The Role of Iran Regarding the U.S. Security Systems in the Persian Gulf Region

LE RÔLE DE L'IRAN VIS-À-VIS DES SYSTÈMES DE SÉCURITÉ DES ÉTATS-UNIS DANS LA RÉGION DU GOLFE PERSIQUE

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Abstract: Since the withdrawal of U.K from the east of Suez and the Persian Gulf region, the security system of this area has been confronted with many challenges and the concern about security has been reintroduced in to the debate on the world order and it has enhanced the previous efforts of the united states of America to establish a balance of power security system among Soviet Union. Furthermore, the end of formal domination of United Kingdom since 1971 brought to the debate the issue of security studies and related questions in the Persian Gulf region. Occurrence of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 was a period that the U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf confronted with serious challenges and so the U.S. leaders began to make some important policies for this region; because this area had an important role for America's economy and industries. But these policies have always been facing serious challenges from Iran and other countries in the region. This article is to study perspective of the U.S. government on security systems of the United States in the Persian Gulf region and internal security approaches according on specific characteristics of this region taken by the littoral stats based on indigenous values and practices.

Key words: Regional security; Persian Gulf; United States; Dual containment; Twin pillar policy; Carter Doctrine

Resumé: Depuis le retrait du Royaume-Uni dans l'est de Suez et dans le golfe persique, le système de sécurité de cette région a été confrontée à de nombreux défis et la préoccupation concernant la sécurité a été réintroduite dans le débat sur l'ordre mondial.

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Il a renforcé les efforts précédents des États-Unis de créer un équilibre du système de sécurité de pouvoir au sein de l'Union soviétique. En outre, la fin de la domination formelle du Royaume-Uni depuis 1971 a apporté au débat la question des études de sécurité et des questions apparentées dans la région du golfe persique. Le surgissement de la révolution islamique en Iran en 1979 était une période dans laquelle les intérêts américains dans le golfe persique sont confrontés à des défis sérieux et donc les dirigeants américains ont commencé à faire des politiques importantes pour cette région, parce que cette région a un rôle important pour l'économie et industries américaines. Mais ces politiques ont toujours été confrontés à des défis sérieux de l'Iran et des autres pays dans la région. Cet article tente d'étudier la perspective du gouvernement américain sur les systèmes de sécurité des États-Unis dans la région du golfe persique et les approches de la sécurité intérieure en fonction des caractéristiques spécifiques de cette région des états littoraux basées sur des valeurs et des pratiques autochtones.
Mots-clés: sécurité régionale; Golfe Persique; Etats-Unis; double confinement ; politique de deux piliers; Doctrine Carter

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is going to examine the role of Iran before and after Islamic revolution in the security arrangements of the Persian Gulf. With Britain's withdrawal from Persian Gulf area in 1971, the U.S actively sought to establish a new security system to fill the power vacuum in the region. This policy has remained based on the firm belief that Western (indeed global) prosperity is tied to the security of oil supplies from the Persian Gulf. Nixon's Doctrine, Carter's Doctrine, and Clinton's Doctrine, are some of the security systems that were formulated for this region mainly to protect oil resources from any aggressive actions; but evidences and historical facts show neither of these security arrangements considered Iran's demands as a main part of this agreements.

This paper states the background of Iran's history in the Persian Gulf and the Importance and Attributes of Persian Gulf Geopolitics; a review on security policies that were held in the Persian Gulf since 1971 to 2008 with a short explanation on each security doctrine for this region; the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran toward Persian Gulf area , emphasizing the policies of littoral states of the Persian Gulf – GCC- vis-à-vis Iran; reasons of change or continuity of contemporary security systems in the Persian Gulf. The last part will discuss about the alternative security systems for this region.

2. BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE OF THE PERSIAN GULF

The Persian Gulf is a shallow semi-enclosed sea between the Arabian Peninsula and Iran. It is bordered by Oman and the United Arab Emirates on the south, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia on the west, Kuwait and Iraq on the north and Iran along the entire east coast. The Persian Gulf has the largest hydrocarbon reserves in the world, which makes this area extremely important for oil production and one of the most important strategic waterways in the world.

The Persian Gulf states have a population of over 129.8 million people, of which 68 million are Iranian. Islam is the dominant religion and plays an important role in governance, as does the split between the Sunni and Shiite sects. Before the fall of Saddam, Iran stood as the only Shiite ruled nation but current indications suggest the Shia will hold a majority position in the new Iraqi government (Wallace, 2005).

The main geopolitical indices and feature of the region is highest volume of fossil fuel exports to the world. Proven crude oil reserves of the Persian Gulf littoral states of Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and Oman stand at around 66 percent of world's total oil reserves. Saudi Arabia has nearly 25 percent of the world's crude oil reserves and then followed by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and the UAE. Therefore, the five Persian Gulf littoral states (Iran, the UAE, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) hold the world's main proven oil reserves. The Persian Gulf littoral states (Iran, the UAE, Bahrain, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and Yemen) also score high in terms of crude oil production. In 2002, they produced 27 percent of the world's total production. The region's natural gas reserves stand at around 45 percent of world's total gas reserves. Almost 80 percent of all proven natural gas reserves of the Middle East are located in the Persian Gulf. The area produces around 32 percent of world's total crude production (Eia, 2006).

Persian Gulf is also an effective geo-strategic center in international system. Its role in generating religious and political thoughts; Iran's geographical position between Russia and the newly-established republics and their link to the Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean; Saudi Arabia's access to the strategic waterways of the Sea of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean; stretching to the Suez Canal and the European continent through the Strait of Bab-ol-Mandab (Saeed Taeb & KHalili, 2008).

3.   U.S. SECURITY POLICIES IN THE PERSIAN GULF SINCE 1971 TO 2008

The security of Persian Gulf, especially since the discovery of oil resources in this region, has always been a pressing issue among the regional states, the international community and the industrial world. Over the past two decades, the regional states have had inconsequential role in the region's much needed security. England saw itself as responsible for ensuring the region's security, its vast oil reserves and the flow of free trade until the World War II (Saeed Taeb & KHalili, 2008).

3.1 Twin pillar policy

With Britain's disengagement east of Suez (and also Persian Gulf area) in 1971, the U.S actively sought to establish a new security system to fill the power vacuum in the region. This policy has remained based on the firm belief that Western (indeed global) prosperity is tied to the security of oil supplies from the Persian Gulf. Given the hard lessons learned in Vietnam, Washington did not want to send its troops to the Persian Gulf. Instead, the Nixon Administration formulated the 'twin-pillar' policy: reliance on two regional powers (Iran and Saudi Arabia) to protect oil resources from any hostile threat. Of the two, Iran was regarded as being militarily more capable of securing western interests and politically more stable than Saudi Arabia. The Iran's Shah was thus given almost unlimited access to the most sophisticated US weaponry and gradually came to be regarded as the "policeman of the Persian Gulf"(Hurewitz, 1972, p. 33).

The twin-pillar policy as part of US strategy after the defeat in Vietnam and under the condition of bipolarity was largely complementary with the self-perception of Iran and to a lesser extent Saudi Arabia, legitimating and reinforcing their roles as status quo powers in the region(Adib-Moghaddam, 2006a).

The twin pillar policy ended badly for the United States in Iran. A strategy based on structures of power without regard to internal governance proved to be only as stable as its least stable pillar. Learning that stability demands legitimacy is crucial for building a new Gulf security order. Similarly, U.S. dependence on local powers to spare it the costs and risks of a major presence of its own can be self-deluding if the local powers are prone to fail or change(Rathmell, Karasik, & Gompert, 2003a). The initial US managed system collapsed when a popular uprising spearheaded by radical clerics swept away the Shah. In sum two important developments led to the collapse of this twin-pillar policy at the end of 1979s. First, the Pahlavi regime in Iran was overthrown and replaced by the Islamic Republic and the leadership of the Ayatollah

Khomeini. Second, Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan and became in a position to pose a direct threat to oil supplies from the Persian Gulf. These two developments caused hard changes in the U.S policy in the region, promulgated in the 'Carter doctrine'.

3.2 Carter doctrine

In an effort to position the United States as the dominant external player in the Persian Gulf region, Carter declared in his State of the Union Address on 23 January 1980: 'An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America. And such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.'(Potter & Sick, 2002).

Thus, Washington shifted from relying on regional powers to a readiness to use its own military force to defend oil resources. In line with this new strategy Carter authorized the creation of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. (Later renamed the U.S. Central Command [USCENTCOM]). At this point, the Carter Doctrine came into being.

According to Carter Doctrine the United States would no longer rely on potentially unstable allies but intervene directly through the Rapid Deployment Force, later incorporated into the Central Command. An agreement was reached with the Saudi government whereby, in exchange for the sale of an integrated package of highly sophisticated weaponry, the Saudis would build and pay for an elaborate system of command, naval and air facilities large enough to "sustain US forces in intensive regional combat".

According to the Carter Doctrine (1980), any effort by a hostile power to block the flow of oil from the Persian Gulf to the U.S. will be viewed as an attack on America's vital interests and will be repelled by any means necessary including military force. Since then, the U.S. has exercised the Carter doctrine several times. (such as Iran-Iraq war)

3.3 Dual Containment

The end of bipolarity and the systemically legitimated penetration of the region by US forces were seen as reason enough to take a rather more offensive posture towards regional challengers, a view that was shared by strategists in Washington. Hence, the dual containment policy instead of the rather more passive balances of power rationale which had dominated US policy towards the region for the last four decades. With the modified structure of the international system, the United States felt reassured that marginalizing the two principal powers in the region, Iran and Iraq, would secure long-term US interests in the Persian Gulf, without the threat of any serious international backlash. As former National Security Advisor Anthony Lake put it:

"we no longer have to fear Soviet efforts to gain a foothold in the Persian Gulf by taking advantage of our support for one of these states to build relations with the other. The strategic importance of both Iraq and Iran has therefore been reduced dramatically, and their ability to play the superpowers off each other has been eliminated."(Adib-Moghaddam, 2006b, p. 94)

During 1993-1997, the Clinton Administration articulated a policy of "dual containment," an effort to keep Iran and Iraq weak rather than alternately tilting toward one or the other to preserve a power balance between them. During this period, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were primarily concerned about the conventional threat from Iraq and saw Iran as a counterweight to Iraqi power.(Mraz, 1997)

Dual containment was a comprehensive policy ordered by President Clinton that Secretary of State Warren Christopher hinted at the emerging shift in February 1993 by branding Iran an 'international outlaw' and a 'dangerous country' for 'the support of terrorism' and 'the pursuit of nuclear weapons.'(Ahmadi, 2008, p. 159)

The broad outlines of this approach were described in a speech in May 1993 by Martin S. Indyk, the Senior Director for Middle East policy at the National Security Council, to the Washington Institute for

Near East Policy, a research group. He stated that the new policy stemmed from 'a clear-headed assessment of the antagonism that both regimes harbor toward the US and its allies in the region'(Ahmadi, 2008). The Clinton policy of dual containment can be seen as, "the culmination of a trend toward an increasingly direct American strategic role in the gulf(Gause, 1994).

Anthony Lake believed that the containment of these nations would be done in three ways: first, through isolation from the international community, second, diplomatic and economic pressures using such methods as UN sanctions or international boycotts, and third, restrictions of their military and technical capabilities. Lake then looks at the containment of Iraq and Iran and says that the United States desires a balance of power in the Persian Gulf with the goal of protecting "the security interests of our friends and in the free flow of oil at stable prices." (Lake, 1994, pp. 47-48).

Lake concludes that dual containment is a genuine and responsible effort to protect American interests, stabilize international politics, and enlarge the community of nations committed to America's core values. The three major risks, acknowledged by Lake and other proponents of dual containment were: driving Iran and Iraq together in an alliance, opening Iraq to manipulation, and destabilizing Iraq's sovereignty.

Dual containment was drafted to allow America to accomplish its three primary objectives in the region: isolation of Iran and Iraq, security of Israel, and access to oil(Mraz, 1997). Many of criticizers of dual containment such as F. Gregory Gause, believe that the policy of dual containment is unattainable and The United States, by isolating itself from Iran and Iraq, has effectively cut off any influence it may have had over these two states. They believe that the United States cannot contain Iran unilaterally, and such a large American military presence in the region created instability. Critics of dual containment generally agree that Iran was not the threat that the United States perceived it to be. Opponents of dual containment all recommend some form of diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic. At a real conclusion we must say America's attempt to control Iran politically, economically, and militarily has been almost without major success(Mraz, 1997).

3.4 Direct presence in the region

When Iraq attacked Kuwait in 1991, the dual containment policy was reached to its ends. After the second Gulf war, the U.S. increased its use of major bases, prepositioned material, and naval forces in the region. The strategic goal has been to protect the security of Persian Gulf oil and its availability to the global economy. The means to this goal have been (a) to contain or change Persian Gulf governments hostile to the U.S., and (b) to support the allied Persian Gulf governments that are friendly to the U.S.(Rathmell, Karasik, & Gompert, 2003b)

Iran before and after Islamic Revolution was most concerned about the deployment of direct U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf region. Before Islamic revolution also Iran was opposite the presence of foreign troops in the region. After the British withdrawal in the late 1960s, Mohammad Reza Shah insisted that "the Americans should realize that our opposition to foreign intervention in the region is serious."(Milani, 2004)

After direct deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf region, Iran has protested several times especially in recent times that local Iraqi government was established but still U.S. forces are continuing occupying Iraq even though president Obama has emphasized during 2009 election that he will withdraw American forces from Iraq as soon as possible, but it hasn't happen until now.

4. IRAN'S POLICY TOWARD PERSIAN GULF REGION

Iran with a population of over 70 million is among the largest countries in the Middle East. It possesses vast lands and extended sea borders in the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea region. Iran produces 4.2 million barrels of oil per day. Iran's proven oil reserves stand at around 132.5 billion barrels (over %11 of the world's reserves). In addition, the country has around 27.50 billion cubic meters of natural gas (%15.3 of the world's proven natural gas reserves). (Lotfian, 2007-08)

Focusing on Iran's ambitions toward Persian Gulf shows that lack of security is a main motivation of Iran to persuade a new security system for the Persian Gulf. Iran has a deep concern about national security within a regional and international context. Security concerns of Iran includes American troops near east and west borders (Iraq and Afghanistan), neighbors that are allies of America such as Turkey and Azerbaijan, nuclear neighbors that are also allies of America (India and Pakistan), Israel as an enemy that is also nuclear and problems with Arab neighbors (borders-Shi'ism). Political prestige is also another motivation for Iran to persuade a new security system for the Persian Gulf. Iran has been a great power for a long time and now it wants to reacquire her historical position . (Bahjat, 2006)

Historical and religious heritage and prestige of Iranian in the Middle East has been another motivation for Iranians to go toward a stable security system to strengthen them and protect their allies in the Middle East. Most of the Iranians are Shi'a that is opposite of sunny in Islam. Iranians are proud of their religious heritage and they want to protect their religious identity also they want to protect Shi'a groups in other Arab countries like Hezbollah in Lebanon and Jeysholmahdi in Iraq. (Brennan, 2008)

Since Iranian revolution in 1979, Iran has shaped her foreign policy in answer to direct threats to her security, sovereignty and internal integrity, which had been related to ideological structure of Iran. After 9/11, the USA entered Afghanistan and Iraq and complicated Iranian position even more. Longstanding American involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan created many threats to Iran, in the same time it gave new opportunities for increasing Iran's influence in region and her international position. Without Iran's will, probably there won't be any peace in those states. On the other hand, radicalized policies of the Islamic regime may result in international isolation or even in open conflict with the United States. (Bojarczyk, 2008)

In an informal announcement of Iran's decision to ensure a successful regional security system for the Persian Gulf; Saideh Lotfian believes Iran, Iraq and Yemen must be part of any security arrangement in the Persian Gulf.(Lotfian, 2007-08) she believes the main pillar of Iranian policy on the Persian Gulf is based, on the regional states' responsibility for ensuring security of this region without the outside help. One barrier in the way of improving the security environment of the region is the current tension between Iran and the United States. This has also overshadowed Iran's ties with other regional states. In sum Iranian think about an effective regional security pact to minimize extra-regional Influence of foreign countries.

5. CURRENT SECURITY SYSTEMS IN THE PERSIAN GULF: CONTINUATION OR CHANGES?

In this article and in previous pages we mentioned that peace and security in the Persian Gulf region has been always instable and U.S. policies regarding to this region confronted with many challenges especially from Iran and Iraq in recent years until downfall of saddam's regime in Iraq by U.S. armies. It is clear that the establishment of peace and stability in Iraq is not the only factor for providing security in the sensitive region of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf although Iraq in recent years has confronted with many difficulties from side of terrorist groups like Taliban in this country. Occurrence of four wars in less than three decades in the region is the best reason for adopting new security strategy based on non-presence of foreign forces and in cooperation with all regional states. So, in the Persian Gulf, Iran believes that since the threat of Saddam in the region has disappeared, all regional countries should take concrete steps to restore security in the region collectively. With this logic, the Islamic Republic of Iran has proposed plans for security arrangement in the Persian Gulf, based on the cooperation of all of the littoral states.

At the other side we must consider this fact in international relation that absolute military power does not provide solutions to global problems. In other words power in its hardware dimension, even when wielded by the most powerful countries, has not helped the realization of their political or economic objectives. What we saw in the recent years' wars in Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon all indicate the lack of efficiency of this model of behavior of absolute military powers(Mohammadi, 2007)

Based on these principles and virtues, Iran has condemned the unilateral action in Iraq and calls for the withdrawal of occupying forces from Iraq and therefore a timetable should be set for withdrawal of foreign forces from Iraq. Despite certain beliefs, the withdrawal can help establish more security in Iraq. Iran is of the view that security affairs in Iraq should be handed completely to the democratically elected government and the Iraqi people should run the security affairs of their country themselves. Iran believes the Iraqi forces and government have potentials to establish security and stability in the country through efforts by all political and tribal groups.

Based on the abovementioned factors and elements, the principles of Iran's Persian Gulf policy are multilateralism, regional capacity building and confidence building. These principles mirror Iran's policies of détente, peaceful coexistence, decontainment and active engagement. (Mohammadi, 2007)

6. TOWARD A NEW PERSIAN GULF SECURITY SYSTEM

So many scholars that are not agreeing with today's security system of the Persian Gulf had suggested new systems for this region. In this paper I will mention some of them in brief and in conclusion will be mentioned the best option that can be more applicable to both the regional countries of the Persian Gulf region and outside powers, especially for Iran that is the most important country in this area and in the Middle East and always after Islamic revolution in 1979 has been in center of conflicts in this region.

Cliff Kupchan a member of Eurasia Group believes that The Persian Gulf nations should build a system based on indigenous values and practices and the Asian experience may be more useful than what Scholars have often looked to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), because at First, Asian nations, like those of the Persian Gulf, are generally not western-style democracies, and the "substructure" of Asian international relations is more like that of the Persian Gulf than is Europe's. Second, the current Asian security system is relatively similar to the Persian Gulf system: both feature a central role for regional great powers and for bilateral relations with the U.S., which play reassurance and balancing roles. Third, the nature and structure of Asian cooperative security systems, in their informality and respect for nation-state sovereignty, offer instructive lessons for building a future Persian Gulf wide cooperative security system.(Kupchan, 2007)

Kupchan (2007) believes that mechanisms used by OSCE may be useful, but the nature of European security relations and the structure and some missions of OSCE as a cooperative security organization are not a good fit for the Persian Gulf. He believes that a Persian Gulf forum would open and regularize three much needed avenues of communication: between the northern countries (Iran, Iraq) and the GCC; between the "big 3" (Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia); and between the smaller GCC nations and the northern states. As in Asia, a cooperative security forum would exist on top of the bedrock security structure, comprised of the realities of U.S. balancing and regional great power policies.

Kupchan (2007) suggests the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) forum for the Persian Gulf region and expresses that the ASEAN experience offers many useful guidelines for a new Persian Gulf forum. The principle of "non-interference" in domestic affairs would appeal to and reassure Persian Gulf states as they contemplate a new forum. As with Asia, many states are concerned with regime stability, do not welcome outside involvement, and do not want domestic governance to be criteria for membership or topic for discussion. The principle of "regional solutions to regional problems" would also attract Persian Gulf littoral states. A regional forum would permit them to take a larger role in enhancing their own security, an argument Iran, Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf nations have been making.

The challenge to the Kupchan belief is that as ASEAN forum he suggests that presence of one foreign superpower (America) is necessary in this forum in the Persian Gulf forum, but experience of the Persian Gulf region indicates that the presence of U.S. in this region always has been confronted with challenges after Islamic revolution in Iran, therefore this forum also can not be a good basis for peace and security in this region.

Michael Kraig is another famous scholar in Persian Gulf filed that believes comprehensive multilateral coalition's strategy offers the best prospect for building a peaceful and stable future in the Persian Gulf, if leaders are concerned with long-term value rather than short-term gains. Kraig concludes that there are two major contending approaches to Persian Gulf security: U.S. hegemony and principled multilateralism. If the hegemony approach is going to carried out Persian Gulf relations would be patterned to a big conflicts. But In contrast to the approach of hegemony, a principled multilateral approach to Persian Gulf security would have the success for this region.(M. Kraig, 2004)

Michael Kraig believes that a new security order should be created in the Persian Gulf by building additional layers to the current security system with a greater emphasis on multilateral cooperation. U.S.-Persian Gulf-state bilateral cooperation and the GCC would serve as the base layer. The second layer would involve setting up a new security organization that could notionally be called the "[Persian] Gulf Regional Security Forum (GRSF)." Southern and northern Persian Gulf States, without exceptions, would be the core members, together with extra-regional states and organizations with vested interests in the Persian Gulf. (M. R. Kraig, 2006)

The critique to the Kraig's approach is that Kraig believes Involving extra-regional states - most notably the United States - in a peaceful and stable Persian Gulf will be important for achieving long-term stability (M. R. Kraig, 2006) but the experiences of recent years in the Persian gulf has shown that his idea cannot be true, because in spite of presence of external powers especially Americans, many disturbs and conflicts has been accrued in this important region.

Joseph McMillan, Richard Sokolsky, and Andrew C. Winner, three scholars in Persian Gulf problems, in another point of view believe that the Persian Gulf region lacks a systematic way for Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia to interact with the rest of the Persian Gulf states. Then there must establish a new multilateral element to the region's security architecture.(Winner, 2003) But they believe this new arrangement could entail certain risks for the United States. The principal limitation from a U.S. perspective is that a regional security structure could never substitute for the ability of the United States to project military power to the region to protect its own interests in extremis. The principal risk is that any security institution that embraces all the Persian Gulf countries could become an anti-U.S. or anti-Israeli bloc.

McMillan, Sokolsky& Winner believe any security architecture for Persian Gulf must be able to accomplish three objectives: 1) provide a collective self-defense capability for the weaker states; 2) promote an environment of cooperation on security issues that will reduce the probability and consequences of conflict among all the Persian Gulf states and enable them to cooperate on transnational threats; 3) enable the region to play an effective and constructive role in strengthening peace and stability beyond the Persian Gulf.(Winner, 2003)

The writers believe a more inclusive multilateral security dialogue may be able to: 1) Increase the ability of regional states to deal with limited threats to peace and stability without requiring the major involvement of outside powers; 2) provide a mechanism for peaceful resolution of specific areas of contention that could otherwise cause the rivalries to flare up into open conflict; 3) identify a modest body of shared interests, toward which regional states can agree to work; 4) erode exclusionary barriers that inflame suspicions and drive states toward planning for worst-case scenarios; 5) develop habits of intraregional cooperation, upon which more ambitious efforts to increase regional stability can subsequently be built.(Winner, 2003)

They conclude, what the Persian Gulf needs, is a series of overlapping bilateral and multilateral relationships**,** with the newest element being a mutually reinforcing network of linkages among all the Persian Gulf states, including Iran and Iraq. So they believe that the ASEAN [the Association of Southeast Asian Nations] Regional Forum (ARF), could serve as a model for a vehicle for dialogue on regional security issues in the Persian Gulf.(Winner, 2003)

But in a real vision and open-minded opinion, Persian Gulf has its characteristics and need a security arrangement based on its history and states and ASEAN and other arrangements forums cannot be useful and helpful for this region, anyway, other security arrangements can be as a sample for this region not as a prescription. In other side, McMillan, Sokolsky and Winner believe a new regional security architecture is only one element of a broader security arrangement for the Persian Gulf region and this order will continue to require a significantly revamped U.S. military presence, bilateral security arrangements between

Washington and some Persian Gulf states, a robust U.S. capability to project power, and Persian Gulf state initiatives to promote good governance.

Andrew Rathmell, Theodore Karasik, and David Gompert another three Persian Gulf problems scholars, outline the disadvantages to the United States and to the region of today's heavy dependence on a forward U.S. military presence and readiness to fight increasingly risky expeditionary wars. They believe that two alternative models for the Persian Gulf, a unilateral U.S. attempt to impose liberal democracy or a return to balance of power approach, will not work. Instead, a multilateral U.S. - European effort to build an intra-regional balance of power, by broad political reform around the Persian Gulf, could lay the basis for long-term stability.(Andrew Rathmell, 2003)

Rathmell, Karasik & Gompert explain the past attempts of United State for building a Persian Gulf security after withdrawal of Grate Britain in 1971s and believe the Nixon's Doctrine of Twin Pillars policy' that the United States used the twin pillars of Iran and Saudi Arabia to ensure stability and to contain threats to the status quo' the U.S. strategy of relying on Iraq and the Persian Gulf states after Islamic revolution in Iran' and Dual Containment Policy for containing Iran and Iraq, were not successful and the United States shifted from reliance on regional friends to an even more muscular forward presence. (Andrew Rathmell, 2003)

These scholars suggest two options for a postwar Persian Gulf security system that could form the basis for a redesign of the region: 1) Radical political transformation (leaping head to the 1920s): the democratizing vision will enable countries across the region to defuse domestic dissent and become productive members of the international community. But undemocratic Arab rulers are naturally frightened by this vision of democracy. 2) Second choice is leaping back to 1970s toward to twin-pillars approach that is a more pragmatic model for a post-war Persian Gulf security system, this time relying on the GCC and Iraq. This model is unlikely to succeed because the past three decades have not resolved some of the underlying issues of Persian Gulf insecurity and because recent changes have made life more challenging. (Andrew Rathmell, 2003)

Finally these scholars at the end of their analysis conclude that no single paradigm will be sufficient to build a Gulf security system. (Andrew Rathmell, 2003) Instead, a Persian Gulf security system needs to be constructed from three interlocking elements: balance of power, reform of the region's and defense structures, and multilateralism that United States and the EU need to partner in this process. Only such a combination will provide both the progress and the stability needed for enduring security.

Mraz in a different perspective, express three broad policy options for shaping a policy for the Persian Gulf: First, continuing the policy of Dual Containment, engaging Iran or Iraq, or both, seeking or supporting a change in the regimes of Iran and Iraq. (Mraz, 1997) Mraz explains the advantages and disadvantages of these policies and at the end he believes that the United States should pursue a more active policy of engagement and enlargement. "The first method of engagement should be commercial. America must find some common ground with Iran. A US policy, which recognizes that Iran and Iraq are less of a threat if they are engaged, will be the greatest contributor in achieving our strategic interest in the region".(Mraz, 1997)

Saeed Taeb & Hossein KHalili two Iranian scholars present three Strategic Scenarios for security building in Persian Gulf region: A) Formation of a security arrangement in the region encompassing the eight littoral states anchored in a joint security solution against the US policies. They believe such an assumption if enacted, could be the most desirable and ideal model for the regional states, especially Iran. However, in the existing regional and international circumstances, chance for such a convergence is slim.(Saeed Taeb & KHalili, 2008)

B) Second Strategic Scenario Assumption: The security structures of Persian Gulf littoral states devised by the US. They believe this scenario dates back to a 1970s strategy and follows the Nixon doctrine which is based on the policy of "balance of power" and reducing US military presence in the region. A plan as such could in the short-run hoard the region from the present crisis; help the US have a face-saving retreat from Iraq; and limit US presence to fewer bases but they believe even a plan as such has its own challenges.(Saeed Taeb & KHalili, 2008)

C) Third Strategic Scenario Assumption: Forming a "security partnership arrangement" on the basis of traditional values and practices that is compatible with the people's norms and governments across the Persian Gulf waterway, and independent of the strategic US policies. If regional states reach to that extent of intellectual maturity so that they could constructively interact in economic cooperation and through confidence building measures, then region goes towards convergence and establishment of a joint security system in order to reduce the existing tensions and make optimum use of the Western intellectual/technological potentials. Taeb & khalili believe that a scenario as such is the wisest strategy in the present circumstances simply because a joint security solution also has a steady tendency towards regional order and security plus fulfillment of security in different spheres and angles as its ultimate goal.(Saeed Taeb & KHalili, 2008)

Marcy Agmon in a rand report "Post cold war U.S security strategies for the Persian Gulf" presents four representative security alternatives for the Persian Gulf. 1) Saudi defense independence 2) U.S-Saudi security condominium 3) all Arab defense of the Persian gulf 4) US as disengaged balancer. (Agmon, 1993) but none of these four security alternatives invite the participation in a security pact of all members of the Persian Gulf region including Iran and Iraq but it has been asserted that the exclusion of specific regional states from Persian Gulf security arrangements would polarize the region; exacerbate tensions; and make resolution of existing disputes more difficult.

In an informal announcement of Iran's decision to ensure a successful regional security system for the Persian Gulf; Saideh Lotfian believes Iran, Iraq and Yemen must be part of any security arrangement in the Persian Gulf.(Lotfian, 2007-08) she believes the main pillar of Iranian policy on the Persian Gulf is based, on the regional states' responsibility for ensuring security of this region without the outside help. One barrier in the way of improving the security environment of the region is the current tension between Iran and the United States. This has also overshadowed Iran's ties with other regional states. In sum Iranian think about an effective regional security pact to minimize extra-regional Influence of foreign countries.

Lotfian (2008) express that another strategy of Iranian foreign policy are:

- Encouraging regional economic and political integration:

Interestingly, Iran and the UAE despite the latter's territorial claims over the three Iranian islands, still have strong and deep-seated economic and trade ties. The Iranian investors have invested heavily in Dubai, so much so that they became its fourth major trading partner in 2004.

- Demilitarization and Call for a WMD Free Zone in the Persian Gulf.

- Effective Regional Security Pact to Minimize Extra-Regional Influence:

Iran has a special geo-strategic position and can become a bridge between the energy-rich regions of the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea regions.

Kayhan Barzegar an Assistant Professor of International Relations at Islamic Azad University in Tehran in an article under title: "Iran, New Iraq and the Persian Gulf Political-Security Architecture", believes to the necessity of establishing a new political-security arrangement in the Persian Gulf region in the light of new political developments in the region after the 2003 Iraq crisis.(BARZEGAR, 2008)

Barzegar believes that a new regional security system in the Persian Gulf must be based on political, cultural and security realities of the region. This system is based on three factors of:

1. Increase in Iran's importance and its augmented regional role;

2. Emergence of a new Iraq with a different nature;

3. Changes in the nature of security challenges.

Barzegar (2008) express that the traditional security system in the region has been designed chiefly upon the traditional threats and particularly based on the situations of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Policies such as balance of power", "dual containment and descriptions such as presenting Iran's "imaginary threat" to the region for imposing "imported security system" based only on the demands and interests of trans-regional players or in other words, "third party interests" have been the main components of such a security system. With the new developments, such an arrangement that multiplies the causes for tension and

mistrust among the regional states and is based on mutual misperception about the roles, positions and aims of the others regional countries is not in conformity with regional realities, and just as demonstrated during the crises in the last few years namely the first and second Persian Gulf wars, it lacks the required efficacy. For the same reason, the current conditions and realities of the region inevitably demand new regional security arrangement.

Writer at the end of his article present four approaches for the new security arrangement in the Persian Gulf region requires contemplating the followings:

1) Engagement of All Actors:

Approaching to a kind of "parity", "convergence of common wills" and attainment of a balance based on the role of all involved players and commensurate with their sources of power is of vital importance.

2) Redefining the Role of Trans-Regional Actors:

Just as the Iraq crisis demonstrated, regional nations are not prepared like the past, to accept the dominant role and influence of foreign powers namely the US in their affairs.

3) Identifying Common Indigenous Security Threats:

A new redefinition of the main regional players' perception of new security threats is worthwhile to this end.

4) Building Regional Interdependence:

All players will attempt to prevent tension that can have security, political, economic or cultural roots.(BARZEGAR, 2008)

6.1 Collective security as an ideal approach

An approach that can be compatible for peace and security in the Persian Gulf region and many scholars, especially Iranian scholars, used it as the final approach and believe can bring peace and security for this aria is Collective Security and it is supposed that Collective Security approach is an ideal security system for the Persian Gulf region. In this part we review some famous ideas about collective security and in conclusion we will conclude about this approach.

The concept of collective security may be defined as general cooperative action for the maintenance and enforcement of international peace. The concept of collective security: First, it assumes that each state is interested, to varying degrees, in the occurrence of interstate conflict and in methods employed in the settlement of international disputes. Secondly, the notion of a 'general cooperative action' means that a collective security system is incompatible with the doctrine of self-help as a basis for international organizations. Thirdly, in order to preserve or reestablish peace, collective action, whenever necessary, can be undertaken. Fourthly, 'general cooperative action' also implies that the vast majority of states in the collective security system must unite against the aggressor country. (Tarzi, 1997)

There are three fundamental tenets for collective security system. First, it is a system of cooperation among states such that an act of aggression by one of its members is an act of aggression against all of its members. As defined in the 1930s, the meaning is "the safety of all by all." Secondly, enforcement must have a degree of automaticity among the members of the collective security system. Members of the system must "be willing and able at all times to muster overwhelming strength for collective defense at successive points of conflict. A third element is some level of commitment to the status quo that is to say, the members of the system are states, and the vast majority (at least) of such states regard as sufficiently equitable their boundaries and other relationships (for example, trade), so that preponderant force can be mobilized to deter, or reverse, an act of aggression. (Clark, 1995a)

The fundamental structural principle of a Collective Security System can be illustrated with the axiom 'one for all and all for one'. As a legal expression, this characterizes 'Collective Security' as a system in which (1) nations commit themselves to the mutual and automatic securing of peace, (2) the protective function is independent of whether the aggressor is a member or not, and (3) the security system

is never directed at a specific potential aggressor or aggressors. Common Security does not have 'only' the long-term aim of replacing pacts and blocs as well as establishing a system of Collective Security. (Lutz, 1984)

The model of collective security assumes that each member of international society be prepared to see an aggression anywhere as a threat to the peace and to view an attack on one as an attack on all. Peace, in other words, must be seen as indivisible. In addition, the model assumes that states are prepared to act decisively on this recognition even if such action is costly and goes against their more immediate short-term interests. Whether or not a state responded to a particular act of aggression would be determined by the overall pattern of its foreign policy interests.(Hurrell, 1992)

Robert D. Murphy believes that collective security needs some implications as follow: First, Working partnerships, second; Long-term basis: collective security policies are not designed to meet an emergency situation. Third, Costs: we must accept the fact that our collective-security policies cost a great deal of money and probably will continue to be costly for a long period of years. Fourth, Requirements of leadership: The requirements of leadership are complex and strenuous, and the essential requirement is a profound understanding of the obligations of partnership. Fifth, not to destroy: the path of collective security involves many difficulties. (Murphy)

Many scholars have criticism to collective security approach. Clark describes the principal criticisms of collective security as: 1) The very rebirth of enthusiasm for collective security leads to the suspicion that the conditions that make it now seem possible (peace-absence of a threat) will lead to its demise when inevitably the conditions change. 2) The universality and automatic of the commitments of collective security will not be matched by members' actions. 3) The timing of the response: Collective Security is likely to delay reaction to attack, because the members of the system must react, mobilize, and coordinate their response ad hoc. 4) The emphasis on multilateralism in the theory of collective security denigrates the value of unilateralism. 5) Because collective security envisions an automatic, multilateral response, such a response may actually turn minor wars into major ones. (Clark, 1995a)

Although the idea of collective security has had a curious history and we have been unable either to accept it or to acknowledge our abandonment of it. We reject and repudiate it in practice but persist in coddling it in theory. The advocacy for collective security remains strong and despite the problems with the theory of collective security, and, more specifically, the problems with the practice of peacekeeping, the U.S continues to favor multilateral approaches to the problem of security.

7. CONCLUSION

The US dependency on oil imports and strategic position of the Persian Gulf has been always two golden principles for the US vital interests in this region. After withdrawal of UK from Persian Gulf in 1971, American interred to the region indirectly by Twin pillars policy or Nixon-Kissinger Doctrine. According to this policy Iran and Saudi Arabia were selected as military and economic pillars and so Iran during this period (1971-1979) was gendarme of the region.

After Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 and over thorn of Pahlavi's Regime, collapsed the twin pillars policy and American interests in the Persian Gulf region was confronted with many challenges from the new revolutionary regime. To this end, The American policy makers have devised numerous strategies and plans for this important region that could help them find better opportunities in the Persian Gulf region. Carter Doctrine (Deployment Joint Task Forces that Later renamed the U.S. Central Command [USCENTCOM]), Clinton Doctrine (Dual containment policy), and direct presence at G.W. Bush administration were some of policies that US policy makers made it. But when we review and analyze the consequences of such policies for the US and other regional and international players, it seems that these policies were not successful and three main wars in less than two decade show the reality of this fact.

Islamic republic of Iran with a population of over 70 million, vast lands and extended sea borders in the Persian Gulf is among the largest countries not only in the Persian Gulf, but also in the Middle East, so any

imported regional security system for this important area that littoral states of the Persian Gulf –especially Iran- has not been participated in it cannot be successful.

The Persian Gulf nations should build a system based on indigenous values and practices and looking for any experience as a model for the Persian Gulf, the same as Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or the Association for the South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), may not be useful, because each region has its specified characteristics and geostrategic position, although the latter organization [ASEAN] can be more compatible for this region.

Iran and the other nations of the Persian Gulf have suffered greatly from military conflicts over the past three decades, including the ongoing conflicts in Iraq, the 1991 war in Kuwait, and the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. So the current Persian Gulf security system, cannot offers the chance to stabilize the region. Meanwhile, the creation of a Persian Gulf-wide cooperative security forum that involve all regional states without presence of external powers including US, would increase regional security by giving recognition to all legitimate security concerns and could play an increasingly important role as the forum matures.

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