

THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE SUPERPOWERS

**Economic, Political and Strategic
Perspectives**

RASUL B. RAIS

**CROOM HELM
London & Sydney**

Contents

Acknowledgements

1	Introduction	1
2	Geopolitics of the Indian Ocean in an Historical Perspective	13
	The Ancient, Pre-colonial Regional Powers and the Indian Ocean	14
	Ancient Egypt	15
	Persia	15
	The Indians	16
	The Arab-Islamic Powers	17
	The Dominance of European Powers in the Indian Ocean	18
	Portugal	19
	The Aftermath of Portugal's Withdrawal	22
	Holland	22
	France	23
	Britain	24
	The Construction of the Suez Canal	26
	The First World War and the Indian Ocean	28
	The Second World War and the Post-war British Strategy	29
3	The Evolution of US Strategy in the Indian Ocean	37
	The Middle East Force	38
	Sino-Indian Border Conflict, 1962	39
	The British Withdrawal	40
	The Soviet Naval Deployments	42
	The Indian Invasion of East Pakistan	44
	The Nixon Doctrine and the Indian Ocean	47
	Arab-Israeli Conflict and the Oil Embargo	49
	South-west Asian Crises, 1979, and the US Indian Ocean Policy	51
4	US Interests in the Indian Ocean	57
	Political Objectives	58
	Security Interests	59
	Economic Interests	64
	Analysis of Threat Perceptions	68

CONTENTS

5	US Naval Facilities in the Indian Ocean	75
	Diego Garcia	76
	Oman	87
	Somalia	88
	Kenya	88
	Egypt	89
6	Analysis and Evaluation of US Strategy	94
7	The Evolution of Soviet Strategy in the Indian Ocean	104
	Tsarist Expansion in Central Asia	105
	Soviet Ideology and Third World Diplomacy	111
	The Soviet Military Doctrine	116
8	Soviet Interests in the Indian Ocean	120
	Political Objectives	120
	Economic Interests	126
	Strategic Interests	131
9	Evaluation of Soviet Strategy in the Indian Ocean	139
10	The Regional Response to the Superpowers' Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean	154
	Australia	156
	India	159
	Iran	162
	Gulf Co-operation Council	164
	Pakistan	167
11	Arms Control Proposals and Prospects in the Indian Ocean	172
12	Conclusion	184
	Appendix 1	191
	Appendix 2	192
	Bibliography	194