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Sommario/riassunto	The Persian Gulf, important because of its vast energy resources, emerged into the limelight of geopolitics at the time of the British Labour government's policy of withdrawal from East of Suez in 1968.

Before 1968 it had been recognised that the Gulf lay in the legitimate sphere of influence of Britain, while the United States exerted its influence in the two pivotal littoral states of Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Soviets had been gaining influence in Iraq ever since the overthrow of the monarchy in 1958 and the Chinese were also fishing for influence by their support of the Popular Front for
