## Contents

About the author ix  
Preface and acknowledgments x  
Map of the Middle East xiii  

Introduction 1  

1 Historical background: stages in the relationship 5  
   British imperial priorities and the Middle East in the heyday of empire: 1860–1914 7  
   Expansion of Britain's interests in the Middle East 8  
   Britain's grand designs for the Middle East: 1914–47 10  
   Imperial machinations 12  
   The lines on the map 14  
   Imperial retreat: 1947–71 16  
   Struggling to adjust 20  
   Britain adjusts as America assumes the lead: 1971–97 21  
   Britain resurfaces 21  
   From war to 'containment' in the Gulf 24  
   The scene is set 28  

2 New Labour worldview and the Middle East 30  
   Britain's place in the post-Cold War world 30  
   Embracing globalization 32  
   The 'special relationship' 33  
   Bridging the Atlantic 36  
   New Labour: new vision 37  
   The first Strategic Defence Review 39  
   Initial thinking on the Middle East 40  
   The reform agenda 40
Contents

Changing gear after 9/11 42
Taking the fight to the Middle East 44
Strategy revisited 45
Security and the reform agenda 47
A selective reading of history 49

3 New Labour: new policy-making process 50
'Rebranding' Britain 50
New Labour leadership 51
'Values and interests merge' 53
The policy-making process 55
A presidential and informal No. 10 56
Diplomacy and policy implementation 59
End of an era 63
Civil society 64
The policy agenda and the media 65
Accountability and the public 66
The role of NGOs 68

4 Britain's role in the peace process: 1997–2001 70
Keeping the process on track: 1997–99 71
Finding a niche 72
Portents of 'the war on terror' 75
The death of King Hussein 76
Promises to the Palestinians 77
Betting on Barak: 1999–2000 78
Surprises on the Syria–Lebanon front 81
Collapse of the Palestinian track 82
Losing control 84

5 The road to war in Iraq 86
Containment: running out of steam 87
New Labour's initial stance 87
Sliding towards war 91
Alliance politics and 9/11 92
Shifting the policy logic 95
Preparing the ground 99
The justification 102
The Point of Departure 106
6 Reaping the whirlwind: the fallout from the invasion of Iraq for British relations across the Middle East 107
   I: Inside Iraq
      The Iraq war 107
      Occupation 108
      Democracy, populism, sectarianism and terrorism 109
      Britain's predicament 112
      The Iran connection 114
      Counting the costs 116
   II: Around the region 118
      Britain and Iran: from rapprochement to animosity 119
      Rapprochement 120
      Deterioration 122
      British relations with Syria and Libya 125
      Syria 125
      Libya 128
      Countering terrorism: British relations with Jordan and Egypt 129
      Jordan 129
      Egypt 132

7 Realpolitik and the peace process after 9/11 135
   Counter-terrorism and Palestinian statehood 136
   Blair's diplomatic buffeting in the region 137
   Counter-terrorism and the road to Baghdad 138
   Battle for the peace process 139
   New twist: Bush's vision and the road map 141
   The palliative of Palestinian 'reform' 143
   Outmanoeuvred on the road map 144
   Launch of the road map 144
   Blair loses credibility 145
   Illusions of progress 147
   Reality overtakes idealism 148
   Hamas comes to power 150
   From conflict to war 151
   A turning point for Blair 152
   The repercussions 153
   Blair the peace envoy 156

8 Still flying the flag: Britain and the Arab Gulf states 158
   Shared history 160
   The 'Trucial System' 161
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusive relationships</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letting go</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition and opportunity</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An enduring defence cooperation</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al Yamamah – the centrepiece</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining relationships</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11, Iraq and al-Qaeda</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regrouping in Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing times for BAE Systems</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortunes restored</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constancy rewarded</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Conclusions</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Labour’s policy approach</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11 was a turning point</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related implications</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>