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PEACEMAKING IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Chairman, H. J. Kaplan
Daniel Pipes, Robert W. Tucker

H. J. Kaplan

The Middle East is unquestionably the most turbulent and arguably the most dangerous region in the world today. It is also a region from which we cannot opt out, as we might, for example, have opted out of Southeast Asia in the late 1950s. Distant as we are geographically from the Persian Gulf, with its enormous oil reserves, and from the Fertile Crescent, directly across from the famous soft underbelly of Europe, there is nevertheless an enduring and, I think, overwhelming consensus among us that this area engages our most vital interests.

The paradox is that our European allies, for whom the Middle East was so long the natural hinterland, as well as an area of enormous cultural and sentimental interest, no longer seem to feel the same way, with the result that we are left alone, or almost alone, to play a role for which we have thus far shown little taste and less talent. I mean, of course, the great power role, the imperial role which was once played in that area by the Turks, the French, and the British, and which the Russians, were they given the slightest encouragement, would tend naturally to take on today.

What I am suggesting is that the Middle East has long been addicted to power, particularly outside organizing power, and that, having been deprived of that power, it is suffering from something like withdrawal symptoms today.

But this is a question which threatens to take me beyond my function as moderator. I want to suggest some rather more specific things that we will want our panelists to address.

Iran, for example. If a specter is haunting the Middle East today, it is unquestionably beetle-browed and fierce-looking, the specter of the Ayatollah. We shall want to talk about the Islamic Republic, so-called, its endless war with Iraq and the concerns it arouses among the countries of the Gulf. Where is the American interest? What has our posture been in recent years, and what should it be in the years ahead?

Then, of course, there is the perennial: the Arab-Israeli problem. We can all remember a time when peacekeeping in the Middle East meant one thing and one thing only, and that was the Arab-Israeli conflict and all its consequences and ramifications. Now the situation has quite visibly changed. The cold peace with Egypt, the revolution in Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the continuing turmoil in Lebanon—all these events have discredited the notion that the Arab-Israeli problem, even assuming it could be readily solved, somehow contains within it the magic key to all our perplexities in the Middle East.

With that thought in mind, I would now like to ask our two panelists to take up the question of peacemaking in the Middle East.

Daniel Pipes

My assignment is to discuss peacemaking in the Middle

East as it concerns the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iraq-Iran war.

My thesis is simple. If you look back over six years of American policy with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iraq-Iran war, in the first case we went from bad to good and in the second case we went from good to bad.

The watershed in the case of the Arab-Israeli conflict was about four years ago, the spring of 1983. Before that spring, our global and regional policies had been at odds with one another. From the global point of view, we looked to Israel as an ally, because of all the Middle East states, Israel is the most capable and willing to help the United States in its global confrontation with the Soviet Union. Regionally, however, we looked to Saudi Arabia. The trouble is, Saudi Arabia and Israel have very few interests in common. Indeed, they disagree on almost everything.

Because of the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Israel, our global and regional policies were in constant conflict. In the first two years of the Reagan administration, this conflict time and again obstructed American policy. There was the battle over the sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia in 1981 and the battle over U.S. policy towards the Israel incursion into Lebanon in 1982. The Reagan Plan of September 1982, in its timing and presentation, was clearly designed for a Saudi audience but went against Israeli interests. Our approach to Syria—whether it should be tough, as the Israelis advocate, or soft, as the Saudis want—was a constant source of problems. So was the issue of whether the United States should be pushing itself into peacemaking. Finally, there was U.S. policy toward the PLO: should we accommodate it and try to bring it into the political process, or treat it as a terrorist group?

In all of these cases, Israeli and Saudi views clashed, and the result was discord within the administration and a basically ineffectual policy. The consequences were espec-

ially unfortunate in the aftermath of the 1982 Lebanon war. In September of 1982 the United States was in a uniquely strong position. Our side had won a major battle. The other side had lost. Yet the gains of that were frittered away because of disagreement within the administration over the proper course of American policy.

All that changed, however, in the spring of 1983. The global policy continued to emphasize Israel but the regional policy turned toward Israel as well, so that from 1983 to the present there has been an essential harmony.

This was due in part to disappointment with Saudi Arabia. The Saudis promised a whole variety of benefits that they never delivered. They were not helpful with regard to Syria. They did not come up with a plan the Arabs could agree on that would have been useful for us, and they did not help to revive the agreement that we had brokered between Israel and Lebanon.

Furthermore, Saudi power declined in the wake of the oil glut. The Saudis no longer had the revenues that had made them something of a worldwide power. Because they were more concerned with the threat of Iran, their ambitions were reined in and they became much more of a local power.

The consequences of our turn from Saudi Arabia to Israel have been beneficial; we have gained by having a unified policy. We have enhanced strategic cooperation with Israel, which supports an American military presence in the region. We are no longer tempted to appease the PLO because we no longer have the Saudis pushing us in that direction. We are less eager to push our views on participants in the Middle East and more ready to listen to them and wait for them to take the initiative. In fact, I think the last four years have been one of the great periods of American policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Many will complain, particularly in Washington, that we

have not got new peace agreements. That is true, but beside the point. Having new peace agreements is the wrong criterion. The right criterion is whether American interests in the Middle East are secure.

By that criterion, the U.S. is better off than it has been in many years. The Soviet Union has not made new inroads. The U.S. has better relations with most of the states of the area, from Algeria to Israel to Iraq, than it has had in many years. We have effective strategic cooperation with Morocco, Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Israel. The Egypt-Israel peace, though cold, is in place. The Jordan-Israel relationship is good, for the two states need each other and cooperate more than ever on the West Bank. The Israeli economy has been turned around. The long-time preoccupation of the United States with the PLO has, at least for the time being, come to an end, which reduces the importance of the PLO. In all, I have cheerful news to report on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

On the Iran-Iraq war, the news is not so cheerful. Here, the change occurred in late 1984, when our policy went from good to bad. Before late 1984, the United States had maintained a position of essential neutrality toward the war, with a tilt toward whichever side was losing. When Iran was on the defensive during the first months of fighting, we tilted toward it. When Iraq was subsequently on the defensive, we tilted toward it. The correct, though dismal, rationale was that we should help the losing side out of concern that neither side should emerge victorious. This policy recognized the weakness of the American hand, the antagonism of both sides towards the United States, and our interest in returning as much as possible to the *status quo ante*.

It was a modest policy. It was, in fact, a fundamentally un-American policy, for not getting involved, standing there and not doing anything, just watching, goes against

our instincts. Eventually, indeed, this proved to be too much of a challenge for the United States. We had to get involved. When we did get involved, we tilted mightily toward Iran.

There were many reasons for this shift. The first has to do with the president of the United States, an elderly and emotional man who is insulated from the outside world. He meets heads of state, other leaders, and his aides, but he does not meet average Americans. The only average Americans he has talked to in the last few years have been the families of hostages. Their presence in his office, their eloquent and moving appeals to his humanity, clearly had an effect on him. We know the president looks at problems in a personal way. And while we don't know what he ordered, it is pretty clear that he asked his aides to take care of the hostages in Lebanon, and they tried to do so.

The second factor in our tilt toward Iran was the assumption in policymaking circles that the Iranians will one day wake up to the big bear on their northern border, ask us for help, and in some fashion restore the old relationship we had with the Shah. It is a faulty premise. One cannot make policy on the flimsy expectation that things will change. Nonetheless, the idea that Iran will one day look again to the U.S. is a deep and abiding assumption among Americans who think about this region.

Thirdly, and perhaps connected to the second point, there is an emotional connection to Iran. It is odd and indeed ironic that whereas the vast majority of Americans feel a deep antagonism towards Iran, those who make policy and who work on Iran have an abiding affection for it, not for the government of the Ayatollah, to be sure, but for the culture of Iran, the people of Iran, and the civilization of Iran. They feel this way because they once had military or intelligence contacts there or because they sold arms there or because they are married to Iranians or

because they are Iranians themselves. For all these reasons, there are emotional connections to Iran which have overridden the political antipathy toward the country and led to a hope that relations could be improved.

A fourth reason for the U.S. tilt toward Iran is the Israeli connection, which parallels the American connection in both the second and third points. The fact that the Israelis have old ties to Iran, have prospered with Iran, have hopes that Iran will once again turn to them, led them to draw some of the same conclusions that American analysts did. Because the Israeli view of the Middle East is so highly respected, American policymakers took Israeli views as an important confirmation of their own.

The tilt toward Iran has been, in a word, disastrous. It is one more blow against the United States' reputation for probity and consistency. It has sown confusion and ambivalence among friendly states in the Middle East. It has diminished Israel's stature in the United States. It has opened opportunities for the Soviet Union in the Persian Gulf region. But worst of all, it has helped the aggressor in the Iran-Iraq war. We have given arms to the side that is winning and to the side that is viciously and permanently anti-American. We have made it more possible for the Iranians to defeat Iraq and thereby to overturn the whole political order of the Middle East.

In addition to giving Teheran military aid, we have given it political aid. We have signalled the world that we think Iran is going to win and we are going to appease it. Others, following our lead, have done the same. We have also helped Iran economically, because the arms we have given have allowed the Iranians to protect their oil industry, and this has allowed them to generate the funds to purchase more arms.

Such have been the international consequences of the U.S. tilt toward Iran. The domestic consequences have been

no less serious. The Iran arms scandal has shown the paucity of ideas and the unclear purpose of the Reagan administration; it has wrecked the rather fragile record of success that the administration could point to; and it has created a much more open contest not only for the presidency in 1988 but for the whole future of American foreign policy.

Robert W. Tucker

I want to associate myself, first of all, with Daniel Pipes's remarks, with which I quite agree. I think it should be added that the success of U.S. policy in the past three or so years, as far as the Arab-Israeli conflict is concerned, came in very large measure from two factors.

One was learning experience and the other was the decline of Arab oil influence. The decline of Arab oil influence meant the decline of the influence of Saudi Arabia on American policy. The learning experience helped to disabuse the administration of its faith in comprehensive peace schemes.

This obsession, which had been the bane of the preceding administration, also came to possess the Reagan administration. But in the aftermath of the Lebanese war, the administration became disillusioned with comprehensive peace schemes and attempted much more modest steps, and these were quite successful.

There is some doubt about the future of American policy in the western Middle East today, in large measure because of the desire to reestablish what many perceive as our lost credibility in the wake of the Iranian arms policy. But it would be a great mistake to think that in order to reestablish our credibility, we should again become enamored of comprehensive peace schemes. I do not think the latest peace proposal—for an international

conference that would bring together the Israelis and Jordanians for a settlement of the Palestinian Arab question—holds out brilliant prospects.

So if we look at the last three-and-a-half years, the United States has done reasonably well. I think that despite the policy of selling arms to Iran, there is no reason why we should not continue to do well if we continue to take the kind of modest measures we have taken in the recent past with respect to Israel, Egypt and Jordan.

In the Persian Gulf, Daniel Pipes is right about the danger from Iran. I am not so sure that I would emphasize the impact that the Iranian arms sales have had on the Iran-Iraq war. I think the basic problem has simply been that the Iranians have done extremely well. The Iraqis have done poorly not because they do not have the wherewithal to fight but because they have lacked the same kind of will and intensity in prosecuting the war that has characterized the Iranian effort.

Clearly, we made a mistake with the Iranian arms sales. Just as clearly, we now regret that mistake. Today we are confronted with a situation that is distinctly ominous. If the Iranians do win the war, and I think their prospects are quite good, we are going to have a government in Iraq that is sympathetic to Iran, and we are going to have a problem with the Gulf states. If this happens, the Syrians will be in some trouble because they will be surrounded by hostile states. Israeli interests will also be adversely affected.

I do not know precisely what can be done in this situation. It does seem to me that we could do the obvious: strengthen the American military position in and around the Gulf and try to forge a still closer military relationship with the remaining states of the Gulf, who on the whole, I think, will be reasonably receptive in the present situation.

But there is no question about it, an Iranian victory will present us with an extremely serious problem.

H. J. Kaplan

I would like to ask Arnaud de Borchgrave to say a few words with respect to what we have heard from Daniel Pipes and Robert Tucker.

Arnaud De Borchgrave

I want to ask the two panelists whether they agree with the proposition that we are not going to see any solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict—in terms of a solution to the Palestinian question—until the Hashemite dynasty disappears on the East Bank and Jordan becomes *de facto* a Palestinian state.

Daniel Pipes

I think it would be a great mistake to work for that because the Hashemite kingdom has a long history, more than 60 years, of being pro-British, pro-American, pro-Zionist, or pro-Israeli. The Palestinian movement has for 60 years had a history of being anti-British, anti-Zionist, anti-American, and anti-Israeli. There is every reason to expect that pattern to maintain itself, and therefore it is in our interest to see the kingdom remain in place.

Whether the Hashemite dynasty's removal would affect much is a second question. I doubt it. The Arab-Israeli conflict today boils down essentially to a Syrian-Israeli conflict. That is to say, the Syrian president is in a position to make the key decisions of war and peace. Consider the following contrast: Were Yasser Arafat to come to the table with the Israelis, reach an agreement with them, and become ruler of the West Bank, or retire to his family estate and tend his orchard, I contend very little would

change. The missiles would still face each other and the conflict would continue.

However, were Hafez al-Assad, the president of Syria, to make a deal with the Israelis, exchanging peace for the Golan Heights, the Jordanian kingdom would immediately follow suit. Others would as well, and the Arab-Israeli conflict would come to an end. To be sure, residual discontented elements would remain, but those would be domestic problems for Jordan and Israel.

Arnaud De Borchgrave

You are assuming that President Assad would like to see a swap of territory for peace, that he would like to get the Golan Heights back. My proposition is precisely the opposite. He would like the Israeli occupation to continue because it enables him to keep his own country fully mobilized and his own minority regime in power.

Daniel Pipes

I entirely agree with you. I did not mean to suggest that the Syrians will make peace. I meant to suggest that the Syrians are the ones who have the power to make peace—or war.

Let me give you an analogy. The United States has a long history of seeking arms-control agreements. Now from one point of view it would make more sense to seek an arms-control agreement with Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs are more friendly toward us than the Soviets and they are much more susceptible to American influence. However, the Yugoslavs can't make decisions about nuclear arms. Therefore, for better or worse, we can only look to the Soviet Union for an agreement.

The same applies in the Middle East. Looking to the Hashemite kingdom or to the PLO or to the local Pales-

tinians is inherently futile. They cannot make the key decisions. I am not saying that turning to Syria will produce results, nor am I saying that we should appease Assad. I am simply saying, keep your eye on the main actor, which is Syria.

Burton Leiser

I would like to ask both commentators to expand on their perceptions of the Soviet role in the Arab-Israeli conflict: first, on whether the Soviet Union might resume relations with Israel; and secondly, on the Soviets' role in the recent PLO conference. My own impression is that under the cover of trying to bring about a unification of the PLO, what the Soviets did was extract concessions from the so-called moderate wing of the PLO—those who are only bad and not unmitigatedly evil—in order to bring the most extreme factions back into the organization.

Robert Tucker

On the issue of normal relations between the Soviet Union and Israel, the Israelis have made this a precondition for Soviet participation in an international conference. It is quite possible that in exchange for a conference the Soviets would accord recognition. I can't imagine how their role in such a conference could be the modest or constructive one that is imagined today by those supporting the proposal. Even if they were to come forward with a resumption of normal diplomatic relations, that would not mean that they would play any kind of useful role.

My impression of the PLO meeting in Algiers is the same as yours. I would only add that it was reasonably clear that the real victors in the meeting were the Syrians.

Daniel Pipes

The Soviets' position has to be understood in the context

of what they have to offer the parties of the Middle East in contrast to what we have to offer. We have arms and we have a great deal of influence over Israel. As Egypt, Jordan, and other Arab states forego armed conflict with Israel, they turn to the U.S. They move away from the USSR, which can only offer arms. The Soviet leaders are trying to get out of this predicament by gaining a diplomatic role, and this means they have to court Israel. Ironically, the Israelis realize this full well, and as the Soviets approach them, the Israelis are becoming skittish. Indeed, the situation could arise in which it is the Israelis who refuse diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

So far as the PLO meeting is concerned, I agree entirely with both your assessment and Robert Tucker's. It must be remembered that the Syrians are interested in turning the PLO into an arm of the Syrian foreign ministry. They would like to submerge PLO claims to Palestine to their own claim to Palestine.

Don Avery

I detected one element of disagreement between the two speakers on the significance of the Iran initiative. Was it a profound tragedy, as Daniel Pipes seems to suggest, or a tactical blunder, as Robert Tucker indicates?

Daniel Pipes

I see it as more than a tactical blunder because it has two major repercussions. Militarily, it has very much enhanced the Iranian side. The war in the Persian Gulf is essentially between the Iranian army and the Iraqi air force. The air force is what the Iraqis use to destroy Iranian infrastructure, particularly the oil-exporting facilities. That ability has been much blunted by the American arms.

Domestically I see a string of problems that preceded the Iran arms deal. There was Reykjavik. There was Daniloff. In other words, there was a certain fragility to the President's record, and I think it came crashing down. I feel a fundamental shift in the future of this administration and the future of conservative principles in foreign policy.

H. J. Kaplan

I would like to ask Robert Tucker to embroider on that, and perhaps to refer back to my suggestion that the area has been long accustomed to being organized by a dominating power which is lacking from the picture now and which constitutes a role that we have been unwilling to fill ourselves. The tendency, then, has been to operate through surrogates in that area.

Robert Tucker

It seems to me that the arms weren't as significant as Daniel Pipes indicates. But I have no disagreement with his view that proper American policy should be to see that there is no real victor in the Gulf war.

On the broader question of finding a surrogate, it is true that this has been the American dream. After the Shah fell, we entertained the illusion or delusion that this role could fall to Saudi Arabia. That was, of course, nonsense. We also forgot that the surrogate we did have in the 1970s, that is, the Iran of the Shah, gave us trouble. The Shah was not at all reluctant to lead the move for higher oil prices. Had his government survived, we certainly would have had difficulty controlling him. At any rate, the prospect of finding a reasonable surrogate in the Gulf is not one that is going to confront us in the future.

Albert Wohlstetter

I agree with both speakers that the Gulf war is not a war between the forces of light and dark. It would be hard to find two governments with more unpleasant characters, and it is lucky that they are incompetents. We have never seen such magnificently equipped stumblebumps as at the beginning of this war.

I agree also that the policy of the U.S. has not been a splendid success. However, I think that Robert Tucker is much closer to the truth when he suggests that the arms sale to Iran was a tactical blunder. The real problem is that a disastrous loss by Iran could bring in a character that hasn't been mentioned, namely, the Soviet Union.

Iran has a very long border with the Soviet Union. As Daniel Pipes knows, it was crossed more than once by the Czars beginning in the early 19th century. The same ambition has been apparent for a long time in the Soviet Union. If there were chaos in Iran, and there is a kind of barely controlled chaos there now, it would be extremely difficult for us to meet the danger of a Soviet intervention.

I believe that the issue of terrorism simply confused things. Getting the hostages back was not the initial nor the main concern that animated policymakers in the administration. Their long-term concern was a possible Soviet invasion reaching the Persian Gulf through Iran and a Soviet takeover of oil production there. That would have an enormous effect on the balance of power in the world. What has made this possibility a concern from the outset of the administration is that, aside from the important fact that we lack political access to bases and air spaces in the region and so are much less able to project military power into the Gulf than the Soviet Union, we also have much less ability to influence events in Iran by non-military means. The Soviets have many levers.

The issue of terrorism is much less important and much less clear. Saddam Hussein, to whom we have been tilting strongly at least since 1984, has supported terrorists operating against the U.S. interests before and since 1984. Abu Nidal, before 1984, and Abu Abbas, among others, since then. Abu Abbas took refuge in Baghdad after the *Achille Lauro* and the murder of Leon Klinghoffer.

Moreover, it is a mug's game to try to predict the outcome of a war between two such incompetents, much less to fine tune it. Ever since the outbreak of the war, the annual predictions on TV and in the press by putative experts about Iran's imminently overwhelming spring offensive illustrate the point. These chaps are never right. Nonetheless, we've justified an extreme tilt towards Iraq in terms of the ups and downs in the Iraq-Iran war. For years we have been far from neutral. The Iran initiative was a small bumbled effort to move us a little toward the center. As the Tower Commission, various hearings and many public statements should have made clear, the Iraqis have benefited from intelligence from advanced U.S. sensors. That has been worth a lot more than a few million dollars worth of arms.

It is absurd to suppose, as the Iraqis suggest, that the twelve million dollars' worth of parts for U.S. Hawk local defense missiles and TOW anti-tank weapons has been a major factor in determining the course of the war. Something like ten billion dollars' worth of equipment has been shipped to Iran by our allies, the Eastern Bloc and the Gulf states themselves. If a quantity of U.S. Hawk and TOW parts forming so small a fraction of Iran's import of arms could be that decisive, we would have little to worry about from Soviet air and ground attack in the center of Europe.

I was also a little surprised at Daniel Pipes's slip, referring to the Iranians as the aggressor. It was Saddam

Hussein who invaded Iran. He is the one who has used poison gas, initiated the bombing of population centers and broken every moratorium on attacks on population. He has been not merely brutal, but dumb. It is as if he studied Goering's mistakes in switching from attacks on British fighter production to terror attacks on London and Coventry during the Battle of Britain, and has been determined to reproduce them. Just as he was using the excellent French laser-guided AS30L missiles to achieve telling effects on the oil production and distribution system inside Iran, which Iran needs to finance and carry on the war, he switched to bombing Teheran and the Holy City of Qum. That precluded any decisive military effect, and it was not exactly pacifying for the religious fanatics in Iran. Saddam invaded Iran at a time when he had an enormous advantage, but backed into it as if ready to run in the opposite direction, and he used only a fraction of his force in order to avoid excessive attrition. And so backed into a war of attrition. It is hard for us or the French or anyone else to furnish help that can offset his strategic blunders. It is a toss-up as to whether Saddam or Khomeini is the larger obstacle to bringing the war to an end without disaster for Iraq. Or without the sort of chaos in Iran or Iraq that would invite a Soviet invasion of Iran leading to the Gulf. That is the main problem that keeps getting lost in all the trivia.

Rosanne Klass

As Albert Wohlstetter indicated, there are Soviet manipulations in Iran. There are also Soviet manipulations in Pakistan, which is the eastern end of the arc that controls the Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

Afghanistan is not a Soviet goal. It is a Soviet pathway. It is a base for Soviet power projection throughout the region. Right now, Pakistan is undergoing increasing

pressure. Pakistan faces the threat of internal subversion, as does Iran. There is a very active Soviet operation inside Iran and inside Pakistan. Pakistan is comparatively fragile, and the alternatives to the present government are not likely to be either pro-American or supportive of policies that we would consider important.

We were not looking at Iran before the Shah fell, which is when we should have been looking, and we are not looking at Pakistan now.

Jack Prah

Robert Tucker talked about closer military cooperation between the United States and various Gulf states. Perhaps they would welcome it, but the United States unfortunately has a history of abandoning its allies at times of stress.

We abandoned Taiwan for mainland China. We abandoned South Vietnam. We abandoned the Shah. In light of this, how can the Gulf States, with any sense of ease, accept American GI's on their soil?

Morris Leibman

I wish Robert Tucker and Daniel Pipes would explain the nature of the Iranian-Israeli relationship. It was murky in the past. It seems murky now.

David Lichtenstein

Was it totally irrational for the Israeli government to press upon the United States the contention that there was a potential opening to the so-called moderates in Iran? Sophisticated intellectuals like Michael Ledeen apparently believed there was some merit to that argument.

Daniel Pipes

To deal first with some of the points raised by Albert Wohlstetter:

Of course the Soviet Union presents a permanent danger to Iran. A Soviet incursion into Iran, a takeover, is the single most dangerous prospect facing us in the Middle East. It would give the Soviets direct access to the Persian Gulf and facilitate their control over the oil of that region. By preventing Persian Gulf oil from being exported, they would control a lever over the international economy and over international politics that is unrivaled anywhere else outside the industrial world. It is of supreme importance that we do everything we can to prevent that.

I in no sense support an Iraqi victory. An Iraqi victory would lead to the disintegration of the Iranian state, and that in turn would create opportunities for the Soviets to make trouble. But at the moment there is little likelihood of an Iraqi victory. At the moment we are worried about an Iranian victory.

Were the Iranians to win, were they to place their own agents in Baghdad, they would have won not only a military victory but achieved a critical confirmation of the validity of their revolution. The revolution, which has been dissipating now for nearly a decade, would suddenly be revived. Their efforts in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and other places would be enhanced. The voice of the Ayatollah would again ring as it did in 1980. That's why we should make sure, to the extent that we can, that neither side wins a clear victory. Although the Iraqis started the war, the war shifted in 1981, and the Iranians have been clearly on the aggressive side since 1982. It is our duty to do what we can to make sure they don't win.

As for the twelve million dollars in Hawk weapons, that was the first figure reported. Subsequent revelations showed much larger arms shipments of precisely the kind of weaponry that Iran most needed. The Iraqis used to go at the oil refineries and then they stopped. One of the

main reasons they stopped is that the Iranians now have ways to defend those installations.

I agree that we should keep our eye on the big picture and the big picture is the Soviet Union. But this does not mean we should appease the government in Iran, which in its own way is the more profound enemy of the United States. It hates us more on more levels, and more passionately, than does the government of the Soviet Union.

That is not to say that Teheran is a bigger enemy, but that it is crazy to try to find allies there against the Soviet Union. That is as preposterous as trying to find allies against Communists by turning to Nazis. The Iranian fundamentalists will never be allies of ours in any form whatsoever. We should not appease the Iranians, for they are our sworn enemies. The government in Teheran no more contains moderates than does the Kremlin. Long experience shows that we cannot win by helping presumed moderates in a state which has a long record of anti-American actions.

Rosanne Klass is absolutely right about the importance of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan is going to pose a classic dilemma for the United States because the self-proclaimed forces of democracy in Pakistan have no interest in Afghanistan. They would simply cede it to the Soviets. It is the military dictator who takes interest in Afghanistan. Therefore we are willy-nilly going to be on the side of the military dictator against the self-professed democrats.

Finally, about Israeli-Iranian relations. The Israelis have a great nostalgia for Iran, the one major Middle Eastern country with which they had ongoing relations on a number of critical levels: intelligence, military, economic. They seek to recreate those relations.

By way of background: in the early 1950s David Ben-Gurion came up with something called the periphery theory. According to this theory, Turkey, Iran, Ethiopia, the Kurds and the Berbers, the Greeks of Cyprus, and other non-

Arab elements of the Middle East were potential friends of Israel. In contrast, the Arabs were seen as unmitigatedly hostile to Israel. It followed that the Israelis should reach out to the non-Arab elements in the Middle East, and so they did. All those peoples and states just mentioned had some kind of relations with Israel.

The periphery theory remains very strong, even though its premises are by now anachronistic. Times have changed. On the one hand, the Arabs are no longer unmitigatedly hostile. The Egyptians have a peace treaty with Israel. The Jordanians are eager to have one, too. There are elements in Lebanon that are friendly. The prime minister of Israel recently flew off to Morocco one fine day in full view of the press.

On the other hand, Turkey no longer is the same kind of friend it was thirty years ago, nor, certainly, is Ethiopia. Iran has profoundly changed. Nonetheless, many Israelis hope to see relations with Iran revived. I would ascribe that more to nostalgia, emotion, affection than to clear geopolitical thinking, which is the cover under which they present this hope.

Robert Tucker

The Gulf is not an area of the world in which the kind of thing that we have done in selling arms to Iran is unheard of and therefore unforgiveable. I think the damage can be repaired. The doubts that the Gulf states have about America today are not primarily the result of the Iranian arms arrangement. They are doubts that they have always had, and we simply have to deal with them.