Chapter IV

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The Eisenhower Doctrine (see Appendix VI) emerged from the ruins of the Suez crisis. The United States was dragged further in the quagmire of the Middle East politics because of the role it had played in it. President Eisenhower was extremely eager for peace and stability in the region through a balance of power. He also believed that given the altered power structure in the region after the end of the British influence there, "...a greater responsibility now evolves upon the United States."¹ From this conviction emerged the Eisenhower Doctrine which satisfied no one in particular as it ignored the fact that Egypt had emerged as the most important player in post-Suez period. This chapter will try to analyse the foreign policy objectives of the United States in the post-Suez period, the enunciation of the Eisenhower Doctrine and the reactions that followed.

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¹ Special Message to the Congress on the Situation in the Middle East, January 5, 1957, p. 6 Public Papers of the President of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower 1957 (Washington D.C., 1957). Henceforth cited as PPE-DDE.
The principles that Eisenhower pronounced in a special message to the Congress on January 5, 1957 came to be popularly known as the Eisenhower Doctrine (See Appendix VII). This message was very important as it tried to delineate the United States role in the Middle East in the post Suez era.

According to Eisenhower the objectives of United States foreign policy in the Middle East were, ending the Arab-Israeli boundary dispute, achieving a better understanding with the nations of the region and preventing the spread of Communism therein. It was the last objective that concerned the President the most. He said:

"(the Middle East was an area that had) been often troubled...(and it had) abruptly reached a new and critical stage in its long and important history...(the area had) always been coveted by Russia, would today be prized more than ever by international Communism..."

He went on to declare that the United States was, "... protector of small nations."  

2. Special Message, n.1, pp 6-7
3. Ibid , p.10
It would appear that Eisenhower's message was full of paradoxical statements. On the one hand he talked of supporting, "the full sovereignty and independence of each and every nation of the Middle East." He emphasised the Soviet Union's desire to, "dominate" the region and the United States having never "entertained such a thought." But it is quite evident that Eisenhower's support to the sovereignty of the countries of the Middle East was primarily intended to prevent Communism from gaining a stronghold there. Such an eventuality would have threatened vital American interest. He sought to fulfill this aim by promising economic and military aid to the nations of the area. For this purpose he asked the Congress to allocate the sum of $200 million on an annual basis for a period of two years (1958 and 1959). However, since the containing

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4. Ibid., p. 7
5. Ibid.
of Communism remained the primary goal the other pressing problems of the region got relegated to the background. This was a major drawback of the Eisenhower Doctrine. Had Eisenhower tackled the other issues alongside, he would have earned the deep respect of the Middle East nations.

According to the contemporary sources the reactions to the Eisenhower proposals were mixed. Some felt that the Doctrine was 'new' something which prompted the foreign policy of the United States after 1956 to, "...set its rudder and sails for friendship with the Arab-Asian lands." 6 Others pointed to its, "vague" 7 character and saw it as an expression of anti-Communism, ignoring the more relevant issue of Arab-Israeli struggle. Most people at the time agreed that the Communism factor could not be totally ignored. However, they also believed that:

   clearly a program to stop Soviet penetration must start with the political issues which have made the Russians welcome in the area, namely the Suez crisis and the Arab-Israeli feud, which the President chose not to discuss in his January 5 appeal. 8

The contemporary journals and newspapers of

8. Ibid.
the time offered numerous suggestions on the general foreign policy aims of the Eisenhower administration. Irwing Kristol writing in *The New Republic* in January 1957 said that the, "basic problem of American policy in the next decade will be, not the cold war in Europe, but the defining of its relations to the Asia-African bloc." However, he conceded that it was difficult to separate the one from the other. For it was the cold war alone which set the pattern for the foreign policy goals of the United States regardless of the area involved.

In an another editorial in January *The New Republic*, stated that Egypt should have been the focal concern of the United States after 1956, but that it was being ignored. It also pointed out that the United States was trying to isolate Nasser and that the Eisenhower Doctrine centered around this alone. It wrote:

> The unstated purpose of the Eisenhower Doctrine beyond the warning to Russia, is to isolate Nasser's Egypt and his ally Syria from all neighbouring countries and thus to insulate the centre of Russian penetration... the United States had only to play upon a widespread fear of Russia

now growing among the Arab themselves and the Arab resentment against Col. Nasser for economic hardships stemming from his casual seizure to widen the gap between Egypt and her neighbours.10

It seems, however, that these comments were based on the wrong assumption that Egypt was a Communist stronghold in the Middle East which it really was not. Nasser was friendly with the Communists in order to secure economic advantages for Egypt. He was moved by pragmatic considerations to develop friendly relations with the Soviet Union. But ideologically he was strongly anti-Communist. Had the United States adopted a more balanced policy rather than over emphasising on Communism it would have endeared itself to the countries of the area, particularly Egypt. Eisenhower had won a great deal of regard among the Arabs for his role in the Suez crisis. He had the magic moment almost in his clasp, but he lost it. The reason was that he could not think beyond containment of Communism, the globalism in United States policy. And in that sense his Doctrine had an extremely narrow perspective.

The New York Times carried a number of items warning the United States on the demerits of the Doctrine. It reported criticisms from various quarters.

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From the Arabs, the Soviet Union, China, the British, most of the Democrats in the American Congress and from some of the Republicans as well. A few examples are given here to illustrate the point. The Russian newspaper Pravada rejected the, "Eisenhower plan as move to enslave and exploit the area." \(^{11}\) The Jordanian Government said that it rejected, "the idea that any vacuum created by fall of British and French imperialism, should be filled by another great power." \(^{12}\) Adlai E. Stevenson, the candidate of the Democratic party for the Presidential elections of 1956 attacked the proposal as, "a blank cheque to fight in the Middle East." \(^{13}\) Further Syria denounced the plan and declared that, "Middle East security is sole responsibility of peoples of area." \(^{14}\) British Labour Member of Parliament A. Bevan warned that the Eisenhower Doctrine may, "plunge world into final war." \(^{15}\) And French Deputy Mendes-France said that the Eisenhower plan will be a, "doctrine only when it defines US stand on all outstanding Mid East issues." \(^{16}\)

Some anti-Doctrine headlines in the New York Times were; 'Arabs resent and distrust it as result c

\(^{12}\) Ibid., January 3, 1957, p.3.
\(^{13}\) Ibid., January 4, 1957, p.13.
\(^{14}\) Ibid., January 11, 1957, p.5.
\(^{15}\) Ibid., January 14, 1957, p.3.
\(^{16}\) Ibid., January 15, 1957, p.17.
propaganda,' "Premier Chou En-Lai denounces plan as imperialist and aimed at replacing British and French influence," "King Hussein welcomes plan providing it does not interfere with Arab states sovereignty," "Egyptian press attacks Eisenhower plan, M.H.Heikal and others state US drags Mideast into cold war," and Republican senator from Pennsylvania, Hugh D. Scott termed the Eisenhower Doctrine as an ' undated declaration of war.'

Further Arab leaders like Nasser, King Hussein(Jordan), Saud(Saudi Arabia) and Premier el Assali(Syria), "reject idea that vacuum exists and affirm Arab nationalism is sole basis for Arab policy," "Syrian Minister el Bitar sees USSR without ambitions in Mideast, holds West creates fear among Arabs for own ends," "Democratic Senators attack Eisenhower Doctrine as unconstitutional," "Truman calls Eisenhower Doctrine as too late and too little," "Democratic Advisory Council deplores Eisenhower Administrative policy and charges resolution fails to meet problems of area," and so the accusations continued. The Doctrine was ultimately cleared by the Congress but its passage, it can be

17. See the New York Times, of January 5, 1957, January 8, January 10, and January 10 respectively.

18. See the New York Times, January 20, 1957, February 12, February 17, and February 18, respectively.
safely said, was due more to the fact that no other viable alternative existed and also because an anti-Communist Doctrine would have been hard to reject by an anti-Communist American Congress.

It was not that everyone condemned the Eisenhower Doctrine there were a few newspapers and journals of the time which favourably commented on it. These were however, fewer in number than the uncomplimentary ones. The New Republic for instance declared:

The central merit of the Eisenhower Doctrine is that it places the Governments of the Middle East on notice that the United States is determined to prevent the satellization of that area by the Soviet Union and that if the Soviet Union recklessly chooses to intervene militarily in that area it will have to fight this country. 19

It was a different matter of course that the satellization of the Middle East was never going to be a reality. In the New York Times the complimentary remarks came from Dulles, from Republican Senators, from Israel, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Lybia and from Eisenhower himself. Interestingly there were no appreciative comments from either the British or the French Governments. It makes one wonder whether this

indifference was not because of the United States role in the Suez crisis?

Secretary Dulles, the unofficial spokesperson for the Doctrine used the oft repeated line and said that the, "United States has major responsibility to help prevent spread of USSR imperialism in the Mideast." 20 Lebanese diplomat, Charles Malik said that Lebanon, "will welcome more active US policy to fill 'vacuum of power' left by Great Britain and France, and sees historic opportunity for US to help Arab states strengthen security of area." 21 Republican Senator Jacob Javits from New York, extends his full support to the Eisenhower plan. 22

Some complimentary headlines in the New York Times included, 'Israel lauds Eisenhower Doctrine,' ´Dulles warns wide inquiry that delays Eisenhower program will increase danger of USSR infiltration.' ´King Saud and Libya express appreciation for Eisenhower's understanding of Arab problems,' ´Eisenhower warns peoples of Mideast against international communism, reiterates purpose of resolution is to free area from

21. Ibid., p.3.
menace of communism,' 23 An interesting point to note here is that though Egypt was against the Doctrine, it was not against the economic advantages it would have brought for the Middle East countries. This is indicated by the report carried in the New York Times of January 1, 1957 'Egypt interested in economic aspects of plan.' 24

The Washington Post too carried complimentary reports about the Doctrine. The editorial was generally in favour of it because of its, anti-Communist stance. In a report by Thomas J. Foley on January 7, 1957 the Congress members were accredited with siding with "...Eisenhower's Middle East program to curb Communist moves in the strategic area." 25 The editorial of the Post on the same day tended to agree with this. It declared:

There will be almost unanimous agreement in this country with the purposes of President Eisenhower's program for the Near East...the prime essential in this process is to deter Russia from pushing further into the area either directly or indirectly... 26

It is surprising that the national dailies had

23. See the New York Times, January 10, 1957, January 26, February 25, and February 26, respectively.


26. Ibid., p.A-12,
little pragmatism to see the future implications of the policy beyond its immediate cold war context. Containment of Soviet expansion in the region had become an all consuming national passion. The liberal newspapers also hoped that the Doctrine would pave the way for better relations with the Arabs. *The Washington Post* emphasised:

> There is no American desire to capitalize upon British misfortunes. Near East oil is far more vital to Britain and Western Europe than to this country. There is now a chance if we use it wisely to strengthen the adherence of the Near Eastern countries to the free world in a manner that previously was impossible. 27

And in a report it similarly stressed:

> A new and far more active period of American participation in Middle Eastern affairs can thus be foreseen— which is probably why the Soviets have denounced the whole Eisenhower plan. 28

In the cold war context the American reason appeared only logical. But there was not way by which these hopes could be realized without the solution of


intra-religonal problems Middle East. Instead these were laid on the determination of the United States to thwart the foreign attempt to gain control of the region. That the doctrine could itself be seen as an instrument of aggrandisement did not occur to those who formulate the Doctrine. The Soviet Union could gain access to the countries of the region only if they were willing to let some one else come in. The Power vaccum could be filled by the regional powers themselves.

Overall most of the newspapers and journals of the time and later felt that President Eisenhower's perspective of the Mideast problems was extremely limited. It was definitely true that Communism should not have been the focal point of his attention. Instead the United States should have made a beginning by addressing itself to the Arab-Israeli problems and by improving relations with Nasser. Kerr Malcolm writing in 1967 in the International Affairs titled his article 'Coming to terms with Nasser.' That is what should have concerned Eisenhower the most. But instead says Malcolm, "...the Eisenhower Doctrine (was) devoted to the purpose of isolating Nasser and his Syrian allies and

building a strong anti-Communist alliance without them.\textsuperscript{30} An article in \textit{Newsweek} in 1958, insisted similarly that "Approach to Nasser,"\textsuperscript{31} should have been the direction of the United States's foreign policy in the post Suez period. It was a real dilemma for the United States Government. And the road that President Eisenhower took was not the right one at the time. An article in \textit{Newsweek} posed the question, "What should the West do about the United Arab Republic president Gamal Abdel Nasser and the surging force of Arab nationalism?"\textsuperscript{32} It was a very valid question. The article provided the answer. It stated that since American appeasement and British, French and Israeli military offensive had failed, perhaps something different was required. It emphasised, "now a new approach seems clearly needed if the West is to salvage its vast stake in the Middle East."\textsuperscript{33} The question that emerges is whether the Eisenhower Doctrine was the answer, the new approach? The article answered in the affirmative. "An extensive aid programme to bolster Egypt's tottering economy..."\textsuperscript{34} was what it felt the Eisenhower Doctrine had in mind, not only for Egypt but

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{30} "Coming to terms with Nasser," n.29, p.72.
\item \textsuperscript{31} "Approach to Nasser," \textit{Newsweek}, August 11, 1958.
\item \textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid.}, p.18
\item \textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid.}, p.22
\end{itemize}

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for all the countries of the Middle East. However, in effect very little aid really went to Egypt. In 1957, the total amount of development and technical assistance to Egypt was only $28,000.35

On the whole Eisenhower emphasised that his programme would attempt to spread the message of peace and economic betterment to the countries of the Middle East. Peace for him was related to the acceptance by the Arabs of a disassociation from the Soviet Union. But the Doctrine should have actually led the United States to, "favour the complete independence of the Arab peoples... and to assist in the economic development of Egypt as well as other parts of the Arab world." 36

As regards the reactions to the Eisenhower Doctrine in the American Congress at the time, these were tremendous and vastly varying. Very heated discussions in both the houses of Congress continued for nearly two months after Eisenhower had sent his message to the Congress. The Congress was as the Congressional Quarterly Almanac noted:

Unwilling to write a 'blank check(sic)' for the President, but equally concerned over the psychological effect that defeat of the resolution


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would have throughout the world.\textsuperscript{37}

Most of the opposition in the House and the Senate was over the huge sum of $200 million which the President had proposed in the aid programme for the Mideast. It was also reluctant to concede to the President the freedom to use troops in the Mideast "as he deemed necessary."

On the first issue, Senator Richard B. Russell (D, Ga.) proposed an amendment opposing the authorization of aid fund. His amendment was ultimately rejected. On the second issue the Congress succeeded in changing the words, 'as he deemed necessary,' to the 'U.S. was prepared to use armed forces if the President determines the necessity.'

The impression that one derives from the debates in the Congress is that most members were not really very enthusiastic about the Middle East resolution. To them the Communist threat was not imminent and the economic aid as proposed was too much and unnecessary. Pro and anti Doctrine voices were raised in both the House and the Senate though the latter were more numerous.

In the House some doubts were voiced on the enormous sum of money which the President had asked for. It was felt that the spread of Communism could be stopped without sacrificing so many dollars. Kenneth J Gray (D, Ill.) emphasised:

It is my firm conviction that we can ward off Communism in the Middle East by offering to help protect any country from aggression without pouring millions of dollars down a rat hole in economic aid. 38

It can of course be argued that economic aid definitely has a relevance that cannot be overlooked. Was it not a fact that Nasser bought arms from the Czechs because they were providing these on easy exchange terms (Czech arms for Egyptian cotton)? Or was it not that money too was a major consideration that prevented the United States from giving a loan for the Aswan Dam? And that the loan was eventually provided to Egypt by the Soviet Union? So preventing the spread of Communism in the Middle East without giving economic aid might have been a difficult proposition. Eisenhower understood this and thus he made it a major part of his proposals for the region.

John D Dingell (D, Mich.) also questioned the

38. House Proceedings, Middle East Economic And Military Cooperation, January 29, 1957
validity of the economic part of the resolution. His opposition was not so much to the amount, but on how it was to be spent. President Eisenhower had requested former Democratic Representative James P Richards to go to the Middle East to ascertain the financial requirements of each country. The objections were raised against the despatch of this mission. Dingell remarked, "this is a terrible way to legislate. To ask for money without the vaguest idea of how it was to be spent."39

The political and military goals of the Middle East proposal were also questioned by him. It is not right said he:

...to make threats against a danger which ... is not very real at this time; and to threaten to defend an area with weapons which conceivably could turn the whole region into radioactive wasteland.40

This point that the danger to the Middle East nations from Communism was non-existent comes through in most of the debates both in the House and the Senate.

39. House Proceedings, n.38, p.1321
40. Ibid.
On the other hand there was Charles Vanik (D, Ohio) who felt that the United States had committed many mistakes during the last few years which had provided Communism a chance to make an impression in the Middle East. He laid the blame for the United States weak position in the Middle East to its declining friendship with Britain, France and Israel. He also blamed Eisenhower for his support to Nasser during the 1956 crisis. This policy he said was one of, "...overhelping Nasser," which led to the creation of a Frankenstein that the United States could not control.41 Vanik thought that by siding with Egypt in the Suez war the United States had bought peace for a short time in the Middle East. But consequently it had created more problems for it had solved he concluded. Finally he confessed that:

We are so thoroughly bogged down in our Middle East policy that no other course remains but to support the President's declaration in the hope that a just peace will result.

In the House debates it was ultimately what Frank H Coffin (D, Me.) said that sums up what most of the

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42. Ibid., p.1320
members felt about the Mideast resolution. In very practical terms he stated:

This resolution will by no means cure the cankers in the Middle East. It does nothing to foster a stable peace between Israel and Egypt; unrestricted use of the Suez Canal; fair resettlement or compensation of the Palestine refugees; resumption of normal trade and economic progress. All it does and tries to do is on the one hand to raise a warning signal to Russia, and on the other hand to give courage, stopgap economic aid and military assistance in the Middle East nations. This resolution in the strictest sense is unnecessary. But the strongest argument in favour of it is the complete absence of any alternative. If we reject it, it will then tell the world that the Middle East can go hang for all we care. We cannot buy friendship with dollars, but we can preserve the integrity and stability and self-respect of nations long enough to help them to gain genuine independence.43

There were other members in the House who stressed on the worth of the resolution. To these members like Eisenhower, Communism was a force that had to be destroyed and thus they viewed the resolution in that very light. Charles Hallek (R, Ind.) called the Doctrine, "a declaration of purpose and courage."44 Joseph W Martin (R, Mass.) similarly emphasised:

The resolution is a notice of our intention to the one country, the Soviet Union, which might have

44. Ibid., p. 1154
ideas of aggression and conquest, that the United States will give the full weight of its support to the little nations that want to be free...What is wrong with that, we have appropriated the money to bring peace and economic security to that area of the world...(President Eisenhower) knows better than we the real situation, who are we to go contrary to (his) solemn judgement.45

John W McCormack (R,Mass.) too had nice things to say about the Doctrine. He linked it to the national interests of the country and stressed:

This resolution represents affirmative action on the part of our country in connection with a very important part of the world which directly concerns the national interests of the United States.46

In a sense this was true since though the United States had limited state in the oil of the Middle East, it still valued its importance as an international waterway with tremendous commercial advantages.

Ultimately the resolution was passed in the House on January 30, by 188 Democrats and 167 Republicans voting in its favour. 135 Democrats and 26 Republicans against it.

In the Senate the hearings and debates lasted for

46. Ibid., p.1156.
about a month. Much of the debate centered around the Russell amendment. There was actually less debate on the Mideast resolution itself then on whether the Russell amendment was to be pasased or not. Rest of the discussion revolved around the necessity of the Doctrine. To some members it was irrelevent to the needs of the hour. There is no doubt as previously emphasised that the Doctrine delievered a message that was in no way related to the problems of the Middle East. It offered no solutions. It only accepted Communism as enemy number one and offered the United States to the Middle East nations as a buffer against that enemy!

The Senate proceedings tended to bring out this very weakness of the resolution. For example Wayne L Morse (D,Ore.) attacked the resolution on these grounds. He said:

I think it is very dangerous to commit ourselves to unilateral military action in the Middle East with no pledges at the same time from our allies, when we all know and it cannot be successfully disputed that the primary underlying purpose of the resolution is the protection of the oil areas of the Arab states to Western Europe... Russia
taking over the oil wells by force is a scarecrow argument... We should (on the contrary) exercise the leadership to the United Nations to face up quickly to the three great issues in the Middle East—Suez Canal, Arab refugee problem and territorial integrity of Israel... (No resolution) can be reconciled with giving to any President... at any time the kind of unchecked blanket power that Mr. Eisenhower is asking for, in his resolution. 47

Thus Senator Morse questioned the economic, political, military as well as the constitutional validity of the resolution. These were the very four points which were to recur again and again during the cold war.

The sweeping economic powers that the resolution attempted to give to the President was the other issue of concern in the Senate, something which the Russell amendment sought to take away. Sam J Ervin Jr. (D, N.C.) while voting against the resolution, attacked its economic plank as something which was irreconcilable, "...with a proper regard for the resources of the American tax-payers and the lives of American boys." 48

The support in the Senate was once again as

48. San J. Erwin, `Senate Debates,' COA, n.37.
in the House, linked to the anti-communist thrust of the Resolution. Jacob K. Javits (R, N.Y.) elaborated:

United States overseas economic and technical assistance programs are in the danger in the Congress. Unless there is a great rallying of public support behind these programmes, they could be so seriously crippled as to materially retard the fight against Communism and the struggle for international peace... military aid is only the shield. Behind this shield, we must integrate and develop a free world, give it hope, encouragement and progress, if we are to overcome successfully the constantly increasing Communist drive of infiltration and subversion.49

In the same vein, H. Alexander Smith (R, N.J.) resolutely asked for an end to "partisan political blocking" of the resolution and "full and unconditional support"50 of the President. It should be noted here that support and opposition to the resolution were not on partisan lines. Those who supported the resolution were moved by a sense of responsibility to the President. Some did not like his proposals and some would have preferred the Russell amendment, but sided with Eisenhower to prevent a "political embarrassment"51 to the President.


50. Ibid.

51. John F. Kennedy (D, Mass.), CQA, n.37, p.579. Another Senator Stuart Symington (D, Mo.) is reported as having agreed with Russell, but voted against his amendment in order to give the President his complete support.
The Senate finally passed the slightly amended resolution ('as he deemed necessary' was changed to 'the US was prepared to use armed forces if the President determines the necessity') on March 5, and on March 9, the resolution became law. In the Senate it was cleared with 30 Democrats and 42 Republicans voting in its favour and 16 Democrats and 3 Republicans against it. It is important to note that the floor debates and voting in both the houses were not on party but on ideological lines.

For a clearer understanding of the Eisenhower Doctrine, it is essential to analyse, how the President himself viewed it after he had announced it. In his memoirs he justified it by saying:

We felt that a declaration making clear the American view of the current situation and our intentions respecting it was necessary so that all including the Soviets would understand that despite our disagreement in 1956 with our major European allies over a logical course of action, respecting the Suez Canal, we were fully determined to sustain Western rights in the region.\(^{52}\)

This implies that he was deeply concerned in assuring Britain and France of the United States

ination to keep the West united. It can also mean
isenhower needed the support of his allied for the
of his resolution.

On January 23, 1957 President Eisenhower addressed
a news conference on the relevence of his Mideast
proposals. A variety of questions on the military and
economic aspects of the Doctrine, on the significance of
the Richards Mission, and the expected results of the
Doctrine in the Middle East were posed to him. An
analysis of the questions and answers would be helpful
in understanding Eisenhower's approach to the Doctrine.

Raymond P. Brandt of the St. Louis Post Dispatch:

How essential is it that the Armed Forces section
and the economic and military aid to be in one
package?

The President:

To my mind, it is vital. You cannot do the things
that need to be done...to wage the peace, mearly
with arms. You have got to have the human
understanding of human wants, and you have got to
make it possible for people to achieve something
in satisfying those wants if we are going to wage
peace successfully. So to have one part of this without the other, I think, would destroy what we are really trying to do, because we don't want any weaker nation to be overcome by force, by subversion or by Communist influences. But at the same time if we limit ourselves to that, then I would say it was a self-defeating effort because we must, particularly by technical help and sometimes by helping in investments, let them develop their resources so they can have a better life.

Thus to Eisenhower, Communism could be made less attractive to the countries of the Middle East, if these were given lots of military and economic aid. Weakness and poverty increased the attractiveness of communism. If these were removed Communism would have less appeal—that was the logic. To another question on the Soviet Union's perception of the Doctrine, Eisenhower replied stressing on the fact that military and economic help would not imply interference in the internal affairs of these countries. Charles E. Shutt, of the Telenews asked:

A few days ago, Sir the Communist leaders of Russia and China signed a pronouncement in Moscow saying, in effect they would protect the Middle East countries from any interference from the Eisenhower Doctrine. Can you give us your views Sir, as to what concern that might cause this Government for a conflict or general misunderstanding in the area?

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The President replied:

...we said we will help those countries desiring it. Now let me say again, there is no one, no government, we are trying to dominate. To dominate a country is to take on, if nothing else, responsibilities which we wouldn't want to be charged with. So they have to handle their own affairs and we are not going to interfere in the internal affairs of any country. We stand ready to help though and prevent them from falling prey to the communist influence.54

A question was also posed as to how the sum of $200 million was going to be spent. The question implied that the Richards Mission, that the President proposed to send to the Middle East to ascertain the financial requirements of the various countries of the region, was not really the appropriate method of ascerting the financial requirements of the countries of the region of doing so.55 On this the President insisted on the necessity of the mission, because he felt that the only way he could:

find out exactly how to spend the $200 million would be through the medium of the Richards Mission. Now one of the reasons it is going out is to explore with these countries the character of their needs. Until we can get that kind of study we wouldn't give any program the expenditure at all.56

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55. Question posed by Rowland Evans, New York Herald Tribune. The question was: Sir one of the main points of resistance to your resolution in the Senate is-there seems to be no clear understanding of how the 200 million might be spent.

56. News Conference, n.53, p.84.
There seemed to be sense in this argument. However, the mission did not accomplish much as it did not visit the countries where funds might have been most necessary to win them to the Western side like Egypt for one. To the President thus the Doctrine was a unique one, meant to save the Middle East countries from the intrusion of Communism, after the exist of Britain from the area. Though there was no harm in this the Doctrine should also have been directed towards solving the Palestine refugee problem, Arab-Israeli conflict and Arab Nationalism. Eisenhower left the first two to the United Nations to deal with. The third one, he chose to ignore as a passing phase, which would be overcome he had hoped, by closer association of the West with the Arabs. And in the process, says Gulshan Deital the Eisenhower Doctrine sacrificed:

...the regional issues on which stability and prosperity depended to the security interests of the Western alliance. It was based on the ideological and strategic considerations rather than on consideration for the betterment of the people of West Asia.  

Deital further says that the Eisenhower Doctrine challenged Nasser's leadership of the Arab world.  

58. Ibid., p.150.  
59. Ibid., p. 139.
She sums up that the Doctrine was a declaration that the United States was prepared to enter West Asia as the spearhead of the Western alliance's interest in the region. 59

There are numerous other secondary accounts which agree that the Eisenhower Doctrine focused on only two issues; anti-Communism and anti-Arab nationalism. However, these were the very issues which should have been kept in focus if anything positive had to be achieved. Richard A. Melanson and David Mayers, two of the revisionist historians of Eisenhower's foreign policy wrote:

The President gained esteem in the Arab world by forcing the allied invaders out of the Suez, but did not then chose to work with Nasser toward resolving the underlying political and economic problems of the region. Instead he hastened to ensure that neither Nasser nor the Soviets reaped too much advantage from Suez; he declared the Eisenhower Doctrine had committed the United States to propping up the status quo. 60

Melanson and Mayers are extremely critical of Eisenhower's post-Suez policy towards the Middle East. They feel that the President was more of an idealist, dragged down by his European connections, rather than

59. Dietl, n.57, p.139.

being a realist and accepting the improvement of the people of West Asia as the basis of any new policy towards the region. Thus they lamented:

Such a cavalier treatment of an issue that comprised at once a grievous human tragedy and the greatest single threat to enduring stability in the region...The events of the immediate post-Suez period suggest what might have been accomplished if Eisenhower had used his leverage on behalf of the Palestinians. But there was a difference between using United States leverage for the immediate sake of Europe's oil and using it to fulfill the long term requirements of regional stability. Ensuring Europe's oil demanded nothing more than a narrow realism. Coping with the Palestine question demanded a sensitivity towards the fate of an Arab people. But Eisenhower was concerned with problems only to the extent they affected direct western interests. His Euro-centric tunnel vision brought him long-run dangers that might have been avoided with a broader view.61

According to Townshend Hoopes, the Eisenhower Doctrine was in a way misdirected, since its aim was to crush the spread of Communism in the Middle East, whereas the real enemy of Westernism in the region was Egypt's Nasser and his Arab nationalism. "...the real danger to the Middle East were not the Communists but Arab nationalism with Nasser as its leading propagandist."62 Nasser according to Hoopes was, "

principle agent of Soviet Communist expansion in the Middle East." 63 Also Nasser was too proud to give up his cherished ambition to make Egypt the leading nation of the region. He thus did not accept the view that nationalist goals should be subordinated to anti-Communism. He saw it just the other way. Therefore, the Doctrine was perhaps unable to make a meaningful contribution to Egypt's development. In this sense the Eisenhower Doctrine as a means to overthrow Communism in the Middle East by providing arms aid was, "a rather blunt instrument." 64

Leonard Mosley, biographer of Dulles, holds the opposite view. Outwardly he agrees that the Doctrine was an instrument to deter the spread of Communism in the Middle East. But otherwise he quotes and agrees with Dulles, that the Doctrine, "was directed more against Nasserist expansion in the Arab countries than Soviet intrusions." 65

Basically in a historical sense the Eisenhower

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64. Ibid., p.408
Doctrine can be seen as a succession to the pronouncements of a similar nature to protect American interests abroad, directly or indirectly. The Monroe Doctrine (1823), the Cleveland Doctrine (1895), the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1903), the Lodge Corollary (1911) and the Truman Doctrine (1949) preceded it. There was no harm in such doctrines. Particularly in the post World War II period, there was a consensus in the United states that it faced a threat from the Soviet Union. On April 23, 1957, in his weekly news conference, Dulles had referred to the Doctrine as, "... an attitude, a point of view, a state of mind..."66 That was not what Eisenhower had in mind when he sent his message to the congress.

Author Richard P. Stebbins writing as early as 1958 too pointed to the Communist phobia of the United States which clouded its vision of the real issues that needed attention in the Middle East in the post Suez period. He wrote:

To many observers it seemed that the really pressing problems in the Middle East were more localised in character and only indirectly related to communism. Most of the troubles of the

area in recent years could be traced to the unbridled nationalism and Xenophobia which had secured such a hold on Egypt and various other Muslim countries. These were the forces that had participated in the conflicts over the Anglo-Iranian oil and the Suez Canal as well as the perennial strife between Israel and the neighbouring Arab States.  

Stebbins also felt that the Western assumption that the Soviet Union would attack any of the nations of the Middle East was an erroneous one. Thus he questioned:

Communist Governments were not generally in the habit of resorting to armed attack when they saw a chance of gaining their objective by other methods. Why should they risk an armed showdown when they already had good footholds in Egypt and Syria and when the current trend of events throughout the Arab world seemed so favourable to them?

Stebbings himself provided the answer which was similar to what so many Congressmen had given. The newly released material provides ample support for Stebbings perspective. The answer Stebbings gave was that, "... the administration in its attempt 'to sell' the program continued to dwell almost exclusively on the threat of Communist aggression."

Arslam Humbaraci, another historian, says that th

68. Ibid., p.39.
69. Ibid., p.40.
"... real purpose of the Eisenhower Doctrine was to enable the United States to replace Britain and take over the policy symbolised by the Baghdad Pact." 70 Humbaraci, feels that the end of British domination in the Middle East was, "a great historical development." 71 And the replacement of British power by the United States was he says, "... a logical and necessary step, unless this vital region was to be left entirely open to Kremlin's brand of civilization." 72 The desire to keep Communism out was welcomed by most people in the world, though they were critical of the manner in which it manifested. Humbaraci's work illustrates it. He stressed:

... what could be criticized and condemned however, is the way in which this takeover took place, some of the motives which inspired it and the way in which the so-called Eisenhower Doctrine was put into operation. 73

To him the 'so called Eisenhower Doctrine,' was doomed.

Because as he pointed:

...the 'vacuum' theory on which it was based was mere wishful thinking. The 'vacuum' the Americans were so eager to fill had already been filled by the Arabs and Egyptian nationalistic middle classes... It regarded communism as the chief problem, when it was really nationalism. 74


71. Ibid., p.237.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., p.239.

74. Ibid.
H. Paul Castleberg, writing in 1959, felt that the emphasis of the Eisenhower Doctrine on a Communist threat to the Middle East, amounted to a "... a public confession of opposition to what some of the (Middle East) states do not necessarily consider an enemy." And this tended to alienate most of the Arab states against the Eisenhower Doctrine, for to them Communism was the lesser of the two evils than colonialism. Richard and William Polk in an article, concluded:

Treaties, pacts and aid agreements have seemed almost to become ends in themselves, to be sought even to the point of damaging the relationships they were designed to support. The Eisenhower Doctrine is a recent example. It was presented in a way ('stand up and be counted; we will make it worth your while') which made it seem to confirm Radio Moscow's daily portrayal of it as nefarious 'new imperialism' As a result, fearing popular outcry, no Arab government except that of Lebanon - a small, half-Christian state with a western orientation- dared to endorse it, and the over-all position of the United States in the Middle East was weakened rather than strengthened. 76

Thus the majority of books and articles on the issue are highly critical of the misguided notions, on which the Eisenhower Doctrine was based.

The recently released material which includes primary United States Government documents as well as the numerous interviews, all confirm to the deductions of the contemporary material on the Eisenhower Doctrine. From these we learn that the discussions on the Eisenhower Doctrine in the United States began as early as December 1956. With the defeat of Britain, France, and Israel in the Suez war of 1956, Eisenhower felt that the United States had a special responsibility in the area. In a telephone call to Dulles on December 8, 1956 Eisenhower said that, "he was looking for a 'package deal' that would combine various factors, economic etc. to allow us to get on a little bit better basis with these people." It is odd that in this call, Eisenhower himself hinted at the fact that, at that time the fear of Communism was the least. He said:

... if we discount a Soviet attack arising out of anger and frustration, ... the world is in the best shape vis a vis communism that it has been in recent years since 1950 at any rate.

It leads one to question as to why then did Eisenhower build up a Soviet bogey?

77. Telephone call by Eisenhower to Dulles, December 8, 1956, Ann Whitman Diary Series Dwight D. Eisenhower Diary Series, File; December 1956, Box 20. Henceforth cited as AWDS DDEDS.

78. Ibid.
A lot of this perhaps had to do with the Suez Crisis. It had brought out two important points. One, that the Soviet Union would definitely make attempts to use the vulnerability of the region to make its presence felt there. And secondly that the United States had emerged as a great power, no longer hesitant of independent action against its allies in the name of fair play. Both these are reiterated in the new sources. In a letter to the American Ambassador in Cairo Raymond Hare in December 1956, Dulles spoke on the first issue with great apprehension. In the letter he advised how the American Ambassador was to talk to Nasser. He wrote:

You may also make the point that our objective must be to lift up the Middle East from the morass into which it has fallen as a result of the development of the past year. We believe that the bad turn of events can be dated from the active intervention of the Soviet Union in the area. We do not believe that there can be anything but increasing distress and misery unless this intervention is excluded for the future because the obvious purpose of the Soviet Union is to create trouble which will increase its opportunities to extend its influence in the area. If this were unopposed, the economies of Asia, the Middle East and Europe would be at the mercy (of Russia). 79

Similarly in a telegram Raymond Hare informed

79. Letter from Dulles to Raymond Hare, December 20, 1956, John Foster Dulles Papers 1951-59, File; Chronological Series, December 1956(2) Box 14. Henceforth cited as JFDP.
I am now convinced that, as far as Egypt and possibly other Arab States are concerned United States has suddenly emerged as a real champion of right. In past a few have had implicit faith in us but great majority were either only half convinced or openly suspicious. Now they tend to see us for first time as we have sought to bring them to see us.

This the President himself confirmed in a telephone call to Dulles. He told him: "We can thereby displace Soviet influence in many areas through our standing firm in the United Nation in opposition to the invasion of Egypt..."

The concept of a 'vacuum' resulting, from the defeat of the British and French forces in the Middle East, too emerges from the recent material. The minutes of a bipartisan Congressional Meeting on Jan 1, 1957, noted:

The President... recalled traditional Russian ambitions in the Middle East, the present impossibility of France and Britain acting as a counterweight, and the existing vacuum that must be filled by the United States before it is filled by Russia..."

From this belief of the special role of the United States in the post-Suez period emerged Eisenhower's

80. Telegram from Raymond Hare to Dulles, November 5, 1956, Dwight D.Eisenhower. White House Central Files 1953-61 (1 of 2),Files : Confidential File, Subject Series, State Department of November - December 1955, Box 70. Henceforth cited as DDE-WHFC

81. Telephone Call, n.77.

82. Bipartisan Congressional Meeting, January 1, 1957, AWDS-DDEDS, File; January 1957' Mis (4), Box 21.
second conviction: that without economic upliftment, a military support to the area would be of no use. Said Eisenhower that, "the United States must assure th Middle East countries of our friendship and must help them economically since the primary concern of local rulers is in the their local economies."83 Again in a message to the Congress on January 10, 1956, Eisenhower stressed:

Without economic strength they (the Middle East Countries) cannot support the military establishments that are necessary to deter Communist armed aggression. Economic strength is indispensable, as well, in securing themselves against internal Communist subversion.84

Thus one sees that Eisenhower's belief in the vulnerability of the Middle East to Communist intervention and the special obligation the United States had to prevent it, is amply revealed. A few more examples clearly prove this. For instance Eisenhower said, to the bipartisan group of members belonging to Congress "... the United States just cannot leave a vacuum in the Middle East and assume that Russia will stay out.85 Similarly Dulles wrote to Representative John

83. Bipartisan Congressional Meeting, n.82, p.3.
85. Bipartisan Congressional Meeting, n.82, p.4.
C. Higgins in February 1957, emphasising on the faith the other countries had in the American capability to keep them free. He stated:

... the United States is the power upon which the free world primarily depends militarily and economically. It is a power which has a worldwide perspective being both an Atlantic and a Pacific power... 86

An interesting point which emerged from the recent material is that President Eisenhower was very keen to give the name 'American Doctrine' to his proposals on. He was certain that there was a 'vacuum' of power in the Middle East, which he felt that the United States alone could fill. Others, however, saw it differently, and rejected the term 'American' attached to the Doctrine. In March 1957, Christian Herter, Under Secretary of State (1957-59) and later Secretary of State (59-61), wrote to Dulles, "placing the name 'American' on this program tends to encourage our enemies to use it as proof we are trying to fill any, 'vacuum' which may exist in the Middle East." 87

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In his interview Manfred Halpern,\textsuperscript{88} stressed on the miscalculated goal of the Eisenhower Doctrine - to prevent the spread of Communism in the Middle East. And because of this Halpern felt that the Doctrine was, "hardly respected."\textsuperscript{89} Halpern argued that the goal of the Doctrine itself was misconceived and because of this it did not command any respect from the countries of the region. The goal was to prevent the region from coming under Communist influence. But the people of the region felt that it was Western colonial dominance which was the real threat which the Doctrine in Halpern's view, completely ignored. He believed that even the notion of 'a vacuum' was off the mark. He exclaimed ," that a vacuum existed in the Middle East and that it had to be filled, this astonishing theory the United States Government expected the 280 million people of the Middle East to accept and agree that they were a vacuum !"\textsuperscript{90} This is what he felt alienated the United States Government from the people of the Middle East.

The reactions to and results of the Eisenhower Doctrine also clearly point to its counter productive nature. No one really took the Doctrine seriously. Coming immediately after the Suez crisis, it was a great

\textsuperscript{88} See Footnote, n.82, Chapter II
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid.
let down. The aims of the Eisenhower Doctrine had been; to destroy Communism, to win over the countries of the Middle East by providing them military and economic assistance, to destroy Arab Nationalism, to win over Nasser but destroy his power by isolating him and to make the Arab countries realise the worth of going in for a Western alliance. Going by the effects of the Doctrine, none of the above mentioned objectives were achieved. Only three countries besides the Baghdad Pact signatories reacted positively to the Eisenhower Doctrine; Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. The Baghdad Pact signatories included, Pakistan, Turkey and Iraq.

Libya, Lebanon, Ethiopia, and Saudia Arabia were suspicious of Russia and the United States had military bases in these countries. But Libya and Ethiopia did not react favourably to the Eisenhower Doctrine. And Egypt and Syria did not join it.

A mission was sent to the Middle East under the supervision of former Democrat Representative, James P. Richards to convince the countries to accept the Eisenhower Doctrine, Richards was officially on a fact finding mission - to determine the financial requirements of various countries. Richards visited Lebanon, Lybia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Greece, Israel, Tunisia, and Morocco. He did not visit Egypt, Syria and Jordan; perhaps because their governments did not invite him whole heartedly.
King Hussein of Jordan was eager to accept the Doctrine and align himself with the United States. But his pro-Doctrine attitude led to hostilities between his supporters and the pro-Nasser forces in his country. The presence of the American 6th Fleet in the Lebanese waters kept a civil strife as well as direct American intervention at bay.

In Syria a very strong anti-American movement got under way as a reaction to the Eisenhower Doctrine to such an extent that it "had the curious effect of uniting various parties and army factions in an anti-United States alliance." The United States, scared, that Syria would seek Communist help, tried to forge an anti-Syrian alliance, but to no avail. Iraq was too concerned about, "its oil pipelines that passed through Syria, King Saud was threatened by domestic rivalries and Jordan and Lebanon felt themselves inadequate to take the initiative." And Russia was prepared to break it.

In Lebanon, a fight resulted between the pro and anti Doctrine groups. The United States troops landed in Lebanon on July 15, 1958. Fearing a repetition of Iraq's coup, where the pro-Western ruler Nuri as Said was overthrown, the United States had to agree to the removal of Lebanon's President, Camille Chamoun.

91. Dietl, n.57, p.207.
92. Ibid.
replacing him with, Faud Shehab.

A glance at the *New York Times* of the year 1957 reveals interesting contrasts on the reactions and results of the Eisenhower Doctrine. Ambassador Richards of course had only complimentary things to say on it. From his mission he kept sending reports back to Washington on how impressed the Middle East nations were with the Eisenhower Doctrine. On April 28, he was reported as saying that, "... talks with Mideast leaders on Eisenhower Doctrin (were) highly successful."\(^93\) Then a month later Richards said that the, "... Eisenhower Doctrine (was) already successful."\(^94\) It is possible that these reports were the result of the warm welcome and positive reaction that Richards received in the 'friendly' Middle East countries that he visited.

From this emerges an interesting point that initially the Eisenhower Doctrine was welcomed though not by all. But as time progressed, the glamour dimmed. Lebanon's response illustrates the point very well. Initially the Lebanese Government voiced its support to

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\(^94\) *Ibid.*, May 28, p.3.
the Doctrine. On March 17, 1957 the New York Times headlined a story: "Lebanon backs Eishenhower Doctrine." Ambassador Richards had by then had talks with the Government of Lebanon in which it had agreed to accept the Doctrine. Then on April 28, another report spoke of Ambassador Richards' success with the leaders of the Middle East countries (Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia etc.) on the Eisenhower Doctrine. As a consequence to the strong friendship that seemed evident between the United States and Lebanon, the latter became the first country to get an arms shipment from the former in June 1957. "Ist military aid shipment under Eisenhower Doctrine, 40 jeeps to Lebanon," reported the New York Times on June 8th. Lebanon also warned the Arab nations that, "their conflicts cannot be solved by an alliance with Communism," But, a change in Lebanon's stand on the Eisenhower Doctrine was perceptible thereafter. It could have been the result of a desire on the part of the Lebanese Government to move away from too close an alliance with the United States due to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

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96. Ibid., April 28, p.2.
97. Ibid., June 8, p.4.
98. Ibid., October 9, p.9.
On October 30, at a news Conference, the President had said that the United States was not keen to expand the influence of the Doctrine. Lillian Levy of the National Jewish Post asked:

Ques: Mr. President in your opinion, does the currently increased penetration of the Communists in the Middle East require that the Eisenhower Doctrine be either expanded or amended, and if so, in what way?

Levy was referring to the political crises in Syria in September October 1957 in which the Soviet Union was reportedly taking a great deal of interest. The President replied:

We, we (sic) have not as of now considered expansion of the Doctrine. I doubt whether it could be expanded greatly and be acceptable either to me or to the Congress ... 100

On October 31, too Eisenhower said that the United States Government has, "... no plans to expand Eisenhower Doctrine." 99 It is possible that the President realised the limitations of his Policy. Eisenhower's assertion of keeping the Eisenhower Doctrine in its original form is an indication of not

only its limitations, but also perhaps of the realization that the Arab states would not rally behind the United States strongly enough to make his Doctrine a real success. Therefore, he may have felt that it was better to keep a concept alive than to push it too far and destroy it.

The secondary sources available on the subject, also emphasis on the limitations of the Doctrine for the peculiar problems of the area. But these do conclude that it was sucessful in attaining the main goal of the United States foreign policy i.e to halt the spread of Communism. On the particular issues of importance to the area, the most glaring omission of the Doctrine these feel was that it did not address itself to Egypt - the one country which was hoping for some support from the United States, after the Suez crisis.

Infact the Eisenhower Doctrine did not give any indication as to "... what precise countries were included in the vague term 'Middle East' and against
which nations 'controlled by' international communism were they to be protected?"101

The emphasis of Eisenhower's policy was thus on the containment of Communism. This raises one question, for whom was the Doctrine meant? Was it meant to give security to the countries of the Middle East? Or was it meant to appease the Western nations, particularly Britain and France? Was the United States by proclaiming the Doctrine trying to justify its anti-allied action in the Suez war? The answer provided by the declassified records is that perhaps the Doctrine served all these purpose. However, some writers have asserted that had the Communist threat materialised the United States may not have responded by military retaliation. After all military intervention was to be only at the request of the affected party.

A question was posed to the President at a news conference on January 23, 1957 as to, "... what action would the United States take in case an "overt armed aggression actually occurred?" The President's reply was very evasive. He said, "I don't know what we would do and I wouldn't guess on it at all." This only reveals an ambiguity about the use of force against Communist aggression. However, sometimes diplomacy requires that the course of action be not spelled out.

Author Humbaraci agreed that the Eisenhower Doctrine was vague in its goal and target concentration. The United States did not want the Middle East countries to become, "Soviet Satellites." But what alternative did it offer? The alternative it offered was, "... of becoming an American satellite." Perhaps this accounts for its rejection by most of the Arab nations of the Middle East. They feared that in the garb of military and economic help the United States was actually going to replace the British and French more than anything else.

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102. Stebbings, n.67
103. Stebbings, n. 67, p.43.
104. Humbaraci, n.70, p.
105. ibid 239.
106. Ibid.
Humbaraci felt that:

The desire to monopolise was one of the reasons the Americans were so eager to oust the British from the region. It accounted also for the fact that the Eisenhower Doctrine turned out to be... merely a continuation of the past policies of the British and the French.107

This however, is debatable. If the Eisenhower Doctrine was a continuation of British and French policies then, like them the United States should have also 'acquired' areas of control there. But that did not happen. Again if the Doctrine was a continuation of past colonial traditions then the President should have consulted the British and French Governments before announcing his policy. But he did not. This in fact leads Stebbings to question the validity of the Doctrine. He wrote:

What, more specifically, was the real purpose, of a plan which had been developed in obvious haste, bore no traces of consultation with Allied Governments, had apparently not been cleared through the National Security Council and evidently envisaged the possibility of military action independently of either NATO or the UN?108

The acceptance of the Eisenhower Doctrine even by friendly Arab States was not wholehearted. King Saud of

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107. Humbaraci, n. 70, p.239.

108. Stebbings, n.67, p.42.
Saudi Arabia in a Conference with other Arab leaders in February 1957 did not speak of the Doctrine in too laudatory a fashion. He did say though that, "... the American attitude seemed to him to reflect a new appreciation of the Arab viewpoint."\textsuperscript{109} But he did not insist on its acceptance by the other Arab states, particularly by those not friendly with the United States. According to Stebbins, "he (King Saud) apparently made no attempt to put the conference on record in support of the Eisenhower Doctrine..."\textsuperscript{110} The friendly Arab states of the Middle East at their best, gave diplomatic support to the Doctrine. And the non-friendly states ignored it and described it, "... as a blatant interference in the domestic affairs of Arab nations."\textsuperscript{111} It seems the Doctrine was the earnest attempt of one man to assert that the United States was deeply concerned about the danger to the Middle East from Communism. Whether that danger existed or whether the countries of the Middle East wanted the support of the United States or not was never given consideration by Eisenhower. It was simply a "one man show,"\textsuperscript{112} as one historian of the Eisenhower Presidency points out rightly.

The newly released material displays a similar

\textsuperscript{109} Stebbings, n. 67, p.179.

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{111} Elmo Richardson, \textit{The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower} (Lawrence, Kansas : The Regents Press of Kansas, 1979), p. 150.

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid.
conclusion on the fall out of the Eisenhower Doctrine. Besides a few new and interesting facts also emerge out of the declassified record.

There are numerous documents relating to the Eisenhower Doctrine in the papers of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Gordon Gray. In one such account Gray gives a list of foreign policy aims he thought should have been kept in mind for the Middle East after 1956. He listed them as, "will fight to preserve peace, recognize that Soviet (sic) has interest in the area,... indentify ourselves with constructive goals of Arab nationalism." It is surprising that though foreign policy bureaucracy had a clear understanding of the need of the hour, no effective measures resulted. Was the refusal to come to terms with the actual problems of the Middle East a deliberate step? Did the United States feel it was more profitable to emphasis on Western solidarity to keep the Communist phobia alive? These questions acquire relevance in the context of a paper on the Near East written as late as January 1958, an year after the Eisenhower Doctrine was announced.

113. There were two other special Assistants for National Security Affairs, Robert Cutler and Dillon Anderson. Their records are listed under the same headings as of Gordon Gray.


115. OSANSA, Ibid.
The paper accepted the declining influence of the United States and the West and the rising one of the Soviet Union in the Middle East. It listed the probable reasons for this as:

1. Many Arabs believe that U.S. is seeking to protect its interest in Near East oil by supporting the status quo and by opposing political or economic progress.

2. That the US seeks to maneuver the Arab states into a position where they will be committed to fight in a world war against the Soviet Union, in the face of traditional Arab reluctance to any sort of commitment.

3. That the USSR, on the contrary favours the goals of Arab nationalism and is willing to support Arabs in their efforts to attain these goals...

4. That Arab interests are best served by a competition between the free world and the Soviet bloc rather than by the exclusion of either.

5. Many Arabs believe that Israel poses a greater threat to Arab interests than Communist imperialism and Israel must be, if not destroyed at least contained and isolated.

6. Many Arabs believe that while the Soviets support Arabs against Israel the US gives Israel more aid ...than it gives to all Arab states, that the US supports Israel position on the Arab refugees and on immigration of Jews into Israel. 116

The paper also posed three very relevant questions, proper dealing of which might have improved the United

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States status in the Middle East. The questions were:

(1) How and where to find enough indigenous strength, political, economic, and military upon which to build an effective resistance to Communist penetration which has already occurred in the area?

(2) How to resolve the overriding Arab-Israel dispute?

(3) ... How to solve the Palestine refugee problem? 117

It is unfortunate, that despite such papers and other warnings the Eisenhower administration did nothing to alter either the parameters of the Eisenhower Doctrine in relation to the above or in relation to foreign policy goals in the Middle East.

Another paper presented by the National Security Council in November 1958 too emphasized the same points, stressing in the process the danger to the United States position in the Middle East from Communism. This paper saw Arab Nationalism aided by Communism as the greatest danger to Western interests. Thus the paper read:

The most dangerous challenge to Western interests arises not from Arab nationalism per se but from

the coincidence of many of its objectives with many of those of the USSR and the resultant way in which it can be manipulated to serve Soviet ends. Soviet policy in the Near East is aimed at weakening and ultimately eliminating Western influence using Arab nationalism as an instrument and substituting Soviet influence for that of the West ... It has become increasingly apparent that the prevention of further Soviet penetration of the Near East and progress in solving Near Eastern problems depends on the degree to which the United States is able to work more closely with such aims and aspirations of the Arab people as are not contrary to the basic interests of the United States.118

The last few lines of the above statement show that Arab nationalism was seen as eroding Western influence. The United States saw the region as the arena of strength between the Western influence and the Soviet influence. It thought Nasserism to be aggressive and expansionist. Did not equate it with Arab nationalism which it wanted to support.

A letter by Millar Burrows, Professor Emeritus of the Biblical Theology, Yale University in the New York Times, of August 16, 1958 displays a similar viewpoint. It read:

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118. Statement of United States Policy Toward the Near East, November 4, 1958, pp 1-2 OSANSA, NSC Policy Papers Subseries, File; Policy Towards the Near East (2), Box 26,
We are beginning to realize that this is a force to be reckoned with but our chief reaction to it seems to be that we must control and "contain" it... The Arabs need and want help both for development and for defence, but they want it on terms that do not destroy their independence.119

The letter went on to point out that unless and until the Palestine and Arab refugee problems were solved, nothing concrete would emerge vis-a-vis the United States and the Arab nations. The use of the word "contain" was so symbolic of the general United States foreign policy. The United States had always seemed to "contain" everything which was against its national interests.

Another public person, Edward L.R. Elson, minister of the National Presbyterian church, also wrote a letter directly to Eisenhower in July 1958, requesting and almost pleading for a genuine approach of understanding towards the Arabs. This letter started by praising Eisenhower's action during the Suez crisis. Said Elson, "Your action was correct in the Sinai-Suez crisis of 1956 (one of your greatest moments)."120 And then Elson offered suggestions on the


120. Letter to Eisenhower from L.R. Elson, July 24, 1958, P.1 AWDS-DDEDS, File; Staff Memos July 1958 (1), Box 35.
possible future American course of action in the Middle East. He stated:

we must find the way to identify ourselves with the Arabs' natural aspirations for freedom under God, for self-fulfillment and the achievement of an honorable national destiny consonant with their cultural and religious heritage ... in private, and when possible in public, assure the Arabs we are as devoted to the containment of Israel as we are to order and stability of the Arab world. 121

Once again the word 'containment' appeared and this time in the context of Israel! It seems the American public was well aware of their Government's adherence to containment.

However, letters, statements or policy papers did little to change the set aims, and the course of the Eisenhower's policy in the Middle East. Even Dulles gave a fair warning on the exact words to be used in the Doctrine as early as January 1957, so as to make the United States appear less anti-Communist and therefore, more welcome to the Middle East. If his warning was not heeded what can be said of others! This interesting facet is revealed in a set of two letters sent by Dulles to Gordon Gray in January 1957. Excerpts

121. Letter, n.120, p.2.
are reproduced here for a clearer understanding. Thus Dulles wrote:

I have been asked for my opinion on a number of amendments to the Middle East Resolution dealing with the matter of subversion.

In my view there is great danger in any amendment which might be construed as authorising, or indicating any purpose on the part of the United States to interfere in the internal affairs of any Middle East nation on the grounds that the United States was thereby combating Communist subversion. Such an amendment would be sure to raise in the Middle East and indeed in other parts of the world, the fear of unilateral intervention by the United States, a fear which would be exploited by the Soviets.122

And the next day he again wrote to Gray voicing the same apprehensions. He stressed:

Since the Resolution is designed not to be a "sense" (sic) resolution but a statement of what the United States will do, we feel it undesirable to make any further reference to subversion as an expression...123

Thus Dulles also had reservations about United States action against possible subversion aided by the Soviet Union and he wanted to underplay it, so that the nations of the Middle East would not oppose the Doctrine violently.

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123. Letter from Dulles to Gordon Gray, January 24, 1957, Ibid.
This factor becomes even more noteworthy since Eisenhower also made a reference to it in a television talk in July 1958. He stated:

> We may as well bring out into full day light the fact that among the Arabs, there is today a widespread notion that America is indifferent to and even hostile towards, the dream of Arab Nationalism... Now all of a sudden we seem to see this paradox: the Soviet Union, whose contribution until very recently to the education ideals, health and progress of the area has been precisely zero, has climbed on the Arab Nationalism bandwagon hooting a big brassy horn. 125

Despite this realization, it is astonishing that Eisenhower did nothing to give the United States foreign policy aims a different outlook. Perhaps by this time the Middle East had been too deeply cast in the mould of the cold war, to change effectively?

Amongst the oral interviews, recently released are of a few individuals who assessed the Eisenhower Doctrine. Of these two should be specially mentioned. These are of Camille Chamoun, former President of Lebanon and Charles Malik, a Lebanese diplomat. Their views acquire special significance since Lebanon was one of the few countries that had shown a positive attitude to the Eisenhower Doctrine. Their remarks clearly indicate the resentment

125. Presidents Television talk on the Mid East, July 28, 1958, pp 5-7, CDJP, File; Time Inc. Middle East Crisis, Working Papers, Results etc.(2), Box 63.
that some of the Lebanese felt against the United States and more particularly the Eisenhower Doctrine. Chamoun lamented:

(When the Eisenhower Doctrine was introduced to us), it was full of promises of the amount of aid to Lebanon. They wanted Lebanon to be the first Arab country to enter into agreement with the United States about the implication of this doctrine. And when it materialized, it materialized by very little results.\textsuperscript{126}

Chamoun not only portrayed the fact that Lebanon felt let down, he also said that Lebanon joined the Eisenhower Doctrine out of fear of isolation in the Arab world. Thus he accepted:

I signed the Eisenhower Doctrine, because I started to realise... the danger of having on one side Egypt with Nasser's ambition; on the other side Syria, which was not part, yet of the UAR, but which was siding a 100% with Egypt against Lebanon. That's one of the reasons for which I have signed the Doctrine.\textsuperscript{127}

The above words are a harsh indictment of the Doctrine as well as of the United States in the Lebanese eyes. It was possible of course that Lebanon wanted the United States to offer American assistance against their Arab rivals rather than against Communism. Charles Malik

\textsuperscript{126} Camille Chamoun, interviewed by Dr. R. Bayly Winder, Beirut, Lebanon, August 28, 1965, p. 6, John Foster Dulles Oral History Collection. Seeley J. Mudd library Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, USA. Henceforth cited as JFD-OHC.

\textsuperscript{127} Chamoun, \textit{Ibid}, p.45.
went a step further and strongly assailed the idea that Lebanon had even accepted the Eisenhower Doctrine. He stated:

People say Lebanon ‘adhered' to the Eisenhower Doctrine ... what do you mean by saying Lebanon ‘adhered to the Eisenhower Doctrine' who adheres to the Eisenhower Doctrine?

In the first place, Lebanon was never consulted. In the second place the phrase ‘Eisenhower Doctrine' does not exist except in newspapers. All that exists is a decision taken by the United States Congress. In what sense can a country ‘adhere' to a decision taken by the legislature of another sovereign country without being asked about it what so ever? In no sense at all.

All that happened was that the Americans acted... without consulting with anybody in the world at least without consulting with us. It was they who acted, and they who elaborated the Congressional Act, and they who passed it later in March 1957. It is they who did it. It is they who felt that the time had come for the United States to pass an act by the legislative whereby the United States would tell the world that it would support any country in the Middle East that would appeal to it for its support if that country is endangered or being undermined by international communism.

Now, in what sense did Lebanon ‘adhere' or ‘join' In no sense at all. We had nothing to do with it.128

These are only two voices (and afterthoughts at that!) but these are embarrassing indicators of the dislike of the Eisenhower Doctrine by even the friendly

nations of the Middle East! Ultimately the Eisenhower Doctrine pleased no one, not even Dulles or Eisenhower, as is revealed. It seems that once having announced the programme and basing its identity with Communism, retreat from it became a difficult proposition. Thus the United States continuous to support it in public, as contemporary sources have showed.

It is not beyond doubt that as the President of the most powerful Western nation, Eisenhower felt that given the circumstances some grand announcement of the United States role in containing Communism was required. And thus his Doctrine. He himself agreed to this in a letter to his friend "Swede" He said:

All this, of course, is nothing but a by-product of a process which has as its principle purpose of strengthening the freedom and the gradual exhaustion of Communism in the world...129

The Doctrine also was too broad-based and vague on its exact functions. But that might have been the result of Eisenhower's desire not to limit his course of action in the politics of the region. Political Scientist and renounced historian on Eisenhower presidency, Fred I

Greenstein in an interview stated:

"It was characteristic of Eisenhower to be cautious, so that it did not limit his actions later on... and to him the Middle East was an area of animosity and problems and he felt that America should not get too involved."

It is possible that the Eisenhower Doctrine was thus deliberately left vague and ambiguous and not spelled out in detail in order to give Eisenhower a chance to use it more flexibly. However, the Doctrine brought Eisenhower only discredit. Raymond Hare, Ambassador to Egypt (1956-58) concluded:

"...however well intentioned it (Eisenhower Doctrine) might be ... this was a gesture of a type that was going to be misinterpreted in the area and going to cause trouble - which it did. Which it did."

Definitely it was going to cause trouble. Repetitive of past doctrines it had nothing new or positive to offer to the area for which it was intended and was a dismal failure.

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130. Fred I. Greenstein, Political Scientist Professor of Politics and Chairman, Programme in Leadership Studies, Department of Politics, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University Princeton, NJ, USA, interviewed by researcher, October 26, 1992.