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Explanation of America's Macro Strategy towards Iran after September 11th based on Henry Kissinger's teachings

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Abstract

Henry Kissinger, a famous American politician and thinker, has played an effective and essential role in the foreign policy of the United States towards Iran after September 11th. He was a realist individual in the field of thought, who is from the political tradition of the United States' pragmatism and followed special methods in the field of international relations. In this research, with the aim of examining the American macro strategy towards Iran based on Kissinger's teachings, we are looking for an answer to the question, what is Kissinger's approach to the issue of Iran in American foreign policy? The hypothesis that was put forward is that Kissinger's approach or Kissingerism regarding Iran is to integrate Iran into the global and regional order by maintaining the distribution of power in the Middle East region, to deal with the growing threats and influence of Iran by creating a network of regional partners to maintain the supremacy and hegemony of America and Israel, to convince Iran to stop exporting the revolution and to behave according to the Westphalian principles and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of countries, to induce the consequences of a dangerous nuclear Iran and to adopt effective diplomacy instead of war. Finally, using the descriptive-analytical method, we came to the conclusion that there is an important and meaningful relationship between the grand strategy and Kissinger's teachings, in such a way that containment of Iran, disarmament and prevention of a nuclear Iran, returning Iran to the regional and world order, Iranophobic strategy, alliance and coalition building and preventing Iran's regional hegemony are among the important things that can be seen both in Kissinger's approach and in America's macro strategy and in the doctrines of American presidents after September 11th.

Keywords: Kissinger, Grand strategy, foreign policy, September 11th, Islamic Republic of Iran

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Introduction

After September 11th, securing the interests of the United States in the framework of the fight against terrorism gained global legitimacy and a turning point was provided for the optimal use of the decision makers of the foreign policy of the United States to operationalize their goals in the field of the international system. The United States was able to gain global support, to penetrate the public opinion of the world that al-Qaeda and its related groups are seeking to obtain weapons of mass destruction, which is a threat to all countries and even human civilization. In this regard, after the attack of September 11th, the public opinion of the world accepted the military power of the United States of America.

In the meantime, the active and prominent role of American strategists should not be neglected. American strategists in research institutes and think tanks through theorizing and reflecting those theories to statesmen and political elites of America have always been very influential in creating wars in the Middle East by presenting the ways of implementation, drawing models and strategies. Basically, strategists try to plan and make policies at different levels of society with high knowledge and experience and a macroscopic, comprehensive and forward-looking thinking. One of the various people who has had a significant impact in guiding and directing the foreign policy of the United States of America from the past until now is Henry Kissinger, a famous American politician and strategist. Throughout the history of his presence in the foreign policy of the United States, he has directly and indirectly affected the formation of wars and terrorist groups in the Middle East region. Among them, he played an important role in the conflict between the Arabs and Israel in the October 1973 war and was able to establish a ceasefire between Egypt and Israel. In the past few years, he has sought to induce the theory of Shia-Sunni war, Iranophobia, in order to scare and pit the countries of the Middle East against each other and create a blockade and intra-regional war in the Middle East.

In this regard, he states: "The challenge is that two solid blocs are facing each other: A Sunni bloc that includes Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf countries, and a Shia bloc that includes Iran, the Shiite part of Iraq with Baghdad as its capital, the Shiites of southern Lebanon under the control of Hezbollah, and the Houthi sector of Yemen, which completes the blockade of the Sunni world. Kissinger believes that Saudi Arabia and Israel have a common goal against Iran, which is to prevent Iran's military and nuclear power and, if necessary, to confront it. In another place, he considers Iran to be the same as ISIS, which is a terrorist group, and also describes Iran as dangerous for the Sunni world.

Also, in April 2015, in line with Iranophobia and the dangerousness of a nuclear Iran, he stated that Iran's nuclear program has reached a point where it will officially obtain weapons in the next two or three months, and that Iran is approaching a military nuclear program that could turn into a North Korea situation. On the other hand, he wants to show the events in Syria as a Shia-Sunni conflict between the countries of the region, that is, he considers the Takfiri movements to represent the Sunnis, and he constantly tries to scare other countries from Iran and that Iran is dangerous in line with the strategy of Iranophobia.

The importance of studying and dealing with the foreign policy advisors of the presidents of the United States of America is important because these advisors such as Fukuyama, Brzezinski and Kissinger play a key role in creating any kind of tension and crisis-causing power, and with a complete and accurate knowledge of these advisors and teachings we can prepare ourselves to face crises for at least a period of three and a half years and know what strategies and tactics to adopt. Therefore, having an intelligent, multi-layered and coherent strategy to face the dangers for Iran will be a serious matter.

Since 1970, Kissinger has played a role as the main advisor in the US State Department, except for Obama's presidency, almost all-American presidents have benefited from his advice. For example, during Trump's presidency, Kissinger instilled the doctrine of unwise wisdom into Trump. Herman Kahn, one of the American military scientists and the founder of the systems theory and one of the main theorists of this doctrine, explains the wisdom of unwisdom doctrine as follows: Perhaps, the best way to impose our own policies is to be somewhat nervous and emotional. In this deterrent game, the side that seems determined and has no way back has a better chance of getting points than the other side that has come to the field with a calm attitude. This is where unwise wisdom is allowed. Pretending to blindly adhere to an unwise policy may be the best strategy for managing a crisis. Kissinger was the designer of this strategy in the Trump administration. He believes that the winner in this game is the one who pretends that he is not afraid of anything, doesn't know pain and is ready to gloat until the destruction of one of the parties.

How can such a view be imposed? The problem is solved in such a way that a politician shows himself to be unwise and crazy, or to show himself in a position where he is denied the possibility of retreating. Kissinger very masterfully taught this method to Nixon and advised him to show with all his might that he has lost his mind just like when Trump promised that he will tear up the JCPOA. He pretended that, unlike the previous presidents, he could have unpredictable madness regardless of the world conditions and the international order.

Since the end of the 2016 election campaign, Kissinger and a group of advisers suggested to Trump that he should act crazy towards Iran in order to push the country back from its regional policies and thus seriously change Tehran's behavior. There are many similarities between Trump and Nixon. Both of them presented themselves as strange people in the election campaigns. Both of them were deeply against intellectuals and the media, and both of them presented themselves as people who fulfill election promises, for which they are ready to challenge any possible world order. This profile would have prepared the two very well to proceed down the road of unwise wisdom that Henry Kissinger suggested in some areas, including Vietnam under Nixon, and Iran and North Korea under Trump.

For the first time in an article entitled Chaos and Order in a Changing World, Kissinger warns that the destruction of ISIS will strengthen the Iranian empire and the growth of radicalism in the Middle East. Kissinger tried to establish the concept that the Middle East has influenced the world both with its violent ideologies and its own actions. Apparently, Kissinger's analysis has been transferred

to Trump and has become a doctrine that after the battle with ISIS, Iran should be pressured with all its might to reduce its influence in the region, and the first step is to threaten Iran to cancel the JCPOA.

It seems that the spread of the analysis that Trump is crazy discouraged political elites and internal analysts from expressing positions and determining approaches that could force Trump to back down in his speech. It seems that during Trump's presidency, Iran refused to take serious initiative measures to counter the wisdom of unwise strategy and only asked the European Union to stand up to Trump. So, contrary to what has been reported, Trump is not crazy, just as Nixon was not crazy, but the theorist of both presidents is a famous person in the world of politics named Henry Kissinger, who developed the theory of the wisdom of unwisdom and should be read carefully.

Trump clearly stated that we expected Iran to change its behavior and show a positive approach to the affairs of the Iqbal region after the JCPOA. In this regard, proxy wars took place with the presence of ISIS takfiri forces in the region, which were Saudi, American and Zionist infantry. It seems that the second wave of these wars is the domino of ethnic incitement for separatism and internal chaos in Iran.

Even now, during the presidency of Joe Biden, Martin Indyk, a senior member of the American Council on Foreign Relations, has emphasized the necessity of developing a post-Afghanistan strategy to promote order in the Middle East, and advised him to use the experience of the prominent American strategist, Henry Kissinger. It is necessary to use the title as a model for formulating this strategy. While explaining Kissinger's Middle East doctrine, Martin Indyk has tried to update it based on common patterns in Kissinger's approach, and provide an efficient strategy for how the United States government interacts with the current relations of the Middle East, especially Iran.

Overall, there is an undeniable similarity between Kissinger's approach to Egypt and the way Metternich and Casselria managed France after Napoleon's defeat, incorporating it into the new order rather than punishing it. And as a result, they turned it from a revolutionary government into a status-quo power. Today, the Kissinger Doctrine will probably use a similar plan against Iran. A country that clearly threatens what is left of the US-led Middle East order.

Kissinger and Kissingerism:

During his time at the top of the American foreign policy pyramid, Kissinger was almost an autodidact, far from taking advantage of the opinions of various experts, and he relied on his own thoughts and ideas in the decision-making and performance stages of foreign policy. Information and decision-making are effective in the field of foreign policy, he considered it unnecessary, and one of the criticisms he brings to the performance of America's foreign policy regarding the Vietnam War is the wrong information estimates and unrealistic decisions of Congress and the CIA (Kissinger, 2008).

Another important point of his thought was the emphasis on the independence of domestic and foreign policy areas from each other. In this sense, foreign policy should be independent in its principles and practice and only establish a constructive relationship with other

areas such as the area of internal affairs, and in no way should it get to the point that domestic needs and issues are the outline of a country's policy in the international arena. One of the important objections that he considered to Bill Clinton was that he was inspired and influenced by the situation and needs raised at the level of American society. Kissinger rejects the involvement of the ideological aspects in foreign policies and believes that American democracy or the capitalist system are not slogans that should be enforced in all countries. He considers America to be a free country that should only support the favorable global situation against the forces that are trying to threaten this situation.

In this context, many believe that America during Kissinger's era has fully supported many autocratic regimes against democratic forces. Such as what happened in Chile under the government of Salvador Allende with the coup of Augusto Pinochet and America's support for him, as well as in Greece under the government of the colonels. Therefore, some accuse him of committing crimes against humanity and provide documents in this regard. For example, in the case of the coup in Chile, when the voice of protest, especially the protest of Ted Kennedy, is raised in the United States, some demand an end to the American military aid that goes to Chile, Henry Kissinger insists on continuing the support, and as the Secretary of State in a small committee, he attacks human rights defenders and in December 1974, he says this about human rights supporters: Their demands are nothing but stupid emotions and feelings. Or about his performance in India and China, Christopher Hitchens writes in the trial book: One of Kissinger's major crimes is the illegal bombing of Laos and Cambodia, which was carried out during Nixon's presidency, and many centers and large areas were bombed by Kissinger's orders using B-52 bombers. (Abrar Journal, 1999).

Kissinger's denial of ideological aspects and basically rejecting them has caused him to underestimate public opinion and its influence on foreign policy, or even ignore it in some cases. He considers such interference in the foreign policy scene to be the reason for diplomacy's deprivation of agility, flexibility, and the power to maneuver in critical moments in international crises. When Henry Kissinger was at the head of political power in America, it was a time when the international arena had special conditions, in the sense that the world had gone through two great wars and global structures had undergone deep changes and new powers were emerging. America was at the head of the Western world in an all-out confrontation with the Eastern Bloc led by the Soviet Union and new organizations and coalitions were being formed. Many revolutions in different parts of the world happened from America to Southeast Asia and mainly left-wing regimes and governments had taken power. But at the same time, the United States was known as a superpower and the leader of the international scene, and material and technological advances had given it a significant position. Henry Kissinger looked at the sovereignty of the United States at the international level as a principle and believed that it is necessary to adjust the strategy of the foreign policy of the United States in such a way that in order to maintain this dominance and superiority, reasonable and logical solutions should be thought in order to contain and silence international conflicts and crises at different levels. Therefore, the formation and management of the foreign policy plan should be pursued with the aim of creating and maintaining a

stable global order. The basis of foreign policy theory from Kissinger's point of view is based on three main concepts: 1. legality; 2. the nature of the international order; and 3. The stability resulting from the balance of forces. The concept that Kissinger gives for legality should not be equated with being fair or conforming to conventional laws. Here, legality has no meaning except that in an international agreement, a consensus has been reached regarding the goals and permissible methods of foreign policy (Burgh Lamay, 1979, p. 67).

From this point of view, when the superpowers agree on an international order, the goals and methods of the foreign policy that was established in relation to that order will find legal content, of course, provided that none of the interested parties are dissatisfied with such an order, like Germany after the peace agreement. Versailles was forced to reveal its dissatisfaction by adopting a revolutionary policy (Scholzinger, 2006, p. 198).

According to Kissinger, absolute security is unattainable for a country like the United States, because any attempt by a country to establish absolute security for itself is considered insecurity by other countries. Therefore, a superpower alone cannot provide absolute security, unless it forces them to completely destroy others, or neutralize their power, or be limited to a period of time during which the multi-power system is removed and a single power prevails. Therefore, the end result of any effort to create absolute security will be the emergence of a revolutionary situation. International order can only be stable when countries consider themselves safe within its framework (Amini Shakib, 2010, p. 131).

From Kissinger's point of view, in the 20th century, it was not possible to establish a classical balance of forces as it was done in the 19th century; Because at this time the world is constantly evolving and small regional wars and military alliances in the scope that happened in the 19th century are not possible. In addition, one of the realities of the world in the 20th century is that what differentiates between a friend and an enemy is an ideological image and it is only through the balance of forces that one country can be prevented from dominating another country, and without such a balance, stability will be unattainable. In the current world, stability is achievable solely through principles that superpowers have accepted in their behavior, and attaining it is possible through continuous and persistent communication among them. One of the fundamental obstacles to the emergence of effective American diplomacy, as seen by Henry Kissinger, is that American policy-makers, instead of addressing root causes, have often been entangled in political issues. In Kissinger's legal order, change and transformation are considered characteristics of the system, but the interpretation differs significantly from what a revolutionary system considers as change and transformation.

In his view, international relations have a gear-like nature, where all components interlock, yet it is in constant motion and transformation. He believes that the course of time involves a continuous and uninterrupted order (Bargh lame, 1979, p. 78).

Kissinger, from a foreign policy perspective, advocated for a balance of power based on the concepts of equilibrium, considering international stability as a result of a delicate balance of relations among superpowers. He viewed it

as a constantly dynamic equilibrium, not static. In this context, the "strategy of engagement" formed a significant part of his intellectual foundation. This policy aimed to implement Kissinger's views on the balance of power, which he had discussed in his doctoral dissertation in 1954, questioning whether a country could achieve all its desires and answering that in the pursuit of security, what is achievable is relative or incomplete security., as it is logically understood in the realm of international politics (Hooeidi, 1999, p. 187).

Henry Kissinger is considered a scholar of international relations within the framework of classical realism. His arguments, based on a unique form of realism, thinking in terms of "balance of power" and "national interests," provide rationality, coherence, and a necessary long-term perspective at a time when all three are lacking. Despite this realism, the Cold War brought about a form of coherence: The United States faced a hostile adversary armed with nuclear weapons and a global ideological agenda, leading American policymakers to design a fundamental strategy for their plans. Due to mistakes made during that time, George Kennan's "containment" policy became the dominant approach for four decades, and the United States emerged victorious in the Cold War.

America's role had evolved into strengthening and inevitably expanding democracy worldwide, sometimes forcefully. People with different cultures and values appreciated Washington's interventions; they welcomed our invading forces with flowers and sweets. The United States had become an "inevitable" country destined to lead the world. Despite numerous disappointments and setbacks in the Middle East and other regions, this mission overtly faced failure. Kissinger dedicated his time mainly to two goals: polishing his reputation and educating Americans about the principles of "realistic politics" (Baghi, 2020, p. 1).

After the end of World War II, the United States became the dominant power in the international system, transforming into the unrivaled global power. The superior power of the United States, after World War II, played a crucial and key role in establishing a new hegemonic order in the liberal economic system. In five major areas, the United States exercised its fundamental and pivotal role: 1) Trade, 2) Finance, 3) Military, strategic, and international security issues, 4) Vital economic resources, and 5) International political issues (Pour Ahmadi, 2007, p. 127).

In the field of military, strategic, and international security issues, the United States expanded its hegemony through the creation of military and security alliances such as NATO, CENTO, SEATO, and some other international security regimes. In the Gulf region, the United States took control of the vital resources for the growth and economic development of other countries, namely oil and gas. The establishment and development of the United Nations were also a foundation for enhancing the legitimacy and power of the U.S. hegemony in the international system. Thus, after World War II, the United States created a network of security and economic institutions to strengthen its hegemony in the world without the Soviet Union and to realize its strategic ambitions. All U.S. Governments since 1945 have believed that preventing the spread of influence of other governments on

their policies is the only way for America to achieve its great strategic goals (Layne, 2007, p. 179).

Kissinger's Role in U.S. Foreign Policy and Relations with Iran, or the U.S. Foreign Strategy Towards Iran

Kissinger, many years before the victory of the revolution, believed that Imam Khomeini and the challenge he posed with the Islamic revolution created a serious crisis for the West. His decisions were so thunderous that they took away any room for thought or planning from politicians and political theorists. No one could predict his decisions in advance; he spoke and acted with criteria other than those recognized in the world. It seemed as if he drew inspiration from elsewhere; his enmity towards the West, derived from his divine teachings, was sincere.

This vivid description is not the only expression of Kissinger's views on the Islamic Revolution in Iran. In his book "World Order," he extensively discusses issues related to the Islamic Revolution and the confrontation between the Islamic Republic and the United States. As someone who has served both in practical politics as the Secretary of State and as a strategist and theoretical figure in the field of politics, Kissinger sees the nature of the Iran-U.S. Confrontation beyond political differences and believes that this conflict stems from the different perspectives of the two sides on the world order and civilization. From Kissinger's perspective, America, representing Western civilization, strives to maintain the current world order and considers the Islamic Republic of Iran as seeking to create a new civilization centered around Islam, fundamentally in conflict with the current global order and U.S. leadership. Kissinger writes about this confrontation: "America still claims the importance of its values in establishing a world order based on peace and preserves the right to globally support them" (Razeei, 2022, p. 6).

Henry Kissinger, in his article titled "Turmoil and Order in a Changing World," has issued a warning to the President of the United States regarding the future role of Iran in the Middle East. He stated that Iran could transform into an empire, and by eliminating ISIS, the groundwork for Iran's power development in the region has been provided. With Tehran's control and its allied forces over territories liberated from ISIS, a "radical Iranian empire" will take shape. In such a situation, the old proverb "the enemy of your enemy is your friend" no longer applies. In contemporary Middle East, the enemy of your enemy might also be your enemy. The Middle East, with its harsh ideologies and specific actions, has influenced the world. Many non-ISIS powers, including Shia Iran and Sunni-led countries, agree on the necessity of eliminating ISIS. However, the question arises about the legacy of the ISIS-held lands. Will it be under the occupation of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards or under the control of trained Shia forces? If the ISIS lands fall under the control of the Revolutionary Guards or Shia-trained forces, Iran will have a contiguous belt of land from Tehran to Beirut, which can lead to the emergence of an Iranian hegemonic empire (Kissinger, 2017, p. 1).

Interview with the growing threats and influence of Iran by creating a regional network of partners to maintain the superiority and hegemony of the United States and Israel.

Over the course of his 4-year tenure in the Middle East, Kissinger sought to establish a stable Middle Eastern order, an order that lasted for 30 years. One of the most important lessons of the Kissinger era is that stability and steadfastness in the regional power balance are not sufficient to preserve a stable order. To legitimize this order, Washington must encourage its allies and partners to address the region's grievances. Although policymakers must exercise caution in their efforts to establish peace and prioritize stability over conflict resolutions, it is essential that they avoid inaction, as inaction can destabilize the order. While Washington has no inclination to engage in the Israel-Palestine conflict, the Biden administration must resist the temptation to overlook this issue. According to Kissinger's teachings, seemingly silent and dormant conflicts can turn into full-blown crises at unforeseen times (Indik, 2021, p. 1).

Kissinger pursued order instead of peace in the Middle East because he believed that peace in the region is neither attainable nor an ideal goal. From Kissinger's perspective, maintaining the Middle Eastern order requires preserving a stable power balance. However, he knew that balance and stasis in power balance are not enough. To sustain legitimacy, all major powers within the system must collectively adhere to an accepted set of rules. These rules should only be followed when a sufficient sense of justice is created for a significant number of regional countries. According to Kissinger, a legitimate order does not eliminate conflicts but limits their scope. Balance and legitimacy were the primary principles of Kissinger's strategic approach to achieving peace gradually in the Middle East. Kissinger's Middle East approach remains relevant today. The current U.S. withdrawal from the region is similar to its withdrawal from Southeast Asia during Kissinger's time. At that time, just like today, the long-term consequences of a war indicated severe limitations on Washington's ability to establish forces in the Middle East. Additionally, Kissinger knew that a balance and stability relied on the United States supporting its diplomatic efforts with a credible military threat. Kissinger strengthened this cycle by relying on capable regional partners and enhancing cooperation with them.

Kissinger's approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict and preventing Egypt – the most powerful and largest Arab country militarily – from entering any future Arab coalition war against Israel can now be applied against Iran. Iran is a clear threat to the remaining American order in the Middle East. Kissinger does not recommend regime change in Iran but persuades Iran to step back from its revolutionary stance and return to behavior more akin to that of a country and government. Meanwhile, Washington must pursue a novel balance where revolutionary motives of Iran are restricted and balanced by an alliance of Sunni countries cooperating with Israel and the United States. According to Kissinger, if Iran wants to play by the rules, the United States must act as a balancer and align itself more closely with all major Middle Eastern claimants (Indik, 2021, p. 2).

Unlike the U.S. policymakers who came after Kissinger, he avoided high-flying and excessive intervention in the Middle East. However, there were numerous instances where his caution and pessimism led to inaction. This is a danger that the Biden administration faces in

the Middle East after the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. Simultaneously addressing more critical priorities in other regions, Biden must aim to shape a regional order in the Middle East, where the United States is no longer the main player but the most influential one. At the heart of this order must be a power balance maintained with the support of the United States for its regional allies, namely Israel and Sunni Arabs. Biden must also collaborate with actors willing to play a constructive role in stabilizing the Middle Eastern order. This may involve challenging cooperation with counterparts such as Abdel Fattah Sisi in Gaza, Vladimir Putin in Russia, Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey, and Mohammed bin Salman in the Persian Gulf. Cooperation with all of them can limit Iran's hegemonic ambitions and restrict its nuclear program.

A few of these allies and partners will align themselves with the values of the United States. However, as Kissinger's experience in the Middle East shows, the United States must strive for justice and fairness sufficient to legitimize the emerging order. Throughout the region, people are crying out for accountable governments. The United States cannot hope to meet these demands. This does not mean pushing beyond the limits again. But it cannot ignore these demands either.

Also, advancing a peace process to improve the Israel-Palestine conflict is crucial in addressing regional dissatisfaction. Dealing with this issue is not a top priority for Biden, but warning signs are emerging. The Palestinian self-governing authority is nearing collapse: Mahmoud Abbas has lost credibility among the Palestinian people, and Hamas, with its doctrine of fierce resistance, is gaining popularity. The Taliban's victory in Afghanistan strengthens Hamas's claim that its strategy is the only way to liberate occupied territories. Furthermore, the number of Palestinian casualties resulting from confrontations with the Israeli army is alarmingly increasing for the first time, and the Israeli government has allowed Jewish worshipers to enter the Temple Mount or the Noble Sanctuary, which is considered a highly provocative move. To prevent another outbreak of violence in the occupied territories, Biden must gradually lead a peace process, rebuild trust and enhance practical experience, much like what Kissinger did to remove Egypt from conflict with Israel. Naftali Bennett has proposed political changes, such as granting work permits to more Palestinians in Israel. These actions alone are not sufficient to restore credibility to a process tarnished by past failures. To achieve this goal, a necessary political process is required, a moderate and realistic one that includes a long-term ceasefire in Gaza and the transfer of complete control of certain areas from the western border to the Palestinians (Indik, 2021, p. 4).

Kissinger, in his book "World Order," believes that the Islamic Republic, due to its Islamic nature, seeks to change the current order of the global society, as the ultimate goal of Islam encompasses the entire world. In this regard, he considers Imam Khomeini's statements about the Islamic awakening and the deadlock of communism and liberalism as an alternative project in confrontation with the world order. The global confrontation between Iran and the United States is so serious that, according to Kissinger, even if the Islamic Republic of Iran ever wants to address some differences through negotiation and agreement with the West, the Americans do not share this view. The American perception

is that what the leaders of the Islamic Republic have in mind is a conflict with the West to shape and lead the world order. In this context, Kissinger writes on page 179 of the book "World Order": "Given the Ayatollahs' definition of the concept of politics, the conflict with the West is not about granting specific privileges or negotiating methods and conditions. Instead, it is a competition over the nature of the world order" (Razeei, 2022, p. 9).

Retiring Iran through the abolition of the export of revolution and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of countries is, like many individuals, opposed to the revolutionary language of Iran and sometimes its methods. He does not openly attack the theocratic political structure of Iran but opposes it through rhetoric and actions that significantly undermine the pluralistic and Western values of the Khomeini order. He defines the consequences of the Iranian revolution in the context of the liberal international order as follows: a religious government with spiritual and worldly power in an important country that openly welcomed an alternative to the world order imposed by the global community. The contemporary Supreme Leader of Iran declared that global religious principles, not national interests or liberal internationalism, would dominate the new world he had predicted (Kissinger, 2014, p. 148).

The reality presented by Kissinger is that Iran's regional policy is fundamentally defensive. Unlike other countries in the region, Iran does not have external security providers. While Turkey is a member of NATO and Gulf Cooperation Council countries have security ties, and Israel has extensive security relations with the United States, Iran can only rely on itself. The war with Iraq, when almost the entire world rallied behind Baghdad against Tehran, made Iranians painfully aware of this reality and has deeply penetrated their security thinking to this day. To neutralize or reduce threats, Iran has cultivated a network of allies and proxies in the Middle East that can serve as a forward defense to keep threats away from Iran's borders. Contrary to the myth of the Shia character of the new empire Iran is constructing, these forces are neither ideologically nor religiously homogeneous: they range from conventional Shia Islamists like Hezbollah in Lebanon to secular dictators like Bashar al-Assad in Syria to Sunni fundamentalists like Hamas. Even engaging with Qatar and the Wahhabis when the opportunity arose (Mamedov, 2020, p. 1).

On the other hand, as recent travels by prominent Shia Iraqi cleric Muqtada al-Sadr to Saudi Arabia have shown, Iran is far from controlling the political life of what is supposed to be part of its "empire." The Iraqi government, even if Shia, has never been under Tehran's direct control. Even if the majority of Iraqis are Shia, they are also Arabs, and ignoring Arab nationalism is foolish. There is no evidence that the majority of Shia in Iraq - or other Arab countries where their presence is significant, such as Bahrain and Saudi Arabia - consider themselves part of an "empire" under Persian leadership and reject the unconventional authority of the Supreme Leader (Velayat-e Faqih), or recognize Ayatollah Khamenei instead of, for example, Ayatollah Sistani, as their highest spiritual and political authority. Any solidarity with Iran found in those countries is primarily the result of severe internal repression of local Shia by Sunni authorities rather than the promotion of the Iranian imperial scheme—a point that Kissinger easily overlooks.

Beyond the West, the secular dictatorship in Syria has heavily relied on Iran for its survival. But Iran is not the only player. The Assad regime also has close relations with Russia, which is aligned with Iran in the war in that country but does not share similar interests. In Lebanon, although Hezbollah undoubtedly has close ideological and operational ties to Iran, it is primarily a Lebanese grassroots organization, united and not Iran's client. Even if Kissinger was right, Iran was adept at imposing a kind of top-down relationships with its satellites in Central Europe after the defeat of Nazi Germany. However, as the above examples show, Iran is not powerful enough to do so easily, even if it genuinely wants to. Therefore, like other regional players, Iran must adapt itself to the constantly changing dynamics of the regional forces it helps shape at least to the extent that it helps shape them. Iran is an opportunistic power, not an empire.

Kissinger says that a "radical Iranian empire" is indeed in the making, and this sinister development must be prevented at any cost. Although he does not directly say it, Kissinger subtly suggests that the United States must ensure the survival of ISIS to balance the "Iranian empire." Congresswoman Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), a close ally of President Trump, had previously whispered an idea in this regard following the terrorist attacks in Tehran in June of this year. (Mamedov, 2020, p. 3).

With the Iranian Revolution, an Islamic movement that was dedicated to the overthrow of the Westphalian system gained control of a modern state and secured its own "Westphalian" rights and privileges - by taking a seat at the United Nations, engaging in trade, and activities. Consequently, the diplomatic apparatus of the Iranian theocratic regime positioned itself at the intersection of two global orders, bypassing the official support of the Westphalian system, even though it repeatedly declared disbelief in it, was not bound by it, and ultimately intended to replace it (Kissinger, 2014, p. 154).

After the end of ISIS's rule in Iraq and Syria, Henry Kissinger analyzed the situation in the Middle East in an article titled "Order and Disorder in a Changing World" on the "CapX" website and claimed that the elimination of ISIS could provide an opportunity for the emergence of the Iranian Empire. In this article, Kissinger introduced the hardline terrorist group as an enemy of modern civilization and wrote that ISIS seeks to replace the bloodthirsty international system of several countries with a single empire governed by Sharia law. Kissinger believed that the old saying "the enemy of your enemy is your friend" does not apply in the Middle East, and in this region, the enemy of your enemy is probably your enemy too, as the Middle East has influenced the world through its own ideologies and actions (Razeei, 2022, p. 8).

The Consequences of Iran's Nuclear Program

Washington policy-makers attempted to use nuclear negotiations as a lever to minimize Iran's ability to develop each vital element of nuclear weapons. The Carter administration, in its effort to go beyond the constraints imposed by its predecessor, sought stricter controls on Iran's capacity to utilize nuclear technology and fuel supplied by the United States for plutonium production. While Iranians argued their "right" to reprocess and engage in other activities under the NPT with nationalist

rhetoric, in the summer of 1978, the revolution practically nullified the agreement.

Interestingly, Henry Kissinger, the former U.S. Secretary of State who led the negotiations from 1974 to 1976, downplayed the role of nuclear proliferation in the talks with Iran. In a 2005 interview with The Washington Post, he stated, "I don't think the issue of proliferation was ever raised. They were an allied country, and it was a commercial deal. Certainly, nobody thought that Iran's capability for nuclear weapons was an immediate prospect, but Kissinger and the State Department did not view the agreement merely as a "commercial" proposal. Firstly, Ford administration officials wondered whether, given the shift in the regional power balance, the Shah of Iran would move towards nuclear weapons. Second, Kissinger and his top advisers only signed an agreement that restricted Iran's ability to use U.S.-supplied resources for nuclear weapons material. This was not the case for the Carter administration. Both Ford and Carter wanted to ensure that the agreement's terms aligned with the U.S. goal of preventing nuclear proliferation." (Linzer, 2005)

Kissinger suggests that if Iran guarantees its nuclear weapons, preventing the spread of nuclear weapons might not be a "meaningful policy," and we could be living in a world with multiple nuclear centers. He then raises the question of what the world would look like if the [terrorist] bombs in London [on July 7th] were nuclear, resulting in 100,000 casualties. In response to the question of whether, if diplomacy fails, he advocates military action against Iran, he says, "I don't recommend it, but, on the other hand, it's a big step to live in a world of multiple nuclear centers without constraints. I don't recommend military action, but I recommend not ruling it out." (Kissinger, 2005)

Henry Kissinger, a Republican, commented on Donald Trump's election in a meeting in New York, stating that the greatest challenge in the Middle East is the potential Iranian hegemony in the region. The former U.S. Secretary of State, referring to Trump's election as President, declared that Trump's victory over Hillary Clinton was a "revolution against conventional wisdom." While labeling Iran as imperialist and jihadist, he said, "America must make it clear that we oppose Iran's territorial expansion and what we want from Iran is to act like a nation, not crusaders." Regarding the fate of the JCPOA in the Trump administration, Kissinger said that abandoning the Iran nuclear deal by the U.S. and the P5+1 (U.S., UK, France, Russia, China, plus Germany) would benefit Iran more than the U.S. Kissinger emphasized, "I didn't achieve such an agreement, but ending it now does not bring a great and important achievement for us." (Donya-ye-Eghtesad Newspaper, 2016, p. 5)

Kissinger's statements, considering him a realist in foreign policy, underscore the importance of "power" in a situation where analyzes have previously been published that Donald Trump, the President-elect of the United States, will not have a significantly different position on the JCPOA than Barack Obama, the current President of the United States, despite the promises made during the election campaigns, and practically cannot make significant changes to the nuclear deal. One of Trump's challenges in canceling, revisiting, or renegotiating the agreement is involving other global powers. European powers along with China and Russia are strongly committed to it once it is implemented."

The adoption of effective diplomacy instead of war is considered by Kissinger as the main problem in the relations between Iran and the United States. He believes that the Iranian government, since 1979, has violated a set of international rules, most of which have been against the United States. He is of the opinion that the U.S. should thoroughly examine diplomatic solutions concerning Iran to garner the consensus of European countries in adopting unified positions to mitigate the threat posed by Iran. If oil shipments from the Persian Gulf are cut off, European countries would be the first to seek access to American energy resources to prevent an economic catastrophe. Overall, Kissinger argues that extensive efforts should be made to achieve international consensus on Iran, and diplomatic relations should be coordinated with reasonable and proportionate pressures (Kissinger, 2002, p. 322).

Kissinger evaluates Iran's nuclear issue in three parts:

1. Nuclear fuel production

2. Production of long-range missiles

3. Nuclear weapons production, specifically nuclear warheads. He believes that a unified and multifaceted strategy is necessary for each of these three phases to address the nuclear crisis in Iran (Kissinger, 2007).

In this regard, he recommends to the U.S. government, especially the foreign policy team, that accurate assessments of Iran's nuclear capabilities, advancements, and the timing of its nuclear efforts should be provided by U.S. intelligence agencies to the executive branch, without interference in decision-making. Subsequently, the U.S. diplomatic apparatus should initiate consensus among the G8 countries and other major world powers on a unified approach against Iran's nuclear policies. Additionally, direct and transparent negotiations should take place, aiming to establish an international center for uranium enrichment under strict supervision of international organizations, ensuring a secure and peaceful resolution to such issues in the future (Kissinger, 2006).

Kissinger believes that diplomacy doesn't work in a vacuum but rather operates by balancing incentives and risks. The six countries involved in the JCPOA should determine the seriousness of their ideas before the technological process weakens the goal of stopping Iran's uranium enrichment program. Agreement on sanctions should also be reached before reaching that point, and these sanctions should be comprehensive and symbolic, intertwined with the losses of any action. Suspending uranium enrichment should not mark the end of this process. The next step should be the development of a global nuclear enrichment system in selected international centers, proposed by Russia for Iran, under international control. This approach eliminates discriminatory complexities towards Iran and sets a pattern for nuclear energy development without crises for any aspiring country in the nuclear field.

Geopolitical dialogue is not a substitute for an immediate solution to the nuclear enrichment crisis. This issue must be separately, rapidly, and firmly addressed. However, a comprehensive plan depends on whether a strong position in this regard is seen as the first step in inviting Iran to return to a broader global community.

The U.S. must be prepared to support its efforts to prevent Iran's nuclear program. For this reason, the U.S. is committed to finding a viable option. An American newspaper has published this analysis while Iran peacefully continues its nuclear program, and the U.S., with its double standards, restricts Iran's legitimate rights while turning a blind eye to the nuclear arsenals of the Zionist regime and signing a nuclear deal with India.

Conclusion and Discussion

Over the past half-century, the United States of America, despite the ups and downs and unique events of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, has maintained its dominance as a superpower. To gain a proper and deep understanding of the nature and logic governing the field of international relations, attention to the principles, values, criteria, and policies governing the American diplomatic apparatus and foreign policy, beyond its appearances, is crucial. It serves as a gateway to understanding the United States as an active and influential player in this arena.

Attention to Kissinger's role in shaping thoughts and his performance as a valid and accurate model is one of the most important ways to achieve such insight. As mentioned, Kissinger's thoughts and actions are highly credible and significant. From the mid-twentieth century to the present, the United States has orchestrated its foreign policy towards the comprehensive expansion of power, utilizing both soft and hard power and various strategies. Following the end of the Cold War and in the past two decades, in pursuit of the mentioned goal, the U.S. has shifted its focus from the Eastern bloc and communism towards the Middle East, incorporating a specific understanding of terrorism.

In this context, concepts and values such as democracy and dictatorship serve the execution of the overall foreign policy plan. Europe, with its unique cultural and political background, stands out as a strategic ally within various unions. Emerging countries like China, India, Brazil, and even Japan are under control as economic rivals, each with its own characteristics, strategies, and plans.

Kissinger's mode of operation during his time in power and his analytical and even critical thinking on current issues in international relations vividly explain the foundations, principles, and executive methods of the overall strategy of the United States. In other words, the writings and speeches of this experienced thinker and diplomat, due to his reliance on scientific roots and a deep understanding of the history of diplomacy and international relations, as well as awareness of the characteristics and specific areas of each region of the world, serve as a comprehensive and accurate reference for the principles and foundations, processes, and trends of foreign policy.

The Nixon-Kissinger doctrine is one of the most important and well-known foreign policy doctrines of the United States. Kissinger, in the current period, continues to act as a strategist, analyzing international relations and aligning them with the grand strategies of U.S. foreign policy. In other words, Kissinger in this regard adopts an adaptive approach that avoids delving into its details in the current era.

Henry Kissinger's recent statements regarding the unique role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region and the international system are

of special importance. He believes that the United States should be ready for interaction and cooperation with Iran. Washington should engage with Iran while supporting its Arab allies. In the Middle East, we face paradoxes. Iran possesses the strongest economic and military capacity in the region. We should not assume that the overthrow of the current Iranian regime is the goal of U.S. foreign policy.

These statements come from someone who, as a realist, has presented various formulas in the direction of destroying or weakening the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Not only Kissinger but also most prominent strategists of U.S. foreign policy have considered confronting the Islamic Republic as one of their main goals in recent years. However, the increasing power of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region and the world, the strengthening of Iran's influence in the world, the attraction of public opinion in the region and the world, and the demonstration of the inefficiency of other political systems in the region have led these strategists to acknowledge their inability to change the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In such circumstances, "interaction with Iran" is the only alternative emphasized by individuals like Kissinger.

During the presidency of George W. Bush's son, at a time when Kissinger had not yet mentioned any interaction with Iran, Zbigniew Brzezinski, another experienced foreign policy strategist in the United States, happened to be involved in the incident of the attack on Tabas during his tenure as the National Security Advisor to President Carter. He warned the Bush administration and neoconservatives that the only way forward for the United States is to engage with the Islamic Republic of Iran and learn to live alongside Tehran. Brzezinski explicitly warned the neoconservatives that if they do not understand these rules, the cost of learning these rules in the future will be heavy. However, the United States continued its direct confrontation with the Iranian system and people, maintaining this trend.

Currently, in addition to Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger also emphasizes dialogue with Iran as the only solution for Washington. This reflects the increasing power of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region and the world, affirming the necessity of preserving our country's closed front against the United States. Kissinger believes that Europe (the European Union) should rely on its previous structure, which has been in place for 150 years. In other words, Kissinger points out a criticism that is only directed at Europe in the jointly made foreign policies of the United States and Europe. Nevertheless, this part of Kissinger's statements is also of particular importance. What is certain is that Henry Kissinger has become aware of the occurrence of new changes and shifts in the international system after decades of examination and research. These transformations and shifts are not and will not be in favor of Western interests. In such conditions, Kissinger warns against "insisting on the current situation" and even "insisting on maintaining the existing structure" in Western foreign policy.

Here, Kissinger not only targets tactics but also the strategies existing in the foreign policies of Western countries, and he believes that these strategies can no longer ensure the survival of the United States and Europe in the international system. Therefore, a realistic view of Kissinger's statements and deciphering them shows that the decline of Western power in the international system is a subject

that has become clear not only to American and European politicians but also to strategists who until yesterday emphasized the stability of the foreign policy of Western countries. Washington's aggressive policy has done nothing but create social, political, and economic crises and turmoil in the Middle East. The interventionist and democracy expansion policies of the United States not only do not reduce turmoil but often lead to further chaos and insecurity, ultimately resulting in terrorism. The interventionist policy of the United States has had disastrous consequences. The consequences of this include corruption, unemployment, violence, governance incompetence (creating incapacity in governments to rule), and most importantly, significant disintegration in the social fabric, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as institutional inefficiency and lack of governance in many other countries such as Syria and Libya. America's presence in the region was the greatest gift to ISIS, and the deserts of the Middle East have seen enough bloodshed.

Iran's constant effort has been towards expanding relations with neighboring countries and establishing a kind of collective security system. However, some regional and extra-regional players have so far refrained from accepting Iran's real position, especially the United States, which still seeks interventionist policies through military presence and confrontation with Iran. Such a policy increases the likelihood of conflict in the region.

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