

and French allies, presented a really harsh dilemma in which we had to make a decision; we had to choose between our allies at that time, and a kind of reversion to the 19th Century method of imperialism which they were engaged in on the one hand, or we had to support the principles of the United Nations and support Nasser whom we didn't like very much, but nevertheless he was the victim of an attack, and there wasn't any real doubt in the end, what our choice was going to be. But actually, the crisis itself, though a victory for Nasser above everybody, didn't settle anything on the main question of our own position in the Middle East.

The crisis did pretty well destroy the British position in the Middle East except for their position in the Persian Gulf and in Iraq. And we soon found ourselves trying to fill what we called a vacuum left by the destruction of the British position in Egypt and elsewhere. In doing so and attempting to build up some kind of coalition which could substitute for what we'd had or thought we'd had before, we ran again into fierce Arab nationalism and a split in the Arab World between the more dynamic forces which were in fact following Nasser, and the more traditional forces which we were supporting because they were friendly to us and willing to cooperate with us, in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan and elsewhere.

The difficulty of this position when you look at it more or less from the over-view, was that we were attempting to oppose and fight at the same time both communism and Arab nationalism. And the combination on the political stage was too difficult an opponent for us to win out over. This was apparent, it seems to me, in the crisis of 1958, the next one on the list, where we did go into Lebanon, where there was a revolu-