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Preface

This book had its inception in a common teaching experience. Although it is now almost two years since we were first involved in the preparation of materials on the Middle East for a course in the problems of American democracy, world events continue to remind us of the critical importance of the Mediterranean area. Our students were aware of an increasing variety of proposals for the role the United States should play in easing the tensions in the Middle East, but they were relatively unfamiliar with the general history and geography of the area. Thus they were unable to evaluate these various proposals critically.

As a result of this experience it was felt that there was a general need for a selection of materials designed to guide the citizen in formulating his own view of United States policy in this troubled zone. We then undertook a dual task: (1) the preparation of a descriptive essay which would meet the need of student and lay reader alike as a guide to the basic historical and geographical data of the Middle East; and (2) the provision of a source book of historical and recent documents which would constitute a framework for developing and testing foreign policy proposals.

We were assisted in our undertaking by many interested colleagues. We wish to express our appreciation to all of them with a particular note of gratitude to Professor Stuart Gerry Brown and Dean Harlan Cleveland of the Maxwell Graduate School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

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