. Like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Zoroastrianism has a holy book, known as the Avesta.

[24]For an analysis of Zorastorian influence on Shi'a Islam see William O. Beeman, "Images of the Great Satan: Representations of the United States in the Iranian Revolution," Religion and Politics in Iran, edited by Nikki Keddie, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983) p. 195.

creation of a broad-based Islamic state. Neither of these policies proved effective and each eventually met its demise.

While adherence to Shi'a Islam has helped strengthen and ensure the survival of Iran as a nation, it has also increased Iran's isolation. Arab-Persian rivalry was redefined and intensified by conflict between the Shi'a and Sunni sects. The animosity between Shi'ites and Sunnis is rarely understated. Lord Curzon described the cleavage between these Muslim sects thusly: "A devout Shi'a would almost leave off cutting a Christian's throat to shift his grip to that of a cursed Sunni"[25] The non-Arab Islamic states, which would appear to be potential allies of Iran in the face of Arab intransigence, are predominantly Sunni. Even relations with Afghanistan and Tajikistan, the two states with the closest cultural and linguistic ties to Iran, are inhibited by the ideological differences between Sunni and Shi'a Islam.

These ideological differences continue to hinder Iran's attempts to forge a wider sphere of influence in the region. Although Ayatollah Khomeini attempted to downplay Shi'a-Sunni ideological differences in his call for broad-based Islamic revival, the Sunni states succeeded in portraying the Shi'a nature of Iran's revolution as simply the heretical expression of Iranian nationalism aimed at expanding Iran's influence in the region. Iran's frustrated attempts to bridge the cultural

---

[25]Lord Curzon, Persia and The Persian Question, Volume II, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), p. 585.

and ideological gaps between itself and the remainder of the Islamic world have exacerbated Iran's sense of isolation and vulnerability.

In an international context, Shi'a ideology contributes to Iran's xenophobic world view. The major themes of Iranian Shi'ism (Twelver Shi'ism) emphasize the requirement to struggle against injustice and oppression, within the context of the continuing conflict between Dar Al-Harb (House of War, i.e. the West) and Dar Al-Islam (the righteous Islamic world, i.e. Iran). Parallels between recent history and the early days of Shi'a Islam signify the influence of Shi'ism on Iran's security perspective. It requires no great leap of faith for an Iranian Shi'ite to envision Saddam Hussein as the assassin Shemur, and the United States as the evil Umayyad Caliph Yezid, who together first deceived Hussein Ibn Ali, the Shi'a saint, and then had him murdered on the plains of Kerbala.

D. CULTURE

Discussions of the role of culture or "national character" in the development of foreign policy suggests stereotyping and are generally shunned in the field of political science. However, the present propensity towards political correctness in no way changes the reality that there exist distinct cultural differences between societies and that these distinct cultural features influence political events within nations.

The influence of Iranian political culture on its world view is particularly important.

The Persian culture may be the most durable culture in the world. Geographic factors have certainly aided its durability but its longevity owes even more to its ability to assimilate foreign peoples. Every conqueror of Persia was eventually conquered by Persian culture. Under the influence of Persian culture, conquerors, from the Arabs to the Mongols, underwent an amazing transformation.

> Probably the most striking example of this absorption is that of the Mongols, who entered the plateau as barbarians reveling in slaughter and destruction and after two generations of settled existence became fervent and advocates of every aspect of Iranian life.[26]

Despite its durability and grand artistic features, Iranian culture seems to be a paradox within itself. According to Graham Fuller, a noted analyst of Iran's geopolitics,:

> Persian culture betrays a profound schizophrenia, born alternatively of a innate sense of superiority stemming from a magnificent imperial past and rich culture, and a nagging sense of inferiority and even insecurity derived from Iran's experience of abject conquest and foreign domination.[27]

---

[26]Donald N. Wilber, p. 76.

[27]Graham E. Fuller, p. 8.

Within Iran the "culture of superiority" conflicts with the "culture of conquest".[28] A glorious history combined with the resilience of its culture has instilled a sense of pride and superiority within Iran. Iran's political and cultural domination of the region suggests that it should once again achieve superiority over "lesser" regional states. The difficulty of reconciling its perceived greatness with the long periods of foreign domination have contributed to Iran's suspicion of foreign powers. Iran attributes its denial of greatness directly to the influence of great powers who seek to exploit it.

Geography, history, ideology, and culture do influence Iran's security perspective. It is not easy to isolate the individual effects of each factor on Iran's security persepective. Each has influenced the others. One could argue that Iran's ideology has been greatly affected by geography and culture. Together they form the lens through which Iran analyzes its position within the international system. An underlying theme of isolation, suspicion, vulnerability, cultural and ideological superiority, and thwarted destiny, has been created by the synergistic effects of these four factors. To the West, Iran may seem to place undue emphasis on its security but in Tehran's eyes its security is always precariously perched on the edge of disaster.

---

[28]Ibid., p. 19.

IV. IRAN'S THREAT PERCEPTIONS

When the Iran-Iraq War ended in 1988, the Cold War international system was still in place. The Soviet Union, while greatly weakened, was still a superpower. Although burdened by large foreign debts, Iraq was militarily more powerful than ever. The United States had demonstrated its continued animosity towards Iran by openly siding with Iraq during the war, and by destroying a large portion of the Iranian navy as a reprisal for Iran's mining of Persian Gulf shipping lanes.[1] Iran was weak, isolated and vulnerable.

From 1988 until 1991 Iran's rearmament was understandable and accepted by an international community that still feared communist expansion and Iraqi aggression. After the demise of Iraq and the Soviet Union, Iran's continued efforts to rebuild its military have been viewed in a less favorable light. Western concerns aside, the view from Tehran suggests that its rearmament is justified.

Security strategies are a state's response to its perceived threats. In order to analyze these strategies, one must understand the broad spectrum of threats confronting a given state. This chapter will examine Iran's view of its

---

[1]On 18 April 1988, the U.S. and Iranian navies engaged in a major surface action. The battle was precipitated by U.S. attacks on Iranian oil platforms in response to Iran's mining of the Persian Gulf. The U.S.S. Samuel B. Roberts nearly sank when it struck an Iranian mine on 13 April 1988.

security in relation to other regional states and major foreign powers. It will focus on issues that exacerbate Iran's security dilemma and will provide the foundation for analysis of Iran's strategic capabilities and beliefs in the following chapter.

A. IRAQ

Iraq remains Iran's chief security concern. Irano-Iraqi relations are historically tense. The issue of control over the Shatt Al-Arab represents more than a struggle over a strategic inland waterway. The Shatt Al-Arab is the physical incarnation of the historical, ideological, and cultural chasm separating Shi'ite Iran from the Arab-Sunni world. Control of the Shatt Al-Arab implies dominance of one side over the other. Regardless of the status of relations between the two states, geography dictates Iran's caution regarding Iraq.

Of primary concern are the unprotected Khuzestan oil fields, Iran's primary source of income. Situated in the eastern Tigris-Euphrates valley, west of the Zagros mountains, Khuzestan is extremely vulnerable to penetration from the west and is isolated from the east. A successful attack in this area would quickly threaten the vital northern port facilities at Kharq Island and Bushire.

The 2 August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, followed by the continuing repression of the Shi'ites in southern Iraq, has confirmed Iran's suspicions of inherent Iraqi aggression.

Despite its defeat in Kuwait, Iraq enjoys a significant conventional advantage, at least quantitatively, over Iran. For example, in the critical areas of armor and artillery, Iraq retains a respectable offensive capability estimated at 2200 main battle tanks, 2700 armored vehicles and 1700 artillery pieces.[2]

The U.N. monitored destruction of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capabilities is more a source of concern than relief to Iran. U.N. inspectors were shocked by the extent of Iraq's nuclear program and the ingenuity with which it was administered and concealed. General suspicion of poor western intelligence and Iraqi guile and cunning suggests that Iraq still retains much of its strategic capability despite UN efforts. Some experts estimate that Iraq retains "very substantial chemical feed stocks and that somewhere between 70 to 120 SCUD or extended range SCUD assemblies are still somewhere inside Iraq".[3] At the least Iraq retains the technical expertise, if not the hardware, required to rebuild its nuclear infrastructure.[4]

A curious twist has developed in the analysis of Iraq's military capabilities. Analysts criticizing Iran's rearmament

---

[2]The Military Balance 1993-1994, (London: Brassey's Ltd., 1993), p. 117.

[3]Anthony Cordesman, quoted in "Symposium on Dual Containment," Middle East Policy, Vol. III, No. 1, 1994, p. 11.

[4]William E. Burrows and Robert Windrem, Critical Mass, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), p. 59.

program are quick to point out Iraq's military impotence, while analysts arguing for continued Western military presence in the Gulf point out the vast capabilities retained by Iraq.[5] Regardless of Iraq's present strength, the temporary reduction of its conventional and unconventional forces has presented Tehran with a window of "strategic opportunity" during which it may close the gap between itself and Baghdad.[6]

B. SAUDI ARABIA AND THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL (GCC)

While Irano-Saudi disputes are usually veiled in ideological rhetoric, the true source of contention revolves around the issues of political dominance of the Persian Gulf and influence over world oil prices.[7] The emergence of Saudi Arabia as the de facto leader of the Gulf Arab states has been accelerated by the defeat of Iraq. Saudi Arabia's expanding influence in the Gulf principalities has eroded Iran's influence, despite its traditional relationship with the large

---

[5]For a discussion of the regeneration of Iraq's conventional and unconventional military capabilities see Thomas Sancton, "No Longer Fenced In," Time, 23 May 1994, pp. 36-38.

[6]Michael Eisenstadt, "Deja Vu All Over Again? An Assessment of Iran's Military Buildup," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994), p. 98.

[7]For an overview of the role of oil in Iran-Saudi relations see M.E. Ahrari, "Saudi Arabia, Iran and OPEC: The Dynamics of a Balancing Act," The Gulf and International Security, ed., M.E. Ahrari, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), pp. 69-88.

communities of Iranian immigrants and Shi'a Muslims that occupy the east coast and islands of the Saudi peninsula.[8]

Iran views the Gulf Cooperation Council as an anti-Iranian military alliance and an attempt to further isolate it in the region.[9] These beliefs are not without basis. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait openly supported Iraq during the war with Iran. In addition to financial, logistic, and intelligence support for Iraq, these two states engaged in economic warfare against Iran; intentionally over-producing oil, forcing down the price of oil and limiting Iran's access to hard currency required to fund its war effort.[10]

The defeat of Iraq in 1991 presented an opportunity for rapprochement between the Iran and the GCC states, and it seemed for a period that detente might take hold. Unfortunately, Iran pursued its relations in an aggressive and at times, arrogant manner, demanding not only participation but a leading role in post-war security arrangements. These maneuvers revived Arab suspicions of Iranian grand designs of regional hegemony. As such, Iran's post-war efforts to break out of its regional isolation have been largely frustrated.

---

[8] For more on the relationship between Iran and the Arab Shi'ites of the Gulf see R.K. Ramazani, "Shi'ism in the Persian Gulf," Shi'ism and Social Protest, ed., Juan R.I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 30-54.

[9] Shireen Hunter, "Iran and The Arab World," Iran At The Crossroads, ed., Miron Rezun, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 107-108.

[10] Ibid., p. 106.

Iran's stance on regional security seems well-balanced. Despite Western claims that it is seeking to dominate the region, Iran's position on Gulf security stresses the importance of regional cooperation and self-sufficiency. Iran has consistently called for the formation of a regional security organization that includes all the states of the region, even Iraq. In a recent interview, Ali Akbar Velayati, the Foreign Minister of Iran, stated:

> Safeguarding security in the Gulf region is a critical issue for all countries of the region. This issue is of strategic importance for all states, not only Iran, Iraq, or the Gulf Cooperation Council members.[11]

Despite its apparent logic, Iran's proposal for the establishment of a regional security organization as set forth by U.N. resolution 598 has been rejected by the GCC states[12]. The Gulf states realize that if a regional security organization was established, Iran, by nature of its population, size, and natural resources, would play what they deem an unacceptably dominant role.

The Gulf states' rejection of a regionally-based security organization has been accompanied by an open alliance with the

---

[11]Ali Akbar Velayati, Foreign Minister of Iran, quoted in Zaki Shihab, "Velayati: We oppose the agreement with Israel, but we will not change our policy towards Syria," AL-WASAT, London, 14-20 March 1994, p. 23.

[12]U.N. resolution 598 secured the cease-fire between Iraq and Iran and calls for the establishment of a regional security organization.

United States and its allies (France and Great Britain), and a massive conventional arms buildup. Although deterrence of future Iraqi aggression is cited as justification for the buildup, the specific nature of the weapons being purchased gives Iran cause for alarm. Considering Iraq's limited access to the sea, the Gulf states' emphasis on acquiring naval weapons systems can be only directed at Iran.

Saudi Arabia already has the most powerful navy in the Gulf and is expanding its capabilities significantly. When planned procurements are completed, Saudi Arabia's navy will have seven frigates, four corvettes, nine missile attack boats in addition to minesweepers and support craft.[13] The United Arab Emirates is pursuing the acquisition of as many as 10 frigates. Bahrain is also interested in acquiring a frigate, the "capital ship" of the Gulf.[14] The combined naval forces of the GCC are clearly superior to Iran's navy and in times of conflict could conceivably deny Iran's access to vital Indian Ocean supply routes.

Another source of Iran's anxiety is the wide technological gap between its weapon procurements and those being purchased by the Gulf states. While Iran has been limited both financially and politically to the less sophisticated and

---

[13]Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Iran's National Strategy: Striving for Regional Parity or Supremacy," International Defense Review, April 1994, p. 37.

[14]Author's conversation with a senior U.S. official, Bahrain, March 1994.

perhaps less reliable weapons of third world suppliers (Russia, China, and North Korea), the Gulf states are buying the most modern and technologically advanced systems available. Iran's limited number of top-of-the-line Soviet aircraft, such as the MIG-29 (58), SU-24 (20), and the reported purchase of twelve TU-22 Backfire bombers, are cited as proof of Iran's hegemonic thrust in the Gulf.[15] Yet a quick tally of the Saudi Air Force inventory reveals a sizable Saudi advantage. Presently Saudi Arabia possesses 78 F-15Cs, 72 Tornadoes, 51 F-5Es and 5 E-3A AWACS.[16] Further augmented by the air forces of Bahrain (12 Fi6s, 12 F-5s), and Kuwait (22 A-4s, 40 F-18s, 15 Mirage F1), the GCC presents a formidable air combat capability that Iran would be hard pressed to match, even in the absence of U.S. forces.

Iran even lags behind the GCC in the area of strategic weapons. While the world decries Iran's attempts to acquire the North Korean No-Dong 1, intermediate range missile, Saudi Arabia possesses the one of the most accurate and longest range missile systems in the region; the Chinese CSS-2.[17] The

---

[15]Anoushiravan Ehteshami, p.33.

[16]The Military Balance 1993-1994, p. 127.

[17]According to most estimates the No-Dong 1 has a range of approximately 1000km and a "poor" CEP, while the CSS-2 has a range of approximately 2000km and a CEP of 1200-2000 meters. See "The Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles," Arms Control Today, April 92, pp. 28-29, and Shahram Chubin, Iran's National Security Policy: Capabilities, Intentions and Impact, (Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1994), p. 58.

significance of Saudi Arabia's ballistic missile force is increased by the belief that U.S. supplied Patriot missile systems will provide it some measure of defense against ballistic missiles.

C. ISRAEL

> Iran has the potential of becoming the regional superpower, or minisuperpower, to replace Iraq in the Persian Gulf. Iran will realize that potential if left *undisturbed*.[18]

Israel presents a unique challenge for Iran. Its special relationship with the United States and its nuclear capability warrant caution. Israel points out Iran's opposition to the peace process as evidence of Iranian animosity and its potential threat to Israel. For Iran, however, the peace process is not a bilateral issue. Successful conclusion of the Arab-Israeli peace process threatens to further isolate Iran.[19] The Palestinian issue has provided Iran with one of the very few vehicles with which it may exert its influence in the region. Deprived of this issue as a political

---

[18]Major General Uri Sagi, Director of Israeli Military Intelligence, 17 April 1992, quoted in Eisenstadt, p. 93. Emphasis added by author.

[19]In a 17 March 1994 speech to The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Mr. Anthony Lake, President Clinton's National Security Advisor, stated that one of the benefits of the Arab-Israeli peace process would be the further isolation of Iran and Iraq.

vehicle, Iran will be more limited in its ability to influence Arab regimes in Syria and Lebanon. Additionally, the Arab-Israeli conflict has pre-occupied Israel, allowing Iran to escape the focused attention of Israeli leaders that will surely follow a comprehensive peace accord. Since the defeat of Iraq, Israel has indeed refocused its attention on Iran as its major regional rival.

The Iranian threat to Israel, real or imagined, presents a challenge that Israel can not meet through conventional means.

> Israel alone can do very little to halt the Iranians. We could raid Iran from the air, but we cannot realistically expect that our aerial operations could destroy all their capabilities. At best, some Iranian nuclear installations could in this way be destroyed, but not all; not even their major centers of nuclear development, especially since that development has proceeded along three different lines in a fairly decentralized manner, with installations and factories scattered widely across the country. It is reasonable to suppose that we will never know the locations of all their installations, as in the case of Iraq.[20]

In one scholar's opinion, Israel's recognition of its limited ability to influence Iran through unilateral conventional action has led it to pursue the formation of anti-Iranian coalitions, while at the same time emphasizing its nuclear

---

[20]Daniel Lesham, a retired senior military officer who is currently a member of the Center for Strategic Research at Tel Aviv University, quoted in Israel Shahak, "Israel seeks to build a coalition against Iran," Middle East International, 6 August 1993, p. 16.

option as a means of preventing Iran's emergence as a nuclear power.[21]

> Against its distant enemies Israel will have to rely not so much on conventional components of the Israeli army as on nuclear deterrence, long-range missiles and improved cooperation with the United States and some neighboring states, like Egypt and Turkey.[22]

Acutely aware of Israel's nuclear advantage, Iran has consistently called for the establishment of a nuclear free zone in the Middle East and takes every opportunity to decry what appears to be a double standard in the application of non-proliferation policies in the region.

> Iran was the first state to propose the implementation of a "nuclear weapons free zone" in the Middle East. We continue to subscribe to this concept and are prepared to consider constructive initiatives in this respect....but Israel's nuclear policies in complete violation of international treaties is equivalent to tacit approval of the regimes access to nuclear weapons. It is hard for the international community to understand this duality.[23]

---

[21]For a discussion of Israeli nuclear strategy for confronting Iran see Louis Rene Beres, "Israel, Iran, and Prospects For Nuclear War In The Middle East," Strategic Review, Spring 1993, pp. 52-57.

[22]Professor Shlomo Ahronson, quoted in Israel Shahak, p. 16.

[23]Reza Amrollahi, Director of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, address to the 37th session of the International Atomic Energy Agency, quoted in an Islamic Republic News Agency broadcast, 28 September 1993. "Amrollahi Speaks on U.N. Role, Nuclear Issues at IAEA," FBIS-JPRS-TND-93-034, 27 October 1993.

Combined with its pre-disposition for engagement in preventive war, Israel's strategic capabilities provide strong incentives for Iran to balance these threats with strategic weapons of its own.

> Chemical and biological weapons are the poor man's atomic bombs and can be easily produced. We should at least consider them for our defense. [24]

Israel's influence with the West is another source of Iran's anxiety. In a land where nothing is believed to occur by accident, the "hidden hand" of Israel is seen to be heavily involved in the development and implementation of U.S. policies aimed at the further isolation of Iran. The policy of "dual containment", authored by Martin Indyk, Special Assistant to the National Security Council for Middle East Policy, is considered by Iran to be a classic example of the depth of Israeli influence in the development of U.S. Middle East policy.[25] Iran's suspicion may be justified. Prior to his appointment to the National Security Council, Mr. Indyk was formerly the director of the Washington Institute for Near

---

[24]President Rafsanjani, 19 October 1988, Islamic Republic News Agency, quoted in Shahram Chubin, p. 28.

[25]"The U.S. Echelons Do Not Comprehend Facts," Jomhuri-ye-Islami, Tehran, 4 October 1993, p. 1, and "The Strategy of Dual Containment," Jahan-e-Islam, Tehran, 3 March 1994, p. 2 of supplement.

East Policy, which is funded by the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC)[26].

D. INDIA, PAKISTAN, AND PROLIFERATION IN SOUTH ASIA

Iran enjoys good relations with both India and Pakistan, despite several sensitive issues, such as the Kashmir crisis in India and the extensive influence of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan. Iran's attempts to break out of its regional isolation have been most successful along its southeastern frontier. Nevertheless, the combination of chronic instability and nuclear proliferation in South Asia presents a significant threat to Iran's national security.

India's emergence as the dominant power in South Asia is both boon and bane for Iran. While India and Iran pursue similar strategic objectives, namely the reduction of superpower presence in the region, India's military superiority is a source of concern. Iran is particularly aware of the vital role of Pakistan as a buffer between itself and India and is committed to its security.[27] Any future Indian attempts to absorb, weaken, or divide Pakistan would constitute a serious threat to the security of Iran.

---

[26]Dan Raviv and Yossi Melman, Friends in Deed: Inside The U.S.-Israel Alliance, (New York: Hyperion, 1994), p. 446.

[27]Shireen Hunter, Iran And The World, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 131-133, and 135-136.

A fourth Indo-Pakistani war with its nuclear implications, could be potentially disastrous for Iran. Such a conflict would provide justification for increased superpower intervention and presence in the region. Iran's important joint economic ventures with both India and Pakistan would certainly be damaged, not to mention the issue of a potential refugee crisis of staggering proportion.[28] In the event of an impending Indian victory, Iran might be compelled to intervene on the behalf of Pakistan. Accordingly, Iran pursues a very cautious line of diplomacy in South Asia; avoiding confrontation with India over Kashmir and ignoring Pakistan's close ties to Saudi Arabia and the United States.[29]

India's capability to project power through its naval forces is another factor Iran must consider.[30] Any state capable of denying Iran's access to the Indian Ocean constitutes a potential threat. A regional rivalry may develop

---

[28]Iran is presently host to the largest refugee community in the world, an unenviable position that severely strains Iran's feeble economy. According to a United Nations Report Iran hosts 21 percent (4.1 million people) of the world's known 19.7 million refugees. See "Iran Ranks Unenviable First," Iran Times, Washington, D.C., 19 November 1993, p. 16.

[29]Iran's position on Kashmir has been fluid- more vocal when tensions are low, quieter when tensions are high. Recently, Iran has sought to mediate the dispute and has achieved some success in this regard. For a discussion of the joint Chinese-Iranian proposal for placing observers in Kashmir see Iran Times, 11 March 1994, p. 15.

[30]India possesses the most powerful regional naval force. India's major combatants include two aircraft carriers, five destroyers, 17 frigates and 15 submarines. The Military Balance 1993-1994, p. 138.

if India begins to push its expanding influence into the Northern Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Persian Gulf.

Iran's adept handling of its relations with India and Pakistan have helped reduce tension. The threat along Iran's southeastern flank appears relatively benign if viewed in isolation. However, when combined with the Iraqi threat and the potential for unrest along Iran's northern borders, the image of an Iran awash in a sea of turmoil becomes more vivid.

E. TURKEY

From the end of World War I until 1979, Iran and Turkey enjoyed close, mutually-beneficial relations. While relations were strained during the early years of the Islamic Revolution, mutual interests have moderated positions on both sides. In 1988 Iran joined Pakistan and Turkey, in forming an economic alliance known as the Economic Cooperation Council.[31] Despite this rapprochement, contentious issues continue to complicate relations. Iran is primarily concerned about the expansion of Turkey's influence in Northern Iraq, Azerbaijan and the Central Asian Republics.

Resurgent nationalism in Azerbaijan presents the greatest challenge to Irano-Turkish relations. One third of Iran's population is Azeri and speak a turkish dialect as their

---

[31]Mushahid Hussain, "Iran Forges New Links," Middle East International, 17 February 1989, p. 17.

native language.[32] In the past Iran's Azeri population was considered to be very well integrated into Iran, possessing very little political affinity with the Soviet Azeris to the north.[33] However, northern Azerbaijan's independence, the war with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabagh, and increasing cultural and commercial contacts between the north and the south, have sensitized Iran's Azeri population to their cultural identity. Iran's concern over Azeri separatism is heightened by the Azerbaijan's official stance supporting unification of the north and south and close association with Turkey. [34]

Another sensitive issue involves the situation in northern Iraq. Iran fears the expansion of Turkish authority into northern Iraq. The U.N. sponsored autonomous zone in northern Iraq has been described by Iranian officials as a "new Israel", an artificial state created to serve the purposes of Turkey and the United States.[35] Iran's concerns in this matter are reflected by its support for unified Iraq.

> We believe completely in the protection of the unity of Iraq, its people and its independence. Attempts to establish an independent state in either the north or

---

[32]Helen Chapin Metz, Ed., Iran: a country study, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), p. 323.

[33]Graham E. Fuller and Ian O. Lesser, Turkey's New Geopolitics, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 82.

[34]Ibid, p. 83.

[35]Ibid, p. 66.

the south threatens the security of Iran. We will strongly oppose such attempts.[36]

Turkey has engaged in its own rearmament and military modernization program. The goal of this ten-year program is to transform Turkey's technologically obsolete infantry based force into a smaller, more modern and technologically advanced, combined arms army, based on a armored and mechanized force structure.[37] In conjunction with this program, Turkey has acquired advanced deep strike aircraft (126 F16s[38]) and an airborne refueling capability.[39]

More than its growing powerful military, Turkey's close alliance with the United States is a sensitive issue for Iran. The presence of the airbase at Incerlik, provides the United States with one more option for striking Iran militarily. Iran is leery of U.S. and Saudi support for Turkey's attempts to establish its pre-eminence in the Central Asian republics, viewing this as further evidence of a Western conspiracy to isolate Iran.

---

[36]Ali Akbar Velayati, Foreign Minister of Iran, quoted in Zaki Shihab, "Velayati: We oppose the agreement with Israel, but we will not change our policy towards Syria," AL-WASAT, London, 14-20 March 1994, p. 24.

[37]Ahmed Hashim, "Iran's Military Situation," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994), p. 173.

[38]The Military Balance 1993-1994, p.61.

[39]Ahmed Hashim, p. 174.

TABLE 4.1: REGIONAL BALANCE OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES

STATE	COMBAT AIRCRAFT	TANKS	ARTILLERY	COMBAT SHIPS
IRAN	293	700+	2300	8 2 SUBS
IRAQ	216	2200	1730	1
ISRAEL	704	3960	1684	3 SUBS
SAUDI ARABIA	296	696	570	8
TURKEY	973	4835	4551	19 15 SUBS
PAKISTAN	441	1890	2205	14 6 SUBS
INDIA	355	3400	3325	24 15 SUBS

Source: The Military Balance 1993-1994, (London: Brassey's Ltd., 1993).

F. THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

From Tehran's perspective the presence of U.S. naval forces in the Gulf is a very serious threat to its national security. This force provides the United States with the option to conduct air and cruise missile strikes throughout Iran, impose a naval blockade, and generally limit Iran's participation in any regional security arrangements. Specifically, as long as the United States maintains a significant naval presence, the GCC states will not feel compelled to include Iran in any type of regional security organization.

Iran has been highly critical of the Gulf states' post-war military agreements with the United States and its allies. Iran asserts that the United States is the catalyst of the Gulf arms race, attempting to instill fear in the Arab Gulf states as a means of encouraging arms purchases that aid America's stagnant economy and increase dependence on the United States for security.[40]

Recent history justifies Iran's threat perception regarding the United States. In addition to U.S.-sponsored political and economic intrigues, Iran has been the target of several U.S. military operations. U.S. involvement in the

---

[40]"The Inauspicious Intentions of the United States and the Negligence of the Arabs," Resalat, Tehran, 8 December 1993, p. 16.

Tanker War of 1987-1988 entailed several minor skirmishes[41], the capture of an Iranian mine-layer[42], and culminated with the destruction of a large portion of the Iranian navy in the largest surface engagement since World War II.[43]

Iranian anxiety over the U.S. threat is not limited to conventional military operations. Iran believes the United States to be a sponsor of anti-Iranian terrorism, noting U.S. involvement in the 1984 bombing of the residence of Hezbullah's spiritual leader, Shaykh Fadlallah, in Lebanon[44], congressional support for the Mujahidin-e-Khalq, and the airbus tragedy as examples.

---

[41]Between July 1987 and December 1988, the U.S. navy was engaged in Operation "Ernest Will", the naval escort for re-flagged Kuwaiti oil tankers. During the course of this operation there were several small incidents involving U.S. special forces, and Iranian Republican Guard gunboats. The most significant event took place 8 October 1987 when U.S. helicopters were fired on by Iranian gunboats, subsequently returning fire and destroying three boats. Salvage operations revealed the first evidence that Iran had acquired Stinger missiles.

[42]21 September 1987, the Iran AJR was caught in the act of mining international waters, attacked and captured.

[43]Operation "Praying Mantis" was the U.S. response to Iranian mining of international waters that resulted in the near-destruction of the frigate, U.S.S. Samuel B. Roberts.

[44]For more on U.S. involvement in the bombing see Robin Wright, Sacred Rage, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), pp. 96-97, and Bob Woodward, Veil, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), pp. 450-456.

G. RUSSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA

The dissolution of the Soviet Union has temporarily removed the greatest traditional threat to Iran's national security. The independence of the Central Asian Republics has provided Iran with a valuable opportunity to expand its influence and establish a Central Asian alliance that would serve as a buffer zone between itself and Russia. Iran is exerting great effort to establish economic and political ties with the new republics[45].

While the breakup of the Soviet Union was welcomed by Iran, its security problems along its northern borders are more complex than ever. It is ironic that in a predominantly Muslim Central Asia, Iran is faced with the dilemma of choosing between Islamic ideology and securing its national interests. The independence of the Central Asian republics has been accompanied by two troubling phenomena: the resurgence of ethno-nationalism, and internal conflicts. Ethnic conflicts, such as the war in Azerbaijan, could potentially create internal strife between Iran's minorities. Continuing instability increases the likelihood of renewed Russian intervention in region. Direct Iranian involvement in either the Azeri or Tajik conflict would likely induce a Russian

---

[45]See interview with Ali Akbar Velayati, Foreign Minister of Iran, by Talal Salmon in Al-Safir, Beirut, 27 November 1993, p. 11.

response.[46] The endless civil war in Afghanistan has burdened Iran with millions of Afghan refugees and contributes to general regional instability.

Iran's relations with Russia are generally good. Russia is an important source of technology and weapons and may still be an effective counter to U.S. influence, as recently witnessed in Bosnia. Russian nationalism is a serious concern for Iran. This is compounded by Russian military leaders who emphasize the "Islamic Threat" as justification for continued or expanded Russian presence in the region.[47]

In summary, Iran's threat perceptions are analogous to the many straws that, when added together, eventually break the camel's back. At the present time, Iran is not facing an *overwhelming* threat from any one state or alliance. However, based on the instability of the region, Iran believes its position is precarious. Iran's response to its perception of threat is exemplified by its strategic weapons program.

---

[46]Iran has approached both of these issues with extreme caution. Initially supporting the Armenians in the Azeri and avoiding confrontation with the Russians in Tajikistan.

[47]For example see Colonel A. Zabelin and O. Cherneta, "Iran's Military Policy," Foreign Military Review, Moscow, April 1993,in FBIS-JPRS, Central Eurasia, 13 October 1993, p. 2-4. Dmitry Volskiy, "Observer's View: Iran-Central Asia: Export of Commodities and Not of Ideological Merchandise," New Times International, Moscow, October 1993, in FBIS-JPRS, Central Eurasia, 8 December 1993, p. 24.

V. IRAN'S STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES AND BELIEFS

States may pursue several options in an attempt to balance a threat. They generally will form either a balancing alliance with other states which face the same threat, (safety in numbers), engage in internal balancing (military buildup), or attempt to negate the threat by capitulating or allying (bandwagoning) with the source of threat (if you can't beat em, join em).[1] The first two options are employed with great regularity. The third option is a more rare occurrence. History counsels against "bandwagoning". Historically, Iran has attempted to form alliances against its perceived threats but has achieved only marginal success. By default, it must seek to balance internally.

A state which is resigned to balance internally must consider several factors when developing its military strategy. These include the nature of the threat (aggregate power, proximity, offensive capability, and offensive intentions)[2], and the resources available to balance the threat (economic strength, demography, technology, geography, etc.). A state with limited resources, threatened by overwhelming force which it cannot counter conventionally,

---

[1]Stephen Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," International Security, Vol. 9, No. 4, Spring 1985, pp. 3-8.

[2]Ibid., p. 9.

will rationally seek to obtain the strategic capabilities it *believes* will balance the threat.

Iran's threat perceptions are multi-dimensional and diverse. Its strategies for countering each perceived threat vary accordingly. Iran has engaged in a conventional rearmament program aimed at the development and maintenance of a military force capable of ensuring internal stability (Kurdish or other internal threats), countering regional threats (Iraq, or Turkey and containment of conflicts that threaten to spill over into Iran) and providing a limited deterrent to invasion by a major foreign power. Other threats seem to require a strategic response. The proliferation of ballistic missiles, and nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in the region requires a strategy of strategic deterrence. The conventional superiority of the U.S. Navy in the Persian Gulf requires a strategic sea denial capability.

A. THE EVOLUTION OF IRAN'S STRATEGIC PHILOSOPHY

Iran's strategic philosophy has changed 360 degrees in the last 16 years. Under Mohammed Reza Shah, Iran's strategic philosophy emphasized the acquisition of the most advanced technology and the maintenance of a professionally trained armed force. After the revolution, the leaders of Iran, who were distrustful of the professional military, emphasized

reliance on revolutionary Islamic zeal, morale and popular support.[3]

> Victory is not achieved by swords, it can only be achieved by blood...it is achieved by strength of faith.[4]

This new philosophy gradually withered under Iraq's superior firepower. By 1988, Iran's philosophy had come full circle. Military leaders attributed Iran's defeat to its technological disadvantage. "They had armor and we did not...We were unarmed infantrymen against the enemy's cavalry."[5]

The war with Iraq not only caused Iran's leaders to refocus on the importance of technology for conventional forces, it also accentuated Iran's vulnerability to strategic weapons, such as ballistic missiles and chemical weapons. Operation Desert Storm would serve to confirm Iran's strategic beliefs about the need for technology at both the conventional and strategic level.

---

[3]Shahram Chubin, Iran's National Security Policy: Capabilities, Intentions and Impact, (Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment For International Peace, 1994), p. 17.

[4]Ayatollah Khomeini, 1982, quoted in Ahmed Hashim, "Iran's Military Situation," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994), p. 160.

[5]Mohsen Rezai, Commander of the Revolutionary Guards, Tehran TV, 22 September 1988, quoted in Shahram Chubin, p.17.

Iran had already embarked on its rearmament program when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August 1991. The subsequent display of technological wizardry that accompanied the allied victory forced Iran to evaluate its new strategic philosophy. The lesson that emerged was clear. Despite access to advanced technology, Iraq's conventional forces, which were far superior to all other regional forces, were no match for a superpower like the United States. On the other hand, specific weapon systems with strategic applications, such as ballistic missiles and underwater mines could have an impact on the enemy.

A theme has emerged in Iran's strategic philosophy that emphasizes the acquisition of weapon systems that meet two criteria: survivability and ease of operation. This is not only a reflection of military considerations but is also indicative of the regime's continuing distrust of a professional military force. These political concerns are evidenced by the assignment of the Revolutionary Guards instead of the regular military to the missile forces.[6] Iran's growing sea denial capabilities epitomize its new strategic philosophy. Fast attack missile craft, coastal anti-ship missile batteries, and underwater mines, seek to maximize the advantages of modern technology and exploit the weaknesses of Iran's major naval threat, the U.S. navy.

---

[6]Shahram Chubin, p. 32.

B. SEA DENIAL

Iran's purchases of two Soviet Kilo-class submarines, SU-24 long-range bombers, Silkworm missiles, and large quantities of underwater mines have created anxiety in the West. Congruent with its policy of seeking weapon systems that are survivable and require only minimum crew training and proficiency, Iran is focusing its sea denial efforts in two main areas: underwater mines and anti-ship missile systems.

The Iran-Iraq war taught Iran the flexibility and strategic applications of mine warfare.[7] In July 1987 Iran successfully mined the deep-water channels of the Gulf without detection and inflicted at least a moral defeat on the United States when the re-flagged Kuwaiti supertanker *Bridgeton* stuck a mine during the very first U.S. escorted convoy. These beliefs were reinforced during Operation Desert Storm. The inability of coalition forces to clear shallow water mines from the coast of Iraq seemingly deterred an impending amphibious invasion. Iraqi mines were one of the few weapons systems to inflict significant damage to coalition forces. The U.S.S. Princeton and the U.S.S. Tripoli were disabled when they struck mines.

---

[7]After the United States began escorting re-flagged Kuwaiti tankers in 1987, Iran began laying mines in the Persian Gulf shipping lanes. An estimated 200 mines were laid, resulting in damage to 10 ships. Anthony Cordesman and Abraham R. Wagner, The Lessons of Modern War, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 565, and Ted Hooton, "The Tanker War in the Gulf," Jane's Intelligence Review, May 1992, p. 22.

Iran does have a large supply of underwater mines. In testimony before the Seapower and Strategic and Critical Materials Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on Intelligence, Rear Admiral William O. Studeman testified that Iran possesses approximately 2000 underwater mines of various type and origin.[8] The majority of these appear to be moored contact mines. These include the Soviet M-08 and the MYaM, a North Korean mine which Iran now produces domestically.[9] While they are very simple to manufacture and employ, these mines are also the easiest to counter. The shallow depths at which these mines must sit in order to make contact with a ship's hull enhance visual detection from the air, while their metal skin allows for sonar detection. Additionally, the hydrography of the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz limits their usefulness. Tidal currents in the Gulf and especially the Straits of Hormuz are very strong. This can cause tethered mines to dip below effective depths, or worse, snap the anchor cables.[10]

Iran's acquisition of deep-water, rising mines is a more serious issue. If acquired in large numbers, and effectively employed, these mines would enhance Iran's ability to deny

---

[8] Michael Eisenstadt, " Deja Vu All Over Again? An Assessment Of Iran's Military Buildup," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994), p. 140.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid., p.141

enemy naval forces access to the Straits of Hormuz and the Gulf during a crisis.[11]

Iran augments its mine warfare capabilities with a limited anti-ship missile force. This force is primarily built around the Chinese HY-2 Silkworm anti-ship missile in its various forms.[12] Iran is believed to have approximately 50 Silkworm missiles and four operational launchers, presumably located on Qesham Island in the straits.[13] Iran has also received the Chinese C801 anti-ship missile. Unlike the Silkworm, which is considered to be easily defeated by electronic countermeasures, the C801 is more advanced.[14] It is a supersonic sea skimming missile with a 70km range and a 500kg warhead.[15]

In addition to its shore-based missile force, Iran also employs a small number of fast missile craft. Of the 10 Kaman

---

[11]According to reports Iran is negotiating the purchase of EM52 rocket-propelled mines from China. The EM52 is designed to be laid by surface vessels in water up to 110 meters deep. It has a 140kg warhead, a ship counting capability, and a 360 day service life. "Tehran's weapons' buyers are very busy," Iran Times, 28 January 1994, p. 15. International Defense Review, June 1991, p. 625.

[12]The Silkworm can carry up to an 1100 pound warhead, has a maximum range of 95km, but is most effective under 40km. It flies at just under the speed of sound. Cordesman, pp.274-275.

[13]Cordesman, p. 286.

[14]Michael A. Palmer, On Course to Desert Storm: The United States Navy and the Persian Gulf, (Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1992), p. 122.

[15]Shahram Chubin, p. 44.

class (ex-French Combattante II) missile boats in Iran's possession it is estimated that only five are operational.[16] Six of these craft were configured for the Harpoon anti-ship missile but only a very small number of missiles were delivered prior to the revolution.[17] Nonetheless, during the major surface engagement of 18 April 1988 one of these craft, the *Joshan*, fired a Harpoon at the American cruiser *Wainwright*. The *Joshan* was subsequently destroyed by missile fire from the *Wainwright* and the American frigate *Simpson*.[18] Iran has acquired three North Korean Chaho class fast attack craft but these are reported to be armed only with guns.[19] Reports indicate that Iran is seeking to purchase 10 Hegu-class fast attack craft from China. If acquired, these craft will likely be armed with the shipboard version of the C801 anti-ship missile.[20]

Iran's purchase of Soviet Kilo-class submarines appears to run counter to its new philosophy of buying user-friendly technology. When the submarines were initially ordered in 1989 they were intended to counter Iraq's growing naval threat. At the time Iraq was due to receive six new frigates from

---

[16]Ahmed Hashim, p. 191.

[17] Cordesman, p.64. Ahmed Hashim, p. 190.

[18]Palmer, p. 144.

[19]Ibid., p.191.

[20]Eisenstadt, p. 133.

Italy.[21] Iran's leaders may believe that the inherent stealth of submarines justifies their expense and the effort required to properly train the crews. The vulnerability of Iran's surface fleet to air attacks during its battles with the U.S. navy in 1988 reinforces the belief that submarines will provide a more survivable platform for countering enemy naval forces.

These submarines will augment Iran's sea denial capabilities but only in a very limited manner. Despite the anxiety generated by their purchase, Iran's submarines represent only a limited threat to the Arab Gulf states or U.S. forces. Russian newspaper reports indicate that the Iranian crews are unable to operate submerged for more than a few hours.[22] The advantages of shallow water operation that the Persian Gulf affords submarines are offset by the increased demands for crew proficiency, access to detailed hydrographic data, and meticulous mission planning.[23] If based at the naval port in Bander Abbas the submarines will be required to pass through the narrow straits when leaving and returning to port, greatly increasing the likelihood of detection. If based outside the Gulf at Chah Bahar, they will have to operate in the deep waters of the Northern Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean where U.S. anti-submarine warfare

---

[21]Ibid., p. 44.

[22]Ahmed Hashim, p. 192.

[23]Eisenstadt, p. 136.

capabilities are enhanced. In the near-term the most effective use of the submarines would appear to be for the clandestine deployment of mines.[24] The Kilo-class submarine can deploy a total of 36 mines.[25]

Iran's sea denial program has a clearly defensive aim. It reflects the lessons Iran has learned from its war with Iraq and from Iraq's defeat in Operation Desert Storm. Its primary goal is to deny or delay hostile naval forces access to Gulf waters. Considering Iran's strategic interest in continued international access to the Gulf, it seems unlikely that Iran would attempt to block the Straits of Hormuz unless confronted by a crisis of "Desert Storm" proportions.

C. BALLISTIC MISSILES

The missile bombardment of Baghdad and Tehran in the spring of 1988, known as the "war of the cities", was a military and political defeat for Iran. While Iran managed to fire a total of 61 SCUDs at Baghdad[26], it was on the receiving end of 203 Iraqi SCUD variants (Al-Hussein and Al-

---

[24]Vice Admiral Douglas Katz, Commander NAVCENT, Defense News, 17-23 January 94, p. 30.

[25]For a technical evaluation of the Kilo class submarine see John Jordan, "The 'Kilo' Class Submarine," Jane's Intelligence Review, September 1992, p. 427. Jordan suggests that Russia also provided 1800 submarine compatible mines, but I have not been able to confirm this fact.

[26]Iran fired a total of 77 SCUDs during the spring of 1988. 61 at Baghdad, nine at Mosul, five at Kirkuk, one at Tikrit and one at Kuwait. Cordesman, p. 367.

Abbas).[27] Iran's inability to counter the Iraqi onslaught had a demoralizing effect on its citizens. The psychological effect of continuous strikes and fears of possible chemical attacks drove Iranians into the countryside by the droves. By late April 1988 millions of people had fled Tehran.[28] The damage to Iran's war effort was tremendous.

> The perception that Iran was at the mercy of an Iraq commanding vast weapons stocks, unconstrained internationally and with little or no compunction as to humanitarian values or morality was surely unnerving to citizenry and government alike.[29]

Iran's inability to respond in kind caused the populace to lose faith in the political leadership's conduct of the war and probably contributed to Ayatollah Khomeini's decision to accept the U.N. ceasefire resolution. Iran became determined never to suffer this type of humiliation in the future.

Despite the spiral dynamics of the "war of the cities" Iran's leaders emphasize the *deterrent* value of ballistic missiles.

> For us, missiles have a deterrent role...no war can be stopped through missile attacks and the military forces, particularly the infantry, decide the course of war...but Iran must strengthen its missile forces as quickly as possible, so that the very thought of an

---

[27]Ibid., p. 366.

[28]Ibid., p. 367.

[29]Shahram Chubin, pp. 21-22.

> attack with missiles will be eliminated from our neighbor's mind.[30]

Discussing Iran's retaliatory attacks on Iraqi cities during 1988, Rafsanjani commented:

> Iran does not wish to embark on such a course but that it has to somehow dissuade the Iraqi Government from attacking cities.[31]

Iran's present ballistic missile program reflects its concern about the growing regional ballistic missile threat and the necessity of maintaining a sufficient retaliatory capability as a deterrent to future attacks. The survivability and psychological shock value of Iraq's SCUD missiles during Operation Desert Storm only served to reinforce Iran's belief that missiles are essential.

> We learned a great deal in the course of the war...missiles are the most important weapons today and we have solved the most important problems regarding the missile industries, and now what concerns us is what to produce, how many to produce...[32]

---

[30]Tehran Television Service interview with Hashimi Rafsanjani, 28 March 1988, FBIS-NES, 29 March 1988, pp. 56-57.

[31]Interview with the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), Tehran, 29 March 1988, in FBIS-NES, 30 March 1988, p. 48.

[32]"Preparing for Protection of Our National Interests," Resalat, Tehran, 31 December 1990. Cited in Shahram Chubin, pp. 22-23.

In addition to their deterrent value there are specific characteristics that make ballistic missiles especially attractive. The comparative ease with which they may be produced and operated, combined with a high rate of survivability and success, is congruent with Iran's strategic philosophy. The relatively high percentage of assured penetration and long range make them acceptable substitutes for deep strike aircraft, which require the advanced technical support and expertise of a professional air force to operate.[33]

Iran's ballistic missile force is built primarily around the Soviet-designed SCUD. Iran is believed to possess between 250-300 missiles of the SCUD-B and SCUD-C variants.[34] The majority of these weapons are believed to have been purchased from North Korea.

In addition to its foreign purchases Iran has actively pursued an indigenous manufacturing capability. It locally produces several artillery rocket systems. These are the Oghab, Shahin-2, Naz'eat, Mushak-160 and the Iran-200.[35] Iran

---

[33]For a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of ballistic missiles see Seth Carus, Ballistic Missiles In The Third World: Threat and Response, (New York: Praeger, 1990), pp. 27-39.

[34]James Wyllie, "Iran - Quest for Security and Influence," Jane's Intelligence Review, July 1993, p. 312, Eisenstadt, p. 112, and The Military Balance 1993-1994, (London: Brassey's Ltd., 1993), p. 115.

[35]"The Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles," Arms Control Today, April 1992, p. 29.

is believed to be constructing a manufacturing facility for SCUD-Cs.[36]

Of greatest concern to Iran's neighbors and Israel is the Iran's imminent acquisition of the North Korean No-Dong 1 missile. The No-Dong 1, with a range of over 1000km would theoretically allow strikes against Israel from western Iran. The No-Dong 1 carries a 1760 pound conventional warhead and could be armed with either chemical or nuclear warheads but is not believed to be very accurate (estimated CEP: 2-4km).[37] A joint Iranian-North Korean effort to develop a more accurate version of the No-Dong 1 is also believed to be underway.[38] Unconfirmed reports suggest that Iran has purchased 150 No-Dong 1s and that delivery will occur in the near future (Summer 1994).[39]

Regional ballistic missile proliferation is one of the most critical factors driving Iran's security dilemma. Israel, Saudi Arabia, India, Pakistan, and possibly Iraq, have potent ballistic missile capabilities which Iran cannot ignore. Iran's accelerated acquisition of these weapons demonstrates its desire to balance the growing ballistic missile and air threat it believes it faces.

---

[36]Ahmed Hashim, p. 215.

[37]Eisenstadt, p. 114(n41) and Ahmed Hashim, p. 215.

[38]Shahram Chubin, p. 58.

[39]Douglas Jehl, "Iran Is Reported Acquiring Missiles," New York Times, 8 April 1993, p. A9.

There seems to be three main goals for Iran's ballistic missile program. The first goal is deterring any future Iraqi missile attacks. Secondly, Iran hopes to deter an Israeli preemptive strike against its military or economic infrastructure, similar to the air strike which destroyed Iraq's OSIRAK nuclear reactor in 1981. Finally, Iran hopes to deter or, at the least, increase the cost of any offensive operation the United States might attempt to undertake against it.

D. CHEMICAL WEAPONS[40]

For Iran the issue of chemical weapons is especially sensitive. In much the same way as it sees itself as a victim of ballistic missiles, Iran feels that it was unjustly victimized by chemical attacks during its war with Iraq. Iran and Iraq are both signatories to the Geneva Protocols of 1925 and the Biological Convention of 1972.[41] Despite this fact Iraq made extensive use of chemical weapons during the war. Iran was caught off guard and scrambled to obtain chemical protective gear for its troops and began to pursue the acquisition of a retaliatory capability.

---

[40]Iran's biological program is very primitive. Very little information is available but Iran is believed to be experimenting with anthrax and mycotoxins. Cordesman, p. 513, and Shahram Chubin, p. 49.

[41]Cordesman, p. 506.

Table 5.1: Regional Ballistic Missile Proliferation

State	System	Range km	Payload kg	Source
Iran	SCUD-B,C	300/600	1000/700	N. Korea
	No-Dong 1	1000	1760lb	N. Korea
Iraq	Al-Hussein	600-650	135-250	Iraq[42]
	Al-Abbas	900	500-1000	
Saudi Arabia	CSS-2	2500	2200	China
Israel	Jericho I	650	500	Israel/Fr
	II/III	1500/1300	650/700	Israel/Fr
	Shavit	2500	750	Israel/Fr
India	Prithi	250	500	India
	Agni	2500	900	India
Pakistan	Haft-1	80	500	Pak/Fr/Ch
	M-11	290	800	China

Sources: "The Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles," Arms Control Today, April 1992, Anthony Cordesman, The Lessons of Modern War, p. 504, and Shahram Chubin Iran's National Security Policy, p. 58.

[42]Between 70 and 120 SCUDs are unaccounted for and believed to be somewhere in Iraq. See Anthony Cordesman's comments in "Symposium on Dual Containment," Middle East Policy, Vol. III, No. 1, 1994, p. 11.

Iran's chemical warfare program is, in large part, the result of the international community's refusal to condemn Iraqi chemical attacks. Iran protested these offenses loudly to the U.N. but was unsuccessful in its attempts to alienate Iraq from the international community. Since the war Iran has actively campaigned against the use of chemical weapons. It was co-sponsor of a U.N. resolution calling for all member nations to sign the Chemical Warfare Convention.[43] In late 1993, Iran adamantly pointed out Iraqi chemical attacks against Shi'a communities in the southern Iraq. U.N. teams were dispatched to investigate these charges and despite some evidence of their validity, no action was taken against Baghdad. The international community has been content to turn a blind eye to Iraq's chemical weapons use, thus solidifying Iran's belief that it must acquire its own chemical stockpile. Its belief in the deterrent value of a sizeable chemical stockpile might have been enhanced by Iraq's obvious restraint in the face of an overwhelming U.S. response had it chosen to use chemical weapons against coalition forces during Operation Desert Storm.

Evidence of Iran's use of chemical weapons is extremely scarce and ambiguous. Although it denies any use, "even as a

---

[43]"Chemical Weapons in the Middle East," Arms Control Today, October 1992, p. 44.

means retaliation"[44], it appears that Iran used lethal chemicals once or twice during the war. Some sources suggest that the weapons used on these occasions were captured Iraqi artillery rounds.[45] Despite having amassed a significant stockpile of chemical weapons by 1988, Iran did not employ them, even to stop the Iraqi offensives that penetrated deep into Iran that spring.[46] It is not clear whether Iran restrained itself on moral grounds or whether it lacked the ability to deliver the weapons effectively.

Iran is believed to have one chemical weapon production facility capable of producing mustard, cyanide and phosgene gas.[47] Former CIA director Robert Gates estimated the Iran's stockpile of chemical weapons at approximately 2000 tons of blister, choking and blood agents.[48] Presently the means of delivery are restricted to artillery shells and air-dropped bombs.[49] It seems that Iran has not yet developed a chemical warhead for its ballistic missiles.[50]

---

[44]From the speech of Ali Akbar Velayati, Foreign Minister of Iran, to the Paris Conference on Chemical Weapons, 7 January 89, quoted in Shahram Chubin, p. 25.

[45]Ibid., pp. 508-509, and p. 513.

[46]Iraqi forces conducting these offensive operations between April and June of 1988 made extensive use of nerve and mustard gas. Cordesman, p. 509.

[47]Arms Control Today, October 92, p. 44.

[48]Shahram Chubin, p. 49.

[49]Arms Control Today, October 92, p. 44.

[50]Eisenstadt, p. 115.

Despite its concerns about the potential abuse of mandatory inspections for political purposes, Iran signed the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty in 1993. Interestingly, unlike Egypt and Syria, Iran did not set Israel's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a pre-condition of its own compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.[51] Iran's own terrible experience with chemical weapons certainly provided enough incentive for its unconditional acceptance of the treaty. Iran's public position opposing chemical weapons seems contradictory to indications of continued production. Recent events have further clouded the picture. There have been numerous reports of attempts to acquire chemical weapons precursors and manufacturing facilities. The most prominent incident occurred in July-August 1993. A Chinese cargo ship bound for Iran was suspected by the CIA of carrying chemical weapons precursors. The ship was eventually inspected by Saudi officials and declared free of any contra-band.[52]

Chemical weapons present a moral dilemma for Iran. Iranian officials routinely denounce chemical warfare as inhumane and immoral:

> It is not acceptable under any circumstances to harm humanity by means of nuclear weapons or other means of

---

[51]Shahram Chubin, p. 48.

[52]"China, Iran enjoy egg on U.S. face," Iran Times, 17 September 1993, p. 16.

> mass destruction, such as chemical weapons and such like.[53]

At the same time, widespread proliferation of chemical weapons and the unwillingness of the international community to condemn nations which engage in chemical warfare limit Iran's options. If a retaliatory chemical warfare capability will deter future chemical attacks against its citizens, Iran may feel morally obligated to pursue such a capability.

> Iran reserves the right...to get the technological know-how to confront the chemical agents our enemies mights use against us.[54]

Iran's intentions concerning its chemical weapons program are vague. Obviously, Iraq is a major consideration. Although its chemical warfare program has been set back by Operation Desert Storm and U.N. inspections, there is some speculation that Iraq retains a limited chemical capability.[55] There is also the issue of its biological warfare program. According to CIA Director James Woolsey "neither war nor inspections have

---

[53]Press conference with Hashemi Rafsanjani, 3 February 1993, quoted in Shahram Chubin, p. 47.

[54]Hussein Firuz-abadi, Chief of the Armed Forces Command Headquarters, 14 March 1991, quoted in Shahram Chubin, p. 47.

[55]Anthony Cordesman, quoted in "Symposium on Dual Containment," Middle East Policy, Vol. III, No. 1, p.11.

seriously degraded Iraq's biological warfare program".[56] In the absence of a nuclear deterrent, chemical weapons offer a poor but acceptable alternative. Iran may also believe that chemically-armed ballistic missiles will serve as an effective interim deterrent to an Israeli nuclear strike while it develops its own nuclear capability.

E. IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

No issue involving Iran has received more attention than its alleged nuclear weapons program. Perhaps better than any other issue, the course of its nuclear program serves to chart the dramatic change in Iran's strategic philosophy. Iran's renewed interest in nuclear power demonstrates the resurgent importance of technology in Iran's strategic philosophy. After the revolution Ayatollah Khomeini declared the atom to be "the Devil's work" and Iran's nuclear program was practically dismantled. By 1984, when Iraq had demonstrated its propensity to use chemical weapons to blunt human-wave assaults, Iran once again displayed interest in nuclear technology.

Iran's nuclear program began during the 1970s under the Shah. Shortly after India conducted its "peaceful" nuclear test explosion in 1974, the Shah commented about the possibility of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons:

---

[56]Quoted in Shahram Chubin, p. 49.

> We don't want Iran to procure nuclear weapons just for the sake of having them. But I tell you quite frankly that Iran will have to acquire atomic bombs if every upstart in the region gets them.[57]

Despite his declarations to the contrary, there is now little doubt that the Shah was pursuing a nuclear weapons capability. The Shah's nascent weapons program took the form of a secret research program which was an offshoot of Iran's nuclear energy program. This ambitious program aimed at the eventual construction of 23 nuclear power stations prior to the turn of the 21st century.[58]

Under the guise of its energy program Iran was pursuing a "three-pronged" weapons program. The "prongs" of this clandestine effort included nuclear weapon design research, and research into the two methods of obtaining fissile material (the extraction of plutonium from spent reactor cores and the enrichment of uranium). The uranium enrichment research was interesting in that it focused on the use of special lasers vice energy consuming calutrons in the enrichment process.[59]

---

[57]Mohammed Reza Shah, quoted from interview with Hussanein Heikal, Kayhan International, 4 September 1975, p. 4.

[58]Leonard Spector, Nuclear Ambitions: The Spread of Nuclear Weapons 1989-1990, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 203.

[59]Spector, pp. 206-207.

Beginning in 1984 and more significantly since the end of the war, Iran has actively pursued the reconstruction and enlargement of its pre-revolution nuclear infrastructure. International assistance has been sought in the completion of two 1300 megawatt reactors at Bushire, which had been eighty percent completed by the German firm, Kraftwerk, prior to the war.[60] A new nuclear research center was opened in Isphahan in 1984. Iran has sought to purchase nuclear technology from as many as twenty countries.[61] It has encouraged the return of nuclear scientists and technicians who fled after the fall of the Shah and has sought to hire nuclear specialists from the states of the former Soviet Union.[62]

Iran has had only limited success in these endeavors, due mainly to U.S. pressure on potential suppliers. Iran has obtained a small calutron (located at the Isphahan research center) from China,[63] and a Chinese commitment to provide three reactors - two 300 megawatt power generation reactors (to be located at Darkhovin) and a 27 megawatt research reactor (presently under construction at Isphahan). Russia has

---

[60]Spector, p. 204.

[61]Eisenstadt, p. 107.

[62]Zachary S. Davis and Warren H. Donnelly, "Iran's Nuclear Activities and the Congressional Response," Congressional Research Service Issue Brief, 5 October 1992, p. 4.

[63]There is some debate as to whether this particular calutron is capable of producing sufficient weapons grade material to produce a nuclear device. Davis, Donnelly and Eisenstadt suggest that it is not.

been contracted to construct two 440 megawatt reactors at either Gorgan or Bushire.[64] There is evidence that laser enrichment research is once again underway in Tehran and possibly at the Isphahan research center.[65]

The public stance of Iran's prominent leadership on the issue of nuclear weapons has evolved over the last six years. In 1988 Rafsanjani stated:

> We should equip ourselves both in the offensive and defensive use of chemical, bacteriological, and radiological weapons.[66]

By 1992 Rafsanjani was singing a different tune.

> We seek nuclear technology for peaceful uses and consider this path to be right for all countries which have the potential to acquire it.[67]

---

[64]Eisenstadt states that the Russian reactors are to be built at Gorgan but Reza Amrollahi, Director of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization, was recently cited as having said that the Russian plant would be built at Bushire. See "Nuclear Plants Provide 20 Percent of Energy," FBIS-NES, 5 November 1993, p.57.

[65]Eisenstadt, p. 106. For more on Laser research in Iran see "Paper Details Work of Laser Research Center," FBIS-NES, 9 April 1993, p. 43.

[66]"Hashemi Rafsanjani Speaks on the Future of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps," Tehran Domestic Service, 0935 GMT, 6 October 1988, FBIS-NES, 7 October 1988, p. 52.

[67]FBIS-NES, 12 February 1992, p. 55, Quoted in Ahmed Hashim, p. 208.

Even Iran's military leadership officially disavows any aspirations for nuclear weapons.

> Political logic, morality, our own culture, and above all the situation in today's world does not allow us to have such deadly weapons...political wisdom demands us not to go for the weapons that could cause devastation to humanity.[68]

While Iran's official position is clear, some cryptic language is evident in the articulation of Iran's stance on the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region.

> We have supported, and will continue to do so, all agency efforts in enhancing the effectiveness of its safeguards regimes. We have pursued an open and transparent policy in this respect, in line with which we took the initiative to invite the agency to visit the requested nuclear facilities in Iran and verify their peaceful utilization...*As long as Israel, with the full support of the United States, continues to refuse to respect the wishes of the international community we fear the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone concept will remain a dormant issue in the region.*[69]

Despite statements to the contrary, it would appear that the primary purpose for Iran's pursuit of nuclear technology is the eventual acquisition of the capability to produce a nuclear weapon. Iran's argument that it needs nuclear

---

[68]Mohsen Rezai, quoted in a Islamic Republic News Agency report, 2027 GMT, 23 February 1994, FBIS-JPRS-TND-94-007, 23 February 1994.

[69]"Amrollahi Speaks on U.N. role, Nuclear Issues at IAEA," Islamic Republic News Agency report, 0932 GMT, 28 September 1993, FBIS-JPRS-TND-93-034, 27 October 1993. Emphasis added by author.

technology to meet its growing energy needs is not convincing.

Iran has the second-largest reserve of natural gas in the world.[70] Natural gas is considered a much cheaper and safer source of energy production. It is not easily exported and thus is best utilized for domestic energy production.[71] If limited to energy uses, the inherent high cost and danger associated with establishing a nuclear power infrastructure does not seem logical. Based on Iran's precarious economic situation it would seem that the development of its natural gas resources vice the construction of nuclear infrastructure would be the wisest course of action. It seems that energy production is a secondary goal of Iran's nuclear program.

The paucity of discussion within Iran on the issue of nuclear weapons hinders analysis of its beliefs and motivations. As with its other strategic capabilities and in keeping with Iran's self-image as a nation besieged, deterrence seems to be a primary goal.

> Can our air force...take on the Americans, or our navy take on the American navy? If we put all our country's budget into such a war we would just have burned our money. The way to go about dealing with such a threat requires a different solution entirely.[72]

---

[70]Eisenstadt, pp. 104-105

[71]Davis, p. 3.

[72]Interview with Akbar Tokran, former Iranian Minister of Defense, Financial Times, 8 February 1993, p. 4, quoted in Eisenstadt, p. 103.

Recent events have confirmed general beliefs concerning the greater deterrent value of nuclear weapons. Pakistan's nuclear capability is perhaps viewed in Iran as having been a major deterrent of an impending Indian conventional attack during the 1990 Kashmir crisis. While chemical weapons are arguably a cheap alternative, Iraq's large chemical stockpile did not deter U.S. military action in Operation Desert Storm. Open speculation that the United States would not have engaged Iraq if it had possessed nuclear weapons only serve to enhance these beliefs. This speculation is given credence by the apparent reversal of the U.S. stance on North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons. The message, although not necessarily accurate, is clear: nuclear weapons bring greater security.

There is also the matter of prestige and leverage. Nuclear weapons symbolize modernization and technological progress. They would represent a major success for a revolutionary regime which has been beset by defeats. Possession of nuclear weapons ushers a state into the elite club of power politics, possibly providing leverage in negotiations over regional and international issues. For Iran they may be seen as the key to reduced isolation and a greater role in regional and international affairs.

Iran's intentions are clear to a degree. It is clear that Iran seeks to build a nuclear infrastructure which will provide the technological and resource base for the eventual

development of nuclear weapons. The extent to which Iran will pursue the actual development of a nuclear device is unclear. Iran is a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and enjoys excellent relations with the IAEA. As with its quick acceptance of the Chemical Warfare Convention, Iran's compliance with international standards suggests that there is a moral dilemma involved.

Iran is a theocracy, a government of God. While its values and beliefs are not necessarily congruent with western values and beliefs, the legitimacy of the regime is based on its moral foundation in Islam. Unlike Iraq, Iran is constrained by its concepts of right and wrong. The proliferation of nuclear weapons, combined with Iran's sense of vulnerability create a dilemma which requires Iran to balance its moral obligation to provide for the security of the Islamic state with the immorality of weapons of mass destruction.

It would seem that Iran is attempting to balance its moral and security dilemmas by achieving a threshold capability in the development of weapons of mass destruction. Under IAEA supervision Iran will be able to legally build and operate a nuclear infrastructure that could eventually produce weapons-grade fissile material. If it is able to obtain the necessary weapons components, such as triggers and fuzing technology, it will be capable of rapidly assembling a nuclear device in a crisis situation.[73]

---

[73]Spector, p. 215.

VI. IMPACT AND U.S. POLICY OPTIONS

Estimation of threat has a profound influence on the policy formulation process. Misperception of threat often leads to policies that create a spiral dynamic between states. On the other hand, policies which result from an underestimation of threat could encourage an aggressor state to engage in more egregious behavior. Undeniably, Iran has engaged in egregious behavior at the very low end of the spectrum of conflict. Yet, Iran has not demonstrated a propensity to utilize its military capabilities for any purpose other than self-defense.

While its revolutionary Islamic message contains what may be characterized as expansionist themes, it is not an "expansionist" state in the literal meaning of the word; it does not seek the expansion of its territory. Contrary to most alarmist accounts, Iran does not claim sovereignty over Bahrain. The issue of the three disputed islands, Abu Musa and the Tunbs, pre-dates the Islamic regime and has been inflamed more by post-Desert Storm Arab ambitions than by any unilateral Iranian action.

As long as the United States continues to identify stability of the Persian Gulf as a major national interest it cannot ignore Iran. The present U.S. policy assumes that Iran is perhaps more egregious and irredentist than it actually is. Developing a more appropriate and hopefully more successful

policy must begin with an accurate appraisal of the threat.

This chapter will examine the impact of Iran's growing strategic military capabilities on regional security and future U.S. military operations. It will then examine the policy of dual containment and its role in Iran's security dilemma, followed by a discussion of possible policy options.

A. THE IRANIAN THREAT: WHAT'S REAL AND WHAT'S IMAGINED

For the hard-line anti-Iran camp every new AK-47 that Iran acquires represents a clear and present danger to western interests. Estimates about the extent, purpose, and potential impact of Iran's military buildup have been grossly exaggerated, especially concerning its conventional weapons purchases.

Generally, Iran's efforts to reconstruct its conventional forces represent an attempt to address legitimate and very serious security concerns.

> If Iran were our friend today, we would be saying: "You guys had better arm yourselves. You're weak. You don't have sufficient capability to defend yourselves in the region against likely problems.[1]

Iran is a nation that was devastated by eight years of a brutal war, fought without significant resupply of parts for its western-made weapon systems, during which it lost 40 to 60

[1]Graham E. Fuller, quoted in "Symposium on Dual Containment," Middle East Policy, Vol. III, No. 1, 1994, p. 9.

percent of its inventory of weapons. Initial estimates of Iran's annual defense expenditures that exceeded $2 billion dollars have been revised downward to between $600-800 million.[2] Estimates of the percentage of GNP Iran devotes to defense expenditures hover around eight percent.[3] Typical percentages for the defense expenditures of Iran's neighbors vary between 20 and 30 percent of GNP.[4]

Iran's worsening economic situation will undoubtedly require further reductions in defense spending. Iran has fallen behind on the service of its short term national debt of approximately $30 billion dollars.[5] While it has successfully rescheduled this debt it appears that new credit will be more difficult to find. If oil prices remain at present levels for the foreseeable future, Iran will be unable to maintain even its present level of defense spending.

The bulk of Iran's conventional weapons purchases, while considered technologically advanced, are either Russian, Chinese, or North Korean products of dubious quality. Iran

---

[2]Anthony Cordesman, quoted in "Symposium on Dual Containment," p. 12.

[3]The Military Balance 1993-1994, p. 225. Anoushiravan Ehteshami, "Iran's National Strategy," International Defense Review, April 1994, p. 29.

[4]Saudi Arabia spent 32.5 percent of its GNP on defense in 1992. The Military Balance 1993-1994, (London: Brassey's Ltd., 1993), p. 225.

[5]Shahram Chubin, "Iran's Strategic Aims and Constraints," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994), p. 89.

presently poses no serious threat of overland invasion to any of its regional neighbors, even Iraq. Even if Iran achieved a conventional capability equivalent to that of Iraq prior to Operation Desert Storm, geography and logistic requirements would limit its ability to project and sustain power in the Arabian peninsula.

While Iran's conventional buildup is generally benign, its effort to acquire a significant sea denial capability is a more pressing concern, which justifies closer analysis of its potential impact on U.S. interests. The expansion of Iran's sea denial capabilities must be placed in proper perspective. Open access to the Persian Gulf is vital to Iran's economic and national security. The other states of the region all enjoy alternate routes by which they may access international trade. Saudi Arabia and the GCC states have access to Saudi Arabia's Red Sea ports and the Indian Ocean through Oman. Barring a crisis of "Desert Storm"-like proportions it is unlikely that Iran would take any action that could lead to the loss of international access to the Persian Gulf.

In the event of such a crisis Iran's employment of advanced underwater mines would present a significant obstacle to the penetration of the Persian Gulf by U.S. naval forces. Its other sea denial capabilities would be less effective. Iran's small force of technically limited anti-ship missile systems would be susceptible to interdiction through air strikes, anti-missile defense systems, and electronic

countermeasures. Two or three Russia submarines, even if manned by an experienced Russian crew, would have a very short period of survivability when confronted by the United States' advanced anti-submarine warfare forces. Only sophisticated mines present a credible threat to U.S. naval forces and the extent of their impact on a determined U.S. military operation would be limited in scope and duration.

Nonetheless, these capabilities would restrict the flexibility of U.S. military response. U.S. aircraft carriers would likely operate from outside the Gulf. This would complicate the employment of U.S. naval air power. Maritime preposition shipping would be forced to off-load at ports outside of the Gulf, further delaying the buildup of U.S. forces. Beyond these minor inconveniences, the impact of Iran's sea denial capabilities is overstated. At best Iran could hope to slow the penetration of U.S. forces into the Gulf.

Regarding Iran's growing arsenal of ballistic missiles and its potential to arm them with chemical and nuclear warheads, Western anxiety is much more justified. The mere presence of these weapons exacerbates the insecurity of the Arab Gulf states, adding fuel to the regional arms race and possibly leading to other regional proliferation efforts.

The extended range of ballistic missiles greatly expands the scope of regional security issues. In the past, Iranian animosity towards Israel meant little more than venomous

rhetoric and harassment of Israeli forces by Hezbollah guerrillas in South Lebanon. The potential combination of the No-Dong 1 and chemical or nuclear warheads elevates Iran's potential threat to Israel from that of a minor nuisance to a credible threat to national security.

The direct impact on the United States of Iranian WMD proliferation is less clear. There is some evidence that U.S. strategic superiority would serve to deter the use of such weapons during a direct military conflict between Iran and the U.S. military forces. Iraqi restraint during Operation Desert Storm may be attributed to the deterrent effect of an inevitably massive U.S. response to any Iraqi use of chemical weapons. However, while Operation Desert Storm demonstrated that mere possession of chemical weapons would not deter the United States from engaging in military action, it is not clear what the U.S. response would have been if Iraq had possessed an operational nuclear capability. The greatest U.S. concern about Iran's possession of WMDs is not their potential use in a conventional military engagement but the possibility of a terrorist "revenge" operation. The potential for a nuclear or chemical weapon to be delivered by covert means such as a tramp steamer or truck, with the associated plausible deniability of its source, greatly complicates issues of deterrence and response.

B. POLICY OPTIONS: DUAL CONTAINMENT OR POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT?

Present U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf is known by the term "dual containment". Originally enunciated by Martin Indyk, the Special Assistant to the National Security Council for Middle East Policy, dual containment seeks the continued isolation of both Iraq and Iran as nations that "pursue policies fundamentally hostile to American interests".[6] Specifically regarding Iran, Mr. Indyk has identified five areas where Iran pursues policies counter to U.S. interests:

> *First of all, in its efforts to pursue the acquisition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction; second, in its efforts to acquire offensive capabilities in the conventional area that would threaten its neighbors;* third, in its promotion of terrorism and assassination on a world-wide scale; fourth, in its efforts to oppose and undermine the Arab-Israeli peace process...and finally its efforts to exploit difficult situations which some of our friends in the region face.[7]

The first two of the five points, Iran's conventional and unconventional weapons programs, appear to be the real focus of the strategy of dual containment. This policy emphasizes the control of arms and technology transfers.

> To counter Iran's quest for domination of the Persian Gulf, we work closely with the friendly governments to

---

[6]Martin Indyk, quoted in "Symposium on Dual Containment," p. 2.

[7]"Symposium on Dual Containment," p.5. Emphasis added by author.

> prevent Iran from obtaining the imports needed for its nuclear and chemical programs and we are very vigilant about the transfer of missile and missile-related systems... We are very much against the supply of dual-use technology to Iran because of its apparent intention to produce weapons of mass destruction.[8]

While aggressively pursuing the containment of Iran's strategic military capabilities, dual containment attempts to recognize Iran's legitimate security concerns. In his recent article in Foreign Affairs, National Security Advisor Anthony Lake notes that dual containment does not imply an arms embargo against Iran:

> This does not mean Washington intends to quarantine Iran or deny it all military-related goods. This administration tries to distinguish between defense items that do not affect the regional security environment and those items that have a offensive use and could destabilize the area.[9]

Since Iran is not under a military embargo and there are no U.N. sanctions in place, the success of dual containment openly depends on the cooperation of U.S. allies in the areas of technology transfer and economic assistance to prevent Iran's acquisition of threatening military capabilities. "The

---

[8]Ibid., p. 7.

[9]Anthony Lake, "Confronting Backlash States," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, No. 2, March/April 1994, p. 53.

U.S. strategy depends heavily on active coordination and consultations with friendly countries".[10]

Finally dual containment assumes that a "favorable balance" in the Persian Gulf may be sustained for "some time" by relying on continued U.S. military presence and "a common understanding and common agreement with our regional friends".[11]

By focusing on the issue of proliferation, dual containment addresses the most critical issue of concern about Iran's behavior. Unfortunately, the policy is flawed, both in conception and application. In many ways this policy serves to perpetuate and exacerbate the spiral dynamics of Iran's security dilemma. In its conception dual containment assumes that Iran is an aggressor state, on par with Iraq, which is pursuing the acquisition of strategic capabilities as a means of achieving ultimate hegemony over the Persian Gulf. This assumption tends to diminish the significance of Iran's legitimate security concerns, and discounts Iran's xenophobic security perspective. The inevitable, even if unintended, comparison of Iran with Iraq convinces Iran of the United States' hostile intent, leading it to believe that the ultimate goal of U.S. policy is the destruction of its

---

[10]Ibid., p. 54.

[11]Martin Indyk, Quoted in "Symposium on Dual Containment," p. 3.

military and economic infrastructure as well as the overthrow of the regime.

Dual containment seeks to counter not only nuclear proliferation but also "destabilizing" conventional proliferation. This is the other conceptual flaw in the policy. In this regard the policy falls into the trap of attempting to define the nature of weapon systems as either offensive or defensive. Since there are very few, if any, purely defensive weapon systems, Iran's acquisition of any weapon system of even alleged offensive capability becomes a threat which must be contained. The result is a nation denied access to conventional means of defense. Predictably, conventional military weakness enhances Iran's desire for strategic capabilities.

Although conceptually flawed, dual containment could conceivably achieve its goals if there were a consensus among the major Western powers to apply the policy with conviction. However, there is no international consensus. In fact there seems to be a consensus among U.S. allies that the present U.S. policy is incorrect and inappropriate. Without the support of Iran's European and Japanese trading partners the policy of dual containment, as it applies to Iran, is dead in the water.

The failure of the administration to create a consensus agreement has produced a response completely opposite of that which is desired. This policy not only fails to contain Iran

but by attempting to increase its isolation, pushes it more rapidly towards the acquisition of nuclear weapons. The inherent gaps in the application of the policy allow Iran to maintain access to international supplies of cash and technology. Iran has had little trouble in circumventing America's attempts to isolate it from both the credit and arms markets.

Even with the support of U.S. allies there is no evidence that Iran's proliferation would be "contained" by the present policy. The effectiveness of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, the Chemical Warfare Convention (CWC), and the Missile-Technology Control Regime is dubious. North Korea, China, and Russia are Iran's major suppliers of modern military technology. India and Pakistan are possible sources of nuclear-related technology, and as non-signatories neither are subject to the restrictions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Despite the changes in the international system, these states have not demonstrated a particular willingness to conform to American wishes on issues of foreign policy. Given Iran's access to hard currency and the lack of control over technology transfers, the reality of eventual Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons becomes simply a matter of market economics and time. If the United States is committed to preventing Iran's acquisition of WMDs, the failure of present policy leaves open only the option of preventive force.

The final flaw in dual containment is the reliance on continued U.S. presence to ensure stability in the Persian Gulf. This assumes that the political status quo will remain the same for "some time". It relies heavily on the goodwill and political viability of the Gulf monarchs. There is little evidence to support the assumption that either of these conditions are ensured. In fact, there are indications that the Gulf states are beginning to distance themselves from the policy. The Secretary General of the GCC articulated the position of the Arab Gulf states regarding this policy. "What interests us is that this policy not reflect on our situation, and that our states not be affected by it." [12] Even if the Arab Gulf states are willing to abide a high profile, long term U.S. military presence there is some doubt as to the ability of the United States to sustain it. Reductions in defense budgets and manpower counsel against a policy that ties up large numbers of U.S. troops and equipment for an indefinite period.

At its present level U.S. military presence in the Gulf creates a false balance of power, dependent on a continued U.S. commitment.[13] The U.S. guarantee of security completely inhibits any effort to establish a regional security forum

---

[12]Al-Hayat, 17 October 1993, p. 5. Quoted in F. Gregory Gause III, "The Illogic of Dual Containment," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, No. 2, March/April 1994, p. 57.

[13]Present U.S. force levels are actually, on average, quite small. However, the U.S. now has a much greater "surge" capability as compared to the pre-Gulf war period.

that would address the security concerns of all the regional states. It requires the smaller Gulf states to play regional security roles that are inappropriate for their size and means. This has led to a massive conventional arms buildup in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, and to a lesser degree in Bahrain. Combined with greater U.S. military presence, the arming of the GCC states increases Iran's perception of threat, in turn increasing its incentives for WMD proliferation.

Since dual containment as a counter-proliferation policy will not achieve the desired results and may in fact encourage more dangerous behavior by Iran, how can the United States prevent Iran from acquiring weapons of mass destruction? It seems that barring comprehensive military action by the United States the certainty of WMD proliferation is unavoidable as long as a Iran believes that weapons of mass destruction will enhance its security. A more effective policy would seek to halt the spiral dynamics of the security dilemma by implementing a strategy of positive engagement vice containment.

Unlike dual containment the conceptual basis of this policy is not a determination of Iran's predisposition towards aggressive or benign behavior. The conceptual basis of positive engagement focuses on efforts to convince Iran that as long as it refrains from aggressive behavior and does not threaten U.S. national interests, its national security is not

in doubt. Specifically, this policy would seek to convince Iran that it neither needs to acquire nuclear weapons nor that acquisition of nuclear weapons will enhance its security in any way.

The cornerstones of positive engagement are the three areas in which U.S. and Iranian national interests converge; regional stability, reduced U.S. military presence, and continued expansion of economic ties. The United States can apply the policy unilaterally and without a direct dialogue with Iran.

Implementation of the policy would begin with a unilateral declaration in which U.S. interests and concerns are clearly articulated in a very specific manner. Much like dual containment, this policy would strongly emphasize those issues in which Iran's future behavior could harm U.S. interests. Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional aggression, subversion of foreign states, and terrorism would be clearly defined as unacceptable. The United States must convince Iran that its response to violations in these four areas would be swift, determined, and comprehensive.[14]

Unlike dual containment this policy would recognize that the long term solution for maintenance of regional stability

---

[14]For a discusion of the importance of long term commitment to mutual interests and reciprocity of behavior in the development of cooperation see Robert Axelrod, The Evolution of Cooperation, (New York: Basic Books, 1984), pp. 124-141.

lies not in an unending U.S. presence but in the creation of a viable balance of power managed through a regional security organization. While emphasizing the mutual interests of the regional states and the United States in the achievement of a diminished U.S. military presence, the United States must reaffirm its commitment to the defense of its interests.

Regarding proliferation of weapons of mass destruction Iran should be encouraged to continue cooperation with the IAEA and the CWC. While pointing out the apparent illogic of Iran's pursuit of nuclear energy, the United States should concede that a state that is willing to abide by international guidelines should not be barred from peaceful use of nuclear technology. Iran must be reminded that the United States would remain extremely vigilant concerning attempts to acquire non-nuclear weapon components and that any attempt to assemble a nuclear device would be strongly challenged. It must be made absolutely clear to Iran, that any use of a nuclear weapon would result in its complete annihilation. Finally, the United States should take a stronger stand on the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. If the Arab-Israeli peace accord reaches a successful conclusion with the confrontation states, the United States should pressure Israel to dismantle its nuclear arsenal and sign the NPT.

The final element of a policy of positive engagement would be official encouragement of expanded economic ties with Iran. This does not imply that the United States should prop up a

failing regime with economic aid. It is simply a recognition that attempts to block Iran's access to international markets are a losing proposition which only increases Iran's xenophobia and costs the U.S. economy millions of dollars a year. The expansion of economic relations may not lead to the establishment of diplomatic relations but it is in the mutual interest of both Iran and the United States, and as such, should be used to establish the foundation from which the gradual normalization of relations might grow.

Although the policy of positive engagement assumes that Iran is not inherently an aggressor state, the United States cannot ignore the possibility of future Iranian aggression. It would be a critical error to allow a policy of engagement to become an obvious "tilt" towards Iran. A policy of engagement with Iran combined with the continued containment of Iraq, will eventually create a regional imbalance of power which could be exploited by Iran.

Since maintaining a favorable balance of power in the Gulf through Dual Containment is extremely costly in both economic and political terms, the United States should consider a strategy that seeks to re-establish a true balance of power in the region. The challenge is to find a state capable of balancing Iran. The prospects are dim. Over the long term, the only regional state with the resources to balance Iran is Iraq. Distasteful as it may seem, there may be no other long term solution to the problem of Gulf security than the re-

emergence of Iraq as a regional power. To this end the United States must reconsider its policy of containing Iraq. Continued economic sanctions and support for autonomous zones may eventually lead to the permanent crippling of Iraq as a sovereign state. Three small states filling the spot on the map where Iraq used to be will only serve to further complicate the security issues of the region. While engagement may lead to a gradual rapprochement between Iran and the United States, the re-establishment of a true regional balance of power will provide the best guarantee of regional stability.[15]

[15]For examples of early thinking along these lines see John Arquilla, "Even Now, Hussein Serves a U.S. Purpose," Los Angeles Times, 22 March 1992, and Israel Shahak, "How Israel's Strategy Favours Iraq Over Iran," Middle East International, 19 March 1993, p. 19.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Iran is a state with a xenophobic security perspective. It sees itself as being historically isolated, and unjustly denied its rightful role in the regional power structure. However, Iran's xenophobia is as much a result of its historical experience over the last 2500 years as it is an expression of its frustrated revolutionary aims. Injustice and denied greatness are the predominant themes of Iran's history, culture, and ideology. The combined effects of geographic isolation, cultural and ideological cleavages, and a long history of successive subjugation to foreign conquerors have contributed greatly to Iran's sensitivity to security issues.

Recent history has served to confirm and reinforce Iran's sense of isolation and embattlement. The failure of the international community to condemn Iraqi aggression, and use of chemical warfare, is seen as evidence of an international conspiracy to suppress and destroy Iran. This notion is confirmed by the U.S. policy of dual containment which implicitly suggests that Iran is an aggressor state, similar to Iraq.

Further exacerbating Iran's xenophobia are its very real national security problems. Iraq, even under embargo, retains sufficient military strength to threaten Iran. Afghanistan and the Central Asian republics continue to be embroiled in internal conflicts that threaten to spill across borders and

sensitize Iran's heterogeneous population to volatile ethnic cleavages. The Arab Gulf states, with the backing of the United States, are arming themselves to the teeth. The enlarged U.S. military presence threatens to permanently exclude Iran from any security role in the region. Finally, Israel has identified Iran as the greatest threat to the Jewish state.

Iran's response to these threats has been conditioned by the lessons of the Iran-Iraq war and the Gulf war. Iran has rejected its earlier strategic philosophy which relied on Islamic vervor and revolutionary zeal in favor of a philosophy that emphasizes the importance of technology and a trained, professional military force. Special emphasis has been placed on the acquisition of strategic capabilities which are believed to be sufficient to deter perceived threats.

Underwater mines, submarines and anti-ship missiles reflect the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf for Iran. Iraq's successful use of mines against the coalition forces reinforced Iran's belief in the usefulness of these weapons systems against an overwhelming conventional naval force. Ballistic missiles are seen as a necessary deterrent to future Iraqi aggression and possibly as a deterrent against an Israeli preemptive strike. Ballistic missiles are simple to operate, survivable and serve as an adequate substitute for deep strike aircraft. Chemical weapons are also seen as an evil necessity that may deter the future use of such weapons

against Iran. Finally, Iran's growing nuclear infrastructure indicates that Iran is pursuing, over the long term, a nuclear weapons capability. The primary objective of its nuclear program would also seem to be deterrence. With a nuclear capability Iran would hope to deter any punitive military actions by the United States, or Israel. Additionally, nuclear weapons would be seen as a major accomplishment for a revolutionary regime that has been beset with defeat.

Ironically, these attempts to deter future aggression have only served to heighten suspicion concerning Iran's intentions. Iran's revolutionary political ideology is an anathema to the rulers of the Arab Gulf states and secular regimes in Egypt and Algeria. The goals that have inspired Iran's support of Islamic fundamentalist organizations and attempts to subvert other regional governments are assumed to be the motivating factors of its military buildup. States suspicious of Iran have reacted to its rearming with military buildups of their own, contributing to the spiral dynamics of the security dilemma.

Interestingly, there is little evidence that Iran is actually pursuing a hegemonic role in the Persian Gulf. It would be more accurate to state that Iran is pursuing a role within the regional political, security, and economic structures that is commensurate with its size, resources and population. Iran has no expansionist aspirations and does not lay claim to territory outside its borders. Estimates of the

scope and purpose of its conventional military buildup have been greatly exaggerated. Even its growing strategic capabilities reflect more of a concern for deterrence than any inherently aggressive tendencies.

The U.S. policy of dual containment assumes the opposite; that Iran is an inherently aggressive, expansionist state that must be contained. As a result, Iran's belief that the United States seeks its destruction is confirmed, providing more incentive for Iran to acquire a deterrent capability. Beyond its conceptual flaws, the policy of dual containment is geopolitically naive. Its success relies on strong support from U.S. allies, but this support has failed to materialize. It assumes that the political and military status quo of the Persian Gulf will remain fundamentally unchanged for the foreseeable future and that any minor changes will be easily managed from Washington. However, there is no evidence that the status quo of such a volatile region will remain constant and there is certainly no reason to believe that the United States is capable of influencing political change in the region. Finally, it depends on a long term, high profile, U.S. military presence in the region, despite reduced defense budgets and manpower reductions.

This policy clearly states that the United States views Iran as a state that pursues policies which are hostile to U.S. interests - i.e. Iran is an enemy. At the same time, the weaknesses of the policy have allowed Iran to maintain access

to the very sources of financial, technical, and military support that the policy seeks to deny. The net result of dual containment is the creation of strong incentives for Iran to acquire WMDs as quickly as possible.

If the major goal of U.S. policy is long term stability in the Persian Gulf, then an alternate strategy must be considered. This policy should focus on efforts to convince Iran that its security will not be enhanced by the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. The critical objective of the policy would be the creation of a viable regional security organization in which all states of the region would play an appropriate role. The United States would seek to gradually reduce its security role in the region. Iran would not be denied the means to provide for its defense in a reasonable conventional manner. Expansion of non-military economic ties with Iran would be encouraged.

At the same time, the U.S. position on the issues of proliferation, subversion, terrorism, and military aggression would be made absolutely clear. The U.S. would continue to conduct bilateral relations with the states of the region and remain openly committed to the stability of the region.

Such a policy would counter the spiral dynamics of the Iran's security dilemma in a positive manner. By focusing on the mutual U.S.-Iranian interests of regional security, reduced U.S. military commitment, and the expansion of economic ties, the United States could unilaterally lay the

foundation for long term regional stability and rapprochement.

Finally, the United States must not rely solely on a policy of engagement with Iran to produce long term stability in the region. This issue must be addressed by the re-establishment of a regional balance of power. Since Iraq is the only regional state capable of balancing Iranian power, the United States should re-evaluate its policy which supports the continued containment and dismemberment of Iraq.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adamiyat, Fereydoun, Bahrain Islands: A Legal and Diplomatic Study of the British-Iranian Controversy, New York: Praeger, 1955.

Ahrari, M.E., "Saudi Arabia, Iran and OPEC: The Dynamics of a Balancing Act," The Gulf and International Security, ed., M.E. Ahrari, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.

Arms Control Today, "Chemical Weapons in the Middle East," October 1992.

_____., "The Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles," April 1992.

Axelrod, Robert, The Evolution of Cooperation, New York: Basic Books, 1984.

Beeman, William O., "Images of the Great Satan: Representations of the United States in the Iranian Revolution," Religion and Politics in Iran, ed., Nikki Keddie, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

Beres, Louis Rene, "Israel, Iran, and Prospects For Nuclear War In The Middle East," Strategic Review, Spring 1993.

Burrows, William E., and Windrem, Robert, Critical Mass, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.

Carus, Seth, Ballistic Missiles In The Third World: Threat and Response, New York: Praeger, 1990.

Chubin, Shahram, Iran's National Security Policy: Capabilities, Intentions and Impact, Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1994.

_____., "Iran's Strategic Aims and Constraints," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994.

Davis, Zachary S. and Warren H. Donnelly, "Iran's Nuclear Activities and the Congressional Response," Congressional Research Service Issue Brief, 5 October 1992.

Ehteshami, Anoushiravan, "Iran's National Strategy: Striving for Regional Parity or Supremacy," International Defense Review, April 1994.

Eisenstadt, Micheal, "Deja Vu All Over Again? An Assessment of Iran's Military Buildup," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, Washington D.C.: National Defense University, 1994.

Fuller, Graham E., The Center Of The Universe: The Geopolitics of Iran, Boulder: Westview Press, 1991.

Fuller, Graham E., and Ian O. Lesser. Turkey's New Geopolitics, Boulder: Westview Press, 1993.

Gause, F. Gregory III, "The Illogic of Dual Containment," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, No. 2, March/April 1994.

Hashim, Ahmed, "Iran's Military Situation," Iran's Strategic Intentions and Capabilities, ed., Patrick Clawson, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1994.

Heikal, Hussanein, "Interview with Mohammed Reza Shah," Kayhan International, 4 September 1975.

Hersh, Seymour M., "On The Nuclear Edge," The New Yorker, 29 March 1993.

Homayoun, Assad, "Iran's Administration Persists In Searching For Jihad While Neglecting Its Domestic Base," Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy, 31 July 1993.

Hooton, Ted, "The Tanker War in the Gulf," Jane's Intelligence Review, May 1992.

Hunter, Shireen T., "Iran and The Arab World," Iran At The Crossroads, ed., Miron Rezun, Boulder: Westview Press, 1990.

_____., "Gulf Security: An Iranian Perspective," The Gulf and International Security, ed., M.E. Ahrari, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.

_____., Iran and The World, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Hussain, Mushahid, "Iran Forges New Links," Middle East International, 17 February 1989.

Iran Times, "China, Iran enjoy egg on U.S. face," 17 September 1993.

_____., "Tehran's weapons' buyers are very busy," 28 January 1994.

_____., "Iran Ranks Unenviable First," 19 November 1993.

Jehl, Douglas. "Iran Is Reported Acquiring Missiles," New York Times, 8 April 1993.

Jervis, Robert, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.

_____. "Cooperation Under The Security Dilemma," World Politics, Vol. 30, No. 2, January 1978.

Jomhuri-ye-Islami, "The U.S. Echelons Do Not Comprehend Facts," Tehran, 4 October 1993.

Jordan, John, "The 'Kilo' Class Submarine," Jane's Intelligence Review, September 1992.

Kechichian, Joseph A., "National Security," Ch. 5, Iran: A Country Study, ed., Helen Chapin Metz, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989.

Lake, Anthony, "Confronting Backlash States," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 73, No. 2, Spring 1994.

Lavoy, Peter, "Nuclear Myths and the Causes of Nuclear Proliferation," Strategic Studies, Vol 2, No.s 3/4, Spring/Summer 1993.

Limbert, John W., Iran: At War with History, Boulder: Westview Press, 1987.

Lord Curzon, Persia and The Persian Question, Volume II, New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966.

Metz, Helen Chapin, ed., Iran: A Country Study, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989.

Middle East Policy, "Symposium on Dual Containment," Vol. III, No.1, 1994.

Morgenthau, Hans, Politics Among Nations, New York: Knopf, 1967.

Pahlavi, Mohammed Reza, Answer To History, New York: Stein and Day, 1980.

Palmer, Michael A., On Course to Desert Storm: The United States Navy and the Persian Gulf, Washington, D.C.: Naval Historical Center, 1992.

Ramazani, Ruhollah K., The Persian Gulf: Iran's Role, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1972.

_____., "Shi'ism in the Persian Gulf," Shi'ism and Social Protest, ed., Juan R.I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

Raviv, Dan, and Yossi Melman, Friends in Deed: Inside The U.S.-Israel Alliance, New York: Hyperion, 1994.

Resalat, Tehran, "Preparing for Protection of Our National Interests," 31 December 1990.

_____., "The Inauspicious Intentions of the United States and the Negligence of the Arabs," Tehran, 8 December 1993.

Sancton, Thomas, "Terrorism, The Tehran Connection," Time, 21 March 1994.

_____., "No Longer Fenced In," Time, 23 May 1994.

Shahak, Israel, "Israel seeks to build a coalition against Iran," Middle East International, 6 August 1993.

Shihab, Zaki, "Velayati: We oppose the agreement with Israel, but we will not change our policy towards Syria," AL-WASAT, London, 14-20 March 1994.

Spector, Leonard, Nuclear Ambitions: The Spread of Nuclear Weapons 1989-1990, Boulder: Westview Press, 1990.

Spykman, Nicholas, The Geography of Peace, New York: Harcourt Brace Javonovich, 1944.

Sykes, Sir Percy, A History of Persia, Volume I, New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969.

The Military Balance 1993-94, London: Brassey's Ltd, 1993.

Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, John H. Finley, Jr., transl. New York: Modern Library, 1951.

Volskiy, Dmitry, "Observer's View: Iran-Central Asia: Export of Commodities and Not of Ideological Merchandise," New Times International Moscow, October 1993 in FBIS-JPRS, Central Eurasia, 8 December 1993.

Walt, Stephen M., The Origins of Alliances, Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1987.

Walt, Stephen M., "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," International Security, Vol. 9, No.4, Spring 1985.

Waltz, Kenneth N., "Systemic and Reductionist Theories," Theory of International Relations reprinted in Neorealism and Its Critics, Robert O. Keohane Ed., New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Wilber, Donald N., Iran: Past and Present, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Woodward, Bob, Veil, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988.

Wright, Robin, Sacred Rage, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.

Wyllie, James, "Iran-Quest for Security and Influence," Jane's Intelligence Review, July 1993.

Zabelin, A., Colonel and O. Cherneta. "Iran's Military Policy," Foreign Military Review, Moscow, April 1993,in FBIS-JPRS, Central Eurasia, 13 October 1993.

Ziarati, Mohammed, "Iranian National Security," Middle East International, 3 April 1993.

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST

	No. Copies
1. Defense Technical Information Center Cameron Station Alexandria, Virginia 22304-6145	2
2. Library, Code 52 Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93943-5100	2
3. Dr. Thomas C. Bruneau Chairman, National Security Affairs (NS/Bn) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93943	1
4. Dr. Peter Lavoy Thesis Advisor (NS/La) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93943	1
5. Dr. John Arquilla Thesis Advisor (NS/Ar) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93943	1
6. Captain Dale R. Davis 5869 Yorkhaven West Dr. Gloucester, Virginia 23061	1
7. Director, Training and Education MCCDC, Code C46 1019 Eliot Rd. Quantico, VA 22134-5027	1