Egypt : A Pivotal State, Britain : A Great Power, USA: The Superpower; The Middle East And World Peace & Stability.

By

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This article attempts to provide a conceptual/theoretical framework, which can be used in analysing the relationship between three key players, with differing roles and relative impact, in attempting to achieve certain political objective(s) in a troubled, but relatively important area of the world.

Part I reviews the Suez Crisis 1956, as an introductory Middle East Crisis, in which a simple "anatomical" approach is adopted, as an introduction to the main subject matter of this article. Part II focuses on the elements of a framework to be used in the development of a hypothesis concerning the interactive relationship between a developing country pivotal state, a great power and a superpower, as related, specifically, to the Middle East area. An attempt is then made in Part III to test the hypothesis on the chosen area. Historical evidence is reviewed, and micro conclusions are drawn. Given the historical evidence, in Part IV a conceptual framework is outlined, which is intended for analytical applications to similar situations, where the underlying assumptions and characteristics apply.

For the purpose of this article, the selected key players are: Egypt - defined as a regional Pivotal State, Britain - as a Great Power, and the United States of America - as the only Superpower. The area selected is the Middle East with problems ranging from Iraq, the Arab-Israeli conflict, to nuclear proliferation, to terrorism, to domestic instability, to civil conflicts.

Part I – The Suez Crisis: An Introductory Middle East Crisis

In introducing the Opening Session of the Suez Conference (see Annexe), I suggested, for illustrative purposes, an "emotional" model, based on the anatomical organs of the human being and their functions:

- Egypt was regarded as the Heart of the World,
- Britain was regarded as the Brain of the World, and
- The USA was regarded as the Muscle of the World.

Out of strong and deep love of the country, I went further in defining the 'special status' of Egypt, by attributing such status to some 'Sacred/ Holy' reasons: for :

- In it, God chose it : as a venue for speaking to His Prophet, Moses
- To it, God chose it : for His Word and Sign, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit Son of Mary, to visit and live as the only place outside his country of birth, and
- From it, God chose it : for Prophet Mohamed (PBUH) to marry one of its Coptic women

Along the same emotional lines, I attributed Britain's greatness to many contributions to humanity: for

- In it the Industrial Revolution began and, henceforth, modern economic science, economic industrialization and prosperity
- * To it, the world looked for wisdom and guidance for many centuries, and
- From it, Shakespeare, Austen, Dickens, and, even, Karl Marx, inspired generations, and, still do, to this day

Based on the above, I put forward a hypothesis that:

"This Heart, Egypt, and, this Brain, Britain, when in synchrony, peace and harmony prevail, and, vice versa when synchrony is no longer prevailing"
To test this hypothesis, it was used in explaining the road to Suez some 50 years ago:
* From July 1952 the Brain started to receive unusual signals from the Heart
- These unusual signals initially caused anxiety, but were beginning to be calmly interpreted after the withdrawals of British troops from the Suez Canal Zone
- But this calm interpretation was suddenly interrupted as a result of a sudden action by the Muscle of the World; the U.S.
- This was followed by a dramatic unexpected reaction by the Valve of the Heart at the time – the charismatic leader of Egypt , Gamal Abdul Nasser

In response to the sudden action by the USA - no finance for the High Dam Project- and the dramatic reaction by Nasser - the Nationalization of the Suez Canal Company - the Brain, Britain, reacted on impulse and panic. A hasty decision, by Eden, followed, which was more dramatic, and future events proved it to be catastrophic, that is:

> "The Brain decided to conduct a coup d'etat : to assume the role of the Muscle and to proceed and carry out a Heart Surgery to replace the Valve, Nasser, at a time when Heart Surgery was virtually unheard of"

Revenge came so quickly from the Muscle of the World and the 'damaged Brain' had no option but to accept the price of irrationality and to resume thinking rationally. Ironically, this simple hypothesis may also explain the road to Baghdad 2003.

The above, though may be too emotional, simplistic, and, perhaps, even biologically unscientific, it illustrates, at least, how the interaction between the three key players, in differing degrees, dealt with a significant crisis some fifty years ago.

One Lesson is the need for serious consultation between a Great Power and a Superpower, with whom the former is supposedly to be tied up in a Special Relationship and are both members of a strategic alliance (NATO). Such consultation becomes necessary when the former is facing a significant challenge, not only to its vital interests alone, but also to the vital interests of its friendly Superpower, its Western Allies and other powers, including another Superpower at the time the Soviet Union.

A second lesson is that force alone cannot resolve a dispute between a Great Power - not even a Superpower, as events later on proved - and an important regional Power - say Pivotal. With calm, rational, calculated and consultative diplomacy, one can even dare to say, in all cases without exception, much more can be achieved compared with force; though, of course, they are not mutually exclusive.

Last, but not least, another lesson is to be noted; namely the critical responsibility of the Superpower in crisis management. In the case above, for example, and despite the many interpretations or misinterpretations, there is no doubt that the wise far-sighted leadership of the U.S. President, Eisenhower, proved to be decisive in the event, even with a militant aggressive Secretary of State (almost Neoconservative. in today's terms - Secretary Foster Dulles) and that his decisiveness most probably, prevented a long term disaster for Western interests.

It is worth trying, at this stage, to outline the specific characteristics of this half a century ago crisis, before we go any further: Firstly, it was a crisis that occurred in an

atmosphere influenced significantly by Cold War considerations, with the Soviet Union going through a period of radical change following the 20th Congress of the Communist Party, on one hand. On the other hand, it was similarly a period of great importance for Nasser's regime, as he was trying to strengthen his authority, after a period of intensive internal struggle, within the group of the so-called Free Officers, who carried out the 1952 coup d'etat. Eden was, also, trying to place his own stamp on the British Government and the Conservative Party, after long frustrated years living in the shadow of Winston Churchill waiting, sometimes patiently and sometimes impatiently, for his turn of leadership to come

Secondly, this was a crisis between, on the face of it, a one Great Power and a one de facto key regional player, trying and already emerging as a de jour regional leader. Despite the fact that the subject of the conflict may, on the surface, appear to be limited and simple, at least in the narrow legal sense, concerning the ownership and management of a 'company'; namely the Suez Canal Company; the full short and long term ramifications appeared to be both strategic and grave. This was the case given the Cold War dimension, the fears regarding Nasser's ambitions, and Britain's lack of realization or refusal of admission that the days of the Empire were over or definitely on the way

Thirdly, and surprisingly, despite the fact that the crisis started with a unilateral American action regarding the withdrawal of finance of the High Dam, and against a restored constructive, even friendly, background in the British/Egyptian relationship, the US Government took, or at least publicly, a back seat, following the response by Nasser of Nationalizing the Suez Canal. Only after the tripartite attack on Egypt did the US Government reappear on the world political scene, with mighty and severe political and economic measures

Fourthly, the manner in which the British Government (or rather Eden personally as documents released later on showed) conducted the public and secret political campaign with some theatrical finale, to be followed by a similarly theatrically managed military campaign, was so strange in all its aspects. No convincing explanation, or even admission, has until now been provided. The question remains as to why on earth should Britain take such a high risk action on a matter that could have been resolved without Britain signing a secret military alliance with Israel, and involving itself with the Algerian War of Liberation by, again, forming a military alliance with France!!!

Thus, instead of trying to solve one problem, the Suez Canal, Britain seemed willingly to have decided, and using force, to engage itself in three, and not one problem : the Suez Canal, the Arab-Israel Conflict and the Algerian War of Liberation. Moreover, all this was done behind the back of a Superpower with whom Britain was supposed to have a special relationship. Perhaps, we should note, at this stage, that the Tripartite arrangement at that time represented a practice, from which the Americans took a leaf from its book; namely forming coalitions (real or superficial) in implementing military missions in the Middle East!!!

The above example represented a case of conflict between a Great Power and a key regional power (which will be defined later as pivotal), while the Superpower became ultimately responsible in resolving the Crisis. For the purpose of this article, what

needs to be analyzed is the interactive relationship between the three key players referred to above, in dealing with problems, not just one, facing them, and not, in the first instance, between them, in an area of critical importance to them and many others associated or not associated with them. A turbulent area sitting on a volcano about to erupt, with much wider implications beyond its border territories; namely the Middle East (in British Terms) or the Near East (in American terms), which will be briefly outlined in the next section.

Part II – Elements of a Framework: Today's Middle East Scene and the Key Players – The Road From Suez to Iraq

1- The Scene : The Volcanic Middle East

Seventeen years have quickly passed since the liberation of Kuwait by a formidable heterogeneous coalition (El Mokadem 2001). Surprisingly, apart from one invasion and another in waiting and a Hezbollah/Israeli military encounter, the Middle East picture looks almost identical, in its basic features, to what it was prior to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990.

Instability is the most repeated word by all commentators and others. Madrid and all the associated hopes and aspirations, have simply vanished and are hardly referred to except as a" cliché". "Land-for-Peace" has turned into "More Land-for-No Peace".
Oslo is now just a history or convenience, and Peace Accords have been replaced by 'buzz' words; such as the "Tennet Understanding", the "Mitchell Report" and the like. A "Road Map" is invented , with no roads and no maps!! The inventors are the "Quartet", consisting of (of course) the USA and others(?) - Russia, EU and UN. Another new "Quartet" was recently invented out of the blue, consisting of the so-called Middle East moderates; i.e. acceptable to the USA; namely Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and The United Arab Emirates. Talk of an independent state for the Palestinians have simply become the preferred scapegoat language of President George W. Bush when he is stuck for words when the subject of Palestine is raised. The only serious talk by the same President is about the serious threat to the security of nuclear Israel!!!

The "Arab East" is in turmoil. Having just come out of a war between Hezbollah and Israel, it seems to be on the verge of more wars. Two civil wars in the Arab East are predicted by King Abdullah of Jordan and one more possibly with Israel. The danger bells are also ringing loud in Lebanon, following the murder of Harriri and the standstill relating to the international court. With a so-called Government in Gaza, with no authority defined borders or revenue- simply a President and a Prime Minister presiding over a big isolated prison, with multiple armed organizations, fighting between Palestinian factions has become the norm not the exception. Nobody dares to point a finger at the root cause of this chronic problem; namely "Occupation in the 21st Century". Instead, scapegoat language is always handy to cover for double standards, such as "observers", "monitors", "protection", "end of violence", "terrorism', and the like.

In the relatively longer term, the Arabs have suddenly discovered a magic remedy to all the gruesome fatal strategic mistakes they committed over the years in handling the Arab-Israeli conflict. On one hand the "Intifadha II" is bringing to the Arabs some "stick" needed for any negotiations to succeed between equal parties, even if

some call it terrorism rather than legitimate struggle for independence; except, of course, the deliberate targeting of innocent civilians. On the one hand, the restoration of some "stick" to the negotiating table should assist in any serious negotiation in the future, noting that sadly such stick was surrendered in "Camp David I" and worsened by the abandoning of "Intifadaha 1" for the shameful Oslo .

On the other hand, lessons should be learned from the recent military conflict between Hezbollah and Israel, in that "faith and conviction" are prerequisites for constructive negotiations or legitimate armed struggle. Both the "Iitiffadha" and the recent military conflict in Southern Lebanon have proven the fallacy of the unbeaten army. In fact, one can argue that Israel's nuclear arsenal, a monopoly since Camp David, has been neutralized. Successful negotiation is achievable, if only a leaf is taken out of British diplomacy; namely the dual "Carrot and Stick" diplomacy, while noting that lasting peace is between "Equals".

Linked to this is a picture of the "American Gulf " (no longer Persian or Arab Gulf) , which is amazingly similar to what it was seventeen years ago. Abandoning the policy of "influence by Proxy" for the policy of "influence by armed physical presence", the Gulf Area is now a "host" to thousands and thousands of American troops with bases scattered from the Euphrates to the Red Sea, supported by mighty naval ships of every kind.

Iraq has become the first example in history of a totally anarchist state, a significant base for Al-Qaa'da and other similar groups, and fomenting the start of a civil war between Suni and Sheya Muslims, which threatens a much wider conflict beyond the Arabian Peninsula. Bukharin and Trotsky should thank Bush/Blair for making their utopian dream a reality for the first time in history, i.e. a State of Anarchy.

Moreover, gifts were presented to Iran on a plate, so to speak, absolutely free of charge: destroying the threat to Iran from Afghanistan, and offering Iraq to Iran in a way that Iran would never have dreamt of achieving. Now, after offering such gifts, America is mobilizing for pre-emptive/preventive military action against Iran for another Weapons of Mass Destruction Story, as if one story is not sufficient? As a result of all this, hostility, tension, threats and counter threats easily describe the high degree of instability which prevails in the Gulf area. The Dictator of Baghdad is gone, many others remain and are regarded as allies, friends and solid supporters of Democracy and the reconstruction of countries that were never constructed in the first place!

Unfortunately, this is the ugly picture, despite the huge sacrifice in human life, and the billions and billions of dollars, which have gone down the drain; some of which aggravated the already existing and widespread corruption. In short, the temperature in the Gulf- climatically, politically and militarily - remains cruelly burning hot, and annoyingly sticky.

In both sub-regions, the interrelated problem - or rather "plays" - are being performed in the same old "theatres", with more or less the same "actors", "producers", and "directors", and the same "five-act-plays". The interrelated problems focus predominantly on defence, security, stability and sovereignty issues. Lately, other

slogan type topics were added, such as democracy, construction, reconstruction, the Greater Middle East….etc

The "plays" are being performed, or rather filmed, in the main theatres of the two sub-regions; though the Riyadh theatre appears to be more equipped. But the main theatre remains on Capital Hill/ White House, Washington D.C. Apart from a few younger regional actors - of course the sons of the older ones, with the same Assad family name, for example - the same leading regional actors still occupy the main stage: from the Al Malki/Al Sadr duo, replacing the Saddam/Azziz, to Olmert/Perez deceit, replacing Sharon/Perez. Internationally, the key actors are back: with Dick Cheney promoted from Secretary of Defence under Bush Sr. to Vice President under Bush Jr., Powell politicized and after a stunning theatrical performance in the UN Security Council Theatre was sacked and replaced by a new Iron Lady, and Bush Sr. demoted to Bush Jr.; a lethal combination. The Theme for the " FIVE ACT PLAY" is " SUSPENCE AND EXTREME VIOLENCE", and the COLOURS are mainly "RED AND KHAKI" !!

Financing such "Productions" is provided both in dollars and in kind. The dollars are largely and ultimately "oil revenues"- made easy, of course by the exceptionally and unexplained very high oil prices!!, turning "surpluses into deficits" and" prosperity into continuing recession".   No-one should complain for defending one's own country, especially if it produces valuable oil, by contracting others - of course friendly others - to provide such defence on their behalf. One wonders what is the external threat now facing these countries after the disappearance of Saddam, and his Weapons of Mass Destruction. As to the in kind finance, it is the valuable type of capital; namely human capital. That is mainly Palestinian flesh and blood, and the murder of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis, and their deliberate starvation and sickness. The preferred currency is Arab Children, with Iranians soon to follow, thus ensuring no future for the "wicked children of the non-Israeli Middle East".

The "directors" are the short-sighted dogmatic fanatic hands in Bush's Washington D.C., in Blair's London, and in Tel Aviv, with some key "assistant directors" in some key regional capitals and others in European capitals. The figure-head (UN) was, until recently, from a developing nation, but has recently been promoted to an ex-senior diplomat from a semi-advanced country. All were and remain ready to receive blame for failure, should the "five-act-play" require them to do so. The motives are always "domination" and "greed"

More recently, specifically since 9/11, fear has been used as a very effective way of galvanizing popular support for foreign policy actions, particularly in relation to the use of force or the passing of unprecedented internal security legislations. In some occasions these are complemented by campaigns that, in some situations, could result in implanting hatred on racial, ethnic or religious grounds. Fortunately, however, there is evidence from recent polls in the USA and Britain that such methods are no longer succeeding in galvanizing support.

A positive recent development is the energetic activities by the U.S. Secretary of State to reactivate the peace efforts in the Palestine/Israeli conflict, and in exploring new approaches to the Iraq quagmire. These new attempts came as a result of the Baker-Hamilton Report and the control by Democrats of both Congress and Senate, in

addition to the increasing unpopularity of the Bush Administration. Similar trends are also noted in Britain. In response, the recent confirmation, in the latest Arab Summit, of the so-called Arab Initiative of recognition of Israel in return of Arab land, occupied by Israel in 1967, is another positive step. Israeli reaction is encouraging, though not totally supportive. Efforts are currently under way to attempt to start peace negotiations with no preconditions attached in advance, using the Arab Initiative as a framework. Despite such development the Middle East skies remain so cloudy, and serious dangers are still brewing and could explode at any time. With the new initiatives from both sides, though to some extent late, there is a golden opportunity for diplomacy to succeed.

Hence, back to the subject matter of this article, what can a pivotal state, a great power and a superpower do to contribute to peace and stability in the Middle East?

2- The Key Players: The Superpower, The Great Power, And The Pivotal

At this stage, it is assumed that there are three states which are capable of playing key roles in the volcanic Middle East, as described above. These states are: The United States of America, Great Britain – at the international level - and Egypt - at the regional level. In this section an attempt is made to justify such assumption, while in Part III, historical evidence will be provided, from Middle East Crises, to further confirm the key roles played, and can still be played, by the three key players in dealing with present day Middle East problems. However, it is important to highlight, at this stage, two points:

The first is that being a key player does not necessarily mean that the involvement of the three key players is always a necessary condition for the effective handling of all crises in the area, or that their participation is required at all stages of the crisis management. As will be demonstrated from historical evidence in Part III, this has not always been the case, neither is it necessary in all cases. The second point is that although the involvement of the key players may be necessary, it is not, by itself, sufficient to ensure effective handling of a problem or to guarantee its success. Almost in all cases, at least the participation, if not the cooperation of other parties is, in differing degrees, also necessary.

2.1 The Superpower : The United States of America

More than half a decade has passed since the collapse of the Soviet Union, changing the global structure of power from basically a bipolar one during the Cold War to one in which there is only one superpower; namely the United States of America. This description of the USA as the only one superpower can easily be justified by the unmatched overwhelming magnitude of US utilized and un-utilized resources and its economic and military might.

But , being the only one superpower "does not mean that the world is "uni-polar", whereby a uni-polar system would have one superpower, no significant major powers, and many minor powers. As a result, the superpower could effectively resolve important international issues alone, and no combinations of other states would have the power to prevent it from doing so. For several centuries the classical world under Rome, and at times in East Asia under China approximated this Model. (Huntington).

It is clear that the USA is not a superpower in this uni-polar sense, neither is the system a bipolar one like the Cold War. It is not either a multi-polar with several major powers with similar strength and capabilities co-operating or competing with

each other as the situation requires, with coalitions being necessary to deal with international issues. For several centuries the European scene approximated this model.

If the prevailing power structure, in which the USA is the one superpower, is neither uni-polar, or bi-polar, or multi-polar, what sort of system is it?

According to Huntington : **" Contemporary international politics does not fit into any of these three models. It is instead a strange hybrid, a uni-multipolar system with one superpower and several major power".** This means that: **"The settlement of key international issues requires action by the single superpower, but always with some combinations of other major states",** on one hand, but, **"The single superpower can, however, veto action on key issues by combinations of other states",** on the other hand.

Based on this, Huntington concludes: **"The United States, of course, is the sole state with pre-eminence in every domain of power - economic, military, diplomatic, ideological, technological and cultural - with the reach and capabilities to promote its interests in virtually every part of the world".** At the same time: "At a second level are major regional powers that are pre-eminent in areas of the world, without being able to extend their interests and capabilities as globally as the United States. They include the German-French combination in Europe, Russia in Eurasia, China and potentially Japan in East Asia, India in South Asia, Iran in Southwest Asia, Brazil in Latin America, and South Africa and Nigeria in Africa." "At a third level are secondary regional powers whose interests often conflict with the more powerful regional states. These include Britain in relation to the German-French combination, Ukraine in relation to Russia, Japan in relation to China, South Korea in relation to Japan, Pakistan in relation to India, Saudi Arabia in relation to Iran, and Argentine in relation to Brazil"

Although Huntington's analysis concerning the powers and constrains of the USA, as the one superpower, is accurate and realistic, and the basic features of the uni-multipolar system appear to make a lot of sense, the composition of the second and third levels is only partially meaningful. Its partiality is attributed to what appears to be a classification relating to specific events, disputes or conflicts per se, and is not justified, in some cases, by other strategic factors, such geography, demography or other factors.

Given the role of the US in a uni-multipolar framework; i.e. cannot do alone but needs others, but having the power of veto; and taking for granted the critical importance of the Middle East to US interests one needs to review, briefly, US strategy in the Middle East as it evolved in the last twenty years or so. This will be presented, simply, as an outline of the important features of such strategy, as viewed by the author, and will not delve into great details or specific policies. Any attempt to cover this subject sufficiently will require a series of articles, which is not specifically the subject matter of this article.

The presented outline will, therefore, focus on those aspects which are of high relevance to the subject of this article. Also, as in the previous section - The Scene - the two sub-region approach is adopted for simplicity, without, hopefully, loss of substance .

(i) The Stable Disequilibrium Strategy (SDS)

Starting with the Arab East's sub-region where the Arab-Israeli conflict represented the main threat to security and stability, and following the Camp David Peace Accord between Egypt and Israel, and a similar accord with Jordan, the adopted strategy by the US towards this sub-region could be described - borrowing economic jargon - as that of the Stable Disequilibrium Strategy (SDS). In terms of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, by SDS it is meant, simplistically, "ensuring continuing stability- non-eruption of major military conflicts, primarily (if not only) with Israel, **even if the root causes of such conflicts remain, by and large, unresolved".** In this sense, stability means no large scale military confrontations with Israel - say on the scale of the October 1973 War - can feasibly occur at any time or with any party or parties. One should note that despite Israel's military superiority, up to Camp David, such military superiority did not prevent the eruption of military conflicts on a large scale.

Following the Camp David's de facto acceptance (in return for promises that were soon ignored after the Accord came into force) of Israel's monopoly of nuclear and thermo-nuclear capability, supported by long range delivery systems, the Strategic Military Balance changed solely in favour of Israel. Theoretically, this meant that, in the absence of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), any party or parties launching a war on Israel could face total destruction which could not be responded to in kind. The prospect, or even the probability, of total destruction represented a real deterrent to any party or parties considering an attack on Israel. **This meant in polite diplomatic terms Stability, ensured by the fear of such magnitude of destruction. As to disequilibrium,** this meant defining a narrow framework for resolving the Arab-Israeli Conflict (of course, totally favourable to Israel allowing it to keep occupied land and illegal settlements and no right of return) and offering such narrow frameworks as final stage solutions. Such offers took different forms and differing sponsorships, and with or without UN involvement. **The substance has always been the same to the Arab side : accept something better than nothing !!**

Of course both Camp David and Oslo introduced new concepts of quasi sovereignty. This meant recovering occupied land is conditional on accepting limited sovereign rights over recovered land. Oslo also meant creating a large prison presided over and run by a so-called President of a so-called authority. Both are certainly new creative inventions in International Law. In both cases they were defined as peace.
If such "peace" is accepted, all is well because it will have changed nothing in reality, except relieving Israel from the bother and expenditure of managing undesired strips of land and unwanted people. If not accepted, nothing is lost or feared, as the comfort of the frightening "stability based on the threat of total destruction to whoever dares"' provide the guarantee of the continuity of the status quo.

This strategy has recently been seriously challenged by the Intifidha and the war in Southern Lebanon. In neither could Israel use its own nuclear arsenal. Also, in economic terms no market can remain permanently in dis-equilibrium, even if it enjoyed stability in the short run.

(ii) The Duel Strategy For the Gulf (DSG) : All Roads Lead To Iran

The United States strategy for the Gulf stand on two major pillars. One is geopolitical and the other is economic. The two pillars rely for their enforcement on one revived

instrument which can be summed up as **:** " influence by military physical presence, no longer   influence by proxy".   As to the second instrument, it is a brand new mathematical equation, naturally born by the Neocons after 9/11, which will be described later. Before proceeding to briefly elaborate, it is worth mentioning that the DSG, although does not ignore the famous Duel Containment Strategy, it is not the same one.

The geopolitical pillar of the DSG complements, strategically, the Stable Disequilibrium Strategy (SDS) for the Arab East. It takes into consideration the critical role the Gulf area played in the October War, in using what was termed at the time as the oil weapon. It recognises, in an explicit way, efforts by some states in the area to develop non-conventional weapons, some of which are regarded by the US as rogue states. Only the U.S. and its allies are permitted to have nuclear armed navy in the area providing the only defence umbrella. For this to work, there should be no challenge to the status quo in the whole area at large. In other words, the unilateral monopoly of the nuclear and the thermonuclear arsenal by the Israelis should not, under any circumstances, be changed. Although Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) can lead to peace, as it contributed to the end of the Cold War, this cannot be guaranteed in the case of the Gulf region. Nuclear weapons in the hands of dictatorial extremist, or even terrorist governments can make nuclear exchange a reality for the first time in history. **In short, the first pillar of the Dual Gulf Strategy is to prevent any power in this strategically important area from developing nuclear military capability.**

In the light of this, one can understand the Axis of Evil, the invasion of Iraq, and the military threat to Iran. One can also place in the correct context policies such as the Dual Containment, (or the Differentiated Containment) and the Bush Doctrine of Pre-emption. One observation, in this respect, warrants a big question . Given that Iraq did not have WMD, and given what we know now that this fact was known to both Bush and Blair before the invasion of Iraq, one wonders as to whether Iraq was the strategic step in the road to Tehran? Or perhaps **Iraq** was meant to be both a l**esson - Tehran behave yourself or else look what happened to Iraq** – or an ideal **Military base** within few miles from the Iranian borders - **Iran if you do not learn the Iraq lesson peacefully, we can force you to learn it !** If no such weapons are found in Iran the Regime Change slogan is handy, and Blair's friend and soon to succeed him will definitely help!!!

Turning now to the **economic pillar** of the Duel Strategy for the Gulf (DSG). It focuses, predominantly, but not solely on oil, and, in particular on US access and the security of the continuity of supply. Rightly or wrongly, the **US seems to be totally convinced that its access to oil and the continuity of supply is under serious threat.** This could have been entertained during the Cold War era, but hard to believe it as an immediate threat or in the short term under prevailing circumstances.
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Apart from the fact that most oil-producers' governments in the area, perhaps with the single exception of Iran, are close friends of the US (in some cases their survival depends on US support and protection), the realities of their economies make them more dependent on the US than the US on them. Also, as a matter of accepted economic theory the "consumer is sovereign", and not the other way around. Added

to this is the fact that most of these countries' economies, perhaps except Iraq and Iran, rely almost solely on oil revenue from exports.

With the exception of oil revenue, most of them have simply no other resources, importing virtually everything including people. The majority of their imports come from the US or the West, although their imports from China are on the increase, but not yet in a threatening way, on one hand. On the other hand, most of these countries' accumulated wealth is to be found in US and western financial markets. In fact, given their dollar priced oil and, thus, dollar oil revenues received, these countries' currencies are simply used for local transactions only, which remain, until now, strictly tied to the US dollar. Not only that, but one can go as far as saying their monetary and fiscal policies are, by and large, determined in Washington D.C., partly by the Federal Reserve!!.

Although, one should not go to the extreme of repeating some of the uninformed slogans, such as "if they do not sell to us - being US and Europe - they will have no option but to drink it"; in my considered view, **the so-called threat is extremely exaggerated, in fact scientifically and realistically unfounded. Nevertheless, be it as it may, the US perceives a real threat in the very near future, warranting an explicit pillar in its Duel Strategy for the Gulf.**

This economic/oil pillar of the Strategy(DSG) simply links the Gulf Oil with the Caspian Sea Oil, one being a contingency for the other. As stated by Amuzegar (1998): "With the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991, four new states emerged on the edges of the Caspian Sea, endowed with oil and gas reserves estimated to be worth between $2.5 trillion and $3 trillion at today's (1998) prices. The full extent of the subterranean energy resources of these countries - Azerbaijian, Kazakastan, Turkmaenistan and Uzbekistan - is still unknown, but by all accounts their mineral wealth is the largest find in three decades". Based on this, the US strategy upgraded these countries to a very high level of priority. In addition to creating military presence in some of these countries, significant capital and technology have been channelled to these countries, encouraged by the US Government. Their importance is continuing to grow, particularly as Russia started to use its significant energy resources in pursuing their geopolitical objectives in Europe and Central Asia, and as China is emerging as an important oil importer.

Nevertheless, despite their significant potential, there are considerable problems associated with the development and sharing of the Caspian Sea oil reserves, most of which relate to long outstanding territorial water disputes. In addition, there are also serious problems relating to the transportation of the oil production to marketing outlets to the Indian sub-continent and elsewhere, through pipelines which cross many disputed borders. Again, some of the reasons relate either to territorial disputes, or to political disagreements. In addition, most of these countries lack sufficient infrastructures and are internally unstable.
In this whole scenario, a key member of the so-called Axis of Evil figure out as the villain behind most of the oil-related problems, not only for genuine economic disagreement, but also for geopolitical reasons, as Iran regards this area as forming part of its sphere of influence. One can now understand why the US is focussing on Iran. It represents a threat to the US strategy in the Arab East - the SDS Strategy, by trying to develop a military nuclear capability. In so doing it is turning the US Dual

Strategy for the Gulf upside down, introducing the Mutually Assured Destruction to the two sub-regions, which may result in nuclear exchange, in which the US will be dragged into it. On the oil front, Iran is a serious obstacle to the contingency oil strategy of the US, not only in the Gulf, but also in the Caspian Sea area and Central Asia.

Once again, this begs the same question: **was the invasion of Iraq directed specifically at Iraq, for the sake of Democracy for example, or was it actually directed at Iran? Either a lesson, look what happened to Iraq, or a strategic base** from which to jump on Iran and eliminate, once and for all, Iran's threatening behaviour. **We seem to be back on the road to Teheran!!** However, one should not unduly worry as the Change of the ugly Regimes slogan is still alive and kicking on the Bush/ B..? agenda! What about the instruments, or policies, used in the execution of the said Strategies?

Basically, the instruments, or policies, are all based on the "Carrot" and "Stick" principles. If you show understanding (?) you are rewarded, but if you do not, or, worse, if you adopt proactive hostile policies, damaging or likely to be damaging, towards the US, punishment is to be expected. The rewards cover many conventional and unconventional "gifts", which vary from straight un-conditional (!!) aid, to grants, to facilities, to long term loans or forgiveness of loans, to removal from certain 'baddies' lists and many others, including political allowances, such as turning a blind eye on violations of human rights, suppression of freedom, fabrication of elections and the like. As to the punishment, they also vary, ranging from simple arm-twisting, angry eye winking, to the famous sanctions, blacklisting, freezing, and, in some cases, even confiscation of assets, military strikes, limited military operation, and finally wars, declared or undeclared.

Except members of NATO, most of these measures are applied selectively, and in varying degrees, on all countries, particularly to those that are of vital interest to the US. One country is favoured with very special treatment; namely Israel. For Israel, the contents of the 'basket of sticks' do not apply no matter how grave the defiance is, on one hand. On the other hand, Israel stands to benefit generously from all, and more, of the contents of the' basket of carrots'

In support of these policies, sticks and carrots, many doctrines are formulated to justify, either before or after, the application of such policies. Again, most of such doctrines do not apply to either member's of NATO, or, of course, to Israel. Examples are the Dual Containment, the Bush Doctrine of Pre-emption. In some cases one does not bother with Doctrines or the like. Slogans, such as Axis of Evil, and the like, are more than sufficient. In fact, no distinction is made between imminent threat, likely threat, or expected threat, or even no threat. In this latter case, imaginary threat is sufficient. On occasions, most recently messages from God were received during prayers, and are instantly interpreted geopolitically. Who dares to delay Sacred Orders from the Mighty God of Love, in relation to launching wars against innocent civilians!!!!! The mix-up of religion and politics has reached its climax since the sad deplorable actions of 9/11.

Sometimes, endorsement is sought from the Security Council. If it comes, it is welcome. In some cases, when it suits, resolutions are subjected to special interpretations, assisted by the British skills in these situations. One example has been the justification of the exclusion zones in Northern and Southern Iraq.

Recently the key magic word has become prevention, based, I dare say, on the popular preventive medicine approach. Wars aside, this meant a return to an old colonial strategy of stationing troops on foreign lands. Until recently, with traditional hostility to imperialism, the US relied on combinations of proxies to guard US interests, and/or stationing Naval warships in International Waters, in the vicinity of countries of significant interest; friends or foes. With some of those proxies having become so aged, or their regimes have become so unstable, the US felt obliged to revert to old colonial methods. As a result, US forces are physically stationed, in thousands and thousands, all over the globe.

Borrowing from the old colonial dictionary did not stop at physically stationing forces or installing puppet governments, or copying disgraceful election practices, or fomenting the seeds of civil and ethnic wars (the infamous Divide and Rule), but has gone even further. Leaves from the disreputable books of colonial map- drawing are borrowed, carefully studied and are in the process of being implemented. For this purpose, and consistent with the post 9/11 euphoria, an equation is being cooked up by the fanatics of Bush and Blair. The form of this equation is that terrorism, the dependent variable, is assumed to be a function of two explanatory variables; namely Islam and Money, nonlinearly feeding terrorism. This equation is now ready to be used in map redrawing. Examples of new entities in the Gulf, perhaps to be created as the need arises, are new Shiyaa Oil States, to either compete with another unfriendly Shiyaa Oil State; say Iran, or to create a larger Shiyaa Oil State, if say Iran was persuaded to be friendly, to balance out the large number of Sunni Oil States. Separation of money, say, from the oil of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, from Islam, in the rest of Saudi Arabia, may become a possibility!

Before we close this section on the US strategy and policies in the Middle East, perhaps a brief comment on two subjects seem in order. The first relates to the US post 9/11 approach in general. There is no doubt that this catastrophic event came as a great shock to the American establishment and to the American people. Not only that it was the biggest loss of innocent life in one incident in the history of the US, but significantly it virtually led to the closing down of all the vital US establishments from government to economy, to the extent of portraying a gloomy picture of all facets of life having come to a complete halt. The reaction was equally unique focusing on two major policies: internationally relying, virtually solely, on the use of force in the fight against terrorism, while domestically, introduction of new domestic measures, which included some practices alien to long standing American principles and traditions.

Evidence, so far available, on the degree of success of solely relying on the use of force internationally, cast considerable doubt on the wisdom and effectiveness of such approach. Perhaps, one may argue that it is too soon to finally judge this approach, given the magnitude of the problem and its complexity. Even if this was the case, one should not exclude the use of force as totally inappropriate. ***It is the sole reliance on force which is questionable.*** As to the resort to unusual security practices, suffice it to say that the American people, the true vanguards of freedom and liberty, have started to show their total resentment to such alien practices. Recent election results and the polls provide some concrete evidence of their rejection.

What should have been the US reaction to 9/11? I have to admit that my answer to this question is both brief, without undermining in any way the magnitude of the problem; and idealistic, if not utopian. America missed a great opportunity of

introducing a new concept of civilization, hitherto unheard of in the long history of recent civilizations. America could have used this catastrophic crime to sponsor, lead, and put into effect a civilization founded on justice for all peoples, as the root cause is to be found in injustice, true or perceived; without justifying 9/11 in any form or way, or anything remotely similar, America should have, then, placed all its mighty unmatched resources, political, economic, technological, cultural and military, behind such a new civilization which is based on the rational enforcement of worldwide justice. After all, when all is said and done, America would have been remembered for having introduced to future generations the first civilization based largely on justice; not on magnificent buildings, monuments, factories or inventions. But what actually happened, instead of America placing its mighty resources behind justice, sadly America placed its resources at the forefront of its policy, and ignored totally the root cause of world problems. One hopes that it is not too late for the most friendly, moralistic people on earth, the people of America, to sponsor, with their principled determination, such a noble cause.

The second issue is made, naively, to be related to the above; namely the subject of Islam. In this respect, I will only quote from an interesting article by Ali Mazrui (Sept/Oct. 1997, Foreign Affairs) on Islamic and Western Values. He asserts: "Of all the value systems in the world, Islam has been the most resistant to the leading destructive forces of the twentieth century- including Aids", on the one hand. On the other hand, "Western Liberal democracy has enabled societies to enjoy openness, government accountability, popular participation and high economic productivity, but Western pluralism has also been a breeding ground for racism, fascism, exploitation, and genocide". He, then, concludes: "If history is to end in arrival at the ultimate political order, it will require more than the West's message on how to maximize the best of human nature. Humankind must also consult Islam about how to check the worst in human nature - from alcoholism to racism, materialism to Natzism, drug addiction to Marxism as the opiate of the intellectuals ".

Attention is now turned to the Great Power: Britain, with whom the Superpower has had what is called a 'Special relationship" for a long time.

2.2 The Great Power: Great Britain

It is unnecessary, in the context of this article, to engage in a long debate on what is meant by the term great power, a term "coined in 1814 and was used to represent the most important powers in Europe in the post Napoleonic era". (Wikipedia) Recognizing the large shifts in power which have occurred since then, most notably in World War I and World War II , "a great power is a nation or state that, through its great economic, political and military strength, is able to exert power over world diplomacy. Its opinions are strongly taken into account by other nations before taking diplomatic or military action. Characteristically, they have the ability to intervene militarily anywhere, and they also have soft cultural power". But, significantly, "One of the hallmarks of contemporary great power status is permanent membership on the United Nations Security Council"

True, recently a lot of talk, the majority and the extreme of which is superficially non-academic, have raised doubts about whether Britain remains a great power. Indulging in such debate is not likely to be that productive. Suffice it to say, on the 25th anniversary of the Falkland War, and recalling the magnificent capabilities of

deploying an army of 3.9 million in World War I, and 2.9 million in World War II, and an industry producing by end of World War II 131,549 aircrafts of all types, 480,943 trucks and lorries, 124,877 anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, and 27,896 tanks and self- propelled guns, and many other remarkable achievements, there can be no doubt, Britain has been and remains, despite most recent performances, a Great Power. Yes, as Nail Ferguson (Empire) said "The British Empire is long dead, only flotsam and jetsam remain", but also yes Britain remains a Great Power, even a better one without a colonial empire.

For the purpose of this article, there are two aspects relating to Britain as a Great Power that have been and remain of considerable relevance to an effective role in the volcanic scene of the Middle East. One aspect is Britain's unmatched deep and ultra-sensitive knowledge of the Middle East and most of its past and present problems. Such knowledge covers the full spectrum from cultural/social/historical to economic and political. It ranges from drawing borders, creating new states and cancelling others, from creating monarchies to establishing governing orders and practices, from thorough understanding of old histories to creating new histories, from solving problems to creating new ones or being an integral chronic party in some others, and, last but not least, from providing dedicated compassionate support in preserving cultures and heritages to educating generations and generations, I being a proud one of them, of Middle East population of noble value systems. Yes, nobody agreed with colonialism, but also yes British colonialism was not all bad, at least when compared with other contemporaneous colonial powers which deliberately eliminated cultures, heritages and even languages.

With this in mind, there can be no lasting solutions to any of the chronic Middle East problems without a thorough in-depth understanding, by other important outside powers, of all that matters in the Middle East: population, culture, history and resources . On this, one can say, with confidence, that there can be no better nation than the British in this respect. The unique" brain bank" at the Foreign Office not only understands the Middle East in depth, but, most importantly feels It!! This is to be compared with the 'high-jacking' of foreign policy-making from the expert hands, brains and down-to-earth experience of the Foreign Office into the grapping uninformed, inexperienced, and media-motivated "spin-doctors" hands, specially created at Downing Street, for the purpose of providing, always, the "yes" when it is asked for, or even if it is not asked for..

Review of failures in dealing with Middle East problems easily show it to be, to some extent, due to either the superficial involvement of Great Britain or to ignoring it; the 2003 invasion of Iraq is one example amongst many. The opposite is true when Great Britain's in-depth knowledge of the area is seriously, and not superficially, taken into consideration; again the Iraq/Kuwait crises of 1961 and 1990 are examples of success.

The other aspect of relevance to the subject matter of this article is Britain's Special Relationship with the US, on one hand, and Britain's place and role in Europe, on the other hand. The Special Relationship was borne out of the circumstances surrounding World War II, and, in particular its ending. Prime Minister Winston Churchill "is often pictured passing the mantle of world power to the new superpowers America and the Soviet Union". As a result, the Special Relationship was designed primarily to serve defence and intelligence purposes. The UK "surrendered a surprising amount of sovereignty to the US. In 1948, the Labour Government invited American

bombers, nuclear armed, to bases in Britain, and they have been there since, making Britain an automatic participant in World War III. Britain provides bases around the world for the US, and the joint arrangement in intelligence means the US Government can spy on its own citizens' phone calls from the shared facilities in Britain". (Williams 2004). Emphasis in defence also meant emphasis on intelligence. In fact Grant (Grant 2000) goes as far as stating "the special relationship is at its most special in intelligence. The United Kingdom has felt compelled to build an Anglo-American intelligence alliance, which can be traced back to the BRUSA (Britain-USA) agreement, established between the two World Wars and which flourished as a joint wartime signal intelligence operation".

But even in relation to intelligence, one needs to consider, so to speak, this "speciality". According to Urban (Urban, Mark1996), it is not an equal exchange of information and leads to "questionable results". Baker (Undated) pointed out that "Often the US will use the U.K. to complete its jigsaw of an intelligence assessment and, in return, either offer it nothing at all, offer it masses of low grade intelligence or a single piece of fairly useful information". Using the case of the Falklands War, Charles Grant concludes that it is a one sided relationship. **"In the final analysis they will always do what is good for the US - and therein lies the core of the U.K. problem**".

Given its defence and intelligence nature, the "Special Relationship" was originally directed at Europe's interrelated security and intelligence. With the end of the Cold War, the Special Relationship was extended beyond Europe, to include the Middle East, both politically and militarily. A constructive example was the proactive co-operation between the two countries in relation to the forming up of a formidable coalition and the liberation of Kuwait in 1990. Another far less constructive example is the "collaboration and total endorsement" by the Blair Government of the Bush invasion of Iraq.

Although the Special Relationship in defence and intelligence, as stated before, has been a relationship between unequal parties - favourable to the US - politically it was not always one-sided. Many examples, up to the Blair Government, can be quoted where the parties did not see eye-to-eye on key foreign policy issues. Eisenhower's firm stand during the Suez Crisis forced Britain to get out of Egypt. Harold Wilson adamantly refused Johnson's attempts to involve Britain in the Vietnam War, despite the economic bullying tactics applied by the US at the time. Under Margaret Thatcher, Britain frequently voted for resolutions concerning the Middle East, which were vetoed by the US. In contrast, the U.K has been recently abstaining on Middle East resolutions out of so-called loyalty to the US, and not out of conviction, or support for Israel.

The situation became worse under Blair, where the Special Relationship became totally one-sided - total acceptance of US positions, for example regarding Iraq, not just abstaining. Despite Blair's claims that his hand was on the steering wheel over Iraq, all evidence available is to the contrary. As summed-up by Williams, "What he needed (Blair) was a brake on the locomotive, of the kind that only publicly-stated differences can get. Whispering respectful disagreements to the White House does not do the job with this (Bush) administration".

But the Special Relationship should not be, in principle, "a la Blair model". There was nothing wrong with the Thatcher Model, and she had the strongest relationship with the US, and with both Presidents Reagan and Bush Sr. Again as Williams raises, correctly, the question: "If Ireland, or Jamaica, or Chile, or New Zealand, can pursue an independent foreign policy, and bargain with Washington, then why should the United Kingdom be the old mistress, always waiting and available, but with no claim on American generosity? It is time for Britain to play hard-to-get or to work on an amicable separation". In other words, the time has come to abandon the passive, submissive Blair application of the Special Relationship. Britain's unremitting servility to American policies is not only damaging to Britain's interests, particularly in Europe, but also damaging to the interests of the US and the world at large. What is needed is an honest truthful true friend, and not an always obedient companion.

It is surely time for reassessment, so that Britain can regain its constructive role in world affairs. In fact Blair's policies have lost Britain some respect, long held. Moreover, it damaged its prospects amongst the leaders of the emerging power of united Europe. Fortunately, there appears to be some hope in the horizon, hopefully soon.
William Hague, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, in a recent speech at Chatham House stated that a Tory government would radically overhaul Britain's Foreign Policy by backing away from the" Special Relationship" with Washington and building closer ties with Asia. He also pledged to develop an independent approach to the Middle East and "shift more political weight" to forming friendships with India, China and Japan. While an overhaul of Britain's foreign policy, and an independent approach to the Middle East are most welcome, however, going to the extreme of abandoning totally the" Special Relationship" with the United States is most likely to prove to be a strategic mistake. Yes, the Blair application of the Special Relationship, particularly in the case of the Iraq invasion, was a big mistake, but what is wrong with the Wilson model or the Thatcher model? How can India, China and Japan be a substitute to the greatest political, economic, military power in the world and the one with whom there has been long cultural affinity and heritage? **In any case having a "Special Relationship" properly reconstructed-after the damage done by Blair - does not conflict with an independent foreign policy for the Middle East, neither does it prevent Britain from having a strong relationship with many countries in the world, including, but not limited to, India, China, and Japan.**

Britain, the Great power, Britain with the unmatched in-depth knowledge of the Middle East, with a properly reconstructed a "Special Relationship" with the only superpower in the world, should be in a position to contribute significantly to the solution of the chronic problems of the Middle East, but only if- and it is a big if- constructive, proactive and permanent cooperation is established with Egypt, as a pivotal state on long-term basis.

Attention is now turned to the analysis of Egypt as a Pivotal State.

2.3 Egypt as a Pivotal State

At the outset, a developing country is classified as a" Pivotal State" based on an assessment made from the angle of American vital interests. Historically, this concept is not new, but goes as far back as the British geographer Sir Halford

Mackinder in the early 1900 , and perhaps, earlier, with the classic example being Turkey.

American statesmen of the twentieth century, from Eisenhower to Kissinger, had their own versions of pivotal states, in concepts such as a potential "rotten apple in a barrel" or a "falling domino". For a period, it went into disrepute, as a result of unsuccessful policies in places from Vietnam to El Salvador.

Following the end of the Cold War, the pivotal state or the domino theory regained its place, perceived to be well suited to American strategic needs in that the new dominos - pivotal states- are no longer needing assistance in the face of a security threat from a hostile enemy, but, most likely, from internal disorder, or even, collapse. A discriminate policy of dominos was deemed to serve the vital interests of the US in a number of ways. Being basically a conservative strategy, it enables the US strategists and policy-makers to place the highest priority on strategic relations, such as with other great powers, while attempting to preserve the status quo elsewhere. It follows that a selective policy can also be applied in deciding on foreign obligations, such as aid; a matter acquiring greater importance given limitations on available resources.

Most importantly, as pointed out by Robert Chase (1999): -

" a pivotal state strategy offered a means to reshape the enduring and somewhat sterile debate between those who regarded traditional military (or "old security") issues as the greatest threats to US security interests and those who viewed the " new security" issues—including environmental degradation, overpopulation, and underdevelopment—as the biggest dangers".

Chase argued that neither the old nor the new approach is sufficient. In contrast, a pivotal state strategy "encourage integration of new security issues into a traditional, state-centred framework and lend greater clarity to the making of foreign policy. This integration may make some long-term consequences of the new security threats more tangible and manageable, and it would confirm the importance of working chiefly through state governments to ensure stability while addressing the new security issues that make these states pivotal".

Given the centrality of the US, as the only superpower, and its vital interests, and arguments favouring a pivotal state strategy from a US standpoint, as put forward in the above, this article accepts the said approach. But first one needs to select the criteria upon which a pivotal state is selected. According to Chase (1996), while factors such as a large population, an important geographical location, economic potential and physical size are necessary, they are not sufficient.

"What really defines a pivotal state is its capacity to affect regional and international stability. A pivotal state is so important regionally that its collapse would spell trans-boundary mayhem: migration, communal violence, pollution, disease and so on. A pivotal state steady economic progress and stability, on the other hand, would bolster its region's economic vitality and political soundness and benefit American trade and industry".

Based on the above definition, both Robert Chase(1996) and Roger Owen (in Chase 1999) argue, most strongly and eloquently, for selecting Egypt as the "Pivotal State" in the Middle East region, in both its positive and negative aspects. According to Owen:

"It – Egypt- is well placed to play a number of regional roles, whether as a potential leader of the Arab World, an ally of the U.S. …., or an essential component of the burgeoning Euro-Mediterranean partnership. It also has critical interests in

demography, land, and water use and the environment, many of which can best be promoted in a regional or international context. By much the same token, it would be a matter of enormous significance if Egypt were to experience a radical change…..that led either to a sharp reduction in the present limited democracy or to a major shift in its international alignment".

Egypt has played, regionally and internationally, this pivotal role since Napoleon's expedition in 1798, and continued to play this role, in varying degrees, ever since. In the future, there are no reasons why Egypt should continue to play such a role. But that does not automatically guarantee success or even effectiveness. To try to ensure such effectiveness, a number of changes must take place.

Internally, as argued by EL Mokadem (1990), a new political program of recovery, is urgently needed, complementing some welcome changes so far achieved. The starting point of such programme of recovery **should aim towards revival of Egyptian Nationalism to the boiling point.** In a few words, after the long confusion and dilution surrounding the true identity of this great ancient nation, **Egypt needs so desperately to return to the" golden age"; a return to the fever and zeal of Egypt's 1919 revolution, which was nationalistic in every single detail. This can be achieved by" populism': i.e. by a direct appeal to the people, to their acquisitive and patriotic instincts over the heads of some ineffective institutions,** such as the National Assembly and the existing "hybrid" party system. **Such must be achieved democratically, calmly, orderly, and most importantly, peacefully.** Politically, this means resorting to the "Politics of Conviction" in place of the "Politics of Convenience", as pursued successfully in the eighties by Margaret Thatcher.

This also means that a touch is urgently needed of, paradoxically, Marxist maxim of withering away of state control in general, while maintaining strict law and order. Strategic, not an Omar Effendi one, state owned industries, such as Energy, must be sold back to the public at large, and not to the elite monopolies. The financial service sector must be genuinely freed, linking the Egyptian Economy with the world economy, and acting, as it should , as the lubricant of the domestic economy with strict compliance to acceptable international standards. Similarly, a healthy and buoyant tourist industry, based on international standards, must be supported. Privatization of the three national newspapers and other key sectors of the media industry to the public at large is necessary. In general, and in few words, away with the parasitic growth in government: public sector, Central Security Force, the numerous internal security intelligence services, keeping only a reformed one, and the like, and let private initiative replace so-called welfare hand-out wherever it can.

As to defence and security, some important changes are needed to boost Egypt's position in world affairs. Egypt must open up strategically and proactively to all its geopolitical surrounding world. Extreme obsession with some of the Arab politics is unproductive, without being hostile to the Arabs. One needs to remember Mohamed Ali's foreign policies in the 1800's, and, in particular opening up to Europe, which enabled strong Egypt to become a significant power stretching to Central Asia, Southern Europe, and through the Arabian peninsula. With great importance, Egypt should consider a stronger more permanent strategic relationship with Great Britain. As to the relationship with the US, Egypt must self-recognize its critical importance to the vital interests of the U.S. Accordingly, Egypt must toughen its position vis-à-

vis the U.S. **It is about time for Egypt to play, similarly to Britain, a hard-to-get friend of the U.S.**
Last, but not least, a strong dignified Egypt cannot accept Israel's monopoly of nuclear arms capability, and Israel's continuing refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty since 1995. Along the same lines, it is about time that the Camp David Accord is renegotiated. Circumstances have changed since it was signed, and some provisions of Egyptian rights over Sinai are no longer acceptable, particularly in view of recent terrorist activities. One should bear in mind that an Accord is not real peace. Permanent lasting peace is one between equals.

Having discussed in this Part III, the elements of a framework, starting with the Suez Crisis and focussing briefly on the volcanic Middle East scene, and in detail on the key players, we are in a position to outline the proposed framework for the key players' interaction in a uni-multipolar power structure.   However, before this concluding part is dealt with, it was felt worthwhile to review some recent historical crises, with which, or about which, the three key players were involved. The criteria for selecting these crises required that the selected examples are: of significance in terms of regional and international peace and stability; the three key players took active part, at least in some, if not all, the stages of the chosen crises; they lend themselves to scientific comparisons and assessment, and finally permit useful conclusions and analytical generalizations to be drawn. This is the subject of Part III.

Part III – Historical Evidence: The Key-Players in Action; In Three Iraq Crises

1-The Iraq/Kuwait 1961 Crisis: A well-managed Crisis by Two Key Players; The Great Power and The Pivotal.

On 25th June 1961, less than one week after Kuwait's attainment of full independence, Brigadier General Qasim of Iraq declared at a press conference that:

> "Iraq has decided to … demand the land arbitrarily held by imperialism which belongs to Iraq as part of the province of Basra". (See reference 1, page 44).

Opinion varied on the correct interpretation of Qasim's declaration. Some observers believed an invasion was imminent, while others suggested that Qasim never reached a final decision to invade Kuwait. Irrespective of whether the threat was real or not, it is important to understand the reason or reasons behind the sudden eruption of the Iraqi threat. Most observers would agree that the threat had more to do with regional factors than any specific endogenous Kuwaiti developments or provocation.   The regional factor playing the dominant role in this event was regional leadership rivalry between Nasser's Egypt and Qasim's Iraq. The latter hoped to counter the former's attempt at asserting his leadership on the Arab World.(El Mokadem 2001)

Qasim's attempt failed and the security of Kuwait was preserved. This was due primarily to external – regional and international – factors, which were united in their opposition to Qasim's threat. At the Arab regional level, Egypt's strong opposition proved to be the most important factor, culminating in an Arab League force arriving

in Kuwait. Furthermore, at the regional level, Iran exerted considerable diplomatic pressure describing Iraq's claim as totally invalid. At the international level, British Forces were rushed to Kuwait, but were eventually replaced by the Arab League Force. On one hand, the ink on the Agreement of Close Friendship with Britain acknowledging Kuwait's full indep3endence and sovereignty had not dried when Qasim issued his threat. On the other hand, there was Cold War element in the situation, as Britain felt considerable unease at Qasim's closeness to the Iraqi Communist Party. Most significantly, despite the issues that divided Britain and Egypt at that time, both regretted the emergence of General Qasim as Iraq's Leader, and both countries disliked his relations with the Iraqi Communist Party.

At the end of the 1961 crisis it would have been easy to observe the following:-
- Despite the seriousness of the threat, in the end no invasion occurred.
- Despite Iraq's recognition of Kuwait's sovereignty on 4[th]October 1963 – eight months after the overthrow of Qasim – territorial disputes remained unresolved.
- Despite the fact that both regional and international diplomacy opposed Iraq's threat, there was no formal or informal agreement or co-ordination between the regional and international powers concerned. Each retained its independent policy in dealing with the crisis.
- The Arab strong, independent pressure and solution led by independent, strong Egypt was highly regarded, both regionally and internationally.
- The strong and independent role of Great Britain in *complementing* the regional Arab factor and in accounting for the Cold War dimension proved to be of significance.
- The role played by Iran was extremely constructive. It was based on the correct legal interpretation and sound geo-political underpinnings.
- It should also be noted that the United States Government did not take part directly in the management of the crisis, despite the existence of a Cold War element. The matter was left to Great Britain to handle.

Not only did the U.S. remain uninvolved, but also the United Nations. Again, it was left to the Arab League to manage – led by independent strong Egypt.

In addition the crisis had strengthened the position of the Al-Sabah's rule and, in particular, the ruler at the time, who in turn increased his resolve to trust the people, and encourage the establishment of a political system in Kuwait offering more civil and political rights than were available to his Iraqi critics in their own country. The skilled manner in which the Kuwaiti Government handled the crisis, both internally and externally, was an important factor.

In sum, the crisis was defused primarily by a skilled diplomatic campaign backed by a measure of military force, and synchronised with skilled internal and external policies pursued by the Kuwaiti Government at the time. Such a skilled diplomatic campaign was regionally sponsored in the first place – led by Egypt and supported by Iran – and was complemented by an intelligent and independent role played by Great Britain.

2- The Iraq/Kuwait 1990 Crisis: A well-planned and executed campaign by the three Key Players with inconclusive finale by the Superpower.

The crisis of 1990, which eventually culminated in the invasion of Kuwait, differed significantly from the crisis of 1961. The difference lies not simply in the facts. For example, the 1961 crisis started with an explicit claim by Iraq and ended with no invasion and subsequent recognition of the sovereignty of Kuwait. Whilst the 1990 crisis started with no such explicit claim but by what appeared to be a dispute between

two independent, allied states, and ended with invasion, subsequent war and liberation. The difference between the two crises was far more significant than that. Fundamentally it was a difference in the real aims and motives of Iraq.

In 1961 the actions taken by the military leadership of Iraq were simply tactical. They were aimed at Nasser's Cairo rather than Al-Sabah's Kuwait, hoping at best to extract some regional concessions in the leadership rivalry of the Arab world fought out between Cairo and Baghdad. At worst the Iraqi Regime hoped to protect itself against conspiracies. Kuwait simply happened to be the means and the theatre for such a regional game. Iraq had no further ambitions beyond that.

The situation was totally different in 1990. Iraq's aims went far beyond obtaining concessions on oil, money, or debt relief. In fact, it was not for the *purpose of uniting Kuwait with the Motherland per se.* Annexing Kuwait under the Iraqi flag happened to be the most effective way for Iraq to achieve its real strategic goal. The real strategic goal of Saddam's Iraq at the time was: *to exploit the prevailing circumstances – regionally and internationally – to effect a permanent and radical change in the balance of power in the Middle East, which could have had an advantageous impact on Iraq's regional and international status.* Again, Saddam's eyes were set on both Cairo and Riyadh. He wanted to settle the regional leadership issue once and for all.

His vision was for a Middle East with only two strong nuclear powers: Iraq and Israel. Both would have to face the real choice between *Mutually Assured Destruction* (MAD)or co-existence. Faced with such a choice Saddam's Iraq was determined to have a strong a hand as he could muster in any future co-existence negotiations. In Saddam's dictionary, the word *negotiations* for co-existence did not mean negotiations with Israel alone, but primarily with the United States. For this reason, oil was extremely important as a negotiating card. Saddam appeared to be confident that the outcome would be co-existence rather than mutual destruction, on the same basis as the Cold War had ended. Again, to guarantee such an outcome one can assume that he had no intention of harming U.S. interests in the region.

Saddam judged – or rather misjudged – the prevailing circumstances to be ideal for him to pursue his real strategic goal:
- Regionally, Egypt had been excluded from the Arab World for a long time after Camp David. It was returning to the fold politically, economically and militarily weak. Iran had been – in Saddam's book – defeated by Iraq. Furthermore, the rest of the Arab World, with the exception of Syria, supported Iraq.
- Internationally Saddam believed he was in the good books of the United States and its allies. Iraq had strong historical links with the Soviet Union, and a friendly relationship with China. He even thought he was entitled to a reward from the U.S. for having done their *dirty work* in fighting Iran. He could even see the U.S. reverting to the *two policemen* of the Middle East strategy with Baghdad replacing Tehran, and jointly policing the region with Tel Aviv.
- Domestically, on the one hand, Iraq had strong military assets; a one-million strong experienced army, a wide ranging, sophisticated weapons arsenal, and advanced missile programme, a bio-chemical weapon capability, an advanced nuclear programme, and a military production base. On the other hand, Iraq was facing serious economic problems, which, if unresolved, could make it impossible for Iraq to sustain military programmes.

Saddam had the strategic goal (outlined above) in mind, and he was convinced that the regional and international circumstances were favourable. Moreover, he needed to strengthen his oil card and solve his economic problems so as to finance his one million strong army and his famous weapons of mass destruction programmes. Furthermore he was fully convinced of Iraq's historical rights in connection with Kuwait.

Given all this, Saddam came to the conclusion that annexation of Kuwait provided the exact, correct and simple answer to all his problems.

- It would directly upgrade Iraq's oil status to that of at least equal status with Saudi Arabia, and as the latter could be intimidated to *toe the line,* Iraq could become the undisputed de facto leader of OPEC.
- It would readily and immediately solve Iraq's financial problems. Not only would all debts to Kuwait be automatically cancelled, but also debts to others – through intimidation – would be dropped. Furthermore, Iraq would lay its hands on Kuwait's huge financial surplus at the time.
- Fattened by this financial surplus and dramatically increased oil revenue, the economy of Iraq would significantly improve. This would make it easy to sustain a one million strong army and to provide all the finance needed to bring the programmes of weapons of mass destruction to fruition.
- In addition, geo-politically the acquisition – or rather the annexation – of Kuwait would provide Iraq with an opening to the sea and thus turning it into a naval power.

In Saddam's calculations Kuwait's annexation was the natural means to achieve his ultimate strategic goal of effecting a permanent change on the balance of power in the region. He also knew that such annexation could only be achieved by *Force,* since Kuwait would never submit willingly, no matter how much pressure and intimidation was applied.

However, Saddam's calculations did not take into account any serious military resistance on the basis that:

- The Arab World would not respond militarily, and, even if they wanted to, they did not have the military capability to do so.
- Iran was not in a position to mount a military action, having just ended an eight years long war with Iraq. In any case Kuwait had already alienated Iran by siding with Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war.
- The U.S. Government's position – on this specific issue – was at worst ambiguous, and at best supportive. Even if it was not supportive, Saddam reckoned that the U.S. would find it very difficult to mount a speedy military response. His famous meeting with the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq before the invasion was a major factor in Saddam's assessment of possible U.S. reaction.

It was not surprising, therefore, that based on the above, Saddam proceeded to invade Kuwait. The response was totally unexpected. Saddam's major error of judgement was, in assuming that the U.S. was prepared to accept a permanent and dramatic change in the balance of power in the Middle East. The U.S. would have been particularly reluctant if such a change placed nuclear weapons in the hands of a dictator who would also have significant control over oil. The last thing the U.S. would have wanted to see in the Middle East was the *nuclearization* of disputes and conflicts. The U.S. did not want to bet on *Mutually Assured Destruction* achieving peace and co-existence in the Middle East.

In fact, apart from the misleading signals given at the unfortunate meeting with the U.S. Ambassador in Baghdad, all the negative writings had been written on the wall

before the invasion. However, Saddam failed or neglected to read them. In late 1989, and early 1990 the U.S. Government passed clear messages to Saddam that his attempt to become nuclear was totally unacceptable. Both U.S. and U.K. Customs and Enforcement Agencies confiscated equipment useable in nuclear programmes and the so-called super-gun, which were destined for Iraq.

Looking back at all the signals, which came out of Washington, one could have reached the conclusion that *had Saddam not invaded Kuwait, the U.S. would still have mounted a military campaign to stop Saddam from achieving his strategic goal of becoming a regional nuclear power.* The U.S. might have been able to obtain the Security Council's approval to mount a military campaign – without the invasion of Kuwait – on the grounds that Saddam's policies represented a threat to world peace and security.

Such an argument might have justified military action in the Security Council's eyes in an effort to stop Saddam. However, lack of intellectual depth, absence of democracy, greed and unfortunate circumstances prevented Saddam from making the correct reading of the U.S. position. The events that followed from Desert Shield, to Desert Storm, to the Liberation of Kuwait – are well known and require no further repetition.

What is of interest is a review of the situation at the end of *Operation Desert Storm.*

- On the one hand, despite the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, Kuwait was liberated, its sovereignty restored and the rule of the Al-Sabah's was reinstated.
- On the other hand, despite the withdrawal and destruction of the Iraqi forces, Saddam's regime remained in power.
- Despite the participation of many Arab armies in the coalition for liberation, their role was regarded as cosmetic and marginal.
- In particular, Egypt's role was initially confined to the *legitimisation* of U.S. policies, but, later on its military participation as part of the coalition encouraged other Arab states to take part, most notably, and, surprisingly, Syria. Egypt was consulted, in a meaningful way, in Desert Shield, and Desert Storm, but not necessarily in the military or the political finale.
- Great Britain's role was not confined to the *Advocation and Justification* of U.S. policies, but varied. It was significant and influential when the crises first erupted, Thatcher was a major influence in advising on the Strategy to be adopted, which proved to be most appropriate. It was also significant in the Security Council, as well as militarily, but not necessarily in determining the military or the political end.
- The defence of Kuwait – and to some extent the security of the Gulf – became, to a very great extent, dependent upon the physical presence of U.S. forces in Kuwait and – to a lesser extent – elsewhere in the Gulf.
- In comparison with the 1961 crisis, the Kuwaiti Government's Management of the pre-invasion crisis was subject to severe criticism and questioning.
- Similarly, in contrast with the 1961 crisis, Iran's position became very difficult. While supporting the sovereignty of Kuwait, the overwhelming influence of the U.S. and the physical presence of a U.S. force in the region caused considerable anxiety, and occasional ambiguity in policies vis-à-vis Iraq.
- The creation of the so-called *zones* in the north and the south of Iraq associated with the strict economic sanctions imposed by the international community planted the seeds of fragmentation and the possibility of civil war.

- In addition, Kuwait's economic and financial position became seriously unhealthy – to say the least. The pre-invasion financial surplus dwindled to a faction of what it was, due to financing the liberation, and was to face further deterioration in meeting the post liberation burdens.
- Moreover, the United National Security Council became the forum and conduit for the implementation of what was predominantly U.S. policies towards Iraq. This had the effect of casting doubts on the credibility, neutrality and effectiveness of the United Nations.

In summary, the invasion was reversed by a formidable Military Coalition led by the United States, which resulted in the liberation of Kuwait. However the post-liberation situation was far from satisfactory. Saddam's regime remained in power backed by (still) a sizeable army, including Republican Guards units. This meant the continuation of the threat to Kuwait, and possibly other Gulf States.

What warrants questioning is the most unsatisfactory way in which this successfully planned and executed campaign was ended. Although this was, from a de facto angle not only a war, but a large scale war, in which more than a million soldiers were deployed, once Kuwait was liberated, de jure considerations prevailed. As a result, long-term security concerns were overlooked or ignored. Hence, there were no surrender documents, no victors and no defeated. After a short interval relating to the uprising in the South of Iraq, all was politically back to normal in Saddam's Baghdad. Of course this was the correct ending from a narrow legalistic point of view, but planted the seeds for another war to come in 2003. One may never know why the US, which handled this crisis up to the point before ending in a wise carefully thought out manner, decided at the end to revert to old habits and stop consulting and proceeded to decide unilaterally. Many conspiracy-based explanations can be advocated, but, perhaps, a simple one may do for the time being. The U.S. was simply dazzled or blinded by the magnitude and the speed of victory, sadly not for long.

3- The invasion of Iraq 2003: A U.S.(plus others !!) Fiasco

Yes, the invasion of Iraq was, in all respects and at all the stages, an invasion by the United States only. Despite what appeared to be consultation with others, in essence none of such consultation was for real, or was listened to, or even casually considered. Claims by Blair, as was mentioned previously, that his hands were on the steering wheel are simply unfounded. Arab involvement was either not meant to be taken seriously, or was secured by duress. What could a small Gulf State, bound by security treaties or by the existence of bases or both, have done faced with pressures from the mightiest force on earth? They were allowed the courtesy of loud-speaking, while the forces were landing. Hence, the title - only the US, plus others, who played no meaningful role at any stage of the whole campaign, and still do not.

Of course, in so far as Britain is concerned, things went back to the narrow interpretation of the Special Relationship; namely do what you are told. And they did, they provided forces, and still do with continuing casualties of young soldiers. They were asked to govern South Iraq, and still do, but after four years all is worse. So much for a Great Power, which had a lot to offer especially about Iraq, with experience resembling, to a very great extent, what has been happening in Iraq in the last four bloody years. Not only that the Great Power suffered huge losses in lives and in money, but appeared to have lost creditability, and it may take a long time for it to be restored.

As to the regional Pivotal State, it fared far better than the Great Power. Egypt restricted its participation to the absolute bear minimum, such minimum was necessitated by consideration of aid and the like. Contrary to the line taken by Egypt in the 1990 campaign, in the 2003 invasion Egypt had nothing to do with planning, execution or occupation. The only blame that some might direct at Egypt is in regard to what might be regarded as passivity. But, in response, what could Egypt have done to stop America's Bush from implementing a decision he, and his Neocons, had taken soon upon coming to power? The answer is simply there was nothing could Egypt or any other Arab State have done to stop the pre-decided invasion

Yes, also, it is a fiasco, which can easily be explained. The invasion was based on either wrong or a fabricated intelligence. The planning for the whole campaign, from beginning until now, was caught in the power struggle within the administration, with eyes blinded by doctrinal dogmas, or by fancy dreams of glory, or even God's blessing. Even the Military accepted, through intimidation and undue threats and pressures, intervention by fanatics in their own technical affairs. Thus, untested imaginary new military plans were used in the invasion, producing quick results at the beginning, to be regretted later on. Plans for the post invasion were not thoroughly prepared, and even those that existed were ignored. All what has been happening have been slogans and slogans as if Saddam is still alive. In the meantime the carnage continues. Where we are going from here, God only knows.

4 - From Suez 56 to Iraq 03

At the end of this historical review;
   * We started with Suez, in which a conflict between the Great Power, Britain, and
      a regional "Pivotal State", Egypt, was wisely settled by the leadership of the
      then President of one of the Superpowers; the U.S, in a Cold War era,
    * The 1961 Iraq/Kuwait Crises was successfully managed by the Great Power
       Britain, and the regional Pivotal State, without any formal consultation, and,
       without involving the U.S, one of the superpowers at the time
    * The 1990 Iraq/Kuwait was , to some extent, also a success, except for the way
       it was ended. In this case the three key players participated meaningfully in
       planning and execution at a time characterized by the end of the Cold War, but
    * When the Superpower decided to go it all alone in the invasion of Iraq in 2003
       this has proved to be, so far, a disaster.

It seems that the above historical review appears to vindicate, at least, the entertainment of a hypothesis concerning the roles of the Superpower, A Great Power(s), and regional "Pivotal State(s)', which will be discussed in the next and final part of this essaPart VI - An Outline Framework in a Uni-Multipolar World Power Structure.

Part II: An Outline Framework in a Uni-multipolar World power Structure

1- Completing the Triangle of Special Relationships

Starting with the triangle of special relationship, Figure 1 in (A) shows an incomplete triangle with unequal distance:

This aims to signify the existence of Special Relationships, in a formal form, between two key parties; namely the Superpower (US) and the Great Power (Britain), on one hand, and between the Superpower (US) and the regional Pivotal State (Egypt), on the other hand.

As to the unequal distances, it is meant to signify the closeness of the parties to each other, and, hence, the relative strength. Thus, it shows a closer relationship, in the case of figure 1 in (A), between the Superpower (US), and the Great Power (Britain), than between the Superpower (US) and the regional Pivotal State (Egypt).

While differing closeness may not represent an obstacle in developing a hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of an interactive relationship between the parties; in fact in some cases it may be an advantage; as an incomplete triangle is, certainly, an obstacle. In one sense, such absence may make it impossible for the parties to act interactively, and forcefully. In another sense, even if they try to do so, say on the basis of an informal or a case-by-case basis, the differing nature of the commitments may reduce the degree of effectiveness, and, hence, success. Thus:

*   **The First Condition that must be satisfied is the need for Special Relationships between All the parties; i.e. the necessity of completing the triangle.**

There are different forms for completing the triangle. One way has been the type of occasional and informal consultations between Egypt and Britain at present, for example; namely informal in that it is not based on any form of formal agreement, and irregular in that consultation occurs irregularly when the need arises, and at the total discretion of either part, as shown in Figure (2) in (A). This discretionary, and informal nature of relationship does mean that the relationship exists and, paradoxically, does not exist. This leads to uncertainty regarding the likely effectiveness.

Figure (2) of (A) shows, in the right hand corner, another form of informal relationship. It represents some improvement over the first form, in that the irregularity is replaced by continuity. However, lack of any formal basis though reducing the uncertainty it does not eliminate it altogether. This leads to:

- **The Second Condition that there should exist a formal basis for the relationship between the key parties, which must go beyond a normal diplomatic embassy representation.**

This could take different forms, representing also different levels of formal commitments. This may range from a simple Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) to a semi-binding Agreement, to a binding agreement, and may go as far as a Treaty of Formal Alliance. Apart from the latter, stronger and more binding forms may relate to a specific subject matter or area, or may be of a general nature. It may also be of a limited period or of a continuing nature. Obviously, the formalization of the relationship may start, say, with an MOU, and gradually move towards a stronger and more binding form, as shown in Figure 3 (A).It should be noted, at this stage, that the triangular shape is not a necessary condition, as there may be more parties involved, of the same power characteristics, in some crises situations. Also irrespective of the exact shape, whatever form it may take, this does not mean the absence of other parties in any particular situation.

(A)
The Triangles of Special Relationships

Figure 1: The incomplete triangle

Superpower   US

                                                    Current Formal

Great
Power   Britain   Egypt   Regional Pivotal
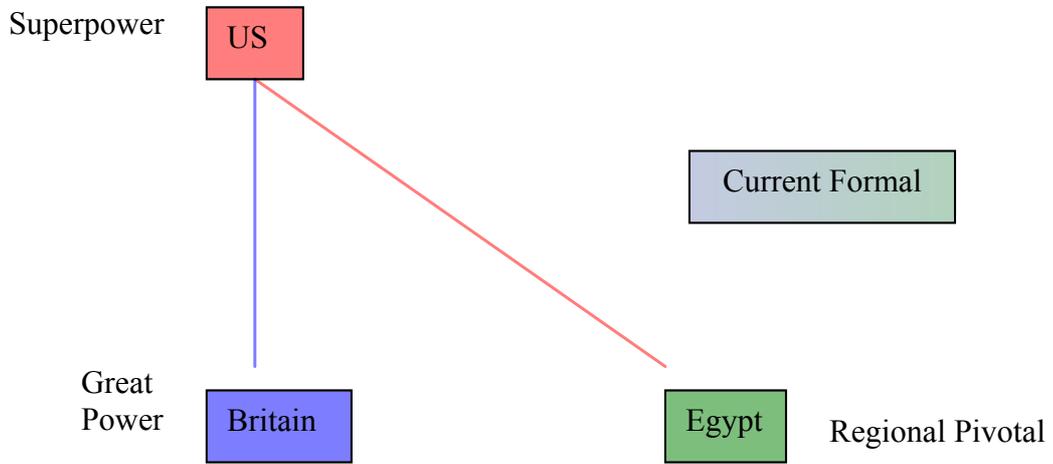
Figure 2: Forms of completing the triangle

US   US

        Current Practice   Improved but still informal

Britain   Egypt   Britain   Egypt

        Irregular   Frequent but
                                          not
                                          formalised
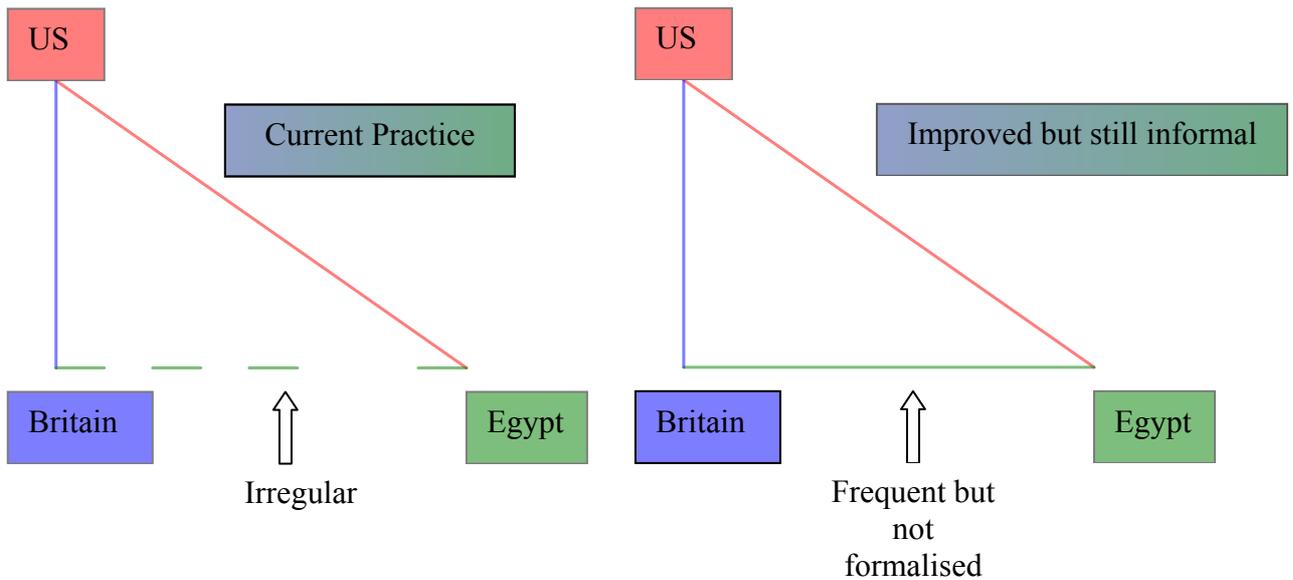
Figure 3: Permanent and Formal

Superpower   US

                                  Desired Formal

Great
Power   Britain   Egypt   Regional Pivotal

        Permanent and formal
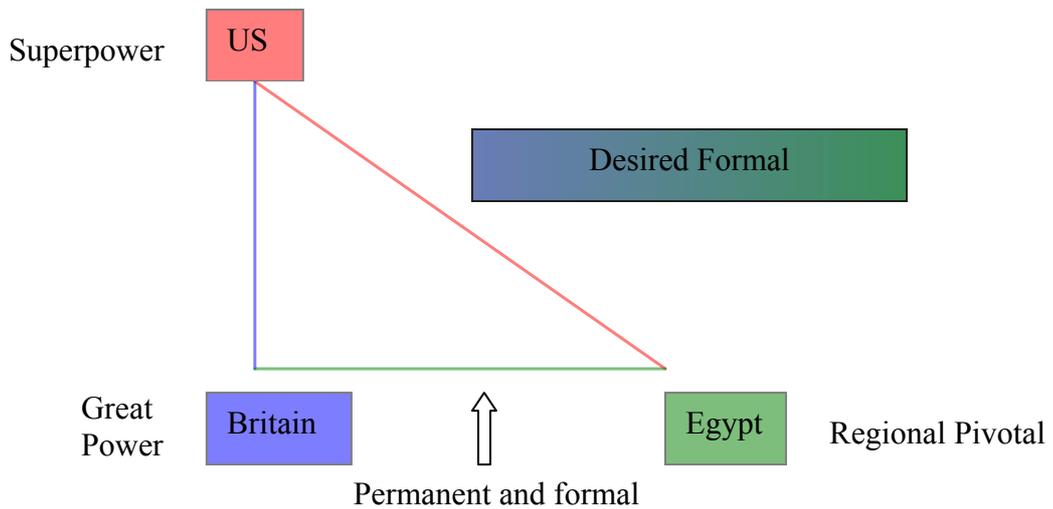
(B)
Interacting With a Crisis

Egypt

Britain

Invisible

Visible

Figure 1:
One key player

US

Superpower   US

Invisible

Visible

Figure 2:
Two key players

Great
Power   Britain

Egypt   Regional Pivotal

Superpower   US

Visible

Figure 3:
Three Key Players

Great
Power   Britain

Egypt   Regional Pivotal
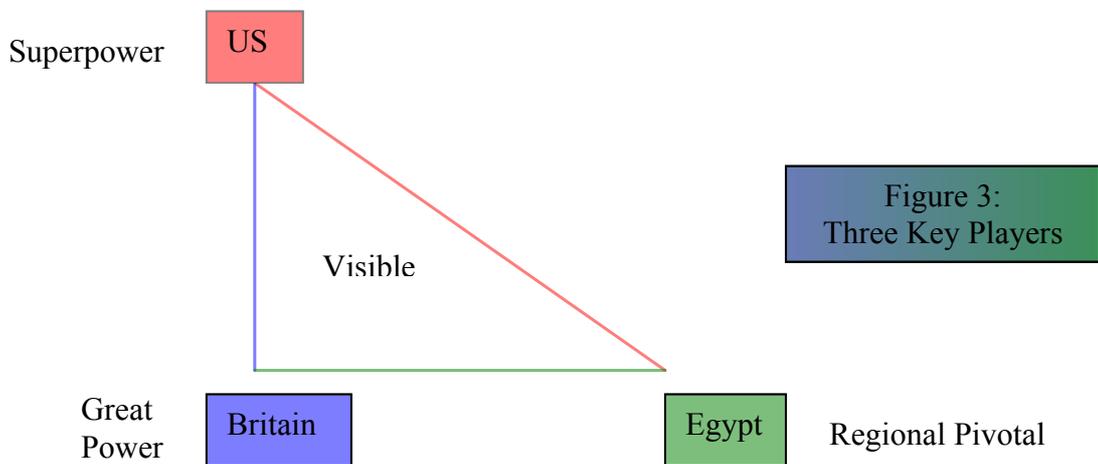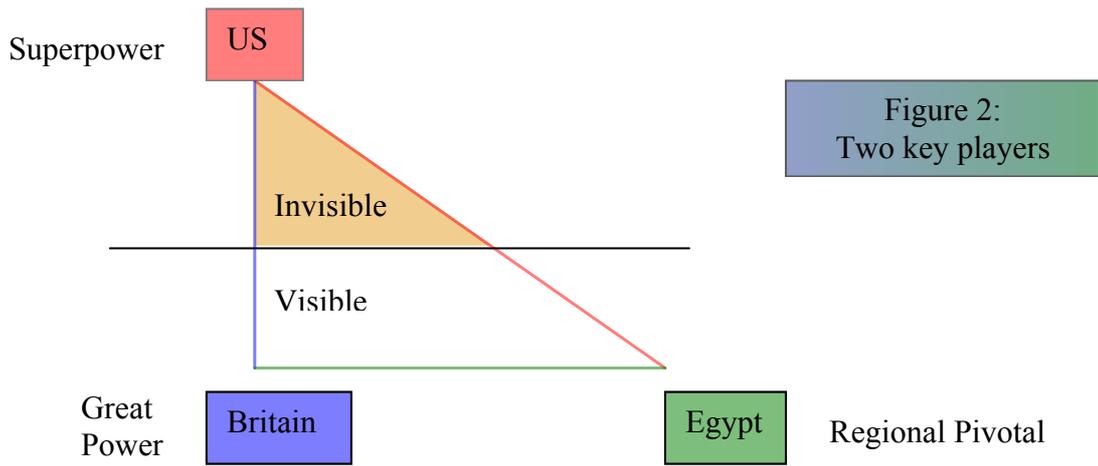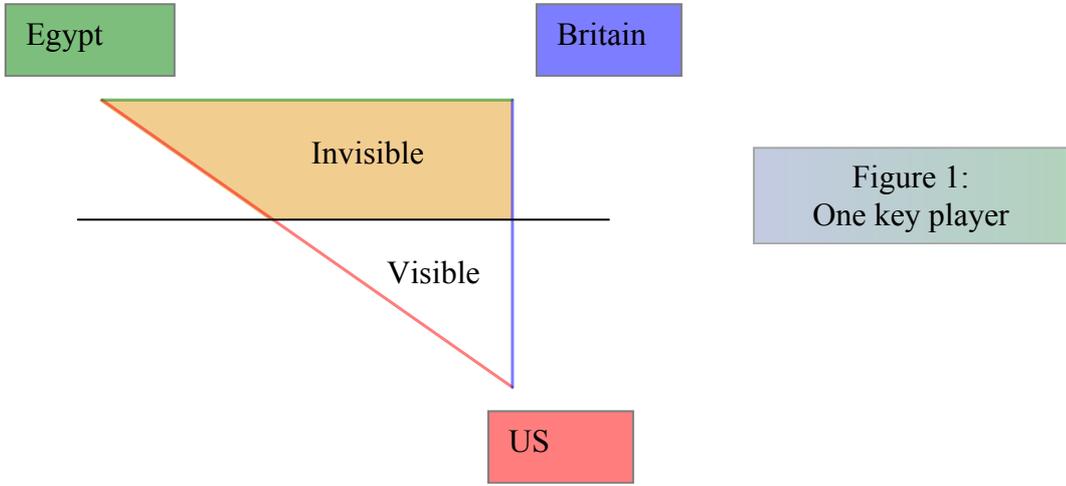
2- The Completed Triangle in Action

Turning attention to how the key parties may deal with any particular situation, or a crisis, alternative arrangements are shown in (B). Three alternative situations are presented. Figure 1 (B), is the case of a one key party player, which does not mean the non-involvement of the other parties, given the existence of a complete triangle, as per Figure 3 (A). What is meant by a one party player is that the three parties have consulted with each other, in accordance with their formal obligations, and decided that the most effective approach is one in which one key party acts visibly alone while the other parties remain involved but not in an explicit or visible way. This situation may occur in a case in which, say, Israel is involved, and it was judged to be more effective if only, say, the U.S. is left to deal with the matter, visibly, alone.

In other situations, it may be decided that the situation is left to two key parties alone to deal with, as shown in Figure2 (B). Again this refers to visibility, and not to consultation, as discussed above. This resembles the situation in the Iraq /Kuwait Crisis of 1961, except for the fact that no formal relationships existed between the parties directly involved; namely Egypt and Britain. Also, there is no evidence that any more than standard diplomatic consultation took place between Britain and the US, despite of the existence of the Special Relationship, or between Egypt and Britain or Egypt and the US. However, one should guard against attempting to draw general conclusions from this case of singular success. The special circumstances prevailing at the time, alone, make it risky for one to generalise.

Neither should one attempt to generalise regarding the advisability or otherwise of the two key players approach. This depends on the situation under consideration in terms of the magnitude of the problem, its likely ramifications, and the relative interests of the key parties. In all circumstances, no decision is to be taken on this issue; the number of key players; until in-depth consultation has taken place. This leads to:

- **The third condition is that All the key parties are to be involved in any situation requiring, by definition or formal agreement, their involvement until a decision is reached between them to proceed differently.**

In other words, the normal situation is as shown in Figure 3 (B)

Last, but not least, the question that remains to be addressed relates to how the key parties operate together, on the basis that the above three conditions, at least, are satisfied. In this respect, it is unwise to try and propose a straight-jacket form of implementation of the key players approach, given the differing circumstances of the parties and their historical ties.

3- A Uni-multipolar Consultative and Policy Structure

Figure (C) presents an example of a Uni-multipolar Consultative and Policy structure, which may be appropriate for the Middle East, assuming three key players only; namely the U.S. as the Superpower, Britain as the Great Power, and Egypt as the regional Pivotal Power:

(C)
Uni-Multipolar Consultative and Policy Structure

US

Egypt

Permanent Policy Panel

Britain

Middle East Consultative Committee

Permanent Members
Egypt - Chair
Saudi Arabia
Iran
Syria
Turkey

Britain – Observer

Invited by Permanent members as required.

Europe Consultative Committee

Permanent Members
Britain – Chair
France
Germany
Russia
Israel

Egypt – Observer

Invited by Permanent Members as required.
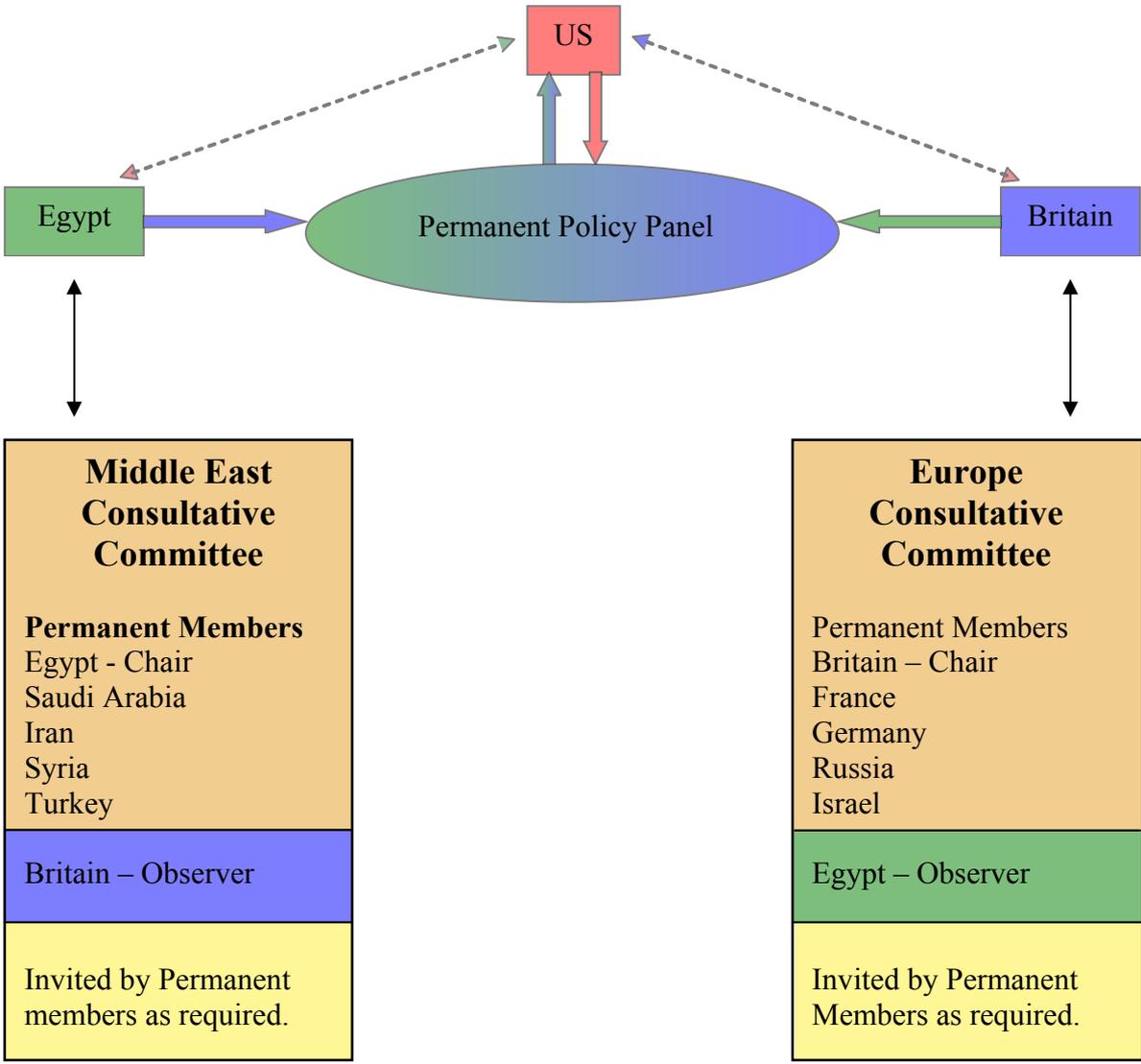
- Focussing on the upper part of the graph, the main feature is the establishment of a Permanent Policy Panel (PPP) between Britain and Egypt in which both countries are represented at the Under-Secretary level. As the title indicates, the purpose is to reach policies, rather than to consult only. It is also in the form of a Panel in order to ensure appropriate representation.
- This permanent Panel interacts with others, as appropriate. It interacts on policies with the US.- the double arrows - while consultative activities - dotted lines - continues, on the one hand,
- On the other hand, two committees are established: the Middle East Consultative Committee and Europe Consultative Committee. The main scope is consultative. However, both committees are permanent.
- Membership of the two committees is of three types: permanent, observer and invited. The permanent membership is reserved for Great Power, Britain, and the regional Pivotal, Egypt, chairing, respectively, the relevant committee.
- Other permanent members are other important players. As shown in the lower part of the graph. These consist in the Middle East Committee of: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Syria; and, in the case of the Europe Committee: France, Germany and Russia, in addition to Israel. The inclusion of Israel in this latter committee is to ensure that the views of Israel are taken into consideration, hoping that a change in the political situation can make it possible for Israel to be a member of the Middle East Committee.
- An observer status is reserved alternatively for Britain and Egypt. As to seats reserved for invited others, these are not meant to be permanent membership, but only at the invitation of the Chair, in consultation with other permanent members, and relate to specific situations. As indicated by the double arrows, consultative activities are interactive and two-ways.
- One can also assume consultation with others, again as appropriate. For instance, the Middle East Committee can liaise with, say, the Arab League, and, similarly, the other Committee liaising with the EU. One should not exclude consultation with international organisations, such as the U.N.

4 - Closure

Bernard Lewis (1997), in a very illuminating article on "The West and the Middle East" suggested a very hopeful prediction :

" There have been other dominant civilizations in the past; there will no doubt be others in the future. Western civilizations incorporated many previous modernities – that is to say, it is enriched by the contributions and influences of other cultures which preceded it in leadership. It will itself bequeath a Western cultural legacy to other cultures yet to come ".

Maybe if the nation states of the world can deal with their problems in a cooperative and sincere manner, perhaps in a similar structure to the one proposed in this article, doom-day predictions, such as " Clashes of Civilizations" and the like, can be replaced by a world system based on justice for all.
In fact, this is what our one and the same God wants us to uphold, as stated in the Qur'an:
" You who have iman (faith)! Be upholders of Justice, bearing witness for Allah alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives whether they are rich or poor, Allah is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, Allah is aware of what you do.

(Surat an-Nisa:135. **"Allah commands justice and doing good and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong and tyranny. He warns you so that hopefully you will pay heed". (Surat an-Nahle:90).**

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