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The Origins of Alliances

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trol of Arab territory. With pan-Arabism in decline, inter-Arab politics after 1967 were driven more by material interests (e.g., regaining the occupied territories) than by the endless wrangling over which regime had the best plan for reuniting the "one Arab nation with its historic mission." Although the question of Palestine remained a touchstone of Arab nationalist ideology, increased cooperation among some otherwise unlikely partners (e.g., Syria and Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia) was the most important result of the gradual decline in pan-Arab ideology.

[5]

Balancing and Bandwagoning

Chapters 5 through 7 evaluate the propositions developed in chapter 2 in light of the events described in chapters 3 and 4. Specifically, chapter 5 examines the competing hypotheses on balancing and bandwagoning, chapter 6 explores the relationship between ideology and alignment, and chapter 7 assesses the impact of foreign aid and penetration.

This chapter considers first the overwhelming tendency for states to prefer balancing and then the rare cases of bandwagoning that do occur. The analysis addresses four broad questions. First, which of the two—balancing or bandwagoning—is more common? Second, do the responses of the superpowers differ from those of the regional states? Third, if balancing is the prevalent response, what is the relative importance of the different sources of threat (aggregate power, geographic proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions) in producing balancing behavior? Finally, are the relatively rare examples of bandwagoning adequately explained by the hypotheses outlined earlier? In answering these questions, I am in effect testing the propositions on balancing and bandwagoning advanced in chapter 2. Before I undertake these tasks, however, I will briefly discuss hypothesis testing.

Three strategies are available to test the different hypotheses developed in chapter 2. The first strategy is to measure covariance. Does the dependent variable (in this case, international alignments) co-vary with the independent variables (level of threat, ideological agreement, etc.) specified in each hypothesis? We can also test the hypotheses indirectly by deducing other predictions (for which evidence may be more readily available) and testing them. The second strategy is to rely on direct evidence (such as the memoirs of a knowledgeable participant) for testimony as to why a particular alliance choice was made. The third strategy is to ask the experts—to compare the judgments of regional specialists with the predictions of each hypothesis, using the expertise of others to

substitute for a lack of direct evidence on the perceptions of the relevant actors.¹

Each of these strategies has been employed in the evaluation of the various hypotheses on alliance formation.² None is uniformly feasible or reliable, but together they provide a satisfactory set of tests. A rough measure of the relative validity of the competing propositions is gained by comparing the number of alliances in the sample that fit the predictions of each general hypothesis with the number that do not. Direct evidence on elite perceptions, when available, is also examined. Throughout, expert testimony from secondary sources is used to make specific analytic judgments.

BALANCING BEHAVIOR AND ALLIANCE FORMATION

What does the historical record in the Middle East reveal about the origins of alliances? Four things, primarily. First, and most obviously, external threats are the most frequent cause of international alliances. Second, balancing is far more common than bandwagoning. Third, states do not balance solely against power; as predicted, they balance against threats. Although the superpowers choose alliance partners primarily to balance against each other, regional powers are largely indifferent to the global balance of power. Instead, states in the Middle East most often form alliances in response to threats from other regional actors. Fourth, offensive capabilities and intentions increase the likelihood of others joining forces in opposition, although the precise impact of these factors is difficult to measure. Let us first consider the evidence for these conclusions and then explore why such behavior occurs.

1. I have found the following works on social science methodology helpful: Alexander L. George, "Case Studies and Theory Development," paper presented to the 2d Annual Symposium on Information Processing, Carnegie-Mellon University, October 15-16, 1982; Arthur L. Stinchcombe, *Constructing Social Theories* (New York, 1968); Donald Campbell and Julian Stanley, *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research* (Chicago, 1963); Hubert Blalock, *Basic Dilemmas in the Social Sciences* (Beverly Hills, Calif., 1984); and Paul Dising, *Patterns of Discovery in the Social Sciences* (Chicago, 1971), especially chaps. 11, 13, 18, and 19.

2. The correlational approach is limited when several independent variables are all contributing to the outcome. With quantitative data, this limitation can be dealt with by controlling for each variable; but there is no simple way to do so with largely qualitative data. Elite testimony can be revealing but must be used with caution, as memoirs and other statements may be heavily influenced by the speaker's instrumental motives. In the same way, expert accounts can reflect the analyst's biases or other errors and therefore should be used with care.

The Dominance of Balancing Behavior

Alliances formed to balance against threats may take several distinct forms. In the most typical form, states seek to counter threats by adding the power of another state to their own. Thus the superpowers have sought allies to counter threats from each other (e.g., by acquiring bases or other useful military assets) or to prevent the other from expanding its influence. The regional states, in turn, have sought external assistance, most often from one of the superpowers but occasionally from other local actors, when they have been engaged in an intense rivalry or an active military conflict.³

A different form of balancing has occurred in inter-Arab relations. In the Arab world, the most important source of power has been the ability to manipulate one's own image and the image of one's rivals in the minds of other Arab elites. Regimes have gained power and legitimacy if they have been seen as loyal to accepted Arab goals, and they have lost these assets if they have appeared to stray outside the Arab consensus. As a result, an effective means of countering one's rivals has been to attract as many allies as possible in order to portray oneself as leading (or at least conforming to) the norms of Arab solidarity. In effect, the Arab states have balanced one another not by adding up armies but by adding up votes. Thus militarily insignificant alliances between the various Arab states often have had profound political effects.

We are therefore dealing with two broad types of balancing: balancing conducted by military means for specific military ends and balancing conducted by political means directed at an opponent's image and legitimacy. Common to both types, however, is the desire to acquire support from others in response to an external threat.

Chapters 3 and 4 identified thirty-six distinct international alliances among the states in the sample. (See appendix 1 for the complete list.) Each of these alliances required a decision by two or more states. The thirty-six alliances are thus the result of eighty-six separate alliance choices. As shown in Table 8, at least 93 percent (eighty out of eighty-six) of these decisions were made at least partly in response to a direct external threat and 87.5 percent (seventy out of eighty) were directed against the states that appeared most dangerous. By contrast, the states examined here chose to bandwagon with the principal sources of threat at most 12.5 percent (ten out of eighty) of the time. Not only were external threats the most frequent cause of the overwhelming majority of alliances examined in this study, but such threats almost always led

3. The most obvious examples are the patron-client relationships that enable the Arabs and Israelis to sustain their rivalry, the support given to the warring sides in the Yemen civil war, and the Arab coalition that fought the October War in 1973.

Table 8. Alliances formed in response to external threats

Alliance	Duration	Main threats	Balance or bandwagon?	Level of commitment ^a
Baghdad Pact ^b	1955-1958	Soviet Union/Egypt	3	Moderate
Arab Solidarity Pact ^c	1955-1956	Iraq/Egypt	4 (2)	Moderate/low
Soviet Union-Egypt	1955-1974	United States/Great Britain/Israel	0	High
			1 (3)	
			0	
Soviet Union-Syria (1)	1955-1958	Baghdad Pact/Israel	2	Moderate
Soviet Union-YAR (1)	1955-1962	Great Britain	2	Low
Suez War Coalition ^d	1956	Egypt	3	High
Kings' Alliance ^e	1957-1958	Egypt	3	Moderate/low
United States-Saudi Arabia	1957-present	Egypt/Soviet Union	2	High
United States-Lebanon	1957-1958	Egypt/Soviet Union	2	High
United States-Jordan	1957-present	Egypt/Soviet Union	2	High
Iraq-Jordan	1958	Egypt/Syria	2	Moderate
Egypt-Saudi Arabia	1958-1961	Iraq/Egypt	1	Low
Soviet Union-Iraq (1)	1958-1960	United States/Great Britain/Egypt	2	Moderate
Kuwait Intervention ^f	1961	Iraq	3	Moderate
United States-Israel	1962-present	Egypt/Soviet Union	2	High
Egypt-YAR	1962-1967	Royalists/Saudi Arabia	2	High
Saudi Arabia-Jordan	1962-1964	Egypt	2	Moderate/high
Tripartite Union ^g	1963	Egypt	0	Low
Syria-Iraq	1963	Egypt	2	High
Cairo Summit ^h	1964-1965	Syria/Egypt	1	Low/moderate
Soviet Union-YAR	1964-1969	United States/Royalists	2	High
Soviet Union-Syria (2)	1966-present	United States/Israel	2	High
Six Day War Coalition ⁱ	1967	Israel/Egypt	2	High

Egypt-Jordan

Soviet Union-PDRY

Eastern Command

Israel-Jordan

October War

Alliance^k

Soviet Union-Iraq (2)

Egypt-United States

Syria-Jordan

Steelfastness Front^l

Saudi

Arabia-Jordan-Iraq

Total alliances: 33

1967	Israel/PLO	2	0	Moderate
1968-present	United States/Saudi Arabia	2	0	High
1969-1970	Israel	3	0	Low
1970	Syria/PLO	2	0	Low
1971-1973	Israel	3	1	High
1971-1978	United States/Iran	2	0	High
1975-present	Soviet Union/United States	1	1	High
1975-1979	United States/Iraq	2	0	Moderate
1978-1981	Israel/Egypt	2	0	Moderate
1979-present	Iran/Syria	3	0	High
Total decisions:		70 (68)	8 (10)	

^aHigh means that the alliance involves extensive security cooperation or active military involvement. Moderate means that the alliance involves diplomatic coordination and significant risk of military involvement. Low means that the alliance involves symbolic commitment only.

^bOnly the United States, Great Britain, and Iraq are counted here. Full membership of the pact was Iraq, Turkey, Great Britain, Iran, and Pakistan. The United States was not an official member but supported the pact via defense treaties with several members.

^cEgypt, Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. Saudi Arabia and Yemen joined the alliance to balance against Iraq and Great Britain but remained partly to appease (i.e., bandwagon with) Egypt. Hussein joined reluctantly under Egyptian and Syrian pressure.

^dBritain, France, and Israel.

^eIraq, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan.

^fJordan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

^gEgypt, Syria, and Iraq. Only Egypt is balancing.

^hRapprochement of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan—all seeking to isolate Syria (i.e., to balance), but Saudi Arabia and Jordan also using Arab surmits as a means of appeasing Nasser.

ⁱEgypt, Syria, and Jordan (bandwagoning with Egypt), with other Arabs showing solidarity through token military actions.

^jIraq, Jordan, and Syria. Very low level of cooperation.

^kEgypt, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Jordan bandwagoning with Israel by limiting its participation to a token force.

^lOnly Syria and PDRY counted here, but Libya, Algeria, and, later, Iran also associated with this coalition.

the endangered parties to seek allies to counter the principal sources of danger.

These results are even more striking when the importance of the alliances is considered. Some alliances involve much more extensive commitments than others, and we are, of course, most interested in those that involve the largest exchange of support. Table 8 classifies each of the alliances according to level of commitment and duration. We can distinguish among three levels of commitment. At the highest level, allies sacrificed tangible assets (e.g., territory, money, and people) to fulfill their commitments. At the moderate level, allies risked tangible losses or made important diplomatic sacrifices to support their partners. In other words, these alliances involved significant but largely intangible costs. The lowest level refers to largely symbolic alliances, where the members proved unwilling to make any significant military or diplomatic sacrifices.

These somewhat arbitrary judgments take account of the duration of the alliance as well. Alliances lasting several years reflect repeated calculations of interest and provide a clearer indication of how the members have weighed their options. Other things being equal, therefore, alliances of shorter duration are assumed to be relatively less important.

If alliances that either involved a very low commitment or were of very short duration (or both) are excluded, we see an even more marked preponderance of balancing behavior. Indeed, every alliance that featured a high level of commitment lasting more than three years reflected a decision to balance against a threatening power. By contrast, seven of the ten possible cases of bandwagoning lasted less than a year, and only one (Jordan in 1967) involved a high level of commitment. In other words, decisions to bandwagon show a low level of commitment and are relatively fragile. Indeed, one might say they are hardly alliances at all—just temporary responses to particular situations. The limited scope of most bandwagoning alliances reinforces the conclusion that they play a minor role in international politics.

The results are especially striking when one considers that many of these states were relatively weak and that they were led by relatively inexperienced regimes. Despite the fact that the Middle East lacks an established tradition of balance of power statecraft (in contrast to the European state system, e.g.), the advantages of seeking allies in order to balance against threats have obviously been apparent to the various actors in the Middle East. As described in chapters 3 and 4, the ascendancy of ambitious regional powers (such as Iraq under Nuri al-Said and Egypt under Nasser) consistently led other regional actors to join forces with one another or with one of the superpowers in order to resist the attempt. In short, the record of alliance formation in the Middle East

presents strong evidence in favor of the general proposition that states form alliances to balance against external threats and casts grave doubt on the validity of the bandwagoning hypothesis.

The Effects of Power and Proximity

The importance of considering different sources of threat is equally clear. Whereas the superpowers tend to balance primarily against aggregate power alone (i.e., forming alliances to contain the other superpower), states in the Middle East tend to balance against threats from other regional powers. Thus the alliances examined here support the proposition that geographic proximity is an important factor in determining which threats will prompt states to seek allies. A brief comparison of the alliance policies of the superpowers and the Middle East states will demonstrate this proposition.

Balancing Behavior by the Superpowers

If the balancing hypothesis is correct, what behavior should we expect from the two superpowers? Like everyone else, each superpower should seek allies to counter significant threats. Threats from the other superpower will be among the most worrisome. We should therefore expect each superpower to balance more energetically (i.e., to seek additional allies or support the ones it already has more vigorously) whenever its position vis-à-vis the other superpower deteriorates. We would also expect cooperation between the two superpowers to be extremely rare. If this hypothesis is false, however, we would expect significant superpower collusion and indifference on the part of each superpower to gains by the other. Setbacks should lead the loser to abandon the field instead of inspiring renewed efforts at restoring its position.

The history of superpower alliances in the Middle East strongly supports the proposition that these states act primarily to balance one another. As Table 9 indicates, all but two of the superpower commitments examined here were formed primarily to counter the opposing superpower. The remaining cases, moreover, were completely consistent with the general objective of weakening the other superpower's regional position. Thus the Western effort to contain the Soviet Union through the Baghdad Pact led the Soviets to seek closer ties with Egypt and Syria.⁴ When this policy bore fruit, the United States proclaimed the Eisenhower Doctrine, began overt and covert pressure on Syria (widely received as a Soviet satellite), encouraged the formation of the Kings'

4. See Hurewitz, *Middle East Politics*, p. 79; Roi, *From Encroachment to Involvement*, pp. 214-16; and Dawisha, *Soviet Foreign Policy towards Egypt*, p. 11.

Table 9. Superpower alliances in the Middle East

Alignment	Duration	Superpower's motive	Client's motive
Baghdad Pact	1955-1958	Contain Soviet Union	Balance Soviet Union/Egypt Balance Israel/Iraq
Soviet Union-Egypt	1955-1974	Balance United States/Great Britain	Balance Israel/Iraq
Soviet Union-Syria (1)	1955-1958	Balance United States/Great Britain	Balance Israel/Iraq
Soviet Union-Yemen (1)	1955-1962	Balance Great Britain	Balance Great Britain (Aden)
United States-Saudi Arabia	1957-present	Balance Soviet Union	Balance Egypt
United States-Lebanon	1957	Balance Soviet Union	Balance Egypt
United States-Jordan	1957-present	Balance Soviet Union	Balance Egypt
Soviet Union-Iraq (1)	1958-1959	Weaken Baghdad Pact, Support Iraqi Communist Party	Balance Egypt
United States-Israel	1962-present	Balance Soviet Union	Balance Arab states
Soviet Union-YAR (2)	1964-1969	Support Egypt	Defeat Royalists
Soviet Union-Syria (2)	1966-present	Balance United States	Balance Israel
Soviet Union-PDRY	1968-present	Anti-imperialism	Balance Saudi Arabia
Soviet Union-Iraq (2)	1971-1978	Balance United States/Iran	Balance Iran
United States-Egypt	1975-present	Balance Soviet Union	Gain peace, economic aid

Alliance against Nasser (also widely regarded as a Soviet pawn), and offered economic and military support to Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. As Eisenhower put it, "When we give military assistance, it is for the common purpose of opposing communism."⁵ In much the same way, Soviet support for Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and the revolutionary regime in Iraq was primarily intended to challenge Western (and especially U.S.) influence in the region.⁶

5. Quoted in Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, p. 54 and passim. On the dominance of anti-Communist thinking in U.S. calculations, see George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, chap. 11; Quandt, "United States Policy in the Middle East," pp. 508-12; and Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, chap. 21. The Eisenhower Doctrine, for example, was justified on the ground that "the existing vacuum must be filled by the U.S. before it is filled by Russia." See Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, p. 178. John Foster Dulles was of like mind, saying that "the leaders of International Communism will take every risk that they dare in order to win the Middle East." Quoted in Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, p. 285.

6. The Soviets criticized the Eisenhower Doctrine as "a means to turn the territories of the Middle East into a military-strategic *place d'armes* directed against the Soviet Union," repeatedly called for the liquidation of all foreign military bases in the region, and consistently supported states adopting anti-imperialist or anti-Western positions. See Roi, *From Encroachment to Involvement*, pp. 214-16, 226; Arnold L. Horelick, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," in Hammond and Alexander, *Political Dynamics in the Middle East*, pp. 566-73; and Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, chap. 16.

In the 1960s, the United States sought a rapprochement with Egypt and Syria—through increased economic aid, sympathetic diplomacy, and recognition of the republican regime in Yemen—in order to entice them away from the Soviet Union.⁷ The Soviet threat also inspired increasing support for existing U.S. allies in Jordan, Israel, and Saudi Arabia.⁸ The Soviet Union responded by increasing its own military and economic aid to Egypt, republican Yemen, and, later, Syria and by encouraging Algeria, Syria, Egypt, and Iraq to form a "united front of progressive forces" against "imperialism."⁹

During the Six Day War, both superpowers provided diplomatic support to their clients and conducted large-scale military deployments to signal their interests and commitment.¹⁰ After the war, the support of the Soviet Union for its Arab allies grew to unprecedented levels as the Soviets sought to preserve their earlier investments while enjoying important strategic benefits (e.g., access to bases).¹¹ In response, the United States now sought, as Kissinger admitted, to "expel the Russians." This objective encouraged U.S. support for Jordan in the 1970 crisis, the growing military relationship with Israel, and the diplomatic and military support provided to Israel during the October 1973 war. As Kissinger told the Egyptians after the war: "Do not deceive yourselves, the United States could not—either today or tomorrow—allow Soviet arms to win a big victory . . . against American arms. This has nothing

7. On the motivations behind the U.S. approach to the Arabs, see Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp. 223-25; Badeau, *American Approach to the Arab World*, pp. 10-13, 17-19, 137; Safran, *From War to War*, pp. 132-33; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 97-98.

8. See Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 103-5, 122; Aronson, *Conflict and Bargaining in the Middle East*, p. 44; and Reich, *Quest for Peace*, pp. 39-41. Lyndon Johnson's memoirs support this interpretation of U.S. motives. As Johnson described the situation in the months before the Six Day War, "the danger implicit in every border incident in the Middle East was . . . an ultimate confrontation between the Soviet Union and the U.S." See Johnson, *Vantage Point*, p. 288.

9. According to Nadav Safran, increased support for the radical Arab states "offered precisely the best chance of embroiling these countries with the U.S. and undoing the rapprochement that had begun to take place." See *From War to War*, p. 121. On the aims of Soviet Middle East policy prior to the Six Day War, see Heikal, *Sphinx and Commissar*, pp. 167-68; Dawisha, *Soviet Foreign Policy towards Egypt*, pp. 35-38; Horelick, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East," pp. 580-86; and Oded Eran and Jerome E. Singer, "Soviet Policy towards the Arab World 1955-71," *Survey*, 17, no. 4 (1971): 20-23.

10. See Wells, "The June 1967 Arab-Israeli War," in Dismukes and McConnell, *Soviet Naval Diplomacy*, pp. 158-68. Wells characterizes Soviet behavior in the Six Day War as "the first occasion in which the Soviets utilized significant naval power in Third World coercive diplomacy."

11. According to Heikal, Soviet reluctance to supply air defense troops and pilots to defend Egypt was overcome when Nasser threatened to resign in favor of a pro-United States president. See Heikal, *Road to Ramadan*, p. 82. On the strategic benefits of Soviet access to Egyptian facilities, see Robert G. Weinland, "Land Support for Naval Forces: Egypt and the Soviet Escadra, 1962-1976," *Survival*, 20, no. 2 (1979); and Malcolm Kerr, "Soviet Influence in Egypt 1967-73," in *Soviet and Chinese Influence in the Third World*, ed. Alvin Z. Rubinstein (New York, 1975).

to do with Israel or with you."¹² Most important of all, Kissinger exploited the Soviet-U.S. détente and the opportunities inherent in the process of step-by-step diplomacy to encourage Egypt to abandon its Soviet patron, a step that cost the Soviets their most important Middle Eastern ally.¹³

After this diplomatic defeat, the Soviets moved to acquire new regional clients (e.g., Libya) and reinforced their commitments to their remaining regional allies (Syria, Iraq, and South Yemen).¹⁴ Although the Carter administration initially sought Soviet cooperation in fashioning a comprehensive peace settlement, the speed with which it abandoned this approach following Sadat's visit to Jerusalem reveals the enduring incentives of a bipolar competition. Faced with the choice of cooperating with the Soviet Union or negotiating a separate peace under U.S. auspices, Carter chose a course that excluded the Soviet Union entirely. At the same time, increasing Soviet activity in South Yemen and the Horn of Africa led the United States to provide additional support to Saudi Arabia and North Yemen.¹⁵ Thus the Carter administration, like its predecessors, eventually made opposition to Soviet influence the cardinal principle of its own Middle East policy.

The eagerness with which each superpower has sought allies in order to balance against the other is revealed in several other ways as well. First, because each seeks to acquire allies at the other's expense, weaker regional powers have profited by encouraging the competition. Thus Egypt received over \$1 billion in economic aid from both the United States and the Soviet Union between 1954 and 1965, ranking third among less developed countries in total superpower assistance.¹⁶ In the

12. On the general characteristics of U.S. Middle East policy under Nixon and Kissinger, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 76-77, 79-80, 121-27; Kissinger, *White House Years*, chap. 10, especially pp. 347, 354, 368, 373-79; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 171-73, 216-17, 224-25. Kissinger's remarks are found in *New York Times*, July 3, 1970, p. 1; and *New York Times*, December 5, 1973, p. 18.

13. For a discussion of how Kissinger exploited the détente relationship to undermine the Soviet position in Egypt, see Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East"; and Kissinger, *White House Years*, pp. 1246-48. A preoccupation with Soviet actions is apparent throughout Kissinger's account of the October War. See Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, p. 468 and passim; and Spiegel, *Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 250-52, 255-56.

14. For a survey of Soviet policy after the October War that elaborates Soviet attitudes toward the peace process, see Golan, *Yom Kippur and After*, especially chap. 4.

15. During the 1979 war between North and South Yemen, the United States dispatched two AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia as a gesture of support and offered additional military aid to the regime in Sana. For accounts, see MECS 1978-1979, p. 63; Katz, *Russia and Arabia*, pp. 35-38; and Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 501-2.

16. See Leo Tansky, *U.S. and USSR Aid to Developing Countries: A Comparative Study of India, Turkey, and the UAR* (New York, 1967), pp. 18-19. Nasser apparently viewed the U.S.-Soviet competition as very much to Egypt's advantage and explicitly wanted the superpowers to compete for Egypt's allegiance. See Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution*, pp. 45-46.

same way, threats to realign have been an effective means of persuading a reluctant patron to provide additional support, as Jordan and Egypt have shown on several occasions.¹⁷ Even the Ba'ath regime in Syria managed to receive substantial U.S. assistance during the era of step-by-step diplomacy while remaining the Soviet Union's major regional client. Because the superpowers are so ready to balance against each other, lesser powers can reap ample rewards by threatening to shift their allegiance.

Second, the absence of significant superpower collaboration in Middle East diplomacy (save during intense crises) illustrates the tendency for each superpower to act primarily to limit possible gains by the other. Soviet proposals to neutralize the region in the 1950s were ignored in the West, and the occasional efforts of the superpowers to negotiate a workable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict (e.g., the Two Power and Four Power talks that followed the Six Day War and the abortive Geneva Conference in 1973-1974) foundered largely because both superpowers placed a higher value on maintaining their existing commitments than on reaching a workable solution.¹⁸

This summary reveals an important point. The efforts of each superpower to counter the other may take two forms, both of which are consistent with the predictions of the balancing hypothesis. One form is to counter the other superpower by opposing its regional clients, either directly or by supporting other regional states. Soviet and U.S. support for their clients during the various Arab-Israeli wars illustrates this type of behavior. The second form is to try to entice the opponent's clients into realigning (either by offering more or by subverting them), as the United States sought to do with Egypt and Syria on several occasions. Although these forms are quite different, both are intended to serve the larger aim of countering the principal rival by containing or coopting its allies.

The tendency for the United States and the Soviet Union to ally with regional powers primarily to counter each other is hardly surprising. As Kenneth Waltz and others have argued, the dominant powers in a bipolar world are strongly disposed to focus most of their attention on the

17. In 1963, hints that Jordan might turn to Moscow for arms led the United States to sell M-48 tanks and advanced aircraft to Jordan. In 1968, Hussein visited Moscow and established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, leading the United States to resume weapons shipments to Jordan. In 1976, an announcement that Jordan was negotiating with the Soviet Union for an air defense system overcame congressional opposition to the sale of J-HAWK missiles. The courtship of Nasser by the United States in the early 1960s, Nasser's threats to resign in 1970, and Sadat's expulsion of his Soviet advisers in 1972 all encouraged the Soviet Union to increase its support for Egypt.

18. On this point, see Breslauer, "Soviet Policy in the Middle East"; and Hurewitz, *Middle East Politics*, pp. 94-95.

other superpower, because they are each other's greatest potential threat.¹⁹ Regional powers in the Middle East, however, have been motivated by other concerns.

Balancing Behavior by Regional Powers

I suggested in chapter 2 that regional states are more sensitive to threats from other regional powers, because of the effects of geographic proximity. If this suggestion is correct, then most of the alliances formed by these states will be to counter a threat from another local actor, not to balance one or the other superpower. If it is incorrect, then the opposite result should occur: Middle East states should form defensive alliances against whichever superpower appears strongest. The evidence supports the former view; concern for the global balance of power has played little or no role in the alliance choices of the regional states examined here. As Table 10 summarizes, when regional states choose to enter an alliance (either with another regional state or with one of the superpowers), it is almost always in response to a threat from another regional power.

In short, Middle East states have been far more sensitive to threats from proximate power than from aggregate power: threats from states nearby are of greater concern than are threats from the strongest powers in the international system. And these threats almost always provoke balancing rather than bandwagoning behavior.

Several examples illustrate this tendency. The Arab-Israeli conflict is the most obvious, because it is driven by competing claims to the same territory. As a result, both Israel and its Arab adversaries have sought great power support or forged regional coalitions to improve their positions.²⁰ Similarly, Iraq's joining the Baghdad Pact encouraged Syria and Saudi Arabia to align with Egypt. But when Nasser's growing prestige made him the more dangerous threat, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan formed the Kings' Alliance and embraced the Eisenhower Doctrine. Egypt's intervention in Yemen triggered a countervailing alliance between Amman and Riyadh, and Saudi Arabia's long-standing alignment with the United States has provided a guarantee against hostile neighbors such as Egypt, South Yemen, and, more recently, Ethiopia and Iran. Iraq's 1972 alliance with the Soviet Union and the Saudi-Iraqi alignment in 1979, both the result of threats from neighboring Iran, fit the same pattern.

19. See Waltz, "Stability of a Bipolar World"; Snyder and Diesing, *Conflict among Nations*, pp. 419-29; and Dinerstein, "Transformation of Alliance Systems."

20. Specific examples are Soviet arms support for Egypt and Syria, including the provision of air defense troops during the War of Attrition; Israel's tacit alliance with France in the 1950s and extensive partnership with the United States since the mid-1960s; the abortive Eastern Command of Syria, Iraq, and Jordan in 1969-1970; and the Egyptian-Saudi-Syrian coalition formed to wage the October War in 1973.

Table 10. Middle East alliances against regional threats

Alignment	Duration	Motives of regional states
Iraq-Baghdad Pact	1955-1958	Balance Soviet Union/Egypt
Arab Solidarity Pact	1955-1956	Isolate Iraq
Egypt-Soviet Union	1955-1974	Balance Israel/Iraq/United States
Syria-Soviet Union (1)	1955-1958	Balance Israel/Iraq/Turkey
Yemen-Soviet Union (1)	1955-1962	Pressure Britain re Aden
Suez War Coalition ^a	1956	Weaken Egypt, overthrow Nasser
Kings' Alliance	1957-1958	Balance Egypt
Saudi Arabia-United States	1957-present	Balance Egypt, other regional threats
Lebanon-United States	1957-1958	Balance Egypt/Syria
Jordan-United States	1957-present	Balance Egypt, other regional threats
Iraq-Jordan Union	1957-1958	Balance Egypt
Iraq-Soviet Union	1958-1959	Prevent British intervention, balance Egypt
Kuwait Intervention	1961	Deter Iraqi annexation of Kuwait
Israel-United States	1962-present	Balance Egypt/Syria
Egypt-YAR	1962-1967	Overthrow conservative Arabs
Saudi Arabia-Jordan	1962-1964	Balance Egypt
Syria-Iraq	1963	Balance Egypt
YAR-Soviet Union (2)	1964-1974	Defeat Royalists in civil war
Cairo summits	1964-1965	Isolate Syria, balance Israel, and appease Egypt
Syria-Soviet Union	1966-present	Balance Israel/United States
Egypt-Syria	1966-1967	Balance Israel, pressure conservative Arabs
Egypt-Jordan	1967-1970	Balance Israel, control PLO
Eastern Command	1969-1970	Balance Israel
PDY-Soviet Union	1969-present	Balance Saudi Arabia, oppose U.S. imperialism
Jordan-Israel	1970	Defeat Syrian invasion of Jordan
October War Coalition	1971-1973	Balance Israel
Iraq-Soviet Union (2)	1971-1978	Balance Iran, Kurdish insurgency
Syria-Jordan	1975-1978	Oppose step-by-step diplomacy
Steadfastness Front	1978-1982	Balance Israel, isolate Egypt
Saudi Arabia-Iraq-Jordan	1979-present	Balance Iran and Syria

^aFrance and Israel can both be considered regional powers, as Algeria was still officially part of France at this time and Nasser's alleged support for the Algerian rebels formed the basis for French hostility to Egypt.

By contrast, regional powers have been relatively unconcerned about the global balance of power. This indifference can be seen in several ways. First, if the regional powers were especially concerned about the global balance of power, we would expect all or most of them to ally against the superpower that was currently ahead. But that is precisely what has not occurred. Instead, each superpower has attracted a roughly equal number of regional allies, with each client seeking superpower support in order to deal with other regional states.²¹

21. The Soviet Union gradually established close relations with Egypt, Syria, Yemen, South Yemen, and Iraq; the United States formed an alliance network with Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq (until 1958), Israel and Egypt (under Sadat).

Second, were the global balance an important factor in the calculations of Middle East states, then significant changes in that balance should lead them to realign. Yet the considerable shift in the military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union since the 1950s has failed to alter the alliance policies of the regional states in any discernible way. In the 1950s, the Soviet Union was incapable of significant military activity outside its own border areas, as several Arab leaders learned to their dismay.²² By the mid-1970s, however, the Soviets had dispatched thousands of troops and advisers to Egypt and Syria, had made credible threats to intervene in both the 1967 and 1973 wars, had acquired an impressive, if still inferior, navy, and had achieved rough parity with the United States in strategic nuclear weapons.²³ At the very least, the United States no longer possessed the overwhelming advantage it had enjoyed two decades earlier.

Yet this significant increase in Soviet capabilities neither won the Soviets new friends nor brought them new enemies, although it did enable them to provide greater support to the allies they already had. Between 1955 and 1979, fourteen alliances were formed between one of the superpowers and one or more regional states, and they have proven remarkably stable. There have been three defections (Iraq in 1958, North Yemen in 1969–1970, and Egypt in 1975), but these shifts had nothing to do with changes in the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union.²⁴ Although the Soviet Union has steadily increased its capabilities vis-à-vis the United States, this effort has not led the regional

22. Mohamed Heikal relates two amusing incidents. During the Suez War in 1956, Syrian President Quwatli, visiting in Moscow, requested Soviet intervention in support of Egypt. According to Heikal, Soviet Minister of Defense Zhukov pulled out a map and asked Quwatli: "How can we go to the aid of Egypt? Tell me! Are we supposed to send our armies through Turkey, Iran, and then into Syria and Iraq and on into Israel and so eventually attack the British and French forces?" See Heikal, *Sphinx and Commissar*, pp. 70–71. Two years later, Nasser requested Soviet support for the Iraqi revolution in the event of Western pressure on the new regime in Baghdad. Warning Nasser that the Soviet Union "was not ready for World War III," Khrushchev said he would order military exercises near the Turkish frontier, but he explicitly cautioned the Egyptian leader that they were "nothing more than maneuvers." See Heikal, *Cairo Documents*, pp. 134–35.

23. One should be cautious in drawing conclusions about the impact of changing military capabilities, because behavior is influenced by perceptions and because many Middle East elites may have accepted the exaggerated claims made by both Soviet and U.S. spokesmen during the 1950s. Because Soviet capabilities were wildly overestimated in the public literature throughout this period, the impressive real growth in Soviet military power may not have been very noticeable.

24. Iraq's shift toward the Soviet Union in 1958 followed the revolution that overthrew Nuri al-Said; Yemen's movement both toward and away from the Soviet Union was the result of the 1962 revolution and the later settlement of the civil war in 1969; and Egypt's realignment was based on Sadat's desire to exploit U.S. influence on Israel, his need for Western investment, and especially the threat that the large Soviet presence in Egypt posed to his freedom of action. The balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union was unrelated to any of these events.

powers to alter their international position in response. In sum, the distribution of capabilities between the superpowers is not an important factor in the alliance choices of regional states.

This is not to say that Middle East states do not perceive threats from either superpower. Their perception of this type of threat usually occurs, however, when the United States or the Soviet Union is acting in support of a particular regional power. For example, it was Western support for Iraq and Israel—not U.S., British, and French capabilities themselves—that led Egypt to seek Soviet arms in 1955. Similarly, Israel welcomed U.S. military aid in the early 1960s not because it feared the direct use of Soviet power but because Soviet arms shipments were increasing the capabilities of Israel's Arab neighbors.

Furthermore, even when Middle East states have sought allies against a threat from one of the superpowers, their goal has not been to correct an imbalance in the distribution of capabilities between the United States and the Soviet Union. In other words, although regional powers are occasionally threatened by what they fear one of the superpowers might do (either alone or by supporting another local actor), I have not uncovered evidence that a concern for the condition of the global balance of power has any effect on the alliance decisions of the regional powers.

Why Different States Respond to Different Threats

The analysis to this point can be summarized as follows. Balancing behavior is far more common than bandwagoning behavior. Yet states do not simply balance against power, (i.e., the most powerful state or coalition in the world). Although the superpowers seek allies in order to balance against those with the largest capabilities, less capable states within a given region, such as the Middle East, seek allies primarily to balance against those who are close by.

Although this point is fairly obvious (and one that several other authors have emphasized), it is worth exploring it a bit further.²⁵ The differing perspectives of regional states and the superpowers helps explain why each superpower's efforts to enlist regional allies in a crusade against the other superpower have been undermined by persistent regional conflicts.²⁶ This evidence also refutes the common assertion that

25. For a general formulation, see Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers*, p. 62. For similar observations about the Middle East itself, see Brown, *International Politics and the Middle East*, pp. 198–214.

26. For example, the United States sought to create a Middle East Command in 1951, to establish a solid Northern Tier/Baghdad Pact alignment in 1954–1955, to erect an anti-Communist coalition through the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957, to wean Egypt from the

a shift in the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union will lead regional powers to alter their behavior significantly. Instead, the record of alliance formation in the postwar Middle East suggests that shifts in the global balance of power, however important they may seem to the United States and the Soviet Union, simply do not matter much to other countries.²⁷

What explains the differing responses of the superpowers and the various regional powers? Three explanations can be given. First, regional states are indifferent to the global balance because they are much weaker than either of the superpowers and can therefore do little to change the global balance.²⁸ As the theory of collective goods predicts, those who cannot affect outcomes by their own actions have little incentive to try. Thus regional powers will not align in response to shifts in the distribution of power between the United States and the Soviet Union but instead will ally with the superpower that is most willing to support their own political objectives. For regional powers, the question is not "which superpower is stronger?" but rather "which is most willing to help?"

Second, the regional powers in the Middle East are unlikely to view either superpower as posing an imminent and direct threat. Because states in close proximity tend to experience more frequent conflicts of interest, and because the ability to harm others declines with distance, the superior capabilities of either superpower may seem less threatening simply because the superpowers are further away.

The difference in Egyptian and Iraqi perceptions of the Soviet Union in the 1950s illustrates this tendency nicely. Premier Nuri al-Said of Iraq justified signing the Baghdad Pact by saying, "[Iraq's] borders are very close to the [Soviet] Caucasus, . . . only some 300 or 400 miles

Soviet Union in the early 1960s and early 1970s, and to establish a strategic consensus against the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Only the realignment of Egypt can be called a success. The Soviets have behaved similarly; they have repeatedly tried to promote fronts of progressive forces, bemoaned the repeated divisions among these same "progressive" regimes, and hurt their position with one set of Middle East states whenever they helped the others.

27. It is possible, of course, that the magnitude of the changes in the global balance has not been large enough to warrant a response from the regional states. Given the considerable changes that have occurred, it is safe to conclude that extraordinary shifts in either superpower's capabilities would be necessary before they would affect the alliance preferences of lesser powers.

28. In 1975, for example, Soviet GNP was more than 800 times that of Jordan, 63 times that of Iraq, and 150 times that of Syria. Soviet defense spending was more than 400 times that of Jordan, more than 500 times that of Iraq, and almost 42 times that of Israel (the regional state that devoted the largest sums to defense). Of course, similar disparities in capability exist between the United States and these regional actors, to say nothing of the asymmetry created by the nuclear arsenals of each superpower. These calculations are based on data on ACDA, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1978*.

[away]."²⁹ By contrast, Nasser belittled the Soviet threat by pointing out that "the Soviet Union is more than 1000 miles away and we've never had any trouble from them."³⁰

Finally, because each superpower will oppose expansion by the other, regional states can be less worried about either one. Thus Nasser once claimed that "Egypt's great strength lay in the rival interests of America and Russia, . . . and that each of the superpowers would protect her from the other."³¹ And because the slim but ominous possibility of nuclear escalation increases the risks of superpower intervention, regional powers may believe that neither superpower will risk a direct invasion. Thus Nasser rejected Western requests for an alliance against the Soviet Union by informing Dulles that "there would be no aggression from outside [the Middle East] for the simple reason that . . . nuclear weapons have changed the whole art of war, and rendered any foreign aggression a remote possibility."³²

For all of these reasons, regional powers are unlikely to seek allies out of fear that one superpower is becoming too powerful. The situation is precisely the opposite, however, in relations among the regional powers themselves. Regional powers seek allies against one another both because their neighbors are more dangerous and because their responses can make a difference.

First of all, imbalances of power within a particular region are more significant and are subject to more frequent changes. Thus Israeli decision-makers saw the Soviet-Egyptian arms deal of 1955 as a major change in the regional balance of power. Yet they also saw this balance as swinging sharply back in their favor when France began to supply them with greater quantities of modern arms. Ben-Gurion was reportedly alarmed by the Tripartite Pact of 1963 (despite its speedy collapse), and Israel's leaders saw both the Egyptian-Syrian defense treaty of November 1966 and Hussein's decision to join forces with Egypt in May 1967 as developments ominous enough to trigger the decision to launch a preemptive attack on June 5.³³

Regional states are more sensitive to local threats, because how they

29. Quoted in Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, p. 201.

30. Quoted in Heikal, *Cairo Documents*, p. 40. In a subsequent article, Heikal reported that this view was widespread: "While admittedly the Soviet Union did represent a threat, it was felt that there was no immediate or direct danger from that source. Many people, including Nasser, held that the lack of common borders between the Arab nation and the Soviet Union would deter the Soviets from undertaking any military act against it." See Mohamed Heikal, "Egyptian Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, 56, no. 4 (1978): 720.

31. See Nutting, *Nasser*, p. 271.

32. Quoted in Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, p. 188.

33. See Gazit, *President Kennedy's Policy*, p. 49; David Ben-Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (New York, 1971), pp. 688-89; Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, pp. 247-48, 412-13; and Tanter and Stein, *Rational Decisionmaking*, pp. 218-19.

choose to ally can make a significant difference. The impact of these decisions has been especially great in inter-Arab politics, where attracting allies in order to isolate rivals has been an effective means of challenging their legitimacy. For example, Syria's decision to ally with Egypt in 1955 left Iraq isolated and effectively doomed the Baghdad Pact.³⁴ But realignment could swing momentum back overnight. The formation of the Kings' Alliance checked Nasser's first bid to lead the Arab world, and the Iraqi revolution and the formation of the UAR restored Egypt's predominance once again. Similarly, although Jordan is hardly a great power (even within the Middle East), its strategic location and small but effective military capabilities have increased the importance of obtaining Jordan's cooperation in any Arab-Israeli war. Thus Nasser pressured Hussein to enter the war of 1967 (to Hussein's later regret), and both the United States and Israel worked to keep Jordan on the sidelines in 1973.³⁵ In the same way, although Saudi Arabia's impressive financial resources are still far too small to alter the global balance of power, the Saudi decision to fund Egyptian purchases of Soviet arms made it possible for Egypt to acquire the capabilities necessary to fight the October War.³⁶ Although none of these countries can alter the global balance of power, the impact of each one on the regional balance can be potent.

Moreover, regional powers clearly have good reason to fear their neighbors. Five Arab-Israeli wars occurred between 1948 and 1979; and there have been recurrent episodes of low-level violence between Israel and her Arab neighbors, a prolonged Egyptian intervention in Yemen, and occasional skirmishes between Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. Thus a final reason that Middle East states seek allies primarily to counter local threats is the fact that they have rightly perceived that the most imminent threats come from their neighbors, not from either superpower.

In sum, although balancing is the characteristic response to threats, the types of threats to which different states respond vary considerably. Because the superpowers appear roughly equal in overall capabilities, because regional powers can do little to affect the global balance, and because other regional actors present much more immediate dangers, the regional states form alliances primarily in response to threats from proximate powers. As Nasser told a U.S. journalist in 1955: "We look at things a lot differently from you Americans. We don't spend our time

34. See Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, pp. 217, 224, 226.

35. On U.S. pressure on Jordan in 1973, see Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 494-500.

36. In 1979, Saudi Arabian GNP was approximately \$76 billion, and the U.S. defense budget was approximately \$150 billion. U.S. defense spending, in short, was roughly twice as large as the entire Saudi economy. Saudi defense expenditures totaled \$20 billion in 1979-1980, about 13 percent of the U.S. total. Within the Middle East itself, however, Saudi financial assets can make a substantial impact, especially with those who have less disposable revenue.

worrying about a world war, or Russian aggression, or the struggle between East and West. We are interested in Egypt's security, and Egypt's security today means protection against Israel." Some fifteen years later, Anwar Sadat described the difference between Egyptian and Soviet interests in strikingly similar terms: "[The USSR is] a big power with commitments, conditions, responsibilities, and so on. . . . Perhaps to them the Middle East problem is not the most important problem. But to me, . . . the Middle East problem is not only the most important problem, but it is also sleep, life, food, waking hours, and water. It is my problem. It is the problem of my occupied territory."³⁷

Offensive Power and Balancing Behavior

The proposition that increases in a state's offensive power will encourage other states to balance is also supported by this study. I make this statement cautiously, however, for several reasons. As defined in chapter 2, offensive power is a state's capacity to threaten the vital interests or the sovereignty of others. This capacity may take many forms, however, depending on both the context and the target.³⁸ As a result, offensive power is difficult to measure precisely and the hypothesis is difficult to test. Moreover, because offensive power is closely related to other sources of threat (e.g., aggregate power and geographic proximity), assessing the independent impact of changes in a state's offensive power is difficult. The solution is to examine situations where a state's offensive capabilities changed but the other factors remained constant.

Several cases examined here support the hypothesis that increases in offensive power tend to provoke states to balance more vigorously. For example, both the British withdrawal from Suez in 1954 (which removed the buffer of British troops between Egypt and Israel) and the Soviet-Egyptian arms deal of 1955 increased Egypt's ability to threaten Israel. The arms deal also heightened French fears that Nasser would provide

37. Nasser's statement is quoted in Meyer, *Egypt and the United States*, p. 123. Sadat's statement is quoted in Aronson, *Conflict and Bargaining*, p. 407. For similar statements by Sadat, see Israeli, *Public Diary of Sadat*, 1: 238, 378. Nasser also indicated his awareness of the difference between the perspectives of the superpowers and their clients in his statement: "When the Americans and the Soviets, as superpowers, get together around a . . . table, they use a language different from that used between a major power and a small country, especially on the issue of a political settlement." See "'Abd-al-Nasir's Secret Papers," p. 70.

38. On the difficulties in conceptualizing and testing hypotheses about offensive and defensive capabilities, see Levy, "The Offense/Defense Balance in Military Technology." Offensive power can result from superior numbers, more effective exploitation of existing capabilities, technological developments, political propaganda and subversion, and so on. Important contextual factors include proximity, geography, and the political cohesion of the states being attacked.

military aid to the rebels in French North Africa. This increase in Egypt's ability to threaten important Israeli and French interests strongly encouraged the formation of close military ties between France and Israel.³⁹

Egypt's relations with the rest of the Arab world exhibit the same effects in a different guise. When Nasser's prestige soared following the Suez Crisis, his ability to mobilize popular support in other Arab countries (and thereby undermine their stability) gave Egypt a potent ability to threaten other Arab states. Although Jordan (and, to a lesser extent, Saudi Arabia) initially sought to appease Nasser by bandwagoning, they shifted to a balancing alignment with Iraq and the United States when appeasement proved unsuccessful.⁴⁰ By forming their own regional alliance, Nasser's opponents could claim (albeit less persuasively) to be pursuing the same ideals of Arab unity personified by Nasser.

Until the Six Day War, Nasser's ability to exploit his personal prestige on Egypt's behalf made Egypt's relations with the other Arab states at best problematic.⁴¹ But as his prestige declined, cooperation with the other Arab states actually increased. Israel's stunning victory in June 1967—as dramatic a demonstration of Egyptian weakness as one can imagine—brought an immediate improvement in Egypt's relations with the rest of the Arab world. With his army in disarray and his economy dependent on foreign subsidies, Nasser posed little threat to anyone. Egypt's aggregate power was reduced by its defeat, but Nasser's offensive power had declined even more. Nasser recognized that "with no army or air force to defend his own country, he could hardly aspire to the leadership of any other."⁴² Moreover, Israel's emergence as the dominant threat to the security of the Arab states provided a positive incentive for greater cooperation among them.⁴³ The Egyptian-Jordanian alignment, the Khartoum resolutions, Egypt's withdrawal from

39. On the effects of these events, see Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, pp. 228–29, 254–55, 258, 262–63; Crosbie, *Tacit Alliance*, pp. 14–15 and passim; Love, *Suez*, pp. 71, 75, 137; Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, p. 247; and Shimon Peres, *David's Sling* (New York, 1970), chap. 3.

40. On the effects of the Suez crisis on Nasser's prestige, see Nutting, *Nasser*, pp. 86–89, 193–96; Stephens, *Nasser*, pp. 251–54; Steven R. David, "The Realignment of Third World Regimes from One Superpower to the Other: Ethiopia's Mengistu, Somalia's Siad, and Egypt's Sadat" (diss., Harvard University, 1980), pp. 201–2; and Nadav Safran, "Arab Politics: Peace and War," *Orbis*, 18, no. 2 (1974): 380.

41. See chapter 6 for a more complete analysis of the turbulent relations among the Arab regimes in this period.

42. Quoted in Nutting, *Nasser*, p. 433.

43. Israel was now the major threat because its military power was now clearly superior and because the humiliating defeat inflicted in June 1967 had weakened the legitimacy of the various Arab powers. Even Nasser faced serious domestic protests in the aftermath of the war.

Yemen, and Nasser's efforts to organize the Eastern Command all illustrate the effects of this trend.

Nasser's death in 1970 removed the final obstacle to significant inter-Arab collaboration. Ironically, because his successor, Anwar el-Sadat, lacked the prestige and charisma that had enabled Nasser to threaten the other Arab states, Sadat's goal of forging effective Arab alliances was easier. The Arab alliance that fought the October War—the high-water mark of Arab cooperation—was the result. Thus a key factor affecting Egypt's relations with other Arab states was the waxing and waning of its offensive power to threaten the other Arab regimes.

The impact of offensive power is revealed by several other examples. Although the Soviet-Egyptian arms deal encouraged Israel and France to join forces against Egypt, the deal was partly the result of an unexpectedly harsh Israeli raid on the Egyptian village of Gaza. By demonstrating Israel's ability to attack Egyptian forces with impunity, the raid increased Nasser's perceived need for great power support.⁴⁴ The arms race that developed between Egypt and Israel in the 1960s was the product of similar concerns, and the extensive support that each superpower provided its regional clients after 1967 suggests that acquisition of offensive capabilities (e.g., advanced aircraft and armored forces) will lead—via the familiar logic of balancing—to a quest for new allies or for increased support from old ones.⁴⁵ Thus the War of Attrition triggered a renewed Israeli campaign for U.S. arms, and when Israel's offensive power was demonstrated anew during the deep penetration raids on Cairo in January 1970, Nasser was forced to beg for more Soviet aid. The Soviet Union responded by sending thousands of troops to Egypt.

These cases are especially important because they show how increases in offensive power increase the likelihood that other states will ally together, even when other factors are unchanged. Although a state's offensive power is closely related to several other sources of threat, it remains an important incentive for others to form a defensive alliance.

Aggressive Intentions and Balancing Behavior

If the hypothesis that aggressive intentions encourage balancing behavior is correct, then states that are perceived as seeking to overthrow

44. See Stephens, *Nasser*, pp. 157–59; Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, pp. 255–57; and Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs*, p. 9. The Gaza raid probably affected Egypt's perception of Israel's intentions as well.

45. On the Arab-Israeli arms race, see Safran, *From War to War*, chaps. 4 and 5; Hurewitz, *Middle East Politics*, chaps. 24 and 25; Colin S. Gray, "Arms Races and Their Influence on International Stability," and Yair Evron, "Arms Races in the Middle East and Some Arms Control Measures Related to Them," both in *Dynamics of a Conflict: A Reexamination of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, ed. Gabriel Sheffer (Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1975).

or dominate others should provoke widespread opposition. As perceptions of intent change, either the direction or the intensity of balancing behavior should change as well. If the hypothesis is incorrect, however, then a state's being seen as aggressive will have little effect or will convince others to support it more strongly, however reluctantly.

Once again, the alliances examined in this study support the former view. Although this conclusion should be viewed with some caution, both superpower commitments and purely regional alliances confirm that states that are seen as especially hostile usually provoke other states to balance against them.

Superpower Alliances with Regional States

In almost all the alliances between a superpower and a regional actor considered here, the regional state perceived one superpower as favorably inclined and the other as hostile. The fact that the Soviet Union had never been an imperial power in the Middle East, the vocal support the Soviets offered for the revolutionary ideals popular in many Arab states, and the Soviet willingness to provide extensive material assistance all encouraged the progressive Arab regimes to align with Moscow, beginning with Syria and Egypt in 1955. By contrast, U.S. support for the conservative monarchies in Saudi Arabia and Jordan, combined with Saudi and Jordanian aversion to Soviet Communism, produced precisely the opposite result.⁴⁶ Although Israel's preference for the United States is based in part on unique cultural connections between the two states, growing hostility from the Soviet Union no doubt reinforced Israel's preference for alignment with the United States.⁴⁷

Once again, Egypt's relations with the United States and the Soviet Union nicely illustrate the impact of intentions. In the 1950s, the reluctance of the United States to provide Egypt with modern armaments, the deliberate cancellation of the Aswan Dam offer, and U.S. support for the Baghdad Pact and (through the Eisenhower Doctrine) Nasser's opponents in the Arab world all left Nasser deeply suspicious of the United States. By contrast, Soviet political and military support conveyed a far more favorable attitude. The situation was partly reversed in 1959, when a series of ideological disputes divided the Soviet Union and Egypt. The United States began a deliberate campaign to improve relations with Nasser; and it produced a noticeable thaw until 1962, when Egyptian and U.S. interests diverged over Nasser's intervention in Yemen. After

46. See Seale, *Struggle for Syria*, p. 301; Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, pp. 125-26; Aruri, *Jordan*, pp. 138-46; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, p. 66 and passim.

47. See Safran, *Israel*, pp. 338-40; Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, pp. 115-22; Roi, *Soviet Decisionmaking in Practice*, pp. 417-23; and Karen B. Konigsberg, *Red Star and Star of David: Soviet Relations with Israel* (senior thesis, Princeton University, 1986).

the United States cut off food aid and increased its arms supplies to Egypt's various regional adversaries, Nasser began to see Egypt as the object of an overt imperialist conspiracy. Indeed, Nasser reportedly saw himself as the potential target of the CIA, which he blamed for the ouster of several other nationalist leaders.⁴⁸ After the Six Day War, Nasser apparently viewed the United States as unremittingly hostile, although he was reluctantly willing to seek U.S. diplomatic assistance in his campaign to regain the occupied territories.⁴⁹ As he told Soviet president Podgorny: "Our enemies will always be the Americans. They are also your enemies. Therefore we have to organize our cooperation, because it is unreasonable for me to stand neutral between he who strikes me and he who helps me."⁵⁰

These images of the two superpowers faded after Nasser's death, and this change played a central role in Sadat's decision to realign.⁵¹ Sadat was alarmed and annoyed by Soviet interference in Egyptian domestic politics, Soviet support for an abortive Communist coup in Sudan, the condescending attitude of Soviet military personnel in Egypt, and the Soviet reluctance to supply him with the weapons he wanted. At the same time, private talks between Kissinger and Egyptian officials led Sadat to conclude that U.S. policy was malleable; U.S. intentions could be changed if Egypt was willing to alter its own position. Although Sadat overestimated U.S. flexibility in 1971 and 1972, Kissinger's even-handed diplomacy after the October War and Egypt's subsequent realignment illustrate how important favorable perceptions of others' intentions can be.⁵²

Why are intentions so important in determining which superpower to choose? Because the other components of threat are not. As argued

48. See Stoukey, *America and the Arab States*, p. 196; Nutting, *Nasser*, pp. 374-82; Stephens, *Nasser*, pp. 457-65; and Burns, *Economic Aid and U.S. Policy*, p. 168.

49. See Safran, *From War to War*, pp. 279-81. One source reports Nasser as telling a meeting of Egyptian leaders in November 1968: "There will be no coexistence [with America]. . . . As long as Nasir is in power, the Americans will not reach agreement with him." For this and similar statements, see "'Abd-al-Nasir's Secret Papers," pp. 40, 68-69, 87-88.

50. See "'Abd-al-Nasir's Secret Papers," pp. 4-5; and Rubinstein, *Red Star on the Nile*, pp. 63-65, 98-103. Of course, Nasser's favorable statements regarding the Soviet Union may have been due to Egypt's dependence on Soviet aid during this period.

51. Nasser did attempt a brief *détente* just before his death by imploring the United States to commence a "new, serious, and definite beginning" in April 1970 and by accepting the Rogers ceasefire in July. This effort suggests some softening of Nasser's attitude (and a recognition that the War of Attrition was becoming too costly), but the tensions that reemerged when Egypt extended its air defenses (in violation of the Rogers agreement) suggest that no great breakthrough would have been reached had Nasser lived. On this point, see Shamir, "Egypt's Pro-U.S. Orientation," p. 280.

52. On these points, see Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, pp. 151-52; el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 230-33; Heikal, *Road to Ramadan*, p. 183; and David, "Realignment of Third World Regimes," pp. 320-24.

earlier, both the United States and the Soviet Union are economic and military superpowers, both have large military capabilities, and both are outside the Middle East region. Because they are difficult to distinguish on these dimensions, the principal criterion on which to base the choice of one superpower over the other will be how a given regional power perceives U.S. or Soviet intentions. The obvious preference is to ally with the superpower that seems least aggressive.⁵³

Alliances between Regional States

The belief that certain regimes harbor aggressive intentions has clearly influenced regional alliance choices as well. For example, the power of Nasser's prestige was dangerous because he was so willing to use it to threaten his opponents. Nasserist subversion undermined the Tripartite Unity Agreement of 1963, and Nasser's repeated attacks against "reactionary" Arab monarchies such as those of Saudi Arabia and Jordan inspired the Kings' Alliance in 1957 and the Saudi-Jordanian axis in 1962. Although tensions between Saudi Arabia and Egypt eased on several occasions (e.g., when Syrian bellicosity seemed even more dangerous) the Saudis remained extremely wary of Egypt until after Nasser's death.⁵⁴

As already noted, Egypt's diplomatic position improved considerably under Sadat. Not only did Sadat lack Nasser's prestige and subversive power, but he was widely viewed as having modest ambitions in the Arab world. In particular, Sadat's carefully cultivated image of moderation and Islamic piety, his open displays of respect for King Feisal, and his decision to rename the United Arab Republic the Arab Republic of Egypt paved the way for the Saudi-Egyptian alliance that lasted until Camp David.⁵⁵ The ascendance of Hafez el-Assad—a moderate by Syrian standards—had similar effects. With Egypt and Syria ruled by less bellicose leaders, Saudi Arabia found cooperation with both far more attractive.⁵⁶

53. This conclusion extends the analysis presented by Snyder and Diesing in *Conflict among Nations*, pp. 421–29. They recognize that in a bipolar system, the decision of which side to ally with must be based on other considerations, such as geography or ideology. When geography and offensive power are indeterminate, however, ideology or perceived intentions—which are closely related in any case—will become even more crucial. The impact of ideology will be examined separately in chapter 6.

54. On this point, see "'Abd-al-Nasir's Secret Papers," pp. 125–29; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 124, 126, 139–42, 145–49.

55. See Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, p. 195; Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution*, pp. 141–42; and Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 288–89, 295–97.

56. After taking power in November 1970, Assad called for a "broad Arab front" and "all-Arab participation" against Israel. In contrast to his predecessors, he also offered a qualified acceptance of U.N. Resolution 242 in 1972, thereby removing another obstacle between Damascus and its new allies in Cairo and Riyadh. See Rabinovich, "Continuity and Change in the Ba'ath Regime in Syria," pp. 226–27.

Several other examples reinforce this conclusion. The Arab coalitions against Israel and Israel's continued search for external support reflect the fact that each side views the other as having extremely aggressive intentions.⁵⁷ Neither side has become more willing to appease the other as the other's hostility has grown; rather, the search for support has widened as the conflict has grown more intense. On a much smaller scale, the Arab League's collective defense of Kuwait in 1961 was triggered by Iraqi President Qassem's open declaration that he intended to annex the sheikdom. Iran's seizure of three islands in the Persian Gulf and its abrogation of the agreement dividing the Shatt al-Arab waterway prompted Iraq to seek a formal alliance with the Soviet Union, a goal it abandoned when its conflicts with Iran were temporarily resolved. Other regional conflicts—such as the border clashes between Saudi Arabia and South Yemen and the internecine quarrels between the Ba'ath regimes in Syria and Iraq—exhibit the same pattern.

The strong relationship between offensive intentions and balancing behavior is to be expected. Although large and powerful states can be either valuable allies or dangerous adversaries, it makes little sense to ally with a state that is known to be hostile, regardless of its other traits. As a result, extremely aggressive states are especially likely to trigger the formation of balancing coalitions.

Summary: Levels of Threat and Balancing Behavior

Taken together, these different sources of threat help explain several characteristic patterns of alliance formation in the Middle East. First, they explain why Soviet and U.S. capabilities do not cause balancing alliances among the regional states, despite the fact that both nations are far more powerful than any of the local actors. Instead, the superpowers are sought as allies against the more imminent threats that arise from other states within the region. Because the superpowers are both more powerful and less threatening to most states in the Middle East, they are ideal allies for a regional power that faces a direct military threat from one of its neighbors. Focusing solely on aggregate capabilities—as traditional balance of power theory does—would ignore the important effects of proximity, offensive capabilities, and intentions.

Second, the impact of the different sources of threat helps explain

57. For evidence on Arab and Israeli perceptions, see Yehoshofat Harkabi, *Arab Attitudes to Israel* (Jerusalem, 1972); John Edward Mroz, *Beyond Security: Private Perceptions among Arabs and Israelis* (New York, 1980); Ralph K. White, "Misperception in the Arab-Israeli Conflict," *Journal of Social Issues*, 33, no. 1 (1977); and Daniel Heradstveit, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Psychological Obstacles to Peace* (Oslo, 1979); and Heradstveit, *Arab and Israeli Elite Perceptions* (Oslo, 1974).

why Egypt and Israel have been the target of balancing alliances with such frequency. They have long been the most powerful regional actors; they have received extensive great power support, they have possessed considerable offensive capabilities, and they have been perceived as seeking to expand at the expense of others. As a result, Israel faced a host of Arab coalitions between 1948 and 1979 and never formed a durable alliance with any Arab state.⁵⁸ In the same way, Egypt's combination of size, offensive capabilities, geographic proximity, and aggressive regional ambitions triggered at least six opposing coalitions between 1955 and 1970.⁵⁹ By contrast, weaker states with negligible offensive capabilities and few, if any, aggressive designs (e.g., Lebanon, North Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan) have rarely, if ever, inspired others to ally against them.

The main point should be obvious: balance of threat theory is superior to balance of power theory. Examining the impact of several related but distinct sources of threat can provide a more persuasive account of alliance formation than can focusing solely on the distribution of aggregate capabilities. Of course, the precise importance of each of these factors (aggregate power, proximity, offensive capabilities, and intentions) is impossible to predict in any given case. For example, states may be forced to choose among potential partners of equal capability, where one appears more aggressive but is also further away. Thus how statesmen will respond to the infinite range of combinations is uncertain. Other things being equal, however, an increase in any of these factors should make balancing behavior more likely.

BANDWAGONING BEHAVIOR AND ALLIANCE FORMATION

Although states almost always choose allies to balance against threats, such behavior is not universal. Under certain conditions, the generally low tendency for states to join forces with the dominant power may increase somewhat.

58. The exception to this observation, which does not undermine the basic point, was Israel's support for King Hussein during the Syrian intervention in the Jordanian civil war. The explanation for this action is straightforward: Israel and Jordan feared a PLO/Syrian victory in Jordan more than they feared each other.

59. The alliances referred to here are (1) the Suez War coalition of Great Britain, France, and Israel; (2) The Kings' Alliance of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq; (3) the alignment of Jordan and Saudi Arabia with the United States under the aegis of the Eisenhower Doctrine; (4) the Saudi-Jordanian defense treaty of 1962; (5) the brief Syrian-Iraqi security agreement in 1963; and (6) the Islamic Pact created by Feisal of Saudi Arabia in 1965-1966.

Table 11. Bandwagoning behavior

Alliance	Date
Saudi Arabia allies with Egypt and Syria	1955
Yemen allies with Egypt and Syria	1956
Jordan joins the Arab Solidarity Pact	1956-1957
Assassination plot fails; Saudi Arabia appeases Egypt	1958-1961
Syria joins Tripartite Pact with Egypt and Iraq	1963
Saudi Arabia agrees to détente with Egypt at Cairo summit	1964
Jordan agrees to détente with Egypt at Cairo summit	1964
Jordan signs defense treaty with Egypt	1967
Jordan stays out of October War (tacit bandwagoning with Israel)	1973
Egypt realigns from Soviet Union to United States	1975

Conditions Favoring Bandwagoning Behavior

Chapter 2 suggested that weak states were more likely to bandwagon than strong states, that an absence of potential allies made bandwagoning more likely, and that incentives for bandwagoning increased if the most threatening power was believed to be appeasable. If we adopt a rather broad definition of bandwagoning (i.e., if we include several questionable cases in order to obtain more than a token sample), we can say that states in the Middle East chose to bandwagon on perhaps ten occasions in the period under study (see Table 11). All three hypotheses receive support from these cases.

Weak and Strong States

Weak states are more likely to bandwagon than strong ones—for two reasons: they are more vulnerable to pressure, and they can do little to determine their own fates. The cases of bandwagoning listed in Table 11 support this proposition, as all save Egypt were weak states that faced a significant threat from the ally they reluctantly embraced.

For example, the Arab monarchies of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and, to a lesser degree, Yemen were especially vulnerable to Nasser's charismatic appeal and political propaganda. Moreover, they could do little damage to Egypt in response. Although they initially sought to balance Great Britain and Iraq, a series of internal disturbances in 1954 and 1955 also encouraged the Saudis to side with Egypt as a means of defusing domestic dissent through association with the leading progressive figure in the Arab world. In much the same way, the deliberate effort to appease Nasser after Saud's ill-conceived assassination plot came during a period of serious fiscal troubles and internal divisions, which weakened the kingdom's ability to resist Egyptian pressure.⁶⁰ Similar motives under-

60. See Holden and Johns, *House of Saud*, pp. 187-88 and chap. 14; and Safran, *Saudi Arabia*, pp. 87-90.

lay the alliance of Imam Ahmed of Yemen with Nasser in this period. The alliance with Egypt both enhanced Ahmed's position in the conflict with Britain over Aden and defused Nasser's incentives to criticize Ahmed's rule. Nasser's attitude was hardly a trivial concern, as Ahmed had narrowly defeated a revolt by revolutionary officers in 1955. And Hussein's decision to reject the Baghdad Pact and join the Arab Solidarity Pact instead followed a series of riots in Amman inspired by Egyptian propaganda. As Hussein described his own position: "Jordan is a very special kind of country that depends on good neighbors for its existence. . . . And what would happen to Jordan if she remained friendless while those around her quarreled?"⁶¹

Hussein also reports that many of his officers believed that "Jordan was too small to stand alone" at that time.⁶² By contrast, Iraq adopted an anti-Egyptian policy under both Feisal II and Qassem, because it was strong enough to do so with some hope of success.

Other examples reveal similar tendencies. Syria's vulnerability to Egyptian pressure contributed to the Ba'th Party's decision to seek an alliance with Egypt in 1963. Continued domestic turbulence and repeated efforts by Nasserist forces to gain power convinced the Syrians that they could achieve internal stability only if they were able to gain Nasser's support. Syrian vulnerability to Egyptian pressure thus made them strongly inclined to bandwagon.

Jordan's weakness (in part the result of Hussein's precarious domestic position) dictated Hussein's responses in 1967 and 1973 as well. Apparently convinced that the Arabs were stronger (and fearing the effects of an Arab victory in which he did not participate), Hussein signed a formal defense treaty with Nasser just before the Six Day War. His decision to enter the fighting on June 5 may also have been based in part on false reports of Arab victories in the early stages of the war.⁶³

Hussein's behavior in 1973 is equally revealing. Now convinced that Israel was invincible, Hussein stated before the war that Jordan would stay out "unless there was a 50 percent chance of an Arab victory."⁶⁴ The odds were nowhere near that good, and Hussein limited his involvement to a single brigade sent north to fight in Syria. This token effort was tantamount to adopting a neutral position, and had Arab solidarity allowed it, Hussein might well have done even less. In short;

61. Hussein, *Uneasy Lies the Head*, p. 104.

62. Hussein, *Uneasy Lies the Head*, p. 157.

63. See Hussein, *My "War" with Israel*, pp. 57, 60-61, 65-66; Dupuy, *Elusive Victory*, pp. 285-87; and Herzog, *Arab-Israeli Wars*, pp. 169-70.

64. Quoted in Whetten, *Canal War*, p. 238. According to one report, Hussein agreed to attack Israel only if the Syrian assault on the Golan Heights was successful. See Herzog, *War of Atonement*, p. 30.

in both 1967 and 1973 Hussein tried to stay on good terms with the likely winners. Although his calculations left much to be desired (especially in 1967), Jordan's overall weakness and vulnerability made this policy a prudent one to follow.

Availability of Allies

States are more likely to bandwagon when useful allies are unavailable, for they will face the threat alone if they choose to resist. A dearth of effective allies is also apparent in most of the cases of bandwagoning already discussed. The Arab monarchs' decisions to bandwagon with Egypt in 1955-1956 were due partly to the lack of alternatives. Britain was an unlikely ally given the disputes over Aden and the Buraimi oasis, and its support was of questionable value. As Arab reaction to the Baghdad Pact showed, close ties with a colonial power merely made Nasser's attacks about imperialist influence all the more potent. The United States had yet to make a clear commitment, and the Soviet Union was already aligned with Nasser (and was anathema to the Saudis and Hussein in any case). By the end of 1956, bandwagoning with Egypt was the best of a set of bad choices.

The unraveling of this coalition is especially revealing. When the Eisenhower Doctrine created the possibility of external support (and Nasser's ambitions continued to grow), Saudi Arabia and Jordan quickly abandoned their alliance with Egypt and joined forces with Iraq and the United States. When the Iraqi revolution removed Iraq from the Kings' Alliance, Jordan continued to rely on Western support while the Saudis—who were especially vulnerable after Saud's bungled plot to assassinate Nasser—once again chose to swing toward Egypt and to downplay their ties with the West.

Syria also lacked effective allies in 1963. After all, Nasser was the only figure who could influence his Syrian supporters, and to seek an alliance elsewhere would have done little to increase Syria's internal stability. Because the civilian members of the Syrian government were reluctant to rely solely on brute force to stay in power (as later Ba'th regimes would do), enlisting Nasser's support by seeking another union with Egypt was the only alternative they could imagine.

A lack of alternatives may have affected Jordan's decision in 1967 as well. In a confrontation with Israel, Hussein could hardly count on Arab support should he reject Nasser's call to close ranks in May. An overt alliance with Israel was unthinkable, and Hussein probably recognized that the United States and Britain could do little to preserve his throne if he failed to participate in an Arab victory. In 1973, Hussein's belief that the Arabs would be no more successful than they had been in 1967 encouraged the token response that he ultimately made. Although the

evidence is skimpy, the record does indicate that a lack of effective allies increases a state's propensity to bandwagon with threatening powers.

The Impact of Intentions

The decision to bandwagon with a threatening power is based ultimately on the hope that such a step will moderate its aggressive intentions. Not surprisingly, the belief that a powerful state can be appeased has been present in most cases of bandwagoning.

For example, Jordan and Saudi Arabia joined with Nasser in 1955-1956 both to exploit his popularity and to persuade him to cease his efforts to subvert their regimes. When these attacks continued (indicating that Nasser's aims were still hostile), the two states shifted to a policy of alignment with the United States and Iraq. Significantly, the Saudi-Egyptian rapprochement between 1958 and 1961 led Nasser to halt his criticisms of the Saudis (in part because he was by now more concerned about his quarrel with Qassem of Iraq). When Egypt's reaction to the break-up of the UAR (including a renewed propaganda offensive and military intervention in Yemen) revealed that Nasser still harbored aggressive aims, the Saudi-Jordanian axis was resurrected once again.

The same hopes probably animated the Syrians in 1963, and the Tripartite Unity Agreement did bring a brief period of apparent amity between Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. But when the Nasserist forces in Syria attempted yet another coup, the Ba'th reacted by executing the plotters and denouncing their efforts. Nasser then abrogated the agreement, ushering in three more years of Syrian-Egyptian hostility.

This dispute eventually led Nasser to seek a rapprochement with the conservative Arab states, beginning at the Cairo summit in 1964. The willingness of the conservative states to mend fences with Nasser whenever he halted his propaganda war is instructive. Cooperation with Egypt was attractive to them because it reduced the immediate threat they faced. At the same time, it did not increase Nasser's ability to threaten them later. Because Nasser relied primarily on propaganda and subversion, his willingness to cooperate with the "forces of reaction" reinforced their positions by showing that they were still loyal members of the larger Arab nation. And Nasser's subsequent criticisms were weakened by the fact that he had been willing to cooperate with them earlier. The lesson is extremely important: states are more likely to bandwagon when it will not increase the threat they will face in the future should their more powerful ally decide to turn on them.

Thus Jordan's decision to ally with Nasser in June 1967 followed from Hussein's (unfortunate) calculation that such a course minimized his future risks. If Hussein joined with Egypt and the Arabs won, his position would be no worse and might even be better. If he joined and the

Arabs lost (as they did), he had at least shown solidarity with the Arab cause. But if he stayed on the sidelines while the Arabs won, he would be more vulnerable than ever to Egyptian and Syrian attacks. Joining the Arab coalition thus prevented his Arab opponents from increasing their power to threaten his always fragile legitimacy. As Malcolm Kerr noted after the war, "the Israeli victory [in June 1967] cost Hussein the West Bank, but it may have saved him his throne."⁶⁵

The belief that favoring the stronger side would prove beneficial also played a role in Hussein's decision to sit out the October War. Although Israeli assurances had no effect in 1967, Kissinger's repeated requests that Hussein remain neutral probably reinforced Hussein's own desire to keep the Jordan front quiet.⁶⁶ With these assurances, Hussein could tacitly align with the more powerful side, Israel, without fearing that Israel would exploit his forbearance.

The three conditions associated with bandwagoning are present in most of the (rare) examples identified in this study. Taken together, they provide a convincing account of the most significant example: Egypt's dramatic realignment from the Soviet Union to the United States.

Egypt's realignment qualifies as an example of bandwagoning for several reasons. Not only was Egypt choosing to align with the superpower it perceived as more powerful, but this step also involved beginning an unprecedented effort toward peace with Israel. In effect, Sadat was abandoning the effort to balance against Israel and the United States that Egypt had pursued since the mid-1950s. Sadat now sought to ally with the United States in exchange for economic benefits and political concessions. Rather than continuing to oppose Israel through armed resistance via Soviet assistance, Egypt now chose to negate the threat through cooperative diplomacy. Convinced he couldn't beat them, Sadat decided to join them.

The three conditions associated with bandwagoning were all crucial to his decision. First, Egypt was growing steadily weaker, as a host of economic troubles posed a growing threat to Sadat's regime. Egypt's economic difficulties also undermined its capacity to compete militarily, as long as Israel enjoyed generous U.S. support. Moreover, as Egypt's relative power declined, the benefits of gaining economic aid from the West, reopening the Suez Canal, and decreasing Egypt's military burdens by making peace with Israel became increasingly appealing.⁶⁷

65. Kerr, *Arab Cold War*, p. 128.

66. On this point, see Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 490, 494, 500, 508; Quandt, *Decade of Decisions*, p. 177; and Dupuy, *Elusive Victory*, pp. 536-37.

67. For descriptions of Egypt's economic plight in the 1970s, see Ajami, *Arab Predicament*, pp. 90-100; Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution*, pp. 135-37; Yusuf A. Sayegh, *The Economies of the Arab World* (London, 1978), pp. 358-59, 363-64; and Dawisha, *Egypt in the Arab World*, p. 186.

Second, Egypt lacked allies that could correct its most pressing problems. Soviet aid to Egypt could not outweigh U.S. support for Israel, and the Soviets were hardly enthusiastic about pouring more resources into Egypt. The October War merely reinforced this point. In spite of strategic and tactical surprise, unprecedented Arab cooperation, a U.S. administration hamstrung by Watergate, and active Soviet support, Egypt and its allies were soundly defeated. Although allies were available prior to Egypt's realignment, they were no longer capable of meeting Egypt's growing needs.

Third, and probably most important, Egyptian perceptions of U.S. intentions changed dramatically after Nasser's death. As noted earlier, Sadat was apparently convinced that U.S. policies could be radically changed if Egypt were more forthcoming. Although his early hints went unrecognized, the October War succeeded in persuading the United States to take his offers seriously. Convinced by January 1974 that "the U.S. is pursuing a new policy," Sadat gradually maneuvered Egypt away from the Soviet Union and into a close alliance with the United States.⁶⁸

Egypt's realignment was thus a decision to bandwagon in response to (1) the vulnerabilities arising from Egypt's economic problems, its military weakness, and the prolonged diplomatic stalemate; (2) the fact that Egypt's other potential allies (e.g., the Soviet Union) could not correct these problems; and (3) Sadat's belief (in contrast to Nasser's) that U.S. opposition could be reversed. It was thus an especially important example of bandwagoning behavior, both in its implications for Middle East politics and as an illustration of the conditions that make such behavior more likely.⁶⁹

CONCLUSION

The record of alliance formation in the Middle East provides strong evidence for many of the propositions advanced in chapter 2. First, states prefer balancing to bandwagoning, even when confronted by significant threats. The rare cases of bandwagoning that one can find are the result of an unusual set of circumstances. And because bandwagon-

68. On these points, see Israeli, *Public Diary of Sadat*, 2: 448; Safran, *Israel*, p. 468; el-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, pp. 230-31; Golan, *Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger*, pp. 145-46; and Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*, pp. 223-27, 460, 637-38.

69. Steven David provides a complete historical account of Sadat's realignment in his "Realignment of Third World Regimes," pp. 418-45. Although he addresses a wider range of factors (focusing especially on the domestic politics of Sadat's decision), his version is consistent with the more theoretical interpretation offered here.

ing is more often the response of weak states, it is most unlikely to alter the global balance of power in any significant way.

Second, these results show that it is more appropriate to focus on how states respond to threats, instead of conceiving of alliances solely as responses to shifts in the balance of power. In addition to economic and military capabilities, threats from subversion or other forms of political pressure can be equally powerful determinants of alignment. Moreover, although the distribution of capabilities is extremely important to the superpowers, it plays little role in the alliance choices of regional actors. As expected, they are far more sensitive to the capabilities and intentions of their neighbors, for the reasons already discussed.

Although geographic proximity is clearly important, the evidence did not reveal a linear relationship between distance and level of threat. This lack of linearity is perhaps due to the fact that many rivalries in the Middle East were conducted primarily through political channels (e.g., propaganda and subversion) in which military power (and thus geography) played a minor role.

Viewed as a whole, these results mean that marginal changes in the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union are unlikely to make much difference and that only an enormous shift in this balance will lead regional powers to alter their international commitments significantly. Indeed, even if either superpower were to forge ahead dramatically, the ultimate effects would probably be less significant than one might suppose. Given the overwhelming tendency for states to balance, a state whose power and ambitions are growing can expect to face ever-increasing resistance should it attempt to exploit its superior position. And because regional rivalries are usually more important, efforts to exclude the other superpower by enlisting all the regional powers under one banner are virtually certain to fail.

Third, the importance of intentions has been apparent throughout this analysis. Because power can be used either to threaten or to support other states, how states perceive the ways that others will use their power becomes paramount. In particular, a state's willingness to bandwagon is heavily influenced by whether or not it believes that the threatening power can be appeased by an alliance with it.

This insight helps explain the tendency for states to prefer balancing. Balancing against a powerful state will be viewed as the more prudent response if one's assumptions about intentions are incorrect. Joining a defensive alliance to oppose a potential threat will protect you if the state in question is in fact aggressive. Such an alliance will be superfluous—but probably not dangerous—if the state in question turns out to be benign. By contrast, bandwagoning may fail catastrophically if one chooses to ally with a powerful state and subsequently discovers that its

intentions are in fact hostile. Balancing will thus be viewed as the safer response when intentions cannot be reliably determined.

Determining intentions is not easy. Accordingly, statesmen often seek shortcuts to identify friends and foes. One approach is to focus on the domestic characteristics of potential partners in order to ally with those whose beliefs or principles resemble one's own. The next chapter assesses the impact of ideological solidarity on alliance formation.

[6]

Ideology and Alliance Formation

In this chapter I analyze the impact of ideological solidarity on alliance formation. I define *ideological solidarity* as a tendency for states with similar internal traits to prefer alignment with one another to alignment with states whose domestic characteristics are different. I consider three questions. First, how powerful is this tendency? Second, does its impact vary as predicted in chapter 2? Third, do certain ideologies exert divisive effects by provoking conflict among adherents rather than encouraging cooperation?

I reach three main conclusions. First, there is a modest association between ideology and alignment. As expected, this association is more pronounced in relations between the superpowers and their regional allies, particularly in the case of the Soviet Union. Second, the observed association probably exaggerates the true impact of ideology. In particular, the extent of ideological agreement between the superpowers and their allies is fairly limited, and the correlation between ideology and alignment may be partly spurious. Third, as proposed in chapter 2, the nature of the ideology is itself a crucial factor. Certain ideologies are more a source of division than of unity, even though the ideology explicitly prescribes close cooperation among the adherents.

I begin the chapter with a broad overview of the relationship between ideology and alliances in the Middle East. Next, I examine this relationship in more detail, beginning with alliances between the superpowers and the Middle East states. Finally, I address the role of ideology in inter-Arab politics, focusing on (1) the ethnic solidarity of the Arab states against Israel, (2) the divisive ideology of pan-Arabism, and (3) the monarchical solidarity among the conservative Arab states.