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Nasser, Mosaed Abdullah (1990) *Principles and policies in Saudi Arabian foreign relations with special reference to the Superpowers and major Arab neighbours.*

PhD thesis

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**PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES IN SAUDI ARABIAN FOREIGN RELATIONS
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SUPERPOWERS
AND MAJOR ARAB NEIGHBOURS**

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TO MY FATHER

GLASGOW UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

Saudi Arabian foreign policy decisions are made by a small group in private and with little public discussion or explanation. Open debates on issues are not encouraged, particularly those that have a direct relation to the nation's security. No concept of public accountability exists. Secrecy is stressed to ensure internal security, as well as stability in the society. However, foreign policy decisions are not made without considerable thought and time spent in discussing the issues with those the leaders of government believe can make a contribution to their understanding of the problems.

The decision-making process has the following four characteristics :

- (1) There is a strong link between domestic and foreign policies because of the historical legacy of the state. For this reason, decision-making includes members of the royal family and religious establishment.
- (2) Other groups do participate and wield differing degrees of influence depending on the issue area.
- (3) Much bargaining occurs before an important decision is announced.
- (4) The process is slow, as the leaders are not prepared to meet crisis

situations. For this reason, the leadership usually turns to outside powers to settle the problem. In addition to the delay in making a decision, there is also the failure to follow through.

These characteristics are influenced by the increasing complexity of Saudi Arabia's regional and global environment, and by the growing demand on the country to play a larger role in global politics.

The methods used by the government result more in a reactive rather than a pro-active policy. The Saudis are more likely to react to events, panic in crises, and delay making decisions at the time the decisions should be made. The consequences of the methods used in making foreign policy decisions has created a political environment that varies from country to country, and from situation to situation. Policy decisions are not consistent. Those concerning Arab Islamic Nations will differ significantly from those made when the United States or the Soviet Union is involved. The main goal is to protect the regime, to ensure the monarchy remains in power, the principles of Islam are supported, and stability is maintained throughout the Kingdom.

Purpose of the Study

Saudi Arabia is encircled by hostile forces. The Saudis find themselves at the intersection of a number of strong crosscurrents. This creates for them a web of involvement with the world that prevents them from

returning to isolation. With the discovery of oil, the Kingdom entered into a foreign political environment which was not understood, but in which the Kingdom was expected to play a major role whether or not they were prepared to do so.

The review identifies the many problems encountered by the government's inconsistencies, and the consequences of using a reactive rather than a pro-active foreign policy decision-making process.

The purpose of this study is to review the Saudi Arabian foreign policy, its strengths and weaknesses, and make recommendations for improving foreign policy decision-making to strengthen the Kingdom's position in the Middle East and the world.

Statement of the Problem

The role of Saudi Arabia as a regional and international power has changed dramatically over the past few years. From a country whose interests lay almost exclusively in preserving political stability domestically and in its immediate border area, Saudi Arabia has developed into a powerful influence that extends beyond the Arabian Gulf, into the entire Middle East, as well as into Africa and Asia.

Saudi Arabia's foreign policy traditionally has been reactive rather than pro-active which has made foreign policy decisions often ineffective.

The fact of the frame of reference in which decisions are made - that of keeping the monarchy in power, adherence to Islamic principles, security of the nation, and stability within the society - has had a very negative effect on foreign policy decisions.

Foreign policy decisions should be based on strengthening the Kingdom's role in the Middle East as well as in international politics. Saudi Arabia should contribute more than any other nation towards maintaining a balance of power in the Middle East to maintain peace in the area, and to play a larger role in global politics not only because of its wealth of oil reserves, but because of the influence the government can have in the international marketplace and the development of other Third World nations.

Importance of the Subject

The history of the Middle East is filled with wars, uprisings, revolutions, and the like. Throughout the history of man there never has been a century in which men lived in peace. The first step was taken by King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud by unifying the different tribal groups in Arabia. Since the discovery of oil in the Middle East, the nations have been experiencing rapid change. Theorists argue that such changes can have a destabilizing effect on any nation. In this sense we can ask whether the stability of the monarchy, as a governmental system, is diminishing. The most important issue to recognise is the new forces

that have been imposed on these nations since they have been forced into global politics. It is the view of some that monarchies are not prepared to deal with these new forces. As a consequence, violence, corruption, and manipulation are expected to continue to exist in the Middle East.

Comparing political systems with that of Saudi Arabia, it can be seen that others appear to be more stable and even more durable than the Saudi system. Unless the monarchy is able to deal with external threats and changes taking place internally, the future of the Kingdom could be in jeopardy. It is believed that if foreign policy decisions were made pro-actively rather than reactively, the decisions would strengthen the nation's position in the Middle East as well as in the world.

Hypotheses

It is the intent of this study to test the following hypotheses :

- (1) The foreign policy decision-making process of Saudi Arabia is based on the need to keep the monarchy in power; retention of Islamic principles; the security of the Kingdom, and stability of the society.
- (2) Foreign policy decisions made within this framework have necessitated decisions being made on a crisis-to-crisis basis, forcing policy makers to be reactive rather than pro-active.

- (3) The foreign policy decisions are not consistent, but are based on ideologies influenced by Islam. As an example, policy decisions favour other Arab Islamic nations.
- (4) Foreign policy decisions made within this framework have weakened the potential of the Kingdom in relations with other countries.
- (5) The development of a stronger foreign policy based on a global perspective could give the Kingdom more influence over the stability of the Middle East, development of Third World countries, and the international marketplace.

Methodology

This study provides an analytical and qualitative examination of the Saudi Arabian Foreign Policy based on a study of scholarly works and professional literature as well as primary sources published in Arabic and translated into English.

Definitions

Foreign policy : The actions of a state toward the external environment and the conditions under which these actions are formulated.

Reactive : Making of decisions after a crisis has occurred to handle problems created by the crisis.

Pro-Active : The making of decisions in anticipation of future problems.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to the years 1920 through 1980. Before the 1920's Saudi Arabia was a land made up of provinces governed by various tribal groups. The Kingdom was unified in 1925. In the 1930's oil was discovered, which not only changed the face of the Kingdom but also increased its importance in the world. These changes are reflected in the foreign policies made through the 1970's.

The study is limited to foreign relations decisions as they pertain to Saudi Arabian foreign relations with the United States, the Soviet Union, North and South Yemen, Iraq, Egypt, and the Arab League.

CHAPTER ONE

POLITICAL HISTORY OF SAUDI ARABIA

- I Introduction : Heart of Islam and Oil Giant

- II Saudi Arabia : The Nation State
 - A The House of Saud and Wahhab
 - B Rise of the Nation State
 - C Towards a Modern State

- III Conclusion

Figures :

- Figure I Saudi Arabia, Government Organization, 1965
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Notes

Country

Formal Name : Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Short Form : Saudi Arabia.

Terms of Nationals : Saudi(s) or Saudi Arabian(s).

Adjectival Forms : Saudi or Saudi Arabian.

Capital : Riyadh (Ministry of Foreign Affairs located in Riyadh).

Government and Politics

Form : Monarchy. King also serves as prime minister.

Administrative Division : Six major and twelve minor provinces.

Legal System : Law consists of the Sharia (sacred Islamic law) - which includes the Quaran, the Hadith, and the Sunna - and of administrative decrees.

Politics : Political parties, interest groups, and similar organizations are not permitted.

Major International Memberships : United Nations and many of its specialized agencies, League of Arab States (Arab League), Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), and various Islamic conferences.

I Introduction : Heart of Islam and Oil Giant

Saudi Arabia is of unparalleled importance to the 800 million Moslems of the world. Never colonized by a western power, it is the core of both Islam and the Arab race, and the keeper of their purity. The migration that began from this Arab-Islamic state spread Islam as far as China, Russia, and Yugoslavia. Two of Islam's holy places, Mecca and Medina, are in Saudi Arabia, and it is toward these that practising Moslems all over the world turn five times a day to pray. Islam is not the only determinant of Saudi policy, whether domestic or foreign, but it is paramount.

Saudi Arabia, two-thirds the size of India, is a barren land. Occupying roughly three-quarters of the Arabian Peninsula (about two million square km), Saudi Arabia would have continued - at the economic level - as a sandbox were it not for one commodity : oil.¹ The country has a quarter of the world's supply, is the third largest producer and the largest exporter of oil, and has accumulated six times more overseas assets than the United States.²

Yet before the early 1970's, no books and only a handful of articles had been published on this country's foreign policy. Other aspects of Saudi Arabia were only slightly better analysed.

Scarcity of information also characterized newspapers and other non-

scholarly sources. Malcolm Peck puts it succinctly :

"In 1968, the New York Times Index revealed twice as much reporting on Albania as on Saudi Arabia, five or six times as much on Malaysia in 1969 and four times as much on Burma in 1970. Time had only one story relating to Saudi Arabia in 1969, reporting the death of King Saud and commenting on his physical ailments and the size of his harem. No mention was made of King Faisal's visit to Washington in 1971. U.S. News and World Report did not mention Saudi Arabia in 1969 or 1971 ... [For] the duration of the 90th and 91st Congresses, 1969-72, the index to the Congressional Record reveals that no reference was made to Saudi Arabia".³

The quality of resources was equally poor. The information provided was frequently careless, shallow, erroneous, or stereotyped. For instance, in covering the fourth non-aligned summit in Algeria (September 1973), the New York Times mentioned that Saudi Arabia did not attend, although the country's delegation was headed by King Faisal in person. A month later the oil embargo and price rises followed. The quantity of reporting on Saudi Arabia increased greatly, but its quality did not improve.

To earlier shortcomings was added a new distorting factor - a compound of fear and hostility in face of the threat which the oil weapon and visions of endlessly accumulating petro-dollars

conjured up. While a Washington Post editorial of April 1973 dismissed the first Saudi warning linking oil and politics, it suggested that the "more important oil becomes, the less important the Arab-Israeli dispute". An editorial of 2nd January 1974, in the same newspaper, noted the threat of a reduction in Saudi oil production and attacked the "feudal government and its ageing monarch" over the King's position on terms of a settlement.⁴

II Saudi Arabia : The Nation State

A The House of Saud and Wahhab

The history of Saudi Arabia as a nation-state begins in its most concise form in 1932. On September 18th of that year, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud assumed the title of King and proclaimed his domain to be the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. However, a more extensive history must consider how the nation-state came into being, for the foundations of authority and legitimacy which exists in the contemporary sovereign nation-state were begun two centuries earlier.

Such a consideration must of necessity be a family story ... a story of the House of Saud. It was through the accomplishments of the House of Saud that divided and separate regions, peoples and tribes were united into a singular, functioning nation.

Eighteenth-century Arabia was for the most part a land politically fragmented where scores of independent tribal leaders and urban lords held small domains. More often than not, these separate and independent leaders were in conflict, each with the other.⁵

Mohammad Ibn Saud, one of the earliest members of the House of Saud, was one such leader, overseeing his small domain in an area north of the present day capital, Riyadh.

There arose within a nearby area a religious leader, Mohammad Ibn Abdulwahhab. Appalled by what he saw as sacreligious and idolatrous practices, Ibn Abdulwahhab called for a return to the original principles of Islam. Stirring up both a fervent following and violent opposition, he was forced by the opposition to leave his home and to seek refuge elsewhere.

Forced out of his own region, Mohammad Ibn Abdulwahhab sought and was granted refuge by Mohammad Ibn Saud. The religious leader and the tribal leader shared the same ideology and saw the possibility of its expansion if they joined together for the same. In 1744, they swore a joint oath to support and further their common cause both within and without the realm of Mohammad Ibn Saud.⁶ Thus was born what was eventually to become the monarchy of the House of Saud.⁷

The combination of Saud's tribal militancy and Abdulwahhab's messianic ideology made for a fervent force which was to eventually transform the Arabian peninsula into a unified Kingdom.⁸ The House of Saud and the Wahhabi religious conservatism were further united by inter-marriage between the two families, the most important of which was Saud's to the daughter of Abdulwahhab.⁹ In 1788 with the House of Saud's family concurrence, Mohammad Abdulwahhab designated the rule of succession which was to continue into the twentieth century. Saud's eldest son was designated as Wali al-Ahd, Holder of

the Covenant of Heir Apparent. Instructions then went out throughout the realm for the traditional baiah or pledge of allegiance to be sworn to Saud. This remains the procedure of the Saudi monarchy today. As George Rentz points out, the often heard reference to the Heir Apparent as Crown Prince is inaccurate for there is not a Crown Prince in Saudi Arabia.¹⁰ Mohammad Abdulwahhab died in 1792 but the Wahhabi conservative ideology lived on to be practiced by the House of Saud and to be the foundation of Saudi Arabia society today.

The period subsequent to Abdulwahhab's death up to the beginning of the twentieth century was a period of both victory and set-back for the House of Saud. At one point in the early nineteenth century, the House of Saud, combined with Wahhabi ideology, had expanded its realm to include most of the Arabian Peninsula and was approaching Damascus.¹¹ However, the Ottoman Sultan, having already been humiliated by his loss of the Holy Cities, Mecca and Medina, decided that the limit had been reached. The Sultan commissioned his Egyptian viceroy, Mohammad Ali, to send an expedition to the peninsula to regain both this territory and his honour.¹² There followed a series of campaigns between the House of Saud and both Mohammad Ali and other tribes that lasted until 1891. In that year, the House of Saud, weakened by both external and internal strife, lost even its homeland, the central province of Najd. A rival tribe, the Al-Rashid, took power in the Najd forcing the House of

Saud into exile in Kuwait.¹³

B Rise of the Nation State

In January 1902, the eldest son of the exiled House of Saud left Kuwait and returned to Riyadh. In a daring dawn raid with less than fifty men, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud (commonly known in the West as Ibn Saud) reconquered Riyadh from the Al-Rashid. Thus began the consolidation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as it is known today. And thus at the age of 21 began the rise of King Ibn Saud, the founder of the contemporary Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and father of the present King.¹⁴

The consolidation was accomplished in a step-by-step process from the central province, the Najd, to the eastern provinces, then the south western-most province, the Asir; and finally the western-most province, the Hijaz.¹⁵

Ibn Saud's 1913 movement toward conquering the eastern provinces was to have special significance in al-Ahsa. Whereas past conquests had been on more of familial basis the attack on al-Ahsa was against a foreign power.¹⁶ Al-Ahsa was a Turkish garrison manned by Turkish troops.¹⁷ And since Rashid and Hussein were both indirectly supported by the Ottomans, the conflict at al-Ahsa was Saud's first direct confrontation with the Turks. Ibn Saud had also heretofore placed primary dependence for his manpower requirements upon temporary alliances. But such assistance was usually inversely

proportional to the difficulty of the ensuing struggle.¹⁸ It was herein then that the evolution of the Ikhwan (Brethren) began.¹⁹

In terms of difficulty and primordial significance, the Hijaz was predominant. For it was here that Hussein, the great grandfather of the present King Hussein of Jordan, reigned supported by the British.²⁰ British subsidies to both rulers could not quell the rivalry between them and in 1926 the Saudi-Wahhabi movement took control of the Hijaz.²¹ Hussein went into exile in Cyprus and Ibn Saud was declared the King of the Hijaz and Sultan of the Najd and Dependencies. After a further period of consolidation, Ibn Saud declared his realm on September 18th, 1932, to be called the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.²²

Those foundations of legitimacy and authority which enabled Ibn Saud to consolidate the Arabian Peninsula into a unified Kingdom continue to this day to be pillars of the Saudi State. Starting with the single source of tribal leadership, the Saudi family had expanded by taking up the Wahhabi religious ideology and cemented that consolidation by intermarriage with the Wahhabs. Ibn Saud used the same technique. As he conquered or consolidated additional tribes or regions, rivalries were erased and bonds established by marrying leading daughters of conquered tribes and religious leaders

(Ulema), thus giving everyone a vested interest in the furtherance of the House of Saud.²³ Ibn Saud's marriages left more than 30 living sons. "Rather than mere procreation ... it was creative Kingdom building".²⁴ Furthermore, the ideology of Wahhabism made individual tribesmen brothers in a greater community, the community of Wahhabist Islam. Thus in 1932, Ibn Saud had established the superstructure upon which his successors would claim rulership of Saudi Arabia. As King he was the chief ruler within the state; as head of the Wahhabist movement he was the central religious figure; as leader of the House of Saud, he was the leading tribal chief of all tribes; and as protector of Islam's holiest shrines, Mecca and Medina, his Kingdom occupied a position of prominence throughout the entire Islamic world.²⁵

C Toward a Modern State

With his nation-state newly consolidated, Ibn Saud had to turn and face conflict from an adjoining state. A border dispute developed in 1933 between his south eastern province, Asir, and the state of Yemen. With Imam Yehya of Yemen provoking what had originally started as a challenge of rulership within the Asir, King Ibn Saud decided to strike at the root of the problem. War was declared on Yemen in March 1934, and Ibn Saud sent his two eldest sons to lead an invasion force. The counter-attack was successful and the Imam sued for peace with Ibn Saud's forces commanding a large portion of Yemen. A treaty was signed on June 23rd, 1934, wherein Ibn Saud demanded neither reparations nor territorial changes of any sort. The statesmanship of Ibn Saud impressed the Imam Yehya in such a manner that he thereafter did his best to refrain from hostile actions against Ibn Saud.²⁶ Border relations with neighbouring states were further improved on April 2nd, 1936, when a treaty of Arab brotherhood and non-aggression was signed with the Hashemite King of Iraq.²⁷

With his state fully expanded and affairs with neighbouring states in a peaceful mode, Ibn Saud could demobilize his war machine and devote primary attention to development of a nation-state infrastructure. Ministries of foreign affairs and finance were

established by 1932 and governors were appointed in the provinces of Najd, Hijaz, Ahsa, and Asir. Internal development proceeded slowly. Social services were initiated, experimental agricultural projects were established, and the state began to acquire the paraphernalia necessary to function as a nation-state.

The need for finance to maintain the state was the catalyst which prompted the sale of an oil concession to an American firm in 1933. Oil in commercial quantity was discovered in 1938, thus seemingly ensuring financial solvency for King Ibn Saud's Kingdom. However, World War II delayed development of production and export facilities and it was not until the late 1940's that the Kingdom was able to enjoy substantial income from the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco).

During World War II, King Ibn Saud kept his Kingdom neutral.²⁸ He did, however, approve an agreement with the U.S. for airfield basing rights in Saudi Arabia. However, construction was not completed until after the war and both negotiations and construction were played down in order to avoid public infringement of his declared neutrality. As the war ended, Saudi Arabia declared war on Germany on March 1st, 1945, thus allowing participation in the United Nations Conference at San Francisco.²⁹

The increasing income from oil development subsequent to the war

allowed for increased internal development. Annual revenue had changed from \$4 million in 1944 to \$85 million in 1945.³⁰

Transportation, power generation, education, agriculture, health care and water supply all benefited from the development funds. The Kingdom experienced significant progress in regard to technology but governmental leadership remained very much patriarchal.

The government was the House of Saud. Ibn Saud was a monarch guided not by any sort of constitution (as defined by Western standards) but by Islamic law. Positions of leadership and responsibility were filled by members of the royal family or close confidants. His sons Saud and Faisal served as viceroys of the two most important provinces, Najd and Hijaz. Saud was heir-apparent and Commander of the army; Faisal foreign minister. In October 1953, King Ibn Saud issued a royal decree establishing a ministerial system and forming a Council of Ministers to act as an advisory body to the King but its makeup was predominantly royal. Although it was a significant step toward modern government, the Saudi Council of Ministers possessed no executive powers; the King continued to exercise his prerogatives as Chief of State, head of the royal family, prince of the faithful (Amir al-mu'm-inin), and head of all tribal sheiks (Shaikh al-mashayikh).³¹ The transfer of the ministries from Jiddah in the Hijaz to Riyadh in the Najd in the mid 1950's signalled the complete consolidation of the authority of the House of Saud as a ruling dynasty in Arabia.³²

King Ibn Saud died on November 9th, 1953, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Saud.³³ While there had been significant development under Ibn Saud, this was not his most significant accomplishment. His most significant accomplishment was the feat of more than two decades prior to his death. Ibn Saud had unified a vast area of conflicting tribal regions into a nation-state. Moreover, he had maintained that unity for nearly a quarter of a century. Such an accomplishment required a tremendous skill in maintaining a delicate balance. On the one hand he faced the fervent, often labelled fanatical, conservatism of the Wahhabi Ikhwan whose "fanaticism" had served him so well in military campaigns. On the other hand there existed the relatively liberal, almost secular, views in peoples such as those in the Hijaz.³⁴ King Ibn Saud had for a quarter of a century walked that tight-rope without being drawn off-balance by either faction; thus ensuring continued unity of his new-found Kingdom.

The demands of the Kingdom were not so well met by Ibn Saud's successor, Saud. From within the Kingdom there developed a dissatisfaction over alleged wasteful expenditures and a lack of development. From without, there developed the challenge of Nasserism, originating in the Egyptian revolution of 1952 and spreading throughout the Arab world. King Saud defined the duties and function of the Council of Ministers in May 1958.³⁵ According to this significant decree, the Council of Ministers was given

executive and legislative duties for the first time in the history of the Saudi State. It was a definite indication that a gradual process of political modernization was taking place in the country, that a process of de-tribalization was occurring, that the government of the state had become a complex responsibility which the monarch alone could no longer discharge, that Saudi Arabia was becoming a welfare state due to its increasing oil revenues, and that a central bureaucratic government organization was being created.

In accordance with Article II of the 1958 Statute of the Council of Ministers, the Council is composed of a president (the prime minister), a vice-president (deputy prime minister), departmental ministers, ministers of State, and advisors to the King.

Appointments to the Council of Ministers are made by royal decree. Article 18 of the same statute states that the Council of Ministers shall legislate in all major aspects of the State. The Council was also entrusted with the execution of this policy.³⁶ Faisal, the King's brother, was appointed prime minister and Crown Prince.

However, problems reached crisis stage in November 1958, and King Saud decreed that Crown Prince Faisal would assume full powers of government in the fields of internal, foreign, and fiscal policy. Under Faisal, fiscal policy was greatly improved and the nation's debts were significantly liquidated. But Faisal's strict programme

of austerity was not without criticism, especially from Saud's patriarchal faction. Resultantly, there developed a power struggle for leadership of the Kingdom which was not fully resolved until November 2nd, 1964.³⁷ In the period 1958-1964 there occurred several transfers of power between Saud and Faisal, with Saud always retaining the title of King and Faisal dutifully relinquishing control whenever challenged by his brother and King Saud.

Faisal's last submission was on March 15th, 1962.³⁸ King Saud resumed power and Faisal left the country shortly thereafter for the United States. His departure was due partly to undergo medical treatment in the United States and partly to express dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in Saudi Arabia. Within a few months, however, he was persuaded to return and resume government leadership. The September 2nd revolution in Yemen precipitated another crisis for Saudi Arabia requiring Faisal's expertise. Faisal continued de facto leadership of the Kingdom from 1962 to 1964 until King Saud again challenged for resumption of power. On this occasion, however, there evolved a consensus from all the sources of power within the Kingdom, the Ulema, the council of royal princes, and the tribal sheiks : Saud's challenge was rejected. King Saud was formally deposed and Crown Prince Faisal was proclaimed King on November 2nd, 1964.³⁹

Under Faisal's leadership, the country underwent significant development while still adhering to the traditional principles of Wahhabi Islam. He had introduced a ten-point programme for the modernization of the country in November 1962.⁴⁰ The ten-point programme called for many of the basic elements of modern government.

- (1) Promulgation of a "Basic Law" (or Constitution) based on the sharia and the Koran.
- (2) Regulation of local government.
- (3) Creation of a Supreme Judicial Council and a Ministry of Justice.
- (4) Establishment of a Judiciary Council.
- (5) New emphasis on the spread of Islam.
- (6) Re-organisation of the Committee for Public Morality.
- (7) Social legislation to improve the standard of living of the average Saudi citizen.
- (8) Co-ordination of economic development programmes and efforts.
- (9) Establishment of priority items in the economic development plan, such as an industrialization programme.
- (10) Abolition of slavery.⁴¹

Most of the social and economic provisions of the ten-point programme have been implemented. Ambitious programmes in industrialization, health, education, and welfare have been set in

motion. In the political sphere, however, no constitution has been written. The King's authority has not been diminished.

Nevertheless, the organizational structure has been formalized, new ministries have been created, and the central bureaucracy has grown in size. The government structure has not significantly changed.⁴²

In Arab affairs, the Kingdom began to assume greater authority by financing rehabilitation of "front-line" Arab states after the 1967 war. After Nasser's death in 1970, King Faisal emerged as the leading spokesman for the Arab world.

Under Faisal's leadership the first two five-year development plans were drawn up. The first in 1970 called for development expenditure of \$9.2 billion and the second in 1975 called for \$142 billion.⁴³

In international affairs, the increased revenues resulting from quadrupling of oil prices in 1973-1974 literally sky-rocketed the Kingdom up the international hierarchy. Saudi Arabian crude increased from \$3.01 to \$11.65 per barrel and the Kingdom's oil revenues rose from \$4.34 billion in 1973 to \$22.6 billion in 1974.⁴⁴ Balance-of-payment surpluses rose by a factor of ten ... from \$2.5 billion in 1973 to \$25 billion in 1974.⁴⁵ Moreover, the Kingdom's possessions of the world's largest proven reserves ... 25% of free world total ... and production of 8.5 million barrels per day ... again 25% of free world total ... gave it overwhelming status in a

world economy frightened by energy prospects.⁴⁶

In development of the country, propagation of Islam and the Arab cause, and emergence of the nation as an international factor of significance, King Faisal was approaching a position of historical significance equal to that of his father, Ibn Saud. It was then a tragic occurrence that on March 25th, 1975, he was assassinated by a young nephew.⁴⁷

The Crown Prince, Khalid, Faisal's brother, assumed the monarchy and his half-brother Fahd assumed the position of Crown Prince and first Deputy Prime Minister. The position of head of the National Guard was assumed by Prince Abdullah while Prince Sultan retained the Ministry of Defence and Aviation. As first Prime Minister, Prince Fahd has conducted most of the day-to-day affairs of the Kingdom, for King Khalid is troubled with medical problems. However, there is no doubt that the loyalty is to King Khalid and he retains full authority as King.

King Khalid has carried on in much the same way as Faisal had re-oriented the Kingdom. Just as Ibn Saud and Faisal had before him, Khalid had been required to strike a finely tuned balance between Islamic traditionalism and modernization. The most recent emanation of this policy of balance was evidenced by expansion of governmental bureaucracy, under demands of the expanding

technocratic class, to include the urban middle class.⁴⁸ Such a move not only met demand but broadened the regime's power base. The most significant of such movements occurred in October 1975 when the Council of Ministers membership was expanded from fourteen members to twenty. Whereas the Council began with a majority of members being royal princes, its make-up changed to include only eight royal princes. Eleven of the new members had higher degrees, one had a bachelor's degree and two were prominent Islamic theologians.⁴⁹ The dynamic of the oil economy and the traditionalism of Islamic society require that the fine tuning be a continual process.⁵⁰

III Conclusion

Although by the mid 1970's the political system in Saudi Arabia was becoming increasingly complex because of the country's attempt to develop rapidly, the procedures for making decisions (domestic or foreign) remained much as they were during Ibn Saud's reign. Policy was determined in the final analysis by one person, the King; its formulation depended on few other individuals. In 1976 many Saudis might be involved in formulating any single decision, but it was still the King who decided what policy should be.

Since the legitimacy and therefore the authority of the office of the King was based on his ability to maintain a consensus among numerous factions within the country, his power was not truly absolute. This need for consensus has been a traditional feature in maintaining leadership in the Saud dynasty and is well documented.

Although there are not political parties in the Kingdom, the position of the royal family in the decision-making process can best be described by using an analogy with a political party or political interest group. After being selected by his peers, a leader constantly consults his committee of senior advisers in the process of making decisions that concern the party (royal family) or conditions affecting the society (Saudi Arabia). The leader's ability to make decisions and maintain legitimacy, however, is

determined through the support of party leaders and members. Party leaders (princes, Ulama, and others) who are close to the leader fill positions (such as governors, ministers, military officers, and others) that maintain influence over the party members (remaining members of the royal family, tribal leaders, and the general Saudi population).

This analogy presents a model of a single-party system, and the decisions that are made depend on the functioning of the party at all levels. The royal family is open to dissension from inside and outside its ranks, but no organized opposition is permitted. This was the system that evolved under the rule of Ibn Saud, and it remained a primary rule in the 1970's and 1980's.

Figure 2 : Saudi Arabia, Government Organization, 1965

Source : Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, 3rd ed. Washington: US Government Printing Offices, 1977, p176

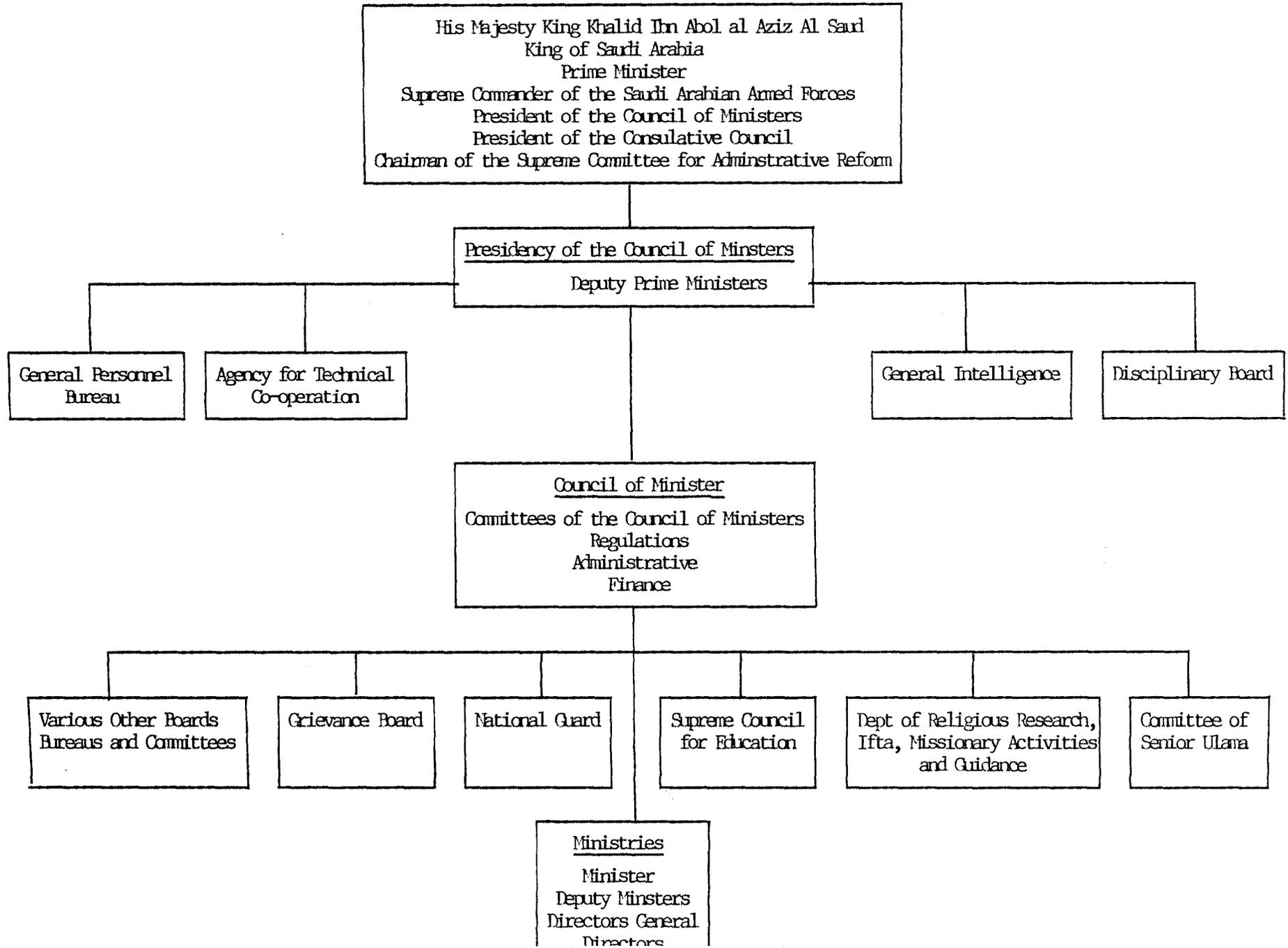


Figure 2 : Saudi Arabia, Government Organization, 1965

Source : Richard F. Nyrop, *Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia*, 3rd ed. Washington: US Government Printing Offices, 1977, p176

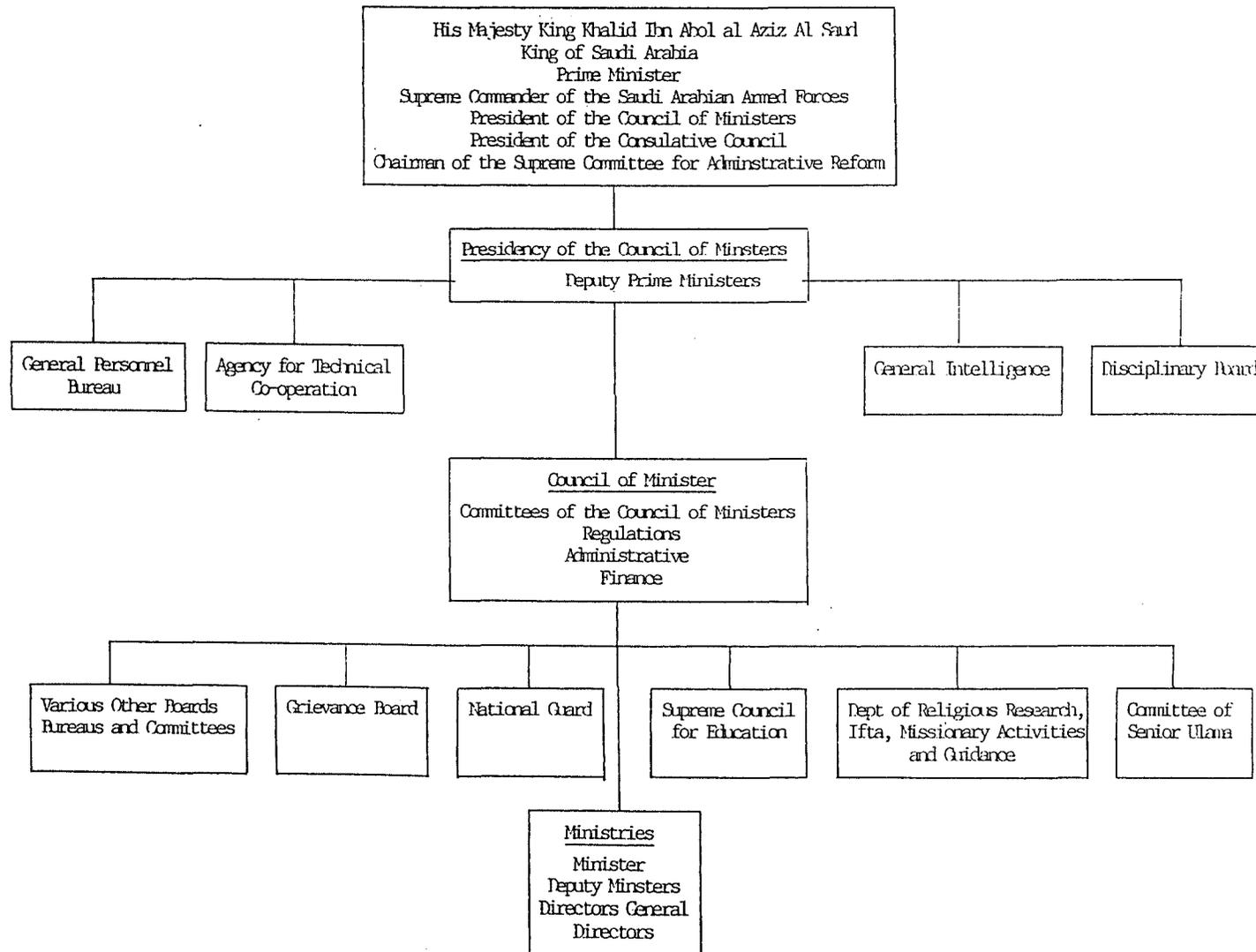
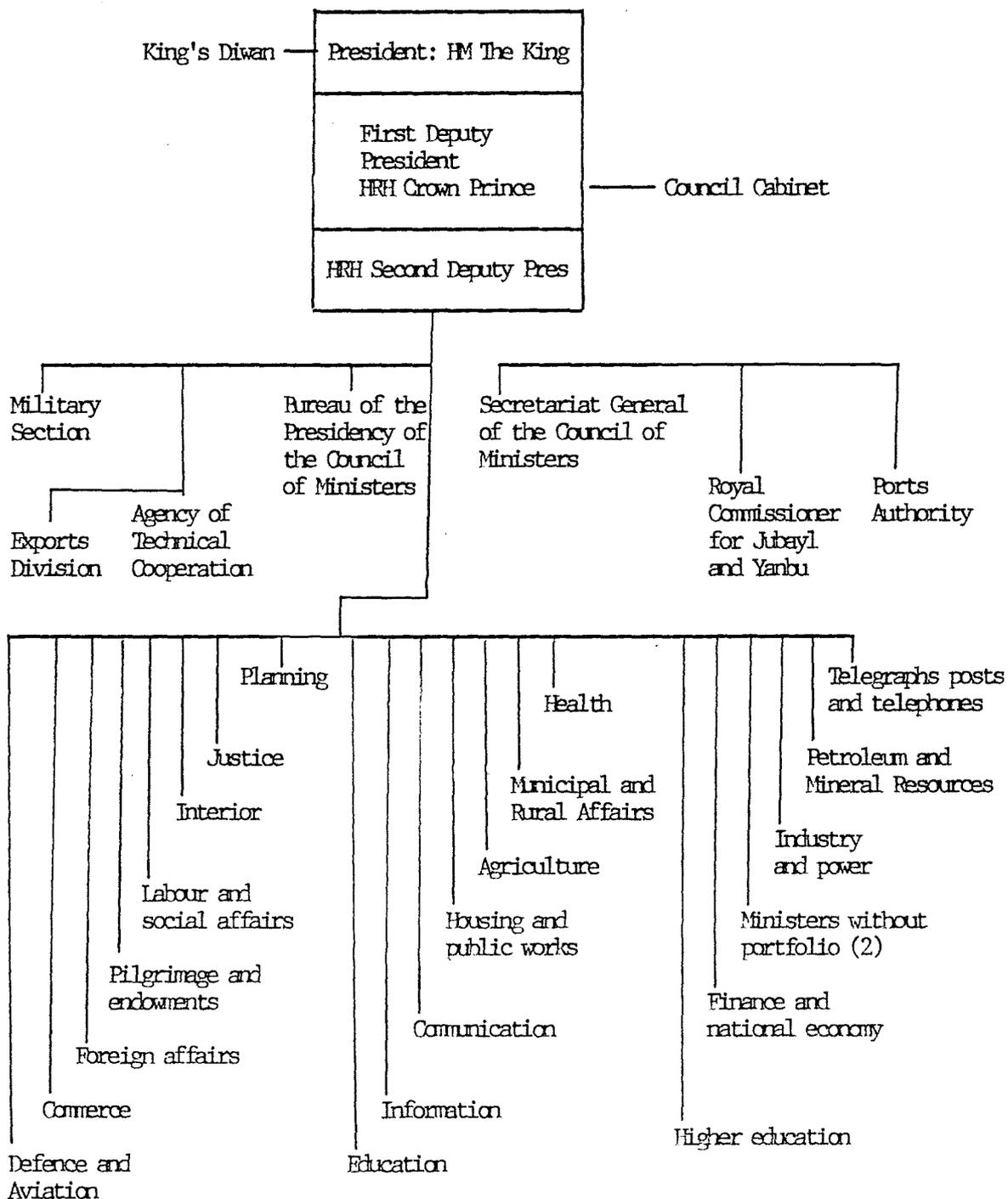
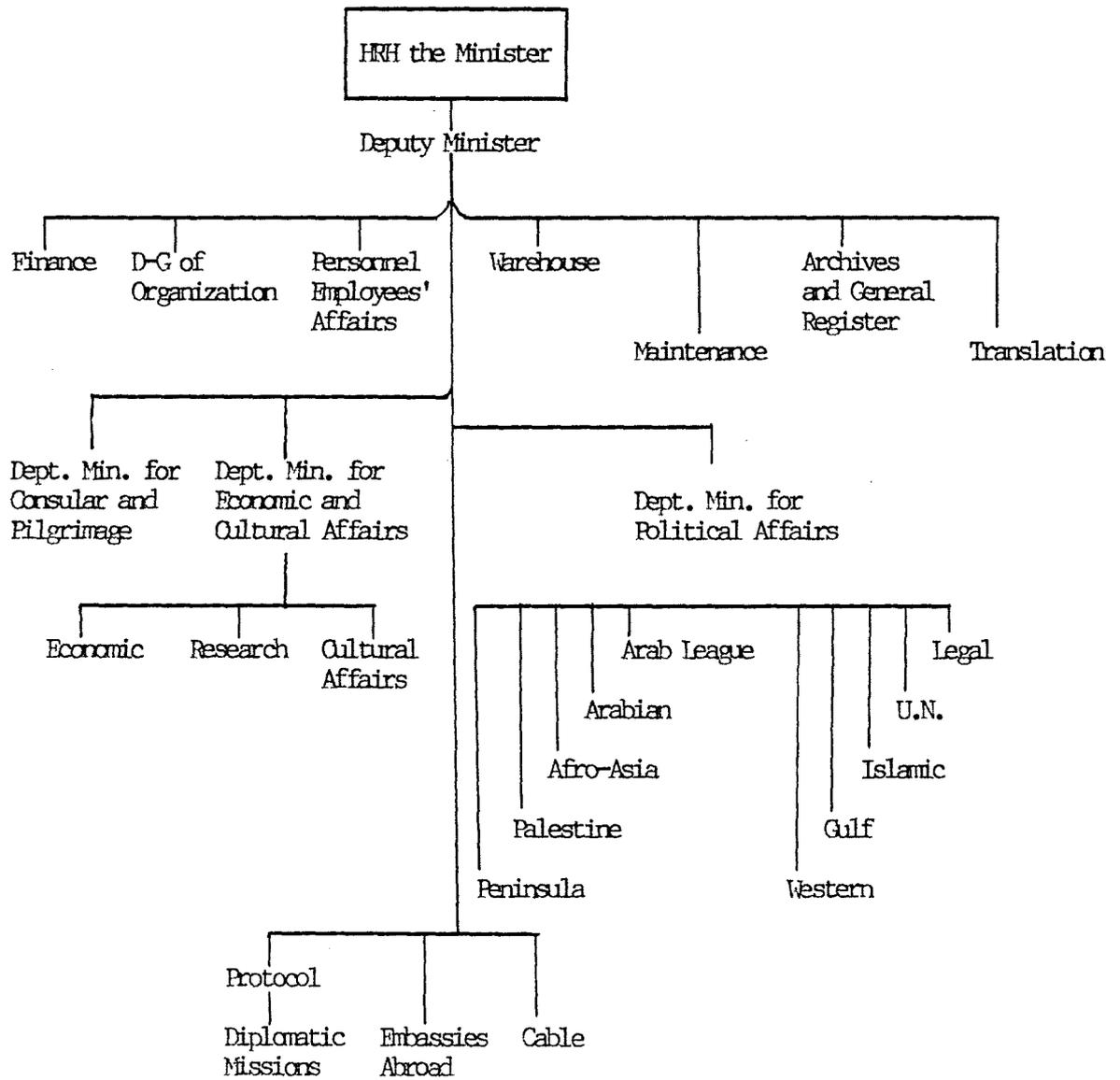


Figure 3 : The Saudi Council of Ministers



Source : Fouad Al-Farsy, *Saudi Arabia : A Case Study in Development*, London: Stacey International, 1978, p. 96

Figure 4 : Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Source : Fouad Al-Farsy, Saudi Arabia : A Case Study in Development, p. 100

Footnotes

- (1) For more information, see Peter Mansfield, The Middle East : A Political and Economic Survey, London: Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 105-106; Christine Moss Helms, The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia : Evolution of Political Identity. London: Croon Helm Ltd., 1981, p. 29; and George Lipsky, Saudi Arabia, Its People, Its Society, Its Culture, New Haven: HRAF Press, 1959, p. 19.
- (2) See David Holden and Richard Johns, The House of Saud, London: Pan Books, 1982; and also see Robert Lacey, The Kingdom, New York: Avon Books, 1982.
- (3) Malcolm C. Peck, "The Saudi-American Relationship and King Faisal", in Willard A. Beling (ed.), King Faisal and Modernization of Saudi Arabia, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980, pp. 235-236.
- (4) Ibid, pp. 238-239, and Marcell Gros, Faisal of Arabia : The Ten Years of A Reign, London: EMGE-SEPTIX, 1976, pp. 63-67.
- (5) For more information about the influence of the tribal segmentary system upon political and social organization in Central Arabia, see Christine Moss Helms, The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia : Evolution of Political Identity, pp. 51-70; Ibn Bisher gave a detailed description of polytheistic practice in Najd in R. B. Winder, Saudi Arabia in the 19th Century, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955, p. 12. See also H. R. P. Dickson, Kuwait and her Neighbours, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1956, p. 111.
- (6) George Rentz, "The Saudi Monarchy" in King Faisal and the Modernization of Saudi Arabia, Willard A. Beling, ed. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980, p. 17.

- (7) For more information about Wahhabism and the formation of the Saudi State, see Ayman al-Yassini, Religion and State in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Bolder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1985, pp. 21-32.
- (8) In exemplifying the change wrought by Ibn Saud, George Rentz comments that "Highwaymen no longer made the roads unsafe; caravans travelled without guards and no longer had to pay Bedouin tribes for the right of transit". Further, he quotes an Arab poet: "If only a tiny coin were lost in the desert, it would be returned, even from the Lion's lair". George Rentz, "The Saudi Monarchy" in King Faisal and the Modernization of Saudi Arabia, Willard A. Beling, ed., p. 20.
- (9) Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, 3rd ed. Washington: American University Press, 1977, p. 25.
- (10) George Rentz, "The Saudi Monarchy", in King Faisal and the Modernization of Saudi Arabia, Willard A. Beling, ed., p. 19.
- (11) "The Kingdom of Ibn Saud had assumed too great an importance to be ignored. Napoleon sent a diplomatic agent there, M. de Lascaris, ... at the end of 1811 and had a number of secret meetings with the Imam of the Wahhabis". Jacques Benoist-Mechin, Arabian Destiny London: Elek-Books Ltd., 1957, pp. 51-52.
- (12) Mohammad Ali, an Albanian Military Commander, was appointed Governor of Egypt in 1806 by the Ottoman government on the condition that he re-take the Hijaz from the Saudis and destroy the first Saudi State. See H.R.P. Dickson, Kuwait and Her Neighbours, pp. 117-122, Ahmed Assah, Miracle of the Desert Kingdom, London: Johnston Publications Ltd., 1969, pp. 7-20, and Jacques Benoist-Mechin, Arabian Destiny, pp. 52-54.

- (13) H. C. Armstrong, Lord of Arabia, Beirut: Lebanon, St. Paul's Press, 1964, p. 22.
- (14) For more information, see David Howarth, The Desert King: The Life of Ibn Saud, London: Quarter Books Ltd., 1980.
- (15) For more detailed information, see Gary Troeller, The Birth of Saudi Arabia : Britain and the Rise of House of Saud, London: Frank Cass Ltd., 1976, pp. 34-117.
- (16) Prior to 1871, the Sultan of Turkey had never exercised effective control or jurisdiction in central Arabia. During Sultan Abdulhamid's reign (1876-1909), Turkey adopted a policy of extending the Turkish Empire's control over Najd. See Ravinder Kumar, India and the Persian Gulf Region : 1858-1907 : A Study in British Imperial Policy, New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965, p. 113. See also J. B. Kelly, Britain and the Persian Gulf: 1795-1880, Oxford and London: The Clarendon Press, 1968, p. 718.
- (17) Ibn Saud sent a telegram to Sultan Abdulhamid on February 18th, 1906, expressing his desire for friendship and good relations. Great Britain Foreign Office, "Secret Frontier Proceedings of the Foreign Department", Government of India, No. 775, May 1906.
- (18) Ibn Saud engaged Turkey in a series of diplomatic manoeuvrings that in May 1914 resulted in a treaty* with the Ottoman government stipulating that the Ottoman government recognised Ibn Saud as ruler of Najd, al-Qaseem, and al-Ahsa. In return Ibn Saud would accept the nominal suzerainty of Turkey. The second objective was to obtain a commitment from the British government for recognition of hegemony over the Arabian peninsula. To this end Ibn Saud contacted the British Resident in the Gulf. The British government's previous ambivalence ceased. Annexation of al-Ahsa had greatly increased his importance. The risk existed that Ibn

Saud's ambitions might extend to the Gulf Skeikdoms, then under British protection, at a time when Britain was preparing for the Great War. The British decided to take Ibn Saud into consideration in its policies in the Gulf region and authorized its Resident to deliver to Ibn Saud the following message:

I have my government's authority to assure you that provided you undertake on your part to abstain from all action calculated to disturb the "status quo" or to create unrest amongst Arab principalities whose rulers are in relations with His Majesty's government ... the British government will continue to maintain friendly relations.**

The message indicated the British government's concern for Ibn Saud's power to threaten the Gulf territories, considered vital to British interests. The British message was the sign of support of Ibn Saud.

* For the terms of the agreement, see A. Amin, Tarikh al-Dawlah al-Saudiyah, [History of the Saudi State], Vol. 2, Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1965, pp. 58-61;

** Great Britain, Foreign Office, Viceroy to Crewe, Telegram, F.O. No. 22076/41141, September 5th, 1913.

- (19) For an analysis of Ibn Saud's use of the Ikhwan in building his nation-state, see Mohammad al-Mana, Arabia Unified : A Portrait of Ibn Saud, London: Hutchinson Benham Ltd., 1980, pp. 121-143; and Gary Troeller, The Birth of Saudi Arabia : Britain and the Rise of the House of Saud, pp. 128-130; and also see John S. Habib, Ibn Saud's Warriors of Islam : The Ikhwan of Najd and Their Role in the Creation of the Saudi Kingdom, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978.

- (20) In 1920 the British government stopped its subsidy of 200,000 sterling pounds per month to Hussein, a subsidy which began in 1914 due to Hussein's intervention in the First World War. The imposition of new taxes had as its purpose the replacement of the British subsidy.
- (21) For more information about the Hijaz Campaign, see David Howarth, The Desert King : The Life of Ibn Saud, pp. 124-141; The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa. David E. Long and Bernard Relch (eds.), Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press Ltd., 1980, pp. 94-95; Arnold, Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs, Vol. 1, London: Oxford University Press, 1927, p. 287; Gary Troeller, The Birth of Saudi Arabia : Britain and the Rise of the House of Saud, pp. 127-152; H. C. Armstrong, Lord of Arabia, pp. 143 and 150-151; and Mohammad al-Mana, Arabia Unified : A Portrait of Ibn Saud, pp. 63-75.
- (22) Royal Decree No. 2716, in al-Rashid, Ibrahim (ed.), Documents on the History of Saudi Arabia, Vol. 3, Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1976, pp. 34-35.
- (23) In 1921, Ibn Saud married the widow of Saud Ibn Rashid, his arch-rival. he adopted her children and made peace with her relatives; thus forestalling any further Rashidi alliance that would conflict with his own. Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, p. 31.
- (24) J. C. Hurewitz, The Persian Gulf after Iran's Revolution, New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1979, p. 15.
- (25) There is little doubt that King Ibn Saud realised both the legitimacy and responsibility bestowed upon his monarchy by possession of Islam's two holiest cities. After taking the Hijaz, he invited all world Islamic leaders to a conference in Mecca to

both seek their advice on improved administration of the pilgrimage and to declare his protectorship of the Holy Places. David Howarth, The Desert King : Ibn Saud and his Arabia, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974, p. 156, Richard R. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, p. 32.

- (26) George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, 4th ed., Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980, p. 579.
- (27) One analyst suggests that Ibn Saud's restraint in imposing military conquest upon Yemeni territory was more a pragmatic realization of the limitations of his military capability than any mood of benevolence. Mohammad al-Mana, Arabia Unified : A Portrait of Ibn Saud, pp. 211-212.
- (28) Philby describes Ibn Saud's position during the war as officially and formally neutral while his personal sympathies were undoubtedly with the allies. For additional support of that argument, see H. St. John Philby, Saudi Arabia, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1955, p. 337.
- (29) See George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, p. 581.
- (30) Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, p. 34.
- (31) For an informative analysis of the socio-political composition of Saudi society, see Abdul H. Raoof, "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia", in Tareq Y. Ismael, ed. Government and Politics of the Contemporary Middle East, Homewood, Ill: The Dorsey Press, 1970, pp. 353-379.
- (32) Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, p. 136.

- (33) See Ukaz, November 10th, 1953 (Jeddah), and Al-Ahram, November 10th, 1953 (Cairo).
- (34) Typical of the extremes of views faced by Ibn Saud were those of the religious leadership ... the Ulema ... and the merchant urbanized classes of Jeddah. Many writings mention a confrontation between ibn Saud and the Ulema when he introduced radio into the Kingdom. The Ulema felt such devices to be of the devil. Ibn Saud's solution was to have the words of the Koran relayed to a distant location via radio, therein proving the radio to be an instrument of great value in propagating the faith. On the other hand, after capturing Jeddah, Ibn Saud had to balance the views of the conquering Ikhwan and the resident merchant class. The Ikhwan sought to destroy consignments of tobacco imported by the wealthy merchant class. Ibn Saud ordered that those consignments in hand would remain the property of the owners but that future importation would be banned. The prohibition was later handily forgotten.

David Howarth, The Desert King : Ibn Saud and his Arabia, p. 157; Peter A. Iseman, "The Arabian Ethos", Harpers, February 1978, pp. 37-57; H. St. John Philby, Saudi Arabia, pp. 304-305. For more information about the Ikhwan Rebellion against Ibn Saud, see Christine Moss Helms, The Cohesion of Saudi Arabia : Evolution of Political Identity, pp. 250-272; Mohammad al-Mana, Arabia Unified : A Portrait of Ibn Saud, pp. 95-143; Robert Lacey, The Kingdom, pp. 201-204.

- (35) See Abid A. al-Marayati, Middle Eastern Constitutions and Electoral Laws, New York: Praeger, 1958, pp. 293-313.
- (36) Ibid., p. 296.
- (37) George Rentz, "The Saudi Monarchy" in King Faisal and the Modernization of Saudi Arabia, p. 31.

- (38) George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, 4th ed., p. 596.
- (39) For text of the official proclamation, see Arab Political Documents 1964, p. 441, as reproduced in George Lenczowski, ed., The Political Awakening in the Middle East, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.
- (40) Gerald De Gaury, Faisal : King of Saudi Arabia, London: Arthur Barker Ltd., 1966, pp. 147-151.
- (41) Helen Lackner, A House Built on Sand : A Political Economy of Saudi Arabia, London: Ithaca Press, 1978, pp. 65-66; and George Lenczowski, "Tradition and Reform in Saudi Arabia", Current History February, 1967, p. 101.
- (42) Jim Hoagland, "Saudis Announce Plans for Political Reforms", Washington Post, 2nd April 1975. The government promised that a Consultative Council (majlis shura) would be formed. As yet it has failed to conform with its undertaking.
- (43) For thorough analyses of Saudi Arabia development, see Ramon Knauerhause, The Saudi Arabian Economy, New York: Praeger, 1975, and Donald A. Wells, Saudi Arabian Development Strategy, Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976.
- (44) Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) Statistical Summary, 1977, as cited in Helen Lackner, A House Built on Sand : A Political Economy of Saudi Arabia, p. 45.
- (45) IMF Balance of Payments Yearbook, 1978, Washington: International Monetary Fund, 1978, p. 517.

- (46) World Petroleum Report - An Annual Review of International Oil Operations, Vol. 21, 1975, as cited in John Duke Anthony, ed., The Middle East : Oil. Politics, and Development, Washington; American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, p. 104.
- (47) Al-Riyadh, March 26th, 1975 (Riyadh); and Al-Jazirah, March 26th, 1975 (Riyadh).
- (48) The impetus for political reform is being generated by the rapidly expanding middle class, a new stratum of the population that is educated, secular, socialist, and non-traditional. This new class seems destined to play a central role in the future of Saudi Arabia. For more information about the new middle class, see Mark Healer, and Nadav Safran, The Middle Class and Regime Stability in Saudi Arabia, Harvard Middle East Papers. Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 1986; William Rugh, "Emergence of a New Class in Saudi Arabia", Middle East Journal, Winter 1973, pp. 7-20; James A. Bill, "Class Analysis and the Dialectics of Modernization in the Middle East", International Journal of Middle East Studies, October 1973, pp. 417-434; and Manfred W. Wenner, "Saudi Arabia : Survival of Traditional Elites", in Frank Tachau, ed., Political Elites and Political Development in the Middle East, Cambridge, Mass. : Schenkman Publishing Company Inc., 1975, pp. 157-191.
- (49) Fouad al-Farsy, Saudi Arabia : A Case Study in Development, London: Stacey International, 1978, pp. 98-99.
- (50) For more information about the Ulema and their role in the decision-making, see Tim Niblock, "Social Structure and the Development of the Saudi Arabian Political System", in Niblock (ed.), State, Society and Economy in Saudi Arabia, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982, pp. 88-92; and also see Ayman al-Yassini, Religion and State in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, pp. 41-50, and pp. 59-79.

CHAPTER TWO

SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED STATES

Introduction

I Saudi Arabia and the United States : Evolution of Special Relationship

- A Pre-1973
- B Post-1973

II Current State of Relationship

- A Geostrategic Interests
- B Political Interests
- C Military Interests
- D Economic Interests
- E Oil Interests

III A Interest Related to the Arab-Israeli Conflict
B Interest Related to the Western Alliance

IV Conclusion

- A Paradox and Fortuitous Circumstances
- B The Cornerstone : Aramco
- C 1973 ... A Year of Change
- D Congruency of National Interests
- E The Future

Footnotes

Introduction / Overview

As discussed in chapter one, Saudi Arabia has evolved into a conservative Muslim monarchy ruled by a powerful King whose authority derives from a large, closely knit royal family (Al-Saud), an influential group of religious scholars (Ulama), and tribal support as expressed by the allegiance of powerful tribal chiefs throughout ninety per cent of the Arabian Peninsula. It was found that the constitutional basis of government is lodged in Islamic Law (Shari'a), as the two primary supports of this Islamic Law are the Sunna, or traditions, and the Hadith, or the sayings and actions of the prophet Muhammad.

Also, it was revealed in chapter one that Saudi religious conservatism and support for such a strict adherence to the faith are based on the Wahhabite movement founded by eighteenth-century religious reformer Muhammad Al-Wahhab in the heart of the Najd region of the Arabian Peninsula. It was observed that the Saudi royal family has assumed, by fact of geography, the role of defender of the faith and protector of Islam's two holiest places, Mecca and Medina. In addition to Saudi Arabia's special position for Muslims throughout the world, the oil-derived wealth of recent decades has added a new dimension of political power and influence far exceeding the country's size or religious stature.

Obviously, this contemporary power and influence has given Saudi Arabia

international stature and has drawn the world's attention to the country and its institutions. So, as a result of this international prominence, the connection between Saudi Arabia's internal political system and the country's regional and international foreign policy has come into sharp focus. There is little doubt that its political leverage in international affairs stems primarily from economic factors, mainly its control over key deposits of petroleum and its petrodollar surpluses.

I Saudi Arabia and United States : Evolution of Special Relationship

The United States-Saudi Arabian relationship evolved through many steps. The foundation of the relationship was established just one year after Ibn Saud declared his newly consolidated realm to be the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. And from that basis of private economic interests, the relationship broadened to include national interests of oil, geostrategic, military, political and economic interests. Each of these factors remains today as an important sustainer of the relationship. For there has been both constant growth in depth within each individual factor and lateral growth of the total relationship by encompassment of additional factors.

The year 1973 marked a watershed in the evolution of the relationship. It was in that year that the junior member of the bilateral relationship exercised fully independent actions to the detriment of the senior member. The results of that action so affected and impressed the United States and its interests, both at home and abroad, that the relationship thereafter would be on a revised basis. Many of the old bases for the relationship would continue but the partnership would be on revised share interest proportions. Saudi Arabia has proven in a most dramatic manner that it would jeopardise its interests in the partnership in favour of regional concerns and interests. While many events of the past had focused the attention of the policy-making elite upon the importance

of Saudi Arabia, no event had ever been so impressive in the scope of its reach and effect. Saudi Arabia gained world notoriety in both its importance to free-world interests and its ability to jeopardise those interests in favour of more nationalistic interests. The United States - Saudi Arabian relationship was to be thereafter both on a more even footing and intertwined complexity. In following the evolution of the relationship, this chapter will then approach the topic via two separate eras ... pre-1973 and post-1973.

A Pre - 1973

The genesis of the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship was in the form of private economic enterprise ... economic enterprise between a tribal chieftain whose new-found conquests required financing and a private oil company which was willing to risk advancing the required financing in exchange for exploration rights. King Ibn Saud quickly found that the financial requirements of his newly formed state exceeded those revenues provided by the Kingdom's primary source of revenue ... the annual pilgrimage to Islam's two holiest cities, Mecca and Medina. An oil concession was a possible source of revenue and oil had been already discovered in neighbouring Bahrain; thus there were a few private oil companies mildly interested in exploring the Kingdom for petroleum resources.

As early as 1923, before complete consolidation of his kingdom, Ibn Saud had granted oil exploration rights to the Eastern General Syndicate of London. There was much opposition to such a move, especially from the religious leaders ... the Ulema. They feared the infidel influence which would accompany outsiders drawn to the Kingdom by oil. Undoubtedly, Ibn Saud shared some of that fear but his movement required funding and the sum of £2000 annual concession rental fees provided sorely needed income. However, Eastern General lost interest after two unsuccessful seasons of exploration and the concession was formally terminated in 1928.¹

The depression of the 1930's impacted the Kingdom's meagre revenues severely. Pilgrims to Mecca and Medina decreased from over 130,000 in 1927 to 40,000 in 1931.² Further, Ibn Saud's realm had now expanded to include all of contemporary Saudi Arabia. And he was involved in a costly dispute on the border with Yemen which would eventually lead to war. Thus, with increasing fiscal demands of an emerging nation-state escalating drastically while income decreased (from what was a meagre amount to start with) Ibn Saud was forced to look outward for assistance and to relegate any fears of outside influence which his Wahhabi conservatism might suggest.

H. St. John Philby, a former British army officer converted to Islam, played an important role in the United States' entrance upon the scene. Philby spent the last forty years of his life in Arabia

and was accepted in Ibn Saud's tent as confidant and adviser.³ Upon Philby's advice, Ibn Saud met in 1931 with the American philanthropist, Charles Crane, who had represented the United States President Wilson a decade earlier in the King-Crane Commission to the Middle East. Crane was sponsoring development in Yemen and Ibn Saud asked for his assistance in assessing mineral and water development potential within his kingdom. The experience with the Eastern Syndicate Concession had raised doubts about oil resources and emphasis was now to be on water and possibly gold. Crane agreed to employ at his own expense an American mining engineer, Karl Twitchell, to survey the Kingdom. Twitchell completed his survey and returned to New York in 1932 whereupon Crane authorized him to make known his results to any interested company. Twitchell's survey still rated oil as the greatest mineral potential of Saudi Arabia. Only one company expressed any interest, Standard Oil of California (Socal). Socal had found oil in neighbouring Bahrain in June 1932; thus, there was some hope of realization of Twitchell's reports.

Twitchell returned to Saudi Arabia with a senior Socal executive and in May 1933 in Jidda, Socal signed a sixty-year oil concession with King Ibn Saud for the variously disputed sum of 35 to 50 thousand gold sovereigns.⁴

In 1930, Texco joined in partnership with Socal in the Saudi venture

to afford the benefit of Texco's worldwide marketing facilities. Together the two companies formed the basis of what would later be known as the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco). They were later joined by Mobil Oil Company and Exxon Oil Company, thus completing the American Consortium membership. Oil was not discovered in quantity until 1938 but that discovery was cause for re-negotiation of the sixty-year concession. Payments were substantially higher and the concession period was extended to 1999.

Just as the concession was being re-negotiated in 1939, competition appeared in the form of a Japanese offer. The Japanese offer had been transmitted by the Italian Minister to Saudi Arabia. At the same time, the German Minister to Iraq who was also accredited to Saudi Arabia called in Jidda to further the drama. Twitchell asserts that the offer was so "fantastic" that Aramco had to admit that, for its part, such terms were not commercially practicable and that Aramco could no match such an offer.⁵ Tempting or not, King Ibn Saud chose to continue dealing with his American friends, thus leaving the Japanese and the Germans empty handed. The United States still had not political interests in Saudi Arabia ... there was no U.S. diplomatic representation accredited to the country at the time ... thus it is felt that this was Ibn Saud's prime consideration. The Japanese and German offers could incur political associations while the Aramco association offered no such liability.

Adhering to his policy of non-involvement, King Ibn Saud steered his Kingdom on a course of neutralism in the rising political storm which was to be World War II. However, in spite of his neutralism, the Kingdom was to suffer from the war. Revenue from the new found life blood of petroleum exports was vastly curtailed as markets assumed the polarity of allied or axis camp. Tankers could no longer venture the long trip between the Arabian Gulf and market and war priorities on strategic materials such as steel curtailed Aramco development. Also, the Kingdom's final, basic source of revenue ... the pilgrimage traffic ... was vastly curtailed by the war. King Ibn Saud was again in dire fiscal straits.

He appealed to Aramco, the United States and Great Britain for assistance. Aramco advanced a loan of three million dollars in 1940.⁶ However, this was only half of what Ibn Saud felt his country needed. With obvious concern for the future of its operation in Saudi Arabia, an Aramco representative, James A. Moffett, met with the Roosevelt administration in April 1941 in an attempt to secure United States aid for the King. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, prepared a memorandum for President Roosevelt relaying Mr. Moffett's concern that "unless King Ibn Saud receives financial assistance at once there is grave danger that the independent Arab kingdom cannot survive the present emergency ..."⁷

Lacking legislative authority for such an action, President

Roosevelt collaborated with Britain to funnel financial assistance to Saudi Arabia by way of funds made available to Britain through American Lend-Lease Assistance.⁸ Thus was established the precedent of United States economic aid to Saudi Arabia.

Exactly ten years after the birth of the relationship in 1933 between the United States and Saudi Arabia by way of an American oil consortium concession, the relationship was to take on more official overtones. In February 1943, President Roosevelt's declaration that "the defence of Saudi Arabia is vital to the defence of the United States" was a catalyst for a chain of events which would make 1943 a year of special significance in the evolution of United States-Saudi Arabian government relations.⁹ The primary reason for the declaration was to enable direct lend-lease aid to Saudi Arabia, thus avoiding the indirect method through Britain which had existed for the past two years. The growing Aramco operation had relayed to U.S. policy makers a perception of U.S. strategic interests in Saudi Arabia. Resultantly, American diplomatic representation in Jidda was raised in rank in July from charge to minister, an agreement was made in December for airfield construction at Dhahran and a U.S. mission arrived in July to determine Saudi Arabian requirements for military assistance.¹⁰

Dhahran air base was to be the initial physical evidence of the United States government's expression of military interests in Saudi

Arabia. Moreover, it represented a significant step in the gradual change in paramount foreign influence in the country from British to American. Located on the eastern coast of Saudi Arabia, Dhahran represented a site for an air base linking Southern Asia with the Western World. It also represented a position of strategic importance in executing the Pacific war effort which was to continue after the war in Europe ended. And as the headquarters for Aramco operations in Saudi Arabia, the location would support allied oil interest in the country. The significance of such a project in diminishing British influence in the area with resultant increase in American influence was not lost to the British, however, for the American minister in Saudi Arabia reported that the British had engaged in "anti-American coercion of the Saudi Government" in an attempt to effect Saudi Arabian rejection of the American project. The British yielded, however, after the U.S. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, protested to the British Government characterizing their opposition as a "reversion to dog-eat-dog policy which, if continued, has possibilities we are not presently able to appraise."¹¹ In late 1943, an agreement was reached between the U.S. Legation in Jidda and the government of Saudi Arabia wherein the U.S. was allowed to construct an air base at Dhahran in exchange for U.S. assistance in training the Saudi military.¹² Negotiations were carried out without public notices in an attempt to avoid discrediting King Ibn Saud's avowed neutrality. Construction began at Dhahran in 1944 and was completed in 1946.

The July 1943 U.S. military mission to Saudi Arabia represented another manifestation of more active pursuit of U.S. interests in the country. Secretary of State Hull ordered the newly appointed minister to Saudi Arabia to inform King Ibn Saud and British representation in Saudi Arabia that Saudi Arabia and the United States would deal, henceforth, directly with each other in matters regarding arms transfers and not through the British as intermediary as had been the custom heretofore. And the United States further informed the British government that the U.S. believed that its contribution to King Ibn Saud's military needs should at least equal that of Great Britain.¹³ The mission was followed in the fall of the same year by a visit to the U.S. by Prince Faisal in negotiations for U.S. arms aid. The February 1944 grant to Saudi Arabia of seven million riyal lend-lease package represented then the culmination of those significant inroads which had been made in 1943.

The war prompted a view of Saudi Arabia as something more than an area wherein U.S. commercial interests were involved. What Aramco had started as a private commercial interest had developed to include both diplomatic and military ties. Thus, it is not surprising that President Roosevelt wished to meet the leader of the tribal kingdom. Indeed, Roosevelt's image of the great King had been sparked many years earlier by people such as Charles Crane, Karl Twitchell and Lowell Thomas, and by the American press.

Roosevelt may have considered Ibn Saud as a fellow man of his time, like himself and Churchill.¹⁴

In February 1945 while returning from Yalta, President Roosevelt met King Ibn Saud aboard the American cruiser U.S.S. Quincy in the Bitter Lakes of Suez.¹⁵ Subsequent to their meeting, Roosevelt sent Ibn Saud a personal letter referring to the "memorable conversation we had not so long ago" and re-stating his promise that there would be no United States action in regard to the question of Palestine "without full consultation of both Arabs and Jews".¹⁶ It was also as a result of the meeting with Ibn Saud that Roosevelt remarked to Congress, "of the problems with Arabia, I learned more about the whole problem, the Arab problem, the Jewish problem, by talking with Ibn Saud for five minutes than I could have learned in exchange of two or three dozen letters".¹⁷

Two months later, Roosevelt was dead and Harry Truman succeeded him. A year later, in 1946, there occurred an open tension between the United States and Saudi Arabia, the root cause of which was to continue as a source of conflict between the two nations, however great and vast their other shared interests. The end of the war brought the question of Palestine and the Jewish refugees to a peak. President Truman made a public appeal for the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine. Obviously offended, Ibn Saud sent President Truman a letter which was made public, recalling President

Roosevelt's promise of no decisions without Arab and Jewish consultation.¹⁸ Within a few months, however, in February 1947, King Ibn Saud and his son, the Heir Apparent Saud, were in the United States visiting President Truman. During the visit, President Truman presented both King Ibn Saud and the Heir Apparent with Legion of Merit commendations for "support and encouragement to the cause of the allies" during World War II.¹⁹

Any appeasement of the Saudis, however, whether intended or not, was rather short-lived. For the United States' de facto recognition of a Jewish State in May 1948 prompted strong reaction from Saudi Arabia. The American Minister to Saudi Arabia, J. Rives Childs, forwarded to the Secretary of State a forecast of a possible Saudi break in relations with the United States. Further, he provided a rather bleak assessment of a situation with so many ominous possibilities that he was requesting the Consulate in Dhahran to confer with U.S. military authorities at Dhahran with a "view to perfecting without delay plans of evacuation ...".²⁰ Although the situation never developed to the extent of Childs' worst fears, Malcolm Peck reports that Faisal, who was then Foreign Minister, told Childs that he would have broken relations with the United States had he been in a position to do so.²¹ The Jewish State issue effected a thorn into the U.S.-Saudi relationship but other policy formulations of the era were to serve to strengthen it.

The Truman doctrine, Marshall Plan, war in Korea, and American and European rearmament were all issues of the era serving to strengthen the evolving United States-Saudi Arabian relationship via oil. The post-World War II oil shortage scare, like that of post-World War I and that of a future era, served to emphasize the importance of Saudi Arabian oil. Oil exports from the United States to Europe decreased after the war, and in 1948 the United States became, for the first time, a net importer of crude oil. Saudi Arabia's rapidly increasing production and proven reserves paralleled the increasing needs of the free world. Saudi Arabian crude production increased from less than one-half million barrels in 1938 to nearly eight million in 1944, over 21 million in 1945, and about 200 million barrels by 1950.²² By 1951, Middle Eastern oil was to supply 80% of the European Economic Recovery plan needs, thus inextricably intertwining U.S. interests in Saudi Arabia via its Atlantic pact allies.²³ It was then in support of these interests that within the era the U.S. Legation in Jidda was expanded to full Embassy status in 1949; the agreement covering the Dhahran air base was renegotiated in 1951, allowing U.S. access for a long-term basis (five years); and concurrently with the Dhahran agreement there evolved a Mutual Defence Assistance Program whereby Saudi Arabia became the first Arab state to be designated, by the United States, as a nation whose ability to defend itself was deemed important to the United States.²⁴

In 1957 there was great American concern over the inroads that the Soviet Union had made into the Middle East after the Suez war. As Lenczowski observed, 1955 was the watershed regarding Soviet relations with the Middle East. For it was in that year that they began rapprochement with non-communist governments in the area by offering economic, technical and military aid.²⁵ As a countermove, President Eisenhower proclaimed, in January 1957, the Eisenhower Doctrine as both a warning to the Soviets and an offer of aid, both economic and military, to any Middle Eastern state which requested it. Within a few weeks, King Saud was in Washington visiting President Eisenhower. This was Saud's first official visit to the U.S. since his father's death in November 1953 and his assumption of the title of King. After the meeting a joint communique was issued wherein Saud spoke of the purpose of his visit "to continue close co-operation with the United States" and Eisenhower spoke, regarding military defence of Saudi Arabia, of his assistance to King Saud of the willingness of the United States to "provide assistance for the strengthening of the Saudi Arabian armed forces".²⁶ King Saud returned to his country with a \$180 million increase in American economic and military aid to expand training programs for the Saudi Arabian Army, Navy and Air Force, and to improve Saudi civil aviation facilities. In return, the U.S. was granted another five-year basing right agreement on the Dhahran air base.²⁷

However, that was to be the last agreement on Dhahran basing rights.

For on March 19th, 1961, the Saudi government announced that the agreement would not be renewed upon its official expiration on April 2nd, 1962. The perception of foreign military forces upon Arabian soil had become too much of a liability relative to both domestic and inter-Arab nationalist sentiment.

In the summer of 1962, King Saud's brother, the Heir Apparent Faisal, came to the United States. Officially, the trip was to undergo medical examinations but there is reason to believe that his exodus was also an expression of dissatisfaction with the state of government in Saudi Arabia. In September 1962, while Faisal was still in the United States, the monarchy in Yemen was overthrown by a military coup d'etat. There followed a civil war between forces loyal to the royalists and those loyal to the cause of the revolution. Within a month, President Nasser had sent Egyptian troops in support of the revolutionary forces. Thus Saudi Arabia now not only faced the fiscal and economic problems of King Saud's regime but the government also faced a crisis situation involving foreign intervention in a border state. Thus in October, Prince Faisal was persuaded to return to the Kingdom with the understanding that he would again be given a free reign in government.

Upon Faisal's resumption of government, President Kennedy sent a personal letter to Faisal dated October 25th, 1962, wherein he recalled their White House discussion of three weeks before and

stated that he wanted it "understood clearly, that Saudi Arabia can depend upon the friendship and co-operation of the United States in dealing with the many tasks which lie before it in the days ahead". Further, President Kennedy assured Faisal of the U.S. support for "maintenance of Saudi Arabia's integrity".²⁸

Shortly thereafter, U.S. resolve in supporting Saudi Arabian territorial integrity was given opportunity for demonstration. In November 1962, Egyptian aircraft bombed Saudi territory adjacent to the border of royalist forces. The United States Department issued a public statement deploring the incidents and making known U.S. "interests in the preservation of [Saudi Arabia] integrity".²⁹ A squadron of United States fighter aircraft was deployed to Saudi Arabia as both a demonstration of U.S. resolve to aid Saudi Arabia and as a deterrent against further Egyptian bombings.

In 1965, there evolved another linkage in the United State-Saudi Arabian relationship which continues today, representing to both countries one of the Corps of Engineers' involvement in developing Saudi Arabia infrastructure which has "no comparable program elsewhere abroad, neither in scope or context".³⁰ The Saudi Arabians admiration of the quality of construction in the Dhahran airfield and terminal which had been turned over to them in 1962 prompted queries of further corps involvement in Saudi Arabian nation-building. Thus in 1965, a country-to-country agreement was

concluded between the U.S. Department of State and Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs whereby the Corps of Engineers would be consultant, planner, administrator and general overseer for military construction within Saudi Arabia. Costs are fully reimbursed by Saudi Arabia. The agreement has been extended three times with the consent of both governments : 1970, 1975 and 1978. As will be seen in a following section, the programme remains one of the most visible, comprehensive and important of linkages in the U.S.-Saudi Arabian relationship.

With the struggle over Saudi Arabian political leadership permanently resolved in 1964, Faisal made his first official visit to the United States as King in June 1966. After visiting President Johnson, a rather non-impressive joint statement was issued wherein both "noted with approval the close and cordial relations which have long existed" between the two countries. However, the lack of any other substantive statements combined with the diplomatic colloquialism referring to "frank and comprehensive exchange of views" may suggest that all was not harmonious accord between these two leaders.³¹

During the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, United States-Saudi Arabian relations again became strained over U.S. policy regarding Israel. King Faisal placed an embargo on oil shipments to the United States although its consequences were far less than a similar action would

be later in 1973. The United States was, in 1967, practically invulnerable to a Saudi Arabian oil embargo. Only 19% of American oil consumption consisted of imports and only 2.5% came from Saudi Arabia. The United States' short-fall was made up through imports from Iran and Venezuela, and utilization of an internal spare production capacity of four million barrels per day.³² Saudi Arabia abandoned their boycott within a month of implementation, thus allowing the incident to pass without significant effect upon the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship.

In May 1971, King Faisal visited President Nixon and in turn President Nixon visited King Faisal in Riyadh in July 1974.

In 1972, Saudi Arabia made a bid for strengthening the relationship. In an address to the Middle East Institute in Washington on September 30th, 1972, Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Yamani, called for "a commercial oil agreement between the two countries that would give Saudi Arabian oil a special place in this United States Country".³³ The proposed agreement would have exempted Saudi Arabian oil from import restrictions and duties, and encouraged Saudi Arabian capital investment in the United States. The United States would have had first call on Saudi Arabian oil, apparently even at the expense of Europe and Japan.

There were inherent advantages for both countries. The United States advantages would have included re-cycling of the growing American dollars being spent for oil imports and interdependency which would have diminished the possibility of interruptions of crude supplies to the country. Saudi Arabian advantages would have included a stable market for its increasing oil production and opportunity for safe, profitable investment interests were mainly in the downstream facilities of oil production such as refineries, chemical plants and possibly even a share in the owners of Aramco-Exxon, Texaco, Mobil and Standard of California. United States' oil imports were being "conservatively estimated to reach 12 mmpbd by 1980" and Saudi Arabia was planning for a production capacity of 20 mmpbd by same time period".³⁴ The two escalating factors would then be mutually supportive.

The motivation for such an offer by Saudi Arabia was felt to be a fear that the United States would, in tackling its energy problems, "enter into arrangements with Western hemisphere producers which would discriminate against Arab countries".³⁵ Saudi Arabia was concerned with a tendency to regard the Middle East as a volatile, basically anti-Western area. She was thus attempting to assure a future place for herself in the world oil market and economy.

However, the proposal never reached a state of development beyond just that ... a proposal. The United States Department of State

officials initially categorized the proposal as "interesting" but there was also speculation that such an agreement would signify "a new relationship with the United States".³⁶ In the end, the complexity and delicacy of such an agreement and the possible effect upon United States oil relations with other countries made the proposal untimely in the United States perspective.

Time moves quickly, however. Just one year later, on September 27th 1973, United States Acting Treasury Secretary William Simon was proposing to the Saudi Arabian Minister of State, Mr. Hisham Nazer, "an economic partnership between the United States and Saudi Arabia to ensure a continuing flow of oil to America".³⁷ Between Yamani's 1972 proposal and the 1973 proposal of the United States Treasury Secretary, the United States had lifted oil import quotas in an effort to meet the country's rising energy demands with cheap Middle Eastern oil. The United States expected its then current imports from Saudi Arabia of 365 mbpd to rise to 8.5 mbpd by 1980.³⁸

However, the atmosphere had changed. Saudi Arabia now questioned whether or not such an arrangement was in its political interests. Political tensions between Israel and the Arab countries were peaking and there was strong feeling by the Arab countries that United States support of Israel was promoting "Zionist expansionism". Thus, in one short year, a drastic change had occurred in member perspectives within the United States-Saudi

Arabian relationship. The United States was seeking a stronger linkage and Saudi Arabia was avoiding one. We now know that Egyptian President Sadat had visited King Faisal in August 1973. Saudi Arabia probably knew in September then that pending some drastic development, the line of another Arab-Israeli war would soon be drawn.³⁹

B Post - 1973

In 1973 there began a series of events which were to prompt an eventual transformation of the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship ... a transformation wherein the dependent member became less of a dependent and the independent became less of an independent.

As has been seen earlier, Saudi Arabia had always been unhappy with the United States policy toward Israel. Much of that first contact between FDR and Ibn Saud had been taken up with the subject of Palestine. And Truman and Ibn Saud also had public disagreement over the matter.⁴⁰ In 1973, however, the objections were much more specific. The Israeli occupation of Arab territories since the 1967 war and the Palestinian problem were points foremost in the Arab mind.

King Faisal was becoming increasingly frustrated by American support

of what he felt to be Israeli expansionist policies. As a leader in the world Islamic movement, he was equally concerned about the question of Jerusalem and frequently expressed a desire to pray in Aqsa Mosque as part of Arab Jerusalem. It must be remembered that his thoughts here were concerned not only with his role as a leader of World Islam but also his role as King of the Hejaz and thus protector of the holy cities ... one of which is Jerusalem.

Faisal worked diligently after July 1972 in an attempt to convince the Nixon administration to make its Middle East policy more "even handed". For it was in this month that Egypt expelled her Soviet advisers. Thus Faisal argued, U.S. support for Israel could no longer be justified by pointing out the Soviet influence in Egypt. By mid-1973, however, there had been no change in U.S. policy.

In April 1973, Faisal sent Mr. Yamani, the Saudi Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, to Washington expressly to urge the Nixon administration to work for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories. There was no favourable United States response.⁴¹ Having thus been frustrated in every attempt to date in changing U.S. policy, Faisal turned to that which he had avoided heretofore ... the oil weapon. Faisal had long advocated that [oil and politics should be kept separate] but now he began hints that the two elements could be mixed.

In May 1973, at a meeting with the chief executives of Aramco, King Faisal warned that unless there was a shift in unqualified U.S. support of Israel, the "traditional friendship for American business interest ... in Saudi Arabia will not be preserved". He added further that he expected Aramco to use its influence to help make that change come about.⁴²

In response, Aramco effected a broad campaign to influence American foreign policy toward the Middle East. Aramco representatives relayed their fears to the Nixon administration but the response was summed up by Aramco in this way :

The general atmosphere was attentiveness to the message and acknowledgement that a problem did exist but a large degree of disbelief that any drastic action was imminent or that any measure other than those already underway were needed to prevent such from beginning. The impression was given that some believe HM [His Majesty King Faisal] is crying wolf when no wolf exists.⁴³

U.S. military officials and congressional delegations visiting Saudi Arabia were briefed by Aramco that whereas it was in America's interests that Saudi Arabia continue its high levels of production, such levels were not necessarily always in the best interests of the Saudis. Thus, the U.S. should avoid any polarity which would

alienate Saudi opinion by "adopting a neutral position on the Arab-Israeli dispute and a pro-American rather than a pro-Israeli policy in the Middle East".⁴⁴ The individual Aramco partners also approached the American public. The New York Times carried a Mobil advertisement which stated that "the United States must recognise the legitimate interests and aspirations of the Saudis ... because in the last analysis we need the oil more than Saudi Arabia will need the money".⁴⁵ Malcolm Peck reports that there were two basic American responses.⁴⁶ One group led by Secretary of State William Rogers and George Schultz felt that the Saudis were bluffing while another was inclined to take the threat seriously but saw no response feasible without upsetting Israeli and United States domestic politics. Thus, faced with the dilemma of any response upsetting one of the two opposing factions ... Israel or Saudi Arabia ... the Nixon administration withheld any response.

Faisal was undoubtedly informed of the Aramco efforts; however, their sincere and enthusiastic efforts as much as his own to date were unsuccessful. Thus, when the Egyptian President Sadat visited Riyadh in August 1973 to relay his war plans, Faisal made a decision. Saudi Arabia was able to use the oil weapon. Faisal told Sadat : "Give us time, we do not want to use the oil as a weapon in a battle which goes on for two or three days and then stops. We want to see a battle which goes on long enough for the world opinion to be mobilized".⁴⁷

On October 6th, Egyptian forces crossed the Suez Canal and penetrated the Israelis' Bar-Bav Line, thus, beginning the war which no official U.S. government consensus had expected. Israel suffered unexpected military reverses and war material was being rapidly depleted, that prompting the possibility of re-supply from the United States. On October 12th, the four executive officers of Aramco sent a message to Washington urging the Nixon administration not to re-supply Israel with arms. They stressed "more than our commercial interests in the area are now at hazard" in that Japanese and Western European reliance on Middle East oil was so deep that they would in no way jeopardize their own positions. Thus, should the United States jeopardize its own positions it may result in "Japanese, European and perhaps Soviet Union interest largely supporting United States presence in the [Middle East] area ...".⁴⁸

However, U.S. re-supply of Israel may have already begun, for U.S. Secretary of State Kissinger reportedly told the Israeli Ambassador to the United States on October 8th that Israeli El Al aircraft could begin picking up supplies the following day provided their Israeli markings were obliterated.⁴⁹ On October 13th, however, all attempts at being discreet about re-supply were abandoned when the United States administration committed itself to open re-supply of Israel by launching U.S. Air Force giant C-5 transport aircraft. On October 14th, the first C-5 arrived in Israel initiating an airbridge capable of one thousand tons per day.⁵⁰

On October 19th, President Nixon asked the U.S. Congress to approve \$2.2 billion in emergency aid to Israel. On October 20th, the Saudi government announced that "in view of an increase in American military aid to Israel, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has decided to halt all exports to the United States of America ..."⁵¹ while a cease fire was declared on October 22nd, the embargo was not lifted until March 19th, 1974.⁵²

The United States had suffered both economically and strategically from the embargo. During the embargo, Saudi Arabia threatened to nationalize Aramco at "gunpoint" if the consortium had sought to circumvent the embargo and Aramco, realizing that the United States could not intervene, complied fully.⁵³ The embargo was so effective that the United States could not get Aramco oil through third party distributors. However, the four American parent companies and three other of the "seven sisters" pooled their worldwide resources to mitigate the effects of the embargo.⁵⁴ Non-Arab wellhead production was increased and the oil companies allocated production as equitably as possible, thus keeping shortages in any individual country to a minimum. However, to a degree Aramco's forecast came true. For in re-supplying Israel by airlift, the United States was denied landing rights by all NATO nations excepting Holland and Portugal.⁵⁵ Thus, the NATO nations had chosen uninterrupted Arab oil flow over allied friendship.

While there is wide variance in subjective evaluation of the overall effect of the embargo, there is little doubt that it made a point. Saudi Arabia was no longer a silent, dependent partner in the "special relationship". It could no longer be taken for granted. Politics and economics had propelled Saudi Arabia to a position of preeminence in the world. The oil price had increased to \$22.6 billion in 1974 and the gross domestic product increased by over 200% in a year.

Her possession of vast oil reserves enabled her political influence to spread throughout the world.⁵⁶

The point had undoubtedly been made with the Nixon administration just as it had with the world. For afterwards there was intense international scrambling by individual countries to attempt to make deals and establish institutional structures to forestall such an occurrence again. President Nixon, President Ford and Mr. Kissinger worked both aspects ... that of the interests of the international community and that of the interests of the United States.

In November 1973, President Nixon announced Project Independence, an ambitious, elusive plan for U.S. energy independence by 1980. In September 1974 in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly, President Ford spoke of global economic interdependence and co-operating as the only viable future approach if human survival was

to be guaranteed.⁵⁷ Likewise in November 1974, Secretary of State Kissinger, speaking in Chicago, called for oil-consuming nations to conserve, search for alternative energy sources and co-operate.⁵⁸ In September 1974, as a result of U.S. initiative, the major oil-importing countries concluded the Brussels agreement establishing the International Energy Agency (IEA) wherein emergency oil sharing agreement members would share oil with any member nation boycotted in the future.⁵⁹ And finally, the most important outcome for this study occurred as a result in part of bilateral discussions between U.S. Secretary of State Kissinger and Saudi Arabia Heir Apparent Prince Faud.

On June 8th, 1974, as a result of Secretary Kissinger and Prince Faud's discussions, there evolved the United State-Saudi Arabian Joint Commissions on Economic and Security Co-operation. Through these commissions the governments "expressed their readiness to expand co-operation in the fields of economic, technology, and industry, and in the supply of the Kingdom's requirements for defensive purposes".⁶⁰ These two commissions are formal organizational structures which, while acknowledging interdependence between the United States and Saudi Arabia in the fields of economics and security, provide facilities for advancement of that interdependence to the mutual benefit of both countries. The United States receives for its part, in addition to oil, a Saudi interest in the vitality of the economies of the Western World while

the Saudis receive, for their part, technological goods and services to further their internal development and defence.

The U.S. Secretary of the Treasury and his Saudi counterpart, the Minister of Finance and Economy, serve as co-chairmen of the economic commission while the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security Affairs and the Saudi Vice Minister of Defence serve as co-chairmen of the Security Commission.

The first and most significant accomplishment of the Joint Commission on Security was a survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Defence, carried out at Saudi Arabian request, on the Kingdom's defence needs for the next ten years. Resulting from that survey, there evolved a long-range plan of order and priority for upgrading and modernization of the Kingdom's defence structure. The plan was the most significant and encompassing effort to date within the kingdom. It recognized the disparity between \$1.5 trillion in resources (valued at 1976 prices) in a terrain as vast as the area of the United States east of the Mississippi and limited defence potential. The plan calls for maximization of the defence potential through mobility and superior technological effectiveness.

II Current State of Relationship

From all that has gone on before one can see that there is now a special relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia. That relationship is partly a process of evolutionary events which started nearly a half-century ago and partly as a result of events which have occurred within the last decade. The two nations have reached a significant level of interdependence wherein there are vested national interests each in the other.

From the United States perspective there is interdependence with Saudi Arabia in areas of : U.S. balance of payments; stability of the dollar as the primary, singular world currency; rate of world economic development; promotion of U.S. interests in the Arabian Gulf region; promotion of U.S. interests in the Middle East region; promotion of U.S. interests in the Islamic world; and assistance in the U.S. objective of an overall Arab-Israeli solution.

Similarly, from a Saudi Arabia perspective there is interdependence with the United States in Saudi Arabian internal and external political stability; internal development and modernization; financial investment; petroleum markets; and national security.

That which is perceived as national interest can be very much a value judgement; thus there is room for wide interpretation. But in

this chapter, I tried to minimize value judgement and emphasize those national interests which are evidenced by substance such as espoused and enacted foreign policy, organizational structures, commercial transaction, alliances, treaties and associations.

This chapter then details the current national interests which sustain the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship. That which has occurred in the past has been combined with current evidence of substance, under the limitations previously cited, to conclude that there are five broad categories of national interests between the two countries. They are : (1) geostrategic; (2) political; (3) military; (4) economic and (5) oil. It will be evident that the interests are not always mutually shared to the same degree and in some cases may be one-sided. However, the five categories basically cover the most substantive sustenance of the "special relationship".

A Geostrategic Interests

A former United States Ambassador to the Middle East has noted that the very term "Middle East" does not refer to characteristics internal to the area, but arose out of the "relations to forces which lie beyond its borders, to external centres of power".¹ His explanation of the term's origin well describes the geostrategic importance of the region relative to global security and the international order. While the Middle East is the global

geostrategic focal point, Saudi Arabia is the regional geostrategic focal point.

The Arabian Peninsula occupies a position of geostrategic prominence in regard to : the Middle East; the Arabian Gulf*; the Red Sea and Horn of Africa; several strategic waterways; and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Comprising four-fifths of the peninsula, Saudi Arabia is without question the dominant power on the peninsula whether measured in land area, wealth, or (excepting North Yemen) population.

The Middle East is located at the junction of three continents and thus forms a strategic crossroad : a land, air and sea bridge joining Asia, Africa and Europe. Saudi Arabia dominates that junction both as geographic centre and as the largest single land mass within the juncture. Closing or restricting access to those bridges would have considerable adverse effect upon both the United States and the free world as a whole.

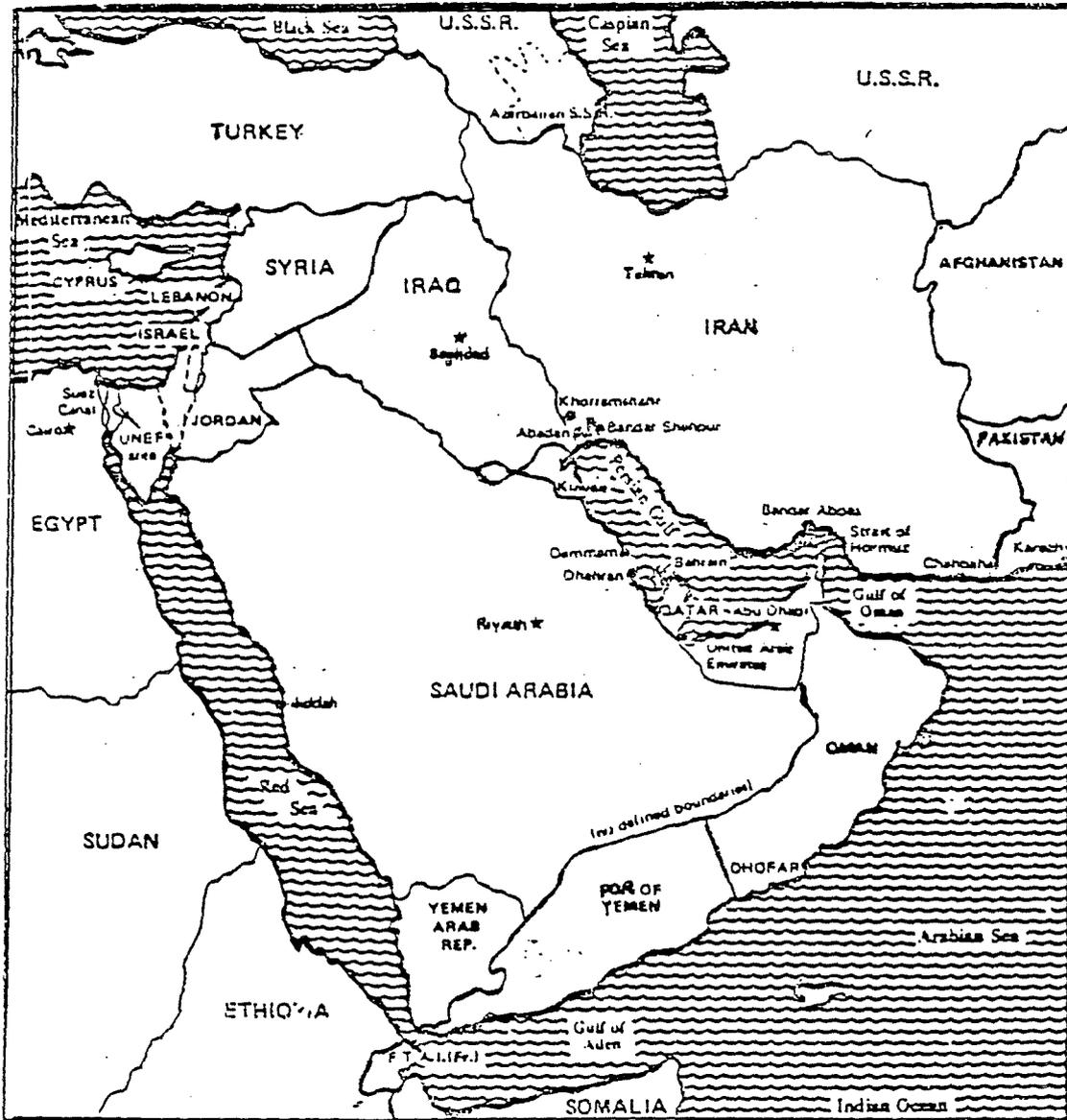
The Arabian Gulf represents a major source of energy for the United States and, even more, for its European and Japanese allies. Saudi Arabia commands the western shore of the Gulf. To the west, Saudi Arabia commands the eastern shore of the Red Sea and the eastern approaches to the Horn of Africa. A significant portion of Europe's oil traverses the Red Sea, a much shorter route than going around

the African Cape. The Red Sea route also provides oil for the United States Mediterranean fleet.

Saudi Arabia commands the eastern shore of the Straits of Turan ... Israel's only southern sea access. Egypt's closure of the Straits in 1967 was one precipitant of the Arab-Israeli war in 1967.

Although Saudi Arabia is not immediately adjacent to three other strategic waterways, its close proximity is of strategic importance. They are the Straits of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. Over half of the free World's oil imports, two-thirds of European oil imports and nearly three-quarters of Japan's oil imports traverse the Straits of Hormuz. Of direct concern to the United States is the fact that nearly 15% of the petroleum consumed in the United States in 1979 ... 31% of imports ... traversed the Straits. Looking at U.S. allies, over 50% of western Europe's petroleum consumption and 70% of Japan's Petroleum consumption traversed the Straits.² And last but certainly not least, virtually all of Saudi Arabia's export production traverses the Straits.³

Geostrategic Importance of Saudi Arabia



Source : Robert G. Irani, "U.S. Strategic Interest in Iran and Saudi Arabia", Parameters Vol. 1. VII, No. 4, 1977, p. 253.

The Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb, like the Suez canal, serves as a passageway for substantial shipping traffic between the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean. Additionally, it serves as a route of approach for sea cargo destined for the Saudi Port of Jidda, Jordan's Port of Aqaba, Israel's Port of Elat and various other Egyptian, Sudanese and Ethiopian ports. Like the Suez Canal and the Strait of Turan, Bab-el-Mandeb plays a potentially significant role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Each is bounded on both sides by Arab or Arabic speaking countries and serves as the only passageway for the Israeli Port of Elat. Ship passage through Bab-el-Mandeb in the mid-1970's averaged seventy ships per day.⁴

B Political Interests

There is strong mutuality of national political interests between the United States and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia represents to the United States a Prominente within three spheres ... Arab, Islamic and Third World nations ... each of which the United States is vitally concerned with. Moreover, each of these three spheres plays an ever-increasing role of importance in a world of rising multipolarity and interdependence.

To Saudi Arabia, the United States represents the arch-defender in a world still possessing vestiges of bi-polarity. The ideology of communism is abhorred by the Saudi Arabians, for its atheism, its revolutionary basis and its socialism. Thus, the United States represents the alternative force of strength, that which has the capability of ultimate opposition to that which the Saudi Arabians abhor.

While Saudi Arabia began to exercise international intercourse to a degree after World War II, the era of King Faisal is perhaps a better point in history to mark as the turn from semi-isolationism to active intercessor. Saudi Arabia was a founding member of the Arab League in 1945 and attempted to commit troops in the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. But the troops never made it to the front because of transportation problems and the "Arab Cold War" which

ensued after the Free Officers' Coup in Egypt in 1952 forestalled any widespread success for the Arab League.⁵ Under Faisal's leadership, the country seemed to have fully visualized the linkage between internal security and external affairs. To this day, foreign policy is very much motivated by the perception of how internal security will be affected by external affairs.⁶

The psychological successes of the oil boycott of 1973-1974 and the vast surpluses resulting from the price increases propelled Saudi Arabia from a mere regional role to a political actor role of international consequence. Saudi Arabia was then sought after as an international market, a financier of both regional and international significance, a mediator of disputes, a source of energy and for a voice of moderation within OPEC pricing policy. Thus, the role of regional actor which was effected late in 1967 was now expanded to include the Islamic World, Third World and industrialized nations.

The role played by Saudi Arabia within the World of Islam and Third World nations is very much like that played as a regional leader. The Saudi Arabians' great influence within the Islamic World is prompted by the combined historical facts of cultural heritage, possession of Islam's holiest shrines and financial utility. The Saudi Arabian's Wahhabi School of Islamic Jurisprudence represents perhaps the most orthodox within Islam. The responsibility entrusted by possession of the holy places is one which the Saudi

Arabians have met with full resource. The transformation of the annual pilgrimage in less than fifty years from an arduous journey involving banditry and exploitation occurred primarily because of the policy and effort of the Saudi Arabian government.⁷

Financial resources provide a method of leveraging within each of the spheres in which Saudi Arabia plays a role plus opening opportunities outside the spheres. Aid, both grant and loan, is given most heavily to members of the Arab and Islamic spheres with the former receiving the predominant portion. According to the Financial Times of London, \$1.55 billion was disbursed in 1977, \$3.6 billion in 1976, \$3.87 billion in 1975, and \$2.37 billion in 1974.⁸ In 1978, Saudi Arabia spent about 2.32% of gross national product (GNP) on foreign aid, compared with 4.3% the year before. This is a significant drop but 2.32% is still far ahead of industrial countries lending in percentage terms. If aid performance were measured as a proportion of a country's fixed assets, then Saudi Arabia would be still further ahead. Armed with such figures, Saudi Arabia can exercise significant political leverage within its spheres of influence.⁹ Table I shows the relative priority of Saudi Arabian aid.

Big Saudi Arabian aid recipients other than the Arab confrontation states include Sudan, a friendly government just across the Red Sea; North Yemen, a buffer against Marxist South Yemen; and Pakistan,

where moves toward a more rigid Islamic law are viewed with favour. Non-Arab Africa and Asia have also received Saudi Arabian aid but emphasis remains strongly with Arab countries. The Saudi government increased the grant element of its foreign loans from 45% of loans in 1976 to 51% in 1977 and 57% in 1978. Three-quarters of those new grants committed in 1978 were to Arab countries. In addition to these OECD publicized grants, there are more discreet, direct government-to-government grants between Saudi Arabia and "Israeli confrontation" states such as Jordan and Syria.¹⁰

Table I

Saudi Arabian Foreign Aid in 1975 and 1976

Recipients	1975	% of Total	1976	% of Total
Afghanistan ^b	18.3	1.0	7.8	0.4
Bahrain ^a	1.7	0.1	100.0	4.8
Comeroon ^c	17.4	1.0	-	-
Chad ^{abc}	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.005
Comoro Islands	-	-	2.1	0.1
Congo ^c	-	-	4.1	0.2
Egypt ^a	948.9	53.3	496.8	24.0
Ethiopia ^{bc}	1.0	0.1	-	-
Gabon ^c	10.4	0.6	-	-
Guinea ^{bc}	-	-	0.2	0.01
Indonesia	-	-	6.9	0.3
Jordan ^a	49.3	2.8	165.0	8.0
Mali ^{bc}	16.0	6.9	-	-
Mauritania ^{ac}	-	-	94.1	4.5
Morocco ^{ac}	25.0	2.0	-	-
Niger ^{bc}	13.2	0.7	2.1	0.1
Oman ^{ab}	100.0	4.6	-	-
Pakistan	74.8	4.2	514.8	24.8
Rwanda ^{bc}	5.0	0.3	-	-
Senegal ^c	-	-	5.0	0.2
Somalia ^{abc}	17.2	1.0	22.8	1.2
Syria ^a	242.2	13.6	189.8	9.1
Thailand	-	-	75.6	3.6
Toga ^c	2.0	0.1	1.1	0.05
Tunisia ^{ac}	19.5	1.1	-	-
Turkey ^{bc}	10.0	0.6	-	-
Uganda ^{bc}	5.3	0.3	0.1	0.005
Yemen (North) ^{ab}	94.8	5.3	121.8	5.9
Yemen (PDRY) ^{ab}	-	-	100.0	4.8
Total	1,780.0		2,073.7	
Arab States	1,603.9	90.5	1,453.8	70.1
Islamic States	1,603.9	99.5	1,990.8	96.0
Least Developed States	269.2	15.1	418.4	20.2
African States	1,187.5	66.9	789.9	38.2
Non-Arab African States	70.6	4.0	12.7	0.6
Afghanistan, India				
Pakistan & bangladesh	93.1	5.2	522.8	25.2

Islamic States shown in italic ^aArab State ^bLeast developed ^cAfrica State
 Source : Arabia and the Gulf, 24th July 1978

Dawisha, Saudi Arabia's Search for Security, (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1979), p.18.

Saudi Arabia also stands as a supporter of Third World developing nations by acting as a chief proponent for North-South dialogue and establishing special petrodollar recycling funds for the Third World oil importers.

And lastly but certainly not least, two recent examples have shown Saudi Arabia's international influence even outside these spheres of special affinity. Canada reversed a decision to re-locate its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem after being reminded of national economic interests in Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom issued a diplomatic apology when its national media carried a controversial film on Saudi Arabia (Death of a Princess).

Saudi Arabia also represents to the United States a vital transducer of sorts within the overall goal of Arab-Israeli conflict resolution. Herein lies the area in which the two nations' interests are askew. Both seek the same ultimate objective ... resolution of the conflict ... but each nation sees a different path to the ultimate goal. The United States represents the chief financier of the State of Israel while Saudi Arabia is a leading financier of the Palestinians.¹¹ This divergence of national interests has existed from the earliest period of formal diplomatic relations between the two nations and has been overcome only by the moderation and conservatism of the two. It should be pointed out, however, that the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship is older

than the United States-Israeli relationship.

As previously mentioned, ultimately the United States represents to Saudi Arabia the arch-defender against communism, the leading world advocate of the status quo and the largest free-world power within the vestiges of a bi-polar world. However, in more immediate interests, the United States represents to Saudi Arabia the prime leverage, short of hostilities, toward "Israeli intransigence in zionist expansionist policy". A former American Ambassador to Saudi Arabia reports that King Faisal saw specific linkages between zionism and communism. Although committed to American friendship, Faisal believed that United States support of Israel "opened up the entire Muslim world to Soviet penetration" and that such support was "an aberration" for America's more important interests "ally in the Arab and Muslim world, not in Israel ...".¹² There is little reason to think that present Saudi Arabian views differ.

Thus, while seeking continued interests in the United States, the Saudi Arabians can become exasperated by United States' policy toward Israel. This gives rise to a faction of opposition within Saudi Arabia very much opposed to current policy regarding United States friendship and Soviet rejection. Like that faction of opposition regarding oil policy (and likely the same faction), this group suggests that Saudi Arabian political alignment with the United States is more to the country's detriment than good. While

many signals have occasionally been lit that Saudi Arabia may move toward a more conciliatory status with the Soviet Union, none have been fulfilled to date.¹³

Thus, the most direct political interest that Saudi Arabia has in the United States is inherent with problems. For while most Saudi Arabians probably view the United States as a primary stimulus upon Middle East regional security and tranquillity, the effect of the stimulus is viewed in differing ways. Some may see the United States as a required actor in any type of settlement while others may see United States policy as the primary stimulus of regional turmoil. Like the United States, Saudi Arabian foreign policy must be considerate of domestic perceptions/politics.

c Military Interests

There exists within the military field a mutuality of national interests also. Saudi Arabia has always been dependent to a certain degree upon external sources for military security, assistance and Western governments, the United States paramount among them, have been amenable in providing that assistance. For each has viewed the security of Saudi Arabia as within their own national interests. But like the relationship as a whole, the events of 1973-74 have heightened the area of military interests in both intensity of interest and scope of complexity.

The British withdrawal from east of Suez, the Arab-Israeli war of October 1973 and increased world oil demand were each events of the era which served to propel the area of military interests to a scale of greater intensity and complexity. The British withdrawal represented the departure of a powerful overseer, leaving a sense of vulnerability in the Arabian Gulf* region and, indeed, in the Western World. The vulnerability was further heightened by the vast appreciation of the area's oil resources within a world perceiving oil shortages. There resulted thereafter a vast effort within the area, aided and even prompted in large part by the Western World, to increase inherent military capability. The U.S.A. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency cites the total value of military deliveries to the Middle East as increasing from \$4.6 billion in the period 1970-

72 to \$10.6 billion in the succeeding three years. Oil-exporting countries such as Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia were particularly active in developing military capability with their new-found revenues.

Saudi Arabia still faces problems which severely limit its self-defence capability in spite of its vastly increased financial capability to acquire the best in military training and equipment. These problems, which are not likely to change significantly over the next decade, are :

- (1) A large geographical area to defend ... as large as the United States east of the Mississippi River ... with an extended coastline ... over 2,000 miles along the Red Sea and Arabian Gulf.
- (2) A severely limited population base ... estimated at five million ... from which to draw military manpower.
- (3) An untested and hence unproven military capability outside the realm of small border disputes.

At first glance, a large geographical area suggests an advantage of being able to trade space for time. But such an attribute combined with a sparse population makes defence of the entire geography

nearly impossible. The most coveted target for an enemy of Saudi Arabia would most likely be the oil industry which is vulnerably concentrated within a small area along the Arabian Gulf Coast. The destruction or capture of the oil industry would mean the demise of Saudi Arabia as a regional power of any consequence.¹⁴ Saudi Arabia's security problem of geography is, therefore, dramatic.

Manpower problems are no less severe. Saudi Arabian armed forces, like U.S. forces, are all volunteer. The rapidly expanding private sector within Saudi Arabia has offered competition, within an already limited market, for manpower. It has thus become increasingly difficult for the armed forces to meet manpower requirements. The Saudi Arabian government has for quite some time considered instituting a draft to remedy the situation but, to date, has not offered up any final decision.¹⁵ Thus, as a sort of substitute for manpower, the Saudi Arabians are concentrating upon highly effective, mobile military defence hardware. Emphasis is on manpower effectiveness.

The Saudi Arabian military capability is largely untested. While it is true that King Ibn Saud's unification of the Kingdom in the early part of the century was due in large part to his military might, it was the last significant test of military effectiveness. The basis of Saudi Arabian military structure since becoming a nation has been defence strategy. Ability beyond that strategy has

thus been weak to non-existent. Support units were contributed to the Palestine War of 1948 and the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973, but these actions were more symbolic than substantive. In two other cases, Saudi Arabian troops have been rallied in defensive displays of strength ... 1957 in Amman in a show of support for King Hussein against Syrian threats and a 1961 massing on the Yemen border in a show of support for royalist forces in Yemen. But, even one of these, the Yemen case, required a deployment of United States fighters to Saudi Arabia in support of the country's territorial integrity.¹⁶

The country's financial resources now enable it to acquire the latest in defensive technology but there is some question as to whether or not Saudi Arabia's technology absorptive capacity is equal to its financial capacity. The past and present social, economic, and cultural isolation from the rest of the world exceeds that of any other regional state excepting Yemen and Oman. Thus, financial ability does not necessarily include the ability to rapidly absorb the human ability to operate them. A 1977 General Accounting Office Study, while supportive of arms sales to Saudi Arabia as within the U.S. national interest, was critical of the fact that there had been no assessment of Saudi Arabian self-sufficiency in operating and maintaining its arms.¹⁷

For all the reasons cited above and shown quantitatively in Table

II, Saudi Arabian military strength falls far short of representing any regional military power. Those powers which Saudi Arabia regards as threats include Israel, Iran, Iraq and the Yemens. Israel has made repeated suggestions that whereas Saudi Arabia was excluded from active confrontations in past Arab-Israeli wars, any future Israeli war strategy would have to include consideration of the Saudi Arabian F-15's and the oil weapon. Such suggestions, along with Israel's historical reliance upon pre-emptive strike strategy, are sufficient grounds for regarding Israel as a possible adversary in active conflict.¹⁸

Iran and Saudi Arabia represented ... until the fall of the Shah ... the supposed "twin pillars" of Gulf security. However, it was a wary, imbalanced partnership. There were social, cultural, economic and military differences which could never be reconciled. Moreover, Iran's seizure in 1971 of the Gulf islands Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tumbs raised grave questions in Arab minds as to what purpose Iranian power was destined. The present transition in Iran has weakened the military power but such weakening may only be a momentary product of the transition. Regardless, the social, cultural and economic differences remain. Although the Saudi Arabians do not espouse it publicly, there is little doubt that they regard Khomeini Shiism as a threat equal to any that existed under Iranian monarchical rule.

Table II

	<u>Armed Forces</u>	<u>Battle Tanks</u>	<u>Combat Aircraft</u>	<u>Naval Vessels</u>
Saudi Arabia	44,500	550	217	134
Israel	400,000	3050	576	63
Iran	415,000	1985	447	40
Iraq	222,000	1900	339	49
Kuwait	11,100	280	50	31
Yemen Arab Republic (North)	36,600	232	11	10
People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South)	22,800	260	109	16
UAE	25,150	30	52	9

Source : The Military Balance, 1979-1980 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Note : Iran's figures are pre-revolution. Current manpower and serviceability are questionable.

Iraq has, since its 1958 revolution, represented a leftist, revolutionary oriented regime which, on occasion, has been identified with activity to undermine Saudi Arabian security. Moreover, its communist contacts and Soviet supplied military have caused apprehensive concern within Saudi Arabia. Revolution in Iran and a perception of common danger have now caused Saudi Arabia and Iraq to seek discreet mutual ties. However, the collaboration is most likely much like that of the "twin pillar" scheme under monarchical Iran ... a wary association full of apprehension regarding the imbalance in military power and the contrasting doctrines of Baathism versus traditionalism.

A consolidated North and South Yemen has long been a prospect outside Saudi Arabia's interests. With perennial border conflict between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen, a consolidated Yemen would represent a potential power of consequence. Moreover, with a marxist government and communist-supplied military in South Yemen, the threat takes on a double-edge.¹⁹ Saudi Arabia has long sought to influence both countries through aid and to aid North Yemen in any military conflict with South Yemen. Results, however, have been more momentary than representative of any long-term realignment.²⁰

While the discussion heretofore has dealt with external security, there is another aspect which must be mentioned and that is internal security. For it is undoubtedly a common interest of both the

United States and the Saudi Arabian government that there not be any radical reversal of the status which presently exists therein.

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger summarized this United States interest in a London speech by saying that the fall of the House of Saud would represent a "major blow to Western interests in the Arabian Gulf region".²¹

The threats to Saudi Arabian internal security are numerous. A vast expatriate labour force comprising every nationality and degree of fervour and emotion from American through Palestinian to Yemeni is one; some estimate their numbers comprise to as much as 16 to 40% of the native Saudi population. A religious duty to maintain an open-door policy for two million annual pilgrims is another; many stay over in the country after completing the pilgrimage and their political leanings may prompt all sorts of problems from Khomein Shiism to Iranians and Iraqis trying to simultaneously complete the pilgrimage while their two countries conduct war against each other. Another possible threat to internal security is the view taken by many Muslims of conflict between Islam and all the vestiges of modernism; the Kingdom's interest manifestation of this threat occurred at Mecca during the 1979 pilgrimage. Add to each of these the vulnerability of the Kingdom's oil facilities to sabotage and disruption, and one will see the importance of internal security within the Kingdom.

Saudi Arabian interests in the United States, therefore, lie in the area of U.S. assistance in closing the gap between military security requirements and military security capability. Such assistance can be in the form of weapons transfers, advising, administering, training, manpower assistance and ultimately ... support by U.S. military forces. Alfred L. Netherton, U.S. Department of State Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs, confirmed the United States' involvement in that interest in 1977 testimony before Congress. He described arms sales to Saudi Arabia as reflecting "U.S. interests in the security of Saudi Arabia affirmed by every President since FDR ... current [arms sales] policy seeks to maintain the continuity of this relationship ...".²² The relationship was maintained by \$4.5 billion in arms sales in 1978, \$6.0 billion in 1979 and a projected \$5.7 billion in 1980.²³ These arms sales are administered by an in-country U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group which, in 1978, was exceeded in size only by those in Iran and South Korea.²⁴ The total U.S. personnel commitment to Saudi Arabia of 27,300 is made up of 700 diplomatic personnel, 2,600 Department of Defence personnel and 24,000 private American citizens, each category including dependants.²⁵ While many of the private U.S. citizens are under contract to private commercial interests, a significant number are involved in privately contracted defence technological support and training. The Northrop Corporation F-5 aircraft program and the Vinnell Corporation's involvement in training of the National Guard are two current

examples. Assimilation of the recently purchased F-15 fighter aircraft will be a future demand for manpower assistance.

U.S. Corps of Engineers involvement in security assistance to Saudi Arabia represents both a unique and highly successful aspect of the programme of U.S. assistance. There are 1450 U.S. government employees devoted full-time to fulfilment of the Corps programme in Saudi Arabia, 950 within the Kingdom (plus 1200 dependants) and the remainder in the U.S. In administering a program estimated at \$20-25 billion in the next ten years, the Corps' success has prompted enquiries from close political associates of Saudi Arabia (Yemen, Sudan and Oman) as to the possibility of acquiring similar aid. The key probably lies in whether or nor the Saudi Arabians would be willing to finance such programmes.²⁶

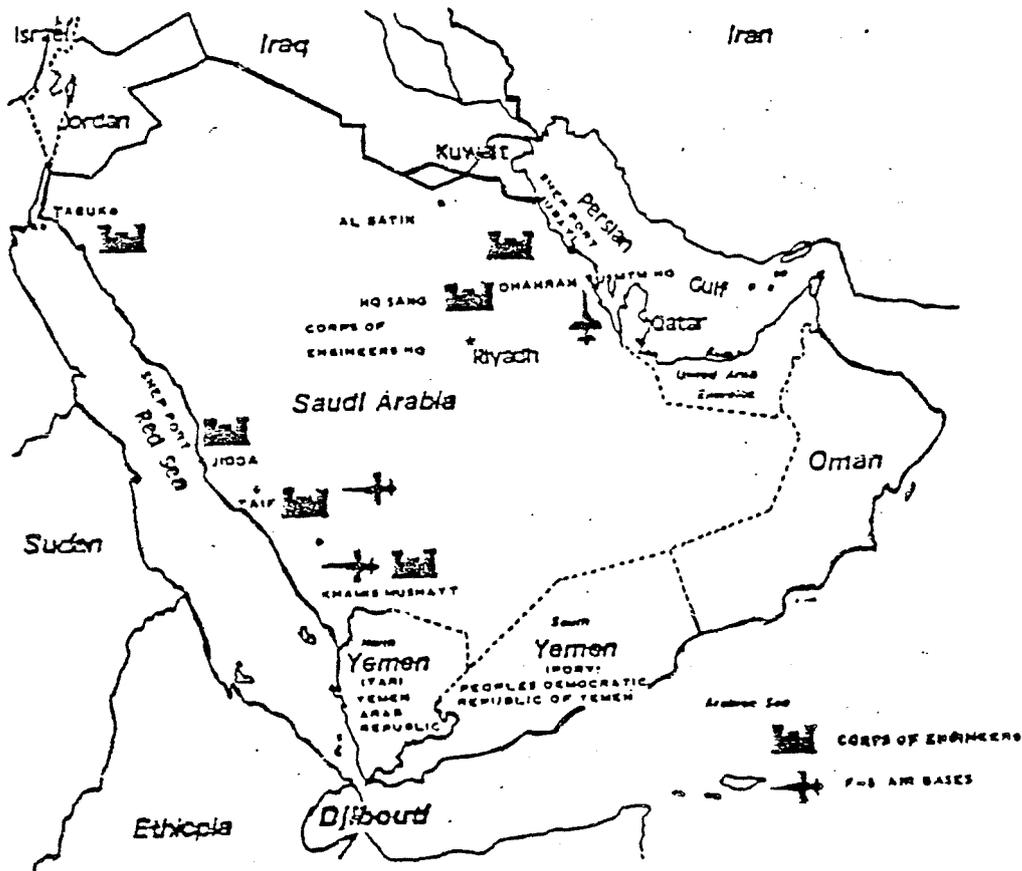
The ultimate Saudi Arabian military interest in the United States of defence by U.S. military forces has been evidenced on several occasions, both in an earlier period of the relationship and more recently. It has already been mentioned how U.S. fighter aircraft were deployed to Saudi Arabia in 1962 in demonstration of United States' support of Saudi Arabian territorial integrity.²⁷ Similar acts were taken in 1979 and 1980. In January 1979, a unit of United States F-15's was deployed to Saudi Arabia in the wake of the Iranian crisis; in March of the same year, two airborne warning and control (AWAC) aircraft were deployed to Saudi Arabia during a South

Yemeni threat against North Yemen; and in fall 1980, four AWAC's were deployed to Saudi Arabia during the Iraq-Iran war. While each act was publicized as "unarmed aircraft", it was a clear message of United States commitment to Saudi Arabian security.²⁸

Unlike Saudi Arabian military interests in the United States, United States military interests in Saudi Arabia are not so formally structured or evidenced. To be sure, the United States would welcome U.S. basing rights in Saudi Arabia along with some form of defence alliance.

Figure

U.S. Corps of Engineers Locations in Saudi Arabia



Source : U.S. Comptroller General, General Accounting Office, Perspectives on Military Sales to Saudi Arabia, A Report to Congress, October 27th, 1977, p.v.

The former justification for basing rights in Dhahran would now have to be modernized only slightly to accommodate the so called Carter "Doctrine" for protection of vital U.S. interests in the Arabian Gulf*. But the same forces which caused Saudi Arabia to abrogate the Dhahran agreement in 1961 exist today in even stronger proportions. The increased threat represented by the Soviet move into Afghanistan has still been insufficient to move Prince Fahd from the position that his government would not grant the United States "military bases or facilities" in Saudi Arabia.²⁹ Likewise, the Saudi Information Minister declared to his populace in 1980 that there were no foreign military bases in the Kingdom and that there would never be any foreign military bases in Saudi Arabia.³⁰ Sovereignty, nationalism, nonalignment and eschewal of any vestige of imperialism are the accepted basis for international stance within the Arab world. The United States, therefore, must look toward countries who consider the losses to be incurred in extending U.S. basing rights offset by other gains. Saudi Arabia is not one of them. As William Quandt has noted, "Saudi Arabian Arab and Islamic ties will often prevail over relations with the U.S."³¹

The present and continued United States involvement in Saudi Arabian military affairs is, however, a vital U.S. interest even short of an ultimate aspiration of basing rights. (And many, including myself, would argue as to whether or not basing rights are in the ultimate interest of the United States or Saudi Arabia). While the Saudi

Arabians espouse Arab defence of their own interests, there is little doubt that they would welcome or possibly even expect U.S. aid in defence against an outside force. Thus, the familiarity with the locality, individuals and equipment, and the standardization resultant from United States' involvement in Saudi Arabian military security programmes are a vital U.S. military interest in Saudi Arabia. The absence of formal alliances and basing rights makes Saudi Arabia no less of an American military interest. It is a characteristic of the regional environment which must be met with innovative defence strategy.

D Economic Interests

U.S. trade with Saudi Arabia, together with the interdependence which it fosters, is of considerable significance to the United States. Over the past few years, Saudi Arabia has become the seventh largest foreign market for U.S. goods, services, and technology, exclusive of military sales. It is the most rapidly expanding market for U.S. exports. Total Saudi imports, estimated at \$25 billion in the calendar year 1979, have been increasing at a 25% annual rate.

U.S. exports to Saudi Arabia in 1980 were \$5.76 billion - a 20% increase over 1979 - and represented approximately one-fifth of the total Saudi imports and 2½% of U.S. exports in 1980. The following Table indicates the scope of U.S. trade with the Kingdom.

U.S. Trade with Saudi Arabia
[In billions of dollars]

	1977	1978	1979	1980
U.S. imports: Petroleum (Crude)	2.29	5.28	7.85	12.30
Other	0.05	0.02	0.13	00.20
<u>Total</u>	<u>6.34</u>	<u>5.30</u>	<u>7.98</u>	<u>12.50</u>
U.S. exports: Food/Animals	0.16	0.30	0.30	00.30
Manufactured Goods	0.43	0.55	0.63	00.74
Machinery/Transport Equipment	2.10	2.53	2.86	03.61
Other	0.85	0.91	1.01	01.11
<u>Total</u>	<u>3.54</u>	<u>4.29</u>	<u>4.80</u>	<u>05.76</u>

Source : U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. U.S.

Exports/General Imports: World Areas by Schedule B Commodity Grouping (Annual).

While U.S. merchandise trade with the Kingdom is in deficit, this is offset by U.S. earnings on services, including substantial earnings of American oil companies, and U.S. military sales. Moreover, there is a huge flow of Saudi investment funds into the United States. During the 1974-78 period, for example, the average annual net capital inflow into the United States was \$5.1 billion.¹

There appears to be considerable promise for increased U.S. exports and trade growth following the inauguration of Saudi Arabia's third 5-year plan 1980 - in May 1980. Total Saudi Government expenditures during the plan period, exclusive of military expenditures and Saudi foreign aid donations, have been projected as exceeding \$285 billion. While concentration in the second 5-year plan 1975 - had been on basic infrastructure, including ports, airports, highways, and telecommunications, investment in infrastructures under the third plan it will be reduced to 35% - compared to 50% previously - and spending in the productive sectors will increase from 25 to 37.3%. The emphasis appears to lie in maintaining and even increasing the Kingdom's strength in the World Oil market and its international financial reserves. Domestically, the goal is to encourage industrial development, decreasing dependence upon the use of foreign manpower, and fostering a more efficient and skilled Saudi labour force.

Emphasis on rapid industrialization is aimed at reducing, in relative

terms, the Saudi economy's dependence on the oil sector. There is a stronger commitment toward distributing the benefits of modernization throughout Saudi society in part through the development of indigenous labour resources. Such a commitment is perceived to be an important element in balanced economic growth and essential to maintain traditional social and political structures which had shown signs of stress during the second plan.² The large increases in social welfare expenditures reflect the desire to maintain internal stability. At the same time, the even larger increases in economic development allocations indicate the government's priorities in this area. Construction is forecast at a total of some \$132.53 billion under the third plan. Private sector investment growth, an important feature of the plan, is expected to expand by more than 10% per year to reach a total of \$60.24 billion by 1985.

The petroleum industry objectives are stated in broad terms : Output will be governed by the resources required for the implementation of the development plan and the need to conserve reserves, rather than an automatic response to world market requirements.³ No specific level of crude oil production has been targeted, while prices are to be set to maintain the real value of a barrel of crude. Recent events and statements by Saudi spokesmen, however, have indicated that Saudi Arabia attaches greater value to relatively lower and stable oil prices than the third plan document would suggest.

An entirely new emphasis has been placed on regional development. Concern with the potential problem of massive migration of rural populations into cities is addressed in the third plan by programmes to make secondary towns and villages more habitable. Accordingly, increased expenditures have been planned for agriculture, housing, schools, rural development, communications, rural electrification, health and city beautification. Some 15 major provincial towns have been designated as national development service centres, and 52 smaller towns or villages as district centres.

Total Saudi imports, estimated at about \$25 billion in 1977, are increasing at an annual rate of 25%. With a market share somewhat greater than 20%, the United States recently remains the Kingdom's leading supplier of goods and services. Although Saudi Arabia has overwhelmingly favoured American contractors in its construction imports, U.S. companies are increasingly finding competition from Asian and European firms. American businessmen in Saudi Arabia have pointed out that awards to U.S. contractors in the field of construction have steadily dropped from 9% of the total in 1975 to 6% in 1978 and to 3% in 1979 and 1980.⁴ In military and civil construction contracts let to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Saudi Arabia, the U.S. share of work has decreased from 35% in 1975 to 5% in 1978 and to 2% in 1979.⁵ The American businessmen pointed out that, as a result of these declines, U.S. exports to Saudi Arabia have shown no real dollar growth when adjusted for a 12%

inflation rate.

The declining competitiveness seems to have resulted from a combination of government and corporate characteristics. The firms themselves emphasize the relative disadvantage they believe themselves to be at because of more liberal practices of governments of competing foreign firms. They argue that foreign firms receive support from their respective governments, ranging from effective subsidies to outright ownership, control, and supply labour. The single factor most often cited by American firms operating in the Kingdom has been the current tax and interpretation of the individual foreign-earned income legislation, sections 911 and 913 of the Internal Revenue Code which require Americans to pay tax on income earned in Saudi Arabia. In addition, American firms have reportedly been placed at a disadvantage by anti-boycott, anti-corruption, and anti-tariff laws.

A number of U.S. construction and engineering firms operating in Saudi Arabia - including Bechtel, Flvor, Ralph A. Parsons, Dravo, Raymond International, and Morrison-Knudson listed reasons for their declining performance in the Kingdom that included private sector as well as government factors.⁶ These include :

- A lack of government assistance compared with that given by competitor's government;

- U.S. products lack competitiveness because of poor quality control and unreliable deliveries;
- The application of U.S. moral standards under U.S. legislation with respect to anti-bribery, tax rules and environment;
- High freight costs to the Middle East from the United States make American equipment excessively expensive;
- Because American engineers are taxed at U.S. rates, they must be paid from two to four times what a West German or British engineer earns;
- U.S. technology is no longer superior; and
- Some other countries, unlike the United States have government agencies that are prepared to back construction firms with government insurance against political risk or to supply performance bonds and advance payment bond coverage.

A General Accounting Office (GAO) survey of 250 American companies in March 1981 showed that about 55% of firms responding to a GAO questionnaire stated the costs of compliance with the accounting standards of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act were greater than benefits received.⁷ In addition, more than 30% of the respondents engaged in foreign business cited the anti-bribery provisions of the act as a cause of U.S. companies losing overseas business. According to the survey, aircraft and construction firms claim to have been particularly hard hit.

Aircraft and high technology firms would be affected by cuts in the U.S. Export-Import Bank's lending authority and could face increasing competition from foreign contractors whose governments subsidize their bids with tax and supplier credits.

That the factors determining U.S. competitiveness relate to both government and corporate circumstances is suggested by the fact that U.S. service firms in non-construction areas possess 56% of the market in Saudi Arabia. Under the third 5-year plan, the Saudi government will likely continue to seek American expertise in service and intellectual areas. There will be increasing demand for the operation and management of buildings and all types of facilities in the Kingdom. The stress being placed on improving health and social services, education and training of all kinds will provide new opportunities for U.S. companies in areas where U.S. contractors and consultants already are successful.

A growing contract field for U.S. firms has been that of manpower training. Such training is part of every major contract and is frequently responsible for the repeated renewal of contracts. Manpower training represents a major concern of the United States-Saudi Arabian Joint Economic Commission, established in June 1974. The Commission was designed to bring together Saudi development needs and U.S. technological and managerial expertise. For this purpose, the U.S. Treasury Department was selected as the logical counterpart of

the Saudi sponsoring agency - the Ministry of Finance and National Economy. The Saudi Ministry sets development priorities and plans projects for the Commission. Since its founding, the Commission has initiated, inaugurated, or implemented contracts ranging into several hundred millions of dollars in such fields - in addition to manpower training - as electrification, census administration, customs management, information and communication systems, transportation design, consumer protection, agriculture, and solar energy research. (See Table on United States-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission on Economic Co-operation : Summary of Projects).

Another feature of the United States-Saudi economic relationship is the flow of money into the U.S. capital market. Direct, in contrast to portfolio, investment by Arab government and individuals in the United States has represented less than 1% of all direct foreign investment. (European countries account for more than two-thirds of that investment).

United States-Saudi Arabian Joint Commission on Economic Co-operation

	Date signed	Objective	U.S. and Saudi Action Agencies	Summary of U.S. Professional Staff in Saudi Arabia Mar.1980
Statistics & data processing	23.09.75 (5 yrs)	Upgrade statistics & National Computer Centre operations	Dept. of Commerce (Census) Ministry of Finance and National Economy	23
Agriculture & Water development	23.11.75 (indef.)	Advice on Agricul. development, water resources and research	Dept. of Agricul. & Interior, Ministry of Agricul. & Water	27
National Park development	16.02.77 (sub-project)	Design & construct national park	Dept. of Interior, Ministry of Agricul. & Water	1
Electrical Services	29.02.76 (indef.)	Planning & technical services in electricity	Dept. of Treasury & Charles T. Main Ministry of Industry & Elec.	3
Support for science & tech. centre	29.02.76 (indef.)	Development of Saudi Arabian Nat. Centre for Science & Technology (SANCST)	National Science Foundation, SANCST	0
Manpower training & development	12.06.76 (9 yrs)	Devel. vocational training: advice on centre construction	Dept. of Labour & General Services Admin., Ministry of Labour & Social Affairs	41
Financial info. services	03.05.77 (indef.)	Financial info. & analysis; Construction Info. Centre	Dept. of Treasury Ministry of Finance & National Economy	14
Desalination research & training	03.05.77 (indef.)	Establish research & training centre: Large capacity Desalination Unit	Dept. of Interior, Saline Water Conversion Corp	3
Consumer Protection	03.05.77 (5 yrs)	Develop food quality control system	Dept. of Treasury & Midwest Institute, Ministry of Commerce	13

Highway Admin. administration & training	26.08.77 (6 yrs)	Provide management, administration & technical services	Dept. of Transportation (FHWA), Ministry of Communications	10
Solar energy research and development	30.10.77 (5 yrs)	Applied research & development in Solar energy (joint funding)	Dept. of Energy and Solar Energy Research Institute, SNACST	1
Audit services	15.05.78 (indef.)	Provide management assistance and audit services	Dept. of Treasury, General Audit Bureau	4
Customs admin. & training	22.06.78 (indef.)	Advise on customs operations and provide training	Dept. of Treasury (Customs), Ministry of and National Economy	4
Supply management development	13.07.78 (indef.)	Develop central supply management & procurement system	General Services Admin. Ministry of Finance and National Economy	4
Nasseriah power station equipment	09.11.78 (letter)	Expand generating capacity & develop plant facilities	Dept. of Treasury and Overseas Advisory Service	4
Agricultural bank management and training	18.11.78 (5 yrs)	Establish training programs and provide advisory services	Farm Credit Admin., Saudi Arabian Agricultural Bank	7
Transports services	18.11.78 (4 yrs)	Provide technical, management, training & financial analysis services	Dept. of Transportation Ministry of Communications	1
Executive development	18.11.78 (indef.)	Develop executive & managerial effectiveness of selected government officials	Dept. of Treasury, Ministry of Finance and National Economy	0
Arid lands, meteorology & education	25.11.79 (indef.)	Curriculum development and teaching assistance	Dept. of Treasury and Consortium for International Development, King Abdel. Aziz University	0
U.S. representation office	-	Co-ordination management & support services	Dept. of Treasury, Ministry of Finance and National Economy	13
<u>Total Professional Staff</u>				<u>173</u>

Completed Projects

Procurement and installation of power generation and warehouses	- Department of Treasury and Overseas Advisory Associates, Ministry of Industry and Electricity, Electricity Corporation and Ministry of Finance and National Economy
Procurement and electrical power for Eastern Province	- Department of Treasury and Overseas Advisory Associates, Saudi Consolidated Electric Company (SCCCO)

Source : Department of the Treasury, Washington D.C.

The vast majority of Saudi investments in the United States are portfolio investments - purchases of capital or money market instruments, or equity positions which do not permit the buyer to exert any meaningful influence over management. Through the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA), the Saudi Government has placed the bulk of its investments in U.S. government securities and into deposits. The remainder is in government agency bonds, corporate bonds, and corporate equity, with a very small percentage going into direct investment.⁸

The surplus assets accumulated by SAMA by mid-1980 amounted to more than \$70 billion and were estimated to be increasing at a rate of more than \$2 billion each month. Almost all of these funds were being held abroad: nearly 40% in foreign banks as either deposits or trust funds, and about 60% in what was categorized as foreign bonds, principally government securities. In terms of geographical spread, approximately half of the Saudi investments were on U.S. territory, although about three-quarters of the total were denominated in U.S. dollars.

SAMA's portfolio has been confined virtually entirely to financial assets, which range from short to medium term. This has created a problem in that such assets are most vulnerable to the erosion of inflation and to exchange risk. By far the largest segment of the portfolio is represented by holdings in Treasury bills and Federal

agency obligation, most of which are in new issues purchased through the Federal Reserve Board, with which SAMA has a close relationship. A smaller part of the purchase of U.S. Government securities is executed through the secondary market, generally through correspondent banks. SAMA places large amounts on deposit with leading U.S. banks, both in the United States and elsewhere. These banks also manage the bulk of SAMA's portfolio of American Corporate bonds and stock holdings.

The investment managers of the banks act on a discretionary basis within guidelines set by SAMA. A fundamental feature of these guidelines is that at no time may a SAMA investment reach 5% of the voting stock of any company. Another restraint is that SAMA will not invest in a number of sectors; these include the news media, entertainment, liquor, and tobacco industries, as well as the defence industries. SAMA places large amounts on deposit with leading U.S. banks, both with the United States and elsewhere.⁹

There has been increasing concern by Saudis over apparent hostility to Arab investment in the United States. Since 1974, more than 80 bills have been introduced in the Congress to investigate or restrict foreign inflows of money into the country. Saudi investment in the United States has been cautious and pragmatic. During the period 1974-78, the flow of Saudi funds into U.S. capital markets was : \$5.22 billion, 1974; \$3.55 billion, 1975; \$4.477 billion, 1976;

\$3.172 billion, 1977; and \$1.539 billion, 1978.¹⁰ The decline in 1978 was attributed in part to a drop in Saudi Arabia's current account surplus and in part to the weakness of the dollar.

E Oil Interests

What started as a pure economic venture for Socal and Ibn Saud in 1933 very quickly turned into a matter of national interest for both countries. It has already been noted how in 1943 both diplomatic representation and financial aid were extended to Saudi Arabia by President Roosevelt's administration because of oil. Within seven years there occurred another event prompted by national interests of both countries.

As the decade of the 1950's started, Saudi Arabia was putting a twenty-per-cent royalty on each barrel produced while Aramco was netting \$1.10 after taxes.¹¹ Saudi Arabia had heard of a Venezuelan agreement whereby the producer and government shared profit equally and began pressing Aramco for an increased share of profits. Aramco was, of course, highly reluctant to cut its income by half.

There was at the same time within United States foreign policy a concern for the stability of conservative governments within the Arab World. Perceptions were that it would be in the United States' national interest for such governments to be on a more sound financial basis.

There evolved out of all this a policy enactment which solved the problems of all three participants -- the United States Government,

the Saudi Arabian Government and Aramco.

The U.S. Treasury Department in the summer of 1950 agreed at the urging of the Department of State to a system whereby companies who increase their payments to oil-producing governments would be allowed to reduce their U.S. tax payments correspondingly.¹²

The result of this arrangement was to vastly increase the financial income of the Saudi Arabian government while reducing the taxes paid to the U.S. government by Aramco. Another consideration was the fact that oil prices would not have to be increased to cover the new "royalties". Obviously, U.S. tax revenues decreased significantly .. over \$50 million in the first year after the decision.¹³ Government revenues from Aramco increased similarly from \$39.2 million in 1949 to \$111.7 million in 1959.¹⁴

The mutual interests of the United States and Saudi Arabia were again protected in 1953 via the intermediary ... Aramco. A year earlier a National Security Council memorandum had spoken of the interdependence of political stability in the Middle East and the government incomes derived from the rate and terms on which it is produced. It stated that :

Since the rate and terms [oil quantity and price] are to a large extent under the control of the companies ... the American oil operations are, for all practical purposes, instruments of our foreign policy toward these countries.¹⁵

It naturally follows then that any government attempt at weakening those instruments would be the equivalent of self-abasement. It is not surprising then that the Eisenhower administration deterred a Justice Department attempt to take anti-trust action against the Aramco partners by issuing a directive stating : "It will be assumed that the enforcement of the anti-trust laws against the Western Oil Companies operating in the Near East may be deemed secondary to the national interest ...".¹⁶ The continued availability of oil was thus placed ahead of domestic legal considerations.

As an effective instrument of foreign policy, however, Aramco had lost some of its clout and was due to lose more. There were two root causes. One, the Tehran Pricing and Participation Agreement of 1971 was the first of several agreements to follow in which Saudi Arabia would assert more and more control of prices and production. Before 1971, their control had been minimal, especially after oil left Saudi Arabian ports. And secondly, Saudi Arabia completed a participation agreement with Aramco in 1972 whereby the Saudi Ministry of Petroleum

and Mineral Resources (Petromin) would assume a 25% share in Aramco in return for agreed upon compensation to Aramco shareholders. However, partly as a result of the 1973 war, the Aramco position subsequently eroded to 40% ownership for the Aramco partners and 60% for Petromin. As of this writing, negotiations are still underway for 100% takeover by Petromin which will reportedly be retro-active to January 1st, 1976.¹⁷

Although negotiations have been carried out in great confidentiality it is assumed that even after Petromin assumes full ownership, the arrangement will continue to be one wherein Aramco continues a marketing role with a certain allocation of that which has been lifted by the company. In 1979, Petromin took 1.3 mmbpd for direct government-to-government sales and Aramco marketed the remainder ... 8.5 mmbpd.¹⁸

While the policy instrument has been weakened, the policy interest has not been so. Instead, the U.S. national interest in Saudi Arabia has steadily increased. Likewise, Saudi Arabia's own national interests have become of a world order in magnitude and notoriety. The critical importance of her status as an oil producer is now more of a fact of life than ever before. There could be no other consequence in a world where the gap has narrowed between energy supply and demand. For Saudi Arabia :

- Possesses the world's largest proven reserves of petroleum ...
25% of the world's total.
- Produces approximately 20% of the Free World's total crude
production.
- Ranks along with the United States and the Soviet Union as the
top three world producers of petroleum.
- Is the world's largest exporter of petroleum.

While her reserves presently rank as the world's largest, the ultimate recoverable total is wrapped in vagueness and contradiction as is the tendency for all oil producers. The Saudi Arabian Government cited exploitable reserves in 1977 as 153 billion barrels while Aramco cited 110 billion "proved" and 177 billion "probable". Both calculations are probably cautious and underestimates. Aramco stated in a 1973 memorandum which was subsequently published that ultimate extraction could be as much as "245 billion barrels".¹⁹ In any event, using the 177 billion figure and a 10 mmbpd average production figure, one sees enough crude for 50 years.²⁰

In assessing U.S. direct interests in Saudi Arabia, the U.S. needs continued access to Saudi oil. "Access" infers: (1) availability of oil imports in quantities adequate to meet United States domestic demands; (2) uninterrupted flow; and (3) at prices which do minimal damage to the United States economy. With 1979 imports supplying about 42% of U.S. inland oil consumption, Saudi Arabia ranks as the

leading supplier. Her contribution amounted to 17% of U.S. imports while Nigeria ran a distant second at 14%. Figure III-1 and Table III-1 give a more comprehensive picture of U.S. direct interests in Saudi Arabian oil.

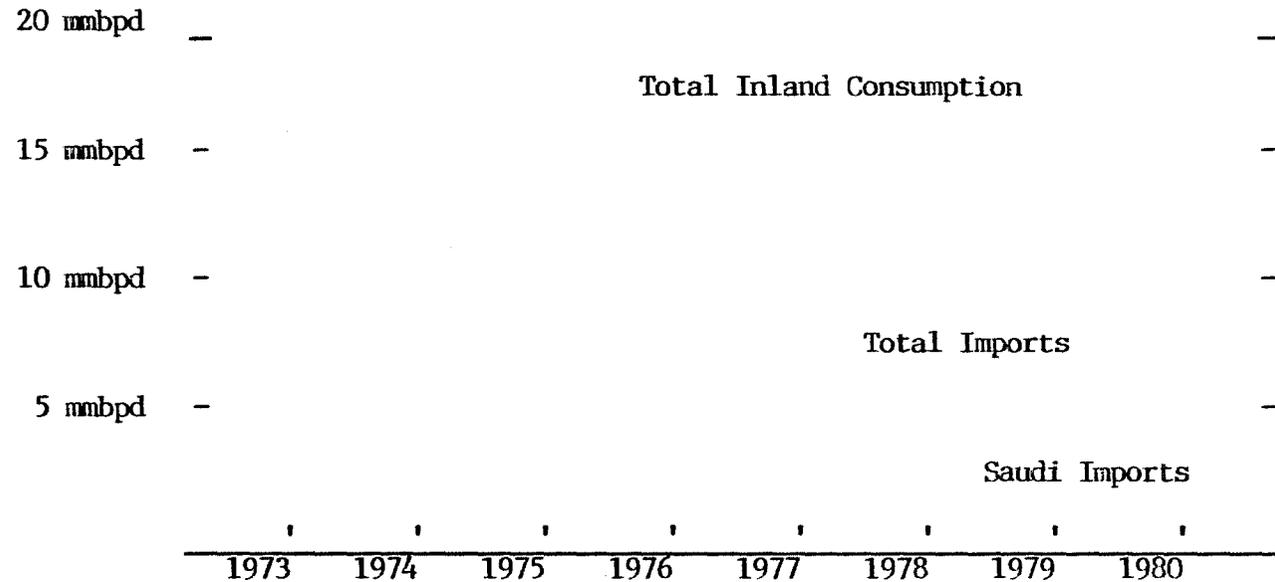
Of a less direct U.S. interest is the contribution that Saudi Arabia makes to allied oil requirements. Both Western Europe and Japan are much more dependent on imported oil than the United States. The United States still has today an interest in European and Japanese access to petroleum just as it did under the Marshall Plan. Western Europe currently depends on imports for roughly 90% of its petroleum requirements while Japan is totally dependent on imported oil. Saudi Arabia is the largest single supplier to both ... over 20% of Western Europe's imports and over 30% of Japan's imports. Figures III-1, III-3 and Tables III-2, III-3 give a more complete picture of the linkages between Western European Japanese and Saudi Oil.

From a Saudi perspective, oil policy presents a dilemma. In an economy where crude production accounts for 75% of the GNP and the majority of all government revenues, the simplest approach would seem to be a matching of production to revenue requirements. However, the Kingdom has never taken such a simplistic approach. Saudi oil production and pricing are determined by many different factors, including (1) domestic revenue requirements, (2) OPEC stability, (3) world market stability, (4) consumer economics and (5) third

world interests. The Saudi Oil Minister, Ahmed Zaki Yamani, alluded to these factors by stating that Saudi oil pricing and production policy is made in consideration of "internal development requirements and economic circumstances in general, by their local, regional and international status".²¹

Figure III-1

United States Crude Oil Consumption and Imports from Saudi Arabia
Million Barrels per Day (mmbpd)



Source : U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, International Oil Developments Statistical Survey; U.S. Central Intelligence Agency; National Foreign Assessment Centre, Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1980 and earlier issues; U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, National Foreign Assessment Centre, International Energy Statistical Review; U.S. Department of Energy, International Petroleum Annual; and U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Mines Minerals Year Book.

Table III-1

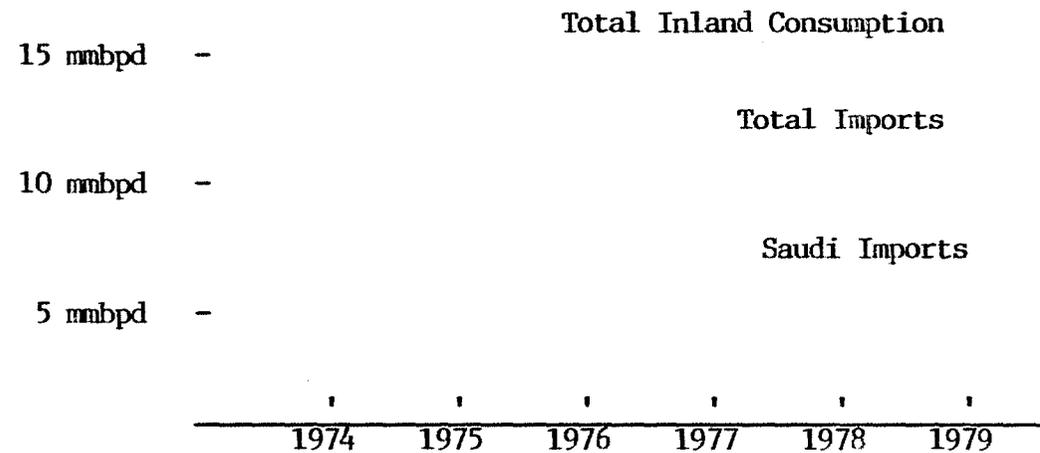
U.S. Oil Consumption and Imports from Saudi Arabia
(Thousand barrels/day)

	Pre- Crisis							
	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
Total Consumption	17,308	16,629	16,321	17,461	18,431	18,847	18,488	16,900
Total Imports	5,471	6,090	6,030	7,295	8,744	8,374	8,460	6,500
Saudi Imports	599	680	850	1,371	1,515	1,234	1,445	1,150

Source : Same as Figure III-1

Figure III-2

Western European Oil Consumption and Imports from Saudi Arabia
Million Barrels per Day (mmbpd)



Source : Same as Figure III-1

Table III-2

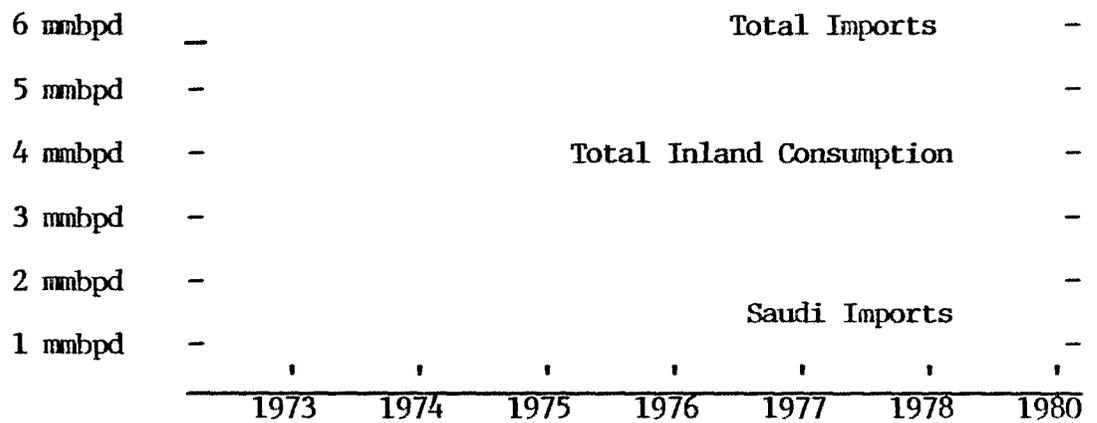
Western European Oil Consumption and Imports from Saudi Arabia
(Thousand barrels/day)

	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Total Consumption	13,775	12,637	13,522	13,832	14,070	14,420
Total Imports	14,400	12,080	13,528	13,108	13,128	13,180
Saudi Imports	4,410	3,445	3,445	3,299	3,049	3,693

Source : Same as Figure III-1

Figure III-3

Japanese Oil Consumption and Imports from Saudi Arabia
Million Barrels per Day (mmbpd)



Source : Same as Figure III-1

Table III-3

Japanese Oil Consumption and Imports from Saudi Arabia
(Thousand barrels/day)

	Pre- Crisis						
	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
Total Consumption	5,000	4,872	4,508	4,786	5,015	5,115	5,173
Total Imports	4,878	5,230	5,010	5,235	5,454	5,347	5,552
Saudi Imports	1,148	1,380	1,460	1,719	1,772	1,712	1,872

Source : Same as Figure III-1

Domestic revenue requirements have yet to overtake oil production income. Crude production capability combined with crude prices have enabled the Saudi budget balances to steadily grow from a deficit in 1970 of \$80 million to a surplus in 1975 of \$18.8 billion. One must consider also that this balance was accrued in the face of a \$41 billion five-year development plan.²² Thus, Saudi oil policy is clearly not linked solely to domestic considerations. This is not to say, however, that there are not some factions within Saudi Arabia who think it should be so. Indeed, there are those who argue that production should be reduced and prices raised ... thus, they argue, maintaining current income while extending long-term availability of their depletable resource. The argument seems to have been coming in its strongest, from the newly evolving new middle class. To date, Yamani has answered their arguments with descriptions of the Kingdom's pricing and production policy typified by the following.

If you need money to spend on development, then you must sell oil ... For this reason, the Saudi Arabian Kingdom must at least produce oil to meet this development requirement and its foreign needs. If it goes beyond this limit ... and that is what it is doing now ... then there must be other considerations which necessitate its doing so. These considerations are not necessarily purely political but both political and economic, because, a reduction in the Saudi Arabian Kingdom's oil

production will lead to an international economic crisis which will subsequently lead to diminishing our capabilities for development inside Saudi Arabia, particularly in industrialization. These are inter-connected interests which sometimes require an increase in production above the limit - we need to meet our financial requirements.²³

Saudi production and pricing policy thus remain structured by factors more extensive than simply domestic revenue requirements.

Current Saudi policy makers argue that policy must, of necessity, include consideration of consumer economies. They theorize a linkage between energy costs and world inflation and realize the Saudi Arabian impact upon such ... especially the world's leading exporter of crude. With vast foreign investments and near total reliance upon imports in minimizing world inflation, Yamani stressed this linkage by noting: "We know that if your economy (Western) collapses, we'll collapse with you. Money in itself counts for nothing. It only counts if it is put back into circulation and transformed into industry, technology".²⁴ Thus, the continued attempts by Saudi Arabia to minimize OPEC price increase can be explained, in part, by their interests in consumer economies.

There is a direct interest in OPEC too, for which dovishness in pricing must be moderated. The oligopolistic advantage for OPEC has

been one of moderation to the occasional point of confrontation, it has never been carried to the extent of threatening the stability of OPEC. Indeed, throughout the period 1977-1980, Saudi Arabia entered each OPEC conference with well published views, which very nearly approached demands, on the moderation in oil pricing which it felt necessary for a successful conference. And in each conference, Saudi Arabia initially stood firm in its "demands". But in each case the end result was a Saudi Arabian pricing and production policy which had been amended to more nearly approaching the broad consensus of OPEC membership. The Saudi pricing remained the lowest in the Cartel.²⁵ World petroleum stability is a concern shared with other members of OPEC with, perhaps, some reasoning unique to the Saudi perspective.

With the majority of its economy dependent upon the oil sector, Saudi Arabia finds itself in a position where the major measures of performance of the internal economy are dependent on external market events which influence the price and demand for Saudi oil. A study by the International Institute for Strategic Studies noted that the sheer magnitude of Saudi Arabia's oil reserves "places the country in a separate category".

She may be able to produce oil well into the twenty-first century and possibly even into the twenty-second ... Any further disruption of the international oil market,

therefore, would increase the danger of making Saudi oil worthless [in the long run]. For this reason, the country cannot be interested in further disturbances of supplies and price increases; a stable relationship with consumer countries will serve her interest best.²⁶

Another Saudi Arabian concern for long-term prospects for her oil potential must be in the area of the continuing oil price increase impact upon the "irreversible development of new energy sources".²⁷ The Saudis seek to strike a balance between high oil prices, which reduce consumption and increase investments, and research in alternative energy sources, and a need to maintain world interest in oil supplies in order to complete Saudi development. Yamani has expressed fears of intensive research, spurred by high oil prices, which would accelerate development of alternative energy.

We are at a point in our development where we are in a race with time. Our interest forces us to maintain the life of our oil production long enough to build our economy until we reach that period of time when there is another major source of energy that can replace oil. At that time we will shift to that source as our main source of energy. We expect that in the next century, at some point in its '20s or '30s at the latest, there

will be a major source of energy other than oil.²⁸

While stable pricing and production may seem an attribute desirable of any economic market, it offers Saudi Arabia special advantages. For in a stable market, Saudi Arabia's relative prominence is maintained within the community of oil exporting markets, whereas an unstable market offers the opportunity for vast profiteering by the less prominent members, thus enabling them to close the gap between their financial status and that of Saudi Arabia. This is another reason why Saudi Arabia has continuously offered production levels higher than necessary under purely domestic consideration.

And finally, the Saudis have always considered the impact of energy costs upon development to the Islamic World and the developing nations at large, and as a heavy investor in the world economy, Saudi Arabia has a triple interest in the Third World. The first two interests are in the form of aid, assistance and leadership, and Saudi Arabia has played the role well.

She has been active in both advocating north-south dialogue and of a more direct nature ... financial assistance in the form of direct grants, loans and special re-cycling programs for the less developed countries.

Saudi Arabia's vast production capacity has been a prime factor in its dominance both in world affairs and, of a more direct nature, in OPEC. How much spare capacity actually exists has been widely rumoured from as high as 20 mmbpd to as little as 12 mmbpd; however, it now appears that the lower figure is the most likely. In 1977, the government directed Aramco to take steps to ensure a maximum sustainable lifting capacity to 16 mmbpd; however, those projections were reduced in 1979 to 12 mmbpd.

III

A Interests Related to the Arab-Israeli Conflict

The Saudi leadership has frequently emphasized that a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict would bring untold benefits to the United States. While Saudi Arabia has looked to the United States for assistance in achieving its domestic and foreign policy goals the Saudi leadership feels that the United States has not been sufficiently forceful with Israel to promote a resolution of the conflict. An outbreak of new hostilities could seriously disrupt the flow of oil - even in the absence of an oil embargo - as a result of shipping restrictions and possible damage to Saudi oil fields or destruction of facilities. Some observers consider that it would be difficult for Saudi Arabia to escape active engagement in a new war. Its prominent political role in the Arab World might reduce its options in new political and military crises in the region and, while the Kingdom may endeavour to avoid involvement, it might be drawn actively into conflict.

Arab-Israeli issues assume considerable significance in American relations with Saudi Arabia because of Israel's special relationship with the United States. The Camp David accords have been perceived by the Saudis as not having taken into account Saudi fundamental interests in the status of Jerusalem.¹ While Arab critics have come forward with no viable alternative approaches, they have rejected,

with the exceptions of Sudan, Somalia, and Oman, the resultant Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and have isolated Egypt for having signed a separate peace. Saudi leaders before the Camp David Summit had concluded they would continue to support Egypt, apparently in the hope that the Summit would result in intense U.S. pressure upon Israel to accommodate Arab positions. Subsequently, however, their position has reflected an endeavour to balance a policy of working closely with the United States with the apparently compelling need to avoid controversy with other Arab States. The Saudis contend that the Camp David framework was insufficiently specific with respect to such basic Arab positions as complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, Palestinian self-determination, and the status of Jerusalem.²

The then Director of Arabian Peninsula Affairs in the State Department of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Joseph W. Twinam, stated before the House of Foreign Affairs Sub-committee on Europe and the Middle East in June 1979.

I think the number one priority of the Government of Saudi Arabia is to preserve the security of the country and of the ruling order. The Saudis perceive the Middle East problem as having a very definite impact, of course, on the environment in which they pursue ... It is our assessment that the United States and the Government of Saudi Arabia

share a commitment to achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, and I think that in all aspects of our military relationship with Saudi Arabia we look very carefully at the impact of our activities on the prospects for peace in the area and on the arms balance.³

Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Fahd, in response to reports in the New York Times and the International Herald Tribune of attempted coups, disturbances and corruption in Saudi Arabia, declared in January 1980:

I think there are a few wise men in the United States who realize the importance of their interests with Saudi Arabia. They must stand up ... and ask themselves if the American mind is identical to that of Israel, which wants to hurt the Arabs and monopolize the United States and destroy American relations with the U.S. because of our leading role in the Arab World ... There are many doors open to us and we can replace the Americans any time we want.⁴

In the talks between National Security Adviser Brzezinski and Crown Prince Fahd in February 1980, the Saudis were reported to have suggested that the United States abandon the Camp David accords as a framework for U.S. Middle East policy. And Brzezinski reportedly stated that the United States remained committed to achieving a

peaceful settlement between the Arabs and Israelis, with special recognition of making progress on the Palestinian issue.⁵

The Saudi Government conforms in general to policy approaches that are shared in the broader Arab orientation, and it has acted in unison with the majority opinion in the Arab World. Following an interview published in the Washington Post in May 1980, which appeared to indicate that the Saudi Government might be re-thinking its attitude toward the Camp David accords. Crown Prince Fahd declared that certain government and news media:

... were trying to portray Saudi Arabia as a supporter of the negotiations of the current peace process, or as if it were prepared to propose its own disguised initiatives in this matter. What is certain is that the attitude of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Middle East problem and the issue of Palestine is firm, clear and known. It derives from the Arab's unanimous attitude that the issue of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem and that a just and comprehensive solution cannot be achieved unless Israel withdraws from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967, including first and foremost, Holy Jerusalem, to which Arab sovereignty must be restored. No solution of the Palestinian issue can achieve peace unless it is based on recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights to return and to self-determination, including the

setting up of an independent state on their territory. In all this, Saudi Arabia pursues a unanimous Arab attitude, to which it is committed and which it supports ... The peaceful means which Saudi Arabia support must realize right and justice, and also a comprehensive solution which is derived from a stand that represents the unanimous Arab will.⁶

The link between stability in the Gulf region and the Arab-Israeli conflict remains as strong as ever. For the Saudis, the United States continues to maintain the role of being the only acceptable and credible mediator in the conflict because of its capability to apply pressure upon the Israeli in efforts toward achieving progress in an overall settlement. If, during the course of the forthcoming year, negotiations between Egypt and Israel produce few results, the United States will find it difficult to justify continuing with the Camp David terms of reference in efforts to achieve a broadening of negotiations that would include Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The questions of stability, U.S. credibility, and Soviet influence in the Arab World will, to some extent, be affected by the positions taken by the United States in the continuing peace negotiations, particularly with respect to the underlying principles of resolving the Palestinian issue.⁷ An impasse would likely appear to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab leaders if Israel (and possibly Egypt) were dictating U.S. policy, and U.S. prestige and credibility would probably suffer.

B Interests Related to the Western Alliance

The interests and vulnerabilities of members of the western alliance and of Japan vary according to each country's dependence upon Middle-Eastern oil, varying internal political processes, and differences over the utility of force to protect Western interests. Since 1973, there has been no progress toward development of a common strategy with the United States in the region, despite the fact that strategic importance of the Middle East has never been greater.⁸ The October, 1973 Arab-Israeli war represented a challenge to the Western nation's attitudes toward the Arab-Israeli dispute, and the European Community (EC) and Japan were quick to re-assert their good intentions with the Arabs and to disavow any association with the U.S. support for Israel.

The cleavage that had developed as a result of events widened when, in November 1973, representatives of the EC adopted a joint statement declaring that a peace agreement should be based on the following points:

- (1) The inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force;
- (2) The need for Israel to end the territorial occupation which it has maintained since the conflict of 1967;;
- (3) Respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of every state in the area and their right to live

in peace within secure and recognized boundaries; and
(4) Recognition that in the establishment of a just and lasting peace account must be taken of the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

A Euro-Arab dialogue, which emerged in the wake of the 1973 war, was formally instituted in Paris in July 1974. Arab representatives were particularly anxious to gain support for their position on the Israeli-occupied territories and the Palestinian issue. EC representatives were willing to criticize Israel openly for not relinquishing the territories and to affirm their belief that a Middle East peace could not be achieved without a resolution of the Palestinian problem. On June 29th, 1977, the European Council issued a statement to this end, saying the conflict could not be solved unless "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to give effective expression to its national identity is translated into fact, which would take into account the need for a homeland for the Palestinian people."⁹ But EC members were not willing to recognize the PLO officially or to endorse specifically the establishment of a Palestinian State. And they stopped short of approving Arab demands for an arms and economic embargo against Israel.¹⁰

In February 1980, EC foreign ministers were reported to be preparing a separate European initiative aimed at bringing about a Palestinian

settlement. They had reached agreement that if the United States failed to achieve a breakthrough on Palestinian self-rule in the near future, they would launch moves of their own independent of the Camp David process. Strategy agreed upon included the following two elements:

- (1) To supplement U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 with an annex definitely recognizing the claims of the Palestinians to be a separate people with a right to their own homeland, and
- (2) The holding of a new international conference to try to resolve the Palestinian problem on the basis of a supplemented U.N. Resolution 242.¹¹

French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing conducted a tour of Arabian Gulf States, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan in March 1980. On March 12th, the French Government formally endorsed PLO participation in Middle East peace talks and the Palestinian right to self-determination.¹² When the May 26th, 1980, deadline for agreement between Israel and Egypt on Palestinian autonomy passed, the EC prepared to restart the Euro-Arab dialogue.

At the EC summit in Venice in June 1980, a statement on the Middle East was issued indicating broad European agreement on elements of an Arab-Israeli settlement. The declaration was designed to supplement rather than to displace either U.N. Security Council

Resolution 242 or the Camp David negotiations. It was intended to give momentum to Middle East negotiations in a period when they otherwise would be stalemated by what was seen to be Israeli intransigence and the United States pre-occupation with the Presidential elections. The elements of a settlement contained in the declaration included: A comprehensive peace settlement, bolstered with international guarantees; self determination for the Palestinian people within the framework of a peace settlement was discussed during visits to Washington in early 1981 by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and French Foreign Minister Jean François-Poncet. Some news media reports indicated that the Reagan administration was less hostile to an independent European initiative on the Middle East than had been the Carter administration, and a State Department official was quoted as saying that it appeared the European and U.S. efforts in the Middle East were manageable and integratable.¹³ At the same time, Dutch Foreign Minister Christoph van der Klaaw, the current EC representative, began a tour of Middle East countries seeking reaction to a 30-page draft of optional approaches to the Arab-Israeli and Palestinian issues. Reported options included: withdrawal of Israeli forces and settlements from the occupied territories, dividing Jerusalem between Israel and Jordan, or placing East Jerusalem under some form of international control; and a referendum among all former Arab inhabitants of Palestine on whether they desired an independent Palestinian State outside Israel's 1967 borders or a federation

with Israel or Jordan.¹⁴ Saudi Arabia, in conjunction with other Arab States, including Egypt, has supported the European initiative and such support could affect Saudi-United States relations.

CONCLUSION

A Paradox and Fortuitous Circumstance

The beginning of the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship is full of paradox and fortuitous circumstances. Paradox was that one Middle Eastern State ... Saudi Arabia ... which had petroleum exceeding all others in the area should look outside the bounds of the predominant influence within the area ... British ... for association. And that one of the predominant influences prime purposes for being in the area was to exploit the petroleum resources of the area.

Fortuitous circumstance was that the state ... Saudi Arabia ... should look to American sources for association even though such association was not actively sought by the United States Government. History suggests that such a lack of activism, which may have been a prime motivation for Ibn Saud to spurn British influence and seek American associations, was in effect an avoidance of political ties with a foreign government.

Paradox was the fact that several American oil companies should turn down Karl Twitchell's offer of venture into what was to be one of the world's largest petroleum reserves. Fortuitous circumstances was the fact that Ibn Saud's personal advisor, a British Arabist, should advise the King to consult an American, Charles Crane, on development of the Kingdom's resources and advise him to accept an American firm's offer for concession over a British firm's. But here again, there are

some offerings for explanations for such in that some claim Philby had an axe to grind with Britain.

B The Cornerstone: Aramco

With such a beginning in good fortune and paradox, one might expect the history of such a long association to settle down to be the resultant of planned, programmed action by both associated governments. However, it did not. The first decade of association was not self-initiated by the United States Government but, rather, by the economic association between an Arabian King who needed revenue for his newly consolidated Kingdom and an American oil company with vested interests in the Kingdom. This economic linkage was the sole basis of American-Saudi Arabian relationship for ten years before the United States Government ever became officially involved. Financial aid was relayed from the United States Government to Ibn Saud in an indirect manner, but this too was at the instigation of the American half of the economic association ... Aramco. Thus, the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship was not only birthed by Aramco but the oil company acted as the sole resident guardian of the relationship for the first ten years of its life.

Aramco's part in this relationship deserves further comment. There has been of recent times much study of the effect multinational corporations have upon international relations. One theory sees the

multinationals as a foreign policy tool of the home country. The multinational injects home country influence into foreign countries by penetrating national borders. Such a description applies to Aramco. However, for the first ten years, Aramco was not a mere tool of foreign policy but rather a manipulator of foreign policy. Its role subsided to the more common role of tool when diplomatic relations were established with Saudi Arabia in 1943.

In that role, Aramco played an exceptional part. For it was paradox that while other such tools of foreign policy all around the region fractured in the stress of nationalization, Aramco remained strong and useful. The company itself deserves, perhaps, more of the credit than does United States policy. For it was through exceptional personnel policies, superior technical performance and conciliatory compromise with the Saudi Arabians that the company came to be regarded by Saudi Arabia as a national asset nearly as valuable as the oil which it produced.

The role has now changed, however. The company now more nearly fulfills the role of hostage to a host government. The threats in 1973 of possible nationalization forced the company to assume the new role in an effort to avoid huge capital losses and complete loss of interest in Saudi Arabian petroleum reserves. The 60% assumption of ownership by the Saudi Arabian Government weakens the company's role as a tool of foreign policy and the completion of present negotiations

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dependency. Saudi Arabia's mineral resources and revenues therefore have made her more an independent actor. No longer dependent upon external sources for financial aid, she can shop the markets for the best purchases in development aid arms and military training. As a political actor of significance, she is no longer dependent on any outside power for day-to-day political clout. While all national sovereignty is relative, Saudi Arabia's post-1973 international sovereignty is far greater than any which existed prior to that time.

D Congruency of National Interests

In reviewing the national interests by which the relationship is maintained, oil remains paramount. It was oil which served to birth the relationship, it was oil which served to develop the relationship and it was oil which served to re-focus the relationship in 1973. Each of the other interests sustaining the relationship is itself either enabled or heightened in importance by oil.

Such a situation has been enabled by the mutually reinforcing interests of each member. For Saudi Arabia, the oil industry represents the heart of the nation. Without it, there would be little else for oil is responsible for 75% of the GDP. For the United States, Saudi Arabian oil represents an important energy source for itself and, even more important, for its Western European and Japanese allies. In the latter half of the decade of the 70's, Saudi

Arabian oil supplied approximately seven percent of United States and more so to its allies. The exchange for oil is then a vital mutual interest between the United States and Saudi Arabia.

The process of actually producing the oil is also a mutually reinforcing interest. For whereas the United States has the best supply of technology, manpower and equipment for oil production, Saudi Arabia has the need. There were still 13,000 Americans working for Aramco in 1980 in spite of the Saudi takeover.

The national interest of economy is also mutually reinforcing. In international monetary affairs, the United States represents to Saudi Arabia the largest economy in the world. Thus there is no avoiding the significance of the dollar, necessitating Saudi support for a strong dollar. And for the United States there is no avoidance of the possible effect the vast Saudi revenue excesses can have upon the dollar. Pursuit of long-term individual interests by both partners in the relationship should therefore further serve to strengthen the relationship.

That other aspect of the economic interest, trade and commerce, is also mutually reinforcing. Saudi Arabia is currently undertaking a plan of national development never before preceded in history. Within that plan, she has utilized the United States as her primary source of technology, real goods, and services. Thus, what Saudi

Arabia sees as a primary source of means for development, represents to the United States a vital means of offsetting the significant debt incurred in purchasing Saudi oil. Thus the process of "dollar recycling" is of mutual interest to both nations.

The military interests of the two members, excepting the case of Israel, are mutually reinforced also. While this study has dealt primarily with events emanating from the central focus year of 1973, it must be mentioned the the year 1979 plays a role of prominence within the military field. The Soviet intrusion into Afghanistan of that year served to prompt the United States to boldly declare its military interests in the Arabian Gulf region. It also served to re-define the Soviet Union as an international transgressor to most international actors who had recently considered her otherwise. Those who had recently considered some sort of approachment with the Soviet Union abandoned their efforts thereafter. Another event of 1979, the Iranian revolution also served to heighten the importance of mutual interests between the United States and Saudi Arabia. For after Iran, Saudi Arabia was the only survivor of the "twin pillar" policy for Arabian Gulf security. These two events then prompted the U.S. administration to take a quantum leap in military assistance offerings to Saudi Arabia, thus confirming her increased importance in the region.

Saudi Arabia, impressed likewise by the events of 1979, welcomed such

offerings but her view of the threat priority is somewhat different from the United States. While the United States views the threat as from outside the region, the Saudis consider regional and internal threats as the paramount source of disruption. The differing views have served them a multitude of actions and arguments. United States factions can justify increased military co-operation with Saudi Arabia while focussing upon the international issues while their detractors can argue against security assistance by focussing upon Middle East regional and Saudi Arabian internal issues. Similarly, one Saudi faction can justify increased military co-operation with the United States by citing Soviet actions while another faction can argue against such by noting United States regional policy. Overall, however, the military interests can be adjusted to become mutually supportive although lacking in the degree of mutuality that exists in oil and economics.

Geostrategic interests are somewhat one-sided. As a super-power, the United States has a strong geostrategic interest in Saudi Arabia. That interest is primarily in assuring that no unfriendly power gains control over the area or strategic points within. The region represents a geostrategic prize mainly to one of the two principal super-powers. Saudi Arabia, as a non-super-power, does not therefore share that interest to the extent of United States concern. She would not welcome control of the area by unfriendly forces. But the demands of nationalism prevent her from expressing strong outward allegiance

to a friendly super-power protector in order to stave off an opposing super-power influence. She is forced then to maintain a position of non-alliance within a multi-bipolar world forestalling that day when a move toward either pole may be necessitated. Because of these concerns, the mutuality of this interest is then scored neutral.

The area of political interests raises the spectrum from congruency to conflict. The United States represents to Saudi Arabia the leader of the Free World and the successful example of free enterprise. In contrast, Saudi Arabia represents to the United States an important lever within regional, Arab, Islamic and Third World politics. From some of these aspects the political interests are basically congruent. But as was so clearly demonstrated in 1973, the political interests of two nations can turn to direct conflict over the issue of another nation-state ... Israel. This area then will require particularly adroit handling by the two partners to avoid conflict in the future.

E The Future

The future of the relationship lies primarily within the same area from which the relationship evolved. It was oil which established the relationship in the beginning, it was oil which served to re-focus the relationship in 1973, and oil remains the principal medium by which a "special relationship" is carried out. It is oil then which will serve as the principal indicator for the future of the relationship.

For changes in that indicator would serve as the catalyst for change in the relationship. Such a reduced dependence could come about by many different ways, from simple conservation efforts to development of a better, more economical energy alternative. However, it must be pointed out that reduced dependence would have to be within the full axis of United States/Western European/Japanese consumption. For as has been seen, a major portion of the United States interest in Saudi Arabian oil is as lifeblood for the Japanese and European allies.

From the supply side, any factor which prompted reduced supply or unreasonable prices would likewise weaken the relationship. Stimuli for such could range from a new Saudi Arabian government oil policy to destruction of the oil facilities by war or sabotage. A new government policy could simply result from a change in the present government's policy, prompted by regional concerns and specifically United States Middle East regional policy or by change in the government itself. War or sabotage in the oil fields could result from either an Arab-Israeli war, an inter-Arab war or a revolution. It is to be assumed, of course, that the Western nations would work to prevent such occurrences. Any such occurrence would seriously jeopardize their vital interests, just as it would jeopardize the vital interests of the present Saudi Arabian government.

The specific future of the United States-Saudi Arabian relationship remains then like the future itself ... unknown. But like other areas of international relations, the paradigm or hypothesis of the future relationship may best be derived by analysing the past. This work has done that and it can be seen that the best indicator to be used in the paradigm of the future is the indicator of oil; herein lies the future of the United States-Saudi Arabian special relationship.

Footnotes

I Saudi Arabia and United States Evolution of Special Relationship

- 1 Philby gives evidence of rather half-hearted interest on the part of Eastern General. Saud's termination of the Concession in 1928 was a reaction to no response on the part of the Concessionaire after Saud had served notice of intent to cancel. Furthermore Eastern General had only advanced rental for two years; thus in 1928, they were in Ibn Saud's mind two years in arrears. Harry St. John Philby, Saudi Arabia (New York: Frederick A. Prager, Inc., 1955) p. 329.
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- 16 For full text of Roosevelt's letter to Ibn Saud, see Ralph H. Magnus, ed., Documents on the Middle East, (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1969), p. 144.
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- 18 See New York Times, October 18th, 1946, p. 1.

- 19 See Public Papers of the President, Harry S. Truman, 1947 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 133-134.
- 20 Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, Vol. V, part 2, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 995.
- 21 Faisal felt that the United States had again betrayed the Arabs in general and Saudi Arabia in particular by moving in regard to the Palestine issue without Arab consultation. See Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, Vol. V, part 1, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 210 and Malcolm Peck's article "The Saudi-American Relationship and King Faisal" in King Faisal and the Modernization of Saudi Arabia, Willard A. Beling, ed. (Boulder Westview Press, 1980), pp. 230-245.
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- 23 Leonard Fanning, Foreign Oil and the Free World, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954), p. 271.
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- 28 See Magnus, Documents on the Middle East, p. 112.
- 29 Richard P. Stebbins, ed., Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1963 (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 260-261.
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- 34 "Overhaul for Mid East Oil", New York Times, October 15th, 1972, Section 3, p. 1.
- 35 "Saudi Arabia Makes Conditional Offer of Assured Oil Supply to U.S." The Times (London, October 3rd, 1972, Section III, p. 1.
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- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Mohammed Heikal, The Road to Ramadan (London: Fontana, 1976), p.266.
- 40 See pages 37-38.
- 41 Malcolm C. Peck, "The Saudi-American Relationship and King Faisal", p. 231.
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- 43 MNC Subcommittee Hearings, pt. 7, p. 509.
- 44 MNC Subcommittee Hearings, pt. 7, p. 528.
- 45 New York Times, June 21st, 1973, p. 30. and See Anthony Sampson, The Seven Sisters, (New York: Viking Press, 1975), p. 246.
- 46 Peck, "The Saudi-American Relationship and King Faisal", pp. 231-232.
- 47 Heikal, The Road to Ramadan, p. 266.
- 48 MNC Subcommittee Hearings, pt. 7, p. 547.
- 49 Matti Golan, The Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1976), p. 64.
- 50 See Aviation Week and Space Technology, Dec. 10th, 1973, pp. 16-19.

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- 52 Morano, p. 467, and for more information about the embargo see Jeffrey Robinson, Yemani : The Inside Story, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1988), pp. 137-149.
- 53 U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Report on Multinational Corporations and U.S. Foreign Policy, 93rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1975, p. 146 (Hereafter referred to as MNC Full Committee Report).
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II Current State of Relationship

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- 5 For a detailed analysis of the period termed the "Arab Cold War", see Malcolm H. Kerr, The Arab Cold War, 3rd ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- 6 See Adeed Dawisha, "Internal Values and External Threats : The Making of Saudi Arabian Foreign Policy", Orbis, Spring 1979, pp. 129-143; and David E. Long "King Faisal's World View", in King Faisal and the Modernization of Saudi Arabia, edited by Willard A. Beling (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980) pp. 173-183.
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- 9 "Saudi Arabia", MEED Special Report, July 1980, p. 83.
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- 11 U.S. Congress, House Committee on International Relations, Hearing before the House Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, 95th Cong., June 8th, 1977, Appendix, p. 40.
- 12 James E. Akins, "Saudi Arabia, Soviet Activities and Gulf Security", in The Impact of the Iranian Events Upon Arabian Gulf and United States Security, ed. by Michael Szaz (Washington: American Foreign Policy Institute, 1979) pp. 89-90.
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- 6 See de Saint-Phalle, Thibaut. "U.S. Productivity and Competitiveness in International Trade". Washington, D.C., Georgetown University Center for Strategic International Studies, c. 1980.
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- 19 Financial Times (London) April 23rd, 1979, a special section on Saudi Arabia.

- 20 While most references refer to Aramco as the oil industry in Saudi Arabia, it should be noted that there are two other operators ... the Getty Oil Company and the Arabian Oil Company. The former is an American company while the latter is a Japanese concessionaire. Together, the two account for about 2% of Saudi annual production while Aramco accounts for the remaining 98%.
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- 27 Outlook for World Oil into the 21st Century, Petroleum Research Foundation prepared for the Electric Power Research Institute, May 1978, pp. 6-15.
- 28 "Saudis Draft Goals for the Time when Oil Runs Low", Christian Science Monitor, April 2nd, 1981, p. 11.

III

- A Interest Related to the Arab-Israeli Conflict, and
- B Interest Related to the Western Alliance

- 1 Because of its status as guardian of Islam, the Saudi Government cannot afford to be seen by Arabs (or Muslims) to be abandoning the objective of restoring the third holiest shrine in Islam to Arab sovereignty.
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- 3 U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East. Activities of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Saudi Arabia. Hearing, 96th Cong., 1st Sess., June 25th, 1979, Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979, pp. 56-57.
- 4 Middle East Economic Digest, Vol. 24th, January, 18th, 1980: 37.
- 5 New York Times, February 6th, 1980.
- 6 Riyadh radio, May 27th, 1980.
- 7 Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Fahd, in an interview in Le Monde called on the United States to recognize the rights of Palestinians and establish direct contacts with the PLO. Fahd described the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty as "an invitation to war rather than peace" because it pushed the region toward greater violence and radicalism. See Le Monde, Paris, May 14th, 1979. Also, see

Al-Majalh, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, May 1979, pp.2-5.

- 8 National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski on February 4th, 1980, described the Gulf region as "the third central strategic zone" of importance to the United States, along with Europe and the Far East. See New York Times, February 6th, 1980.
- 9 Washington Post, June 30th, 1977.
- 10 Washington Post, October 30th, 1977.
- 11 Washington Star, February 10th, 1980.
- 12 Washington Star, March 13th, 1980.
- 13 Washington Post, March 2nd, 1981.
- 14 Washington Post, March 4th, 1981.

CHAPTER THREE

SAUDI ARABIA AND THE SOVIET UNION

- I Introduction
- II Influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East
- III Soviet Union relations with Saudi Arabia:
 - A 1901 - 1940
 - B 1940 - 1960
 - C 1960 - 1970
 - D 1970 - 1980
 - E 1980 - 1987
- IV Conclusion
- V Footnotes

I Introduction

The Middle East has long been important as the object of great power aspirations, both for strategic and economic reasons. Its position astride the main lines of air and sea communication linking the Atlantic and European nations with East Africa, the Indian sub-continent, South East Asia, the Far East and Australasia led great powers to regard control over the region as vital to their interests. This outlook was reinforced as huge reserves of petroleum were discovered and began to be exploited. In addition, the Middle East, particularly its northern and eastern section, was valued as a buffer to prevent the expansion of Russia, both Tsarist and Soviet. The various Russian governments, naturally, have regarded the region in a different light, as an obstruction in a traditional area of expansion and in desired north-south paths of communication to the Indian Ocean, and as the locale for Western military bases.¹

The Arabian Peninsula (especially its peripheral areas) attracted the attention of the great powers for the same reasons. Aden was a vital link in the communications and commercial chain of the British Empire, a bunkering station which commanded the southern approach to the Suez Canal. British ships policed the Arabian Gulf to ensure the safety of this alternative approach to India. It was the fear of a challenge to its naval dominance in the Gulf and Indian Ocean

by French, Russian or German acquisition of bases or refuelling facilities which prompted Britain to conclude treaties with the local Sheikhs of the Gulf principalities (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the Seven Trucial States) and Muscat expressly forbidding such a possibility; the treaties eventually became the basis of a permanent British presence in the Gulf, as the principalities became virtual protectorates.²

The interest of Russian governments in the Arabian Peninsula was generally spasmodic until recently; attention was more often focussed on Iran and Turkey, the countries adjacent to Russia. Nevertheless, both before and after the Revolution, governments of Russia made attempts to establish some kind of presence in the region. Tsarist Russia's aspirations in the Peninsula were centred on the Gulf and in fact on Persia more than on the principalities. However, at the end of the nineteenth century, Russian activity in the principalities at each end of the Gulf was the cause of much British consternation.³

The Revolution wrought great changes in Russian foreign policy, not least in the leadership's outlook and the ability of the country to undertake active policies. If anything, the former changes intensified Soviet Russia's interest in the Peninsula, and Moscow had some success in establishing ties with the independent countries in the region. However, during the first three and a half decades

of its existence, preoccupation with the internal situation and with other, more important, areas of the world, and its weakness vis-a-vis its "imperialist" enemies, prevented the Soviet Union from seriously challenging Britain's hegemony in the Peninsula.

Since the Second World War the changes in the global situation have been immense. Two of the most important of these have been the movement of colonial and dependent countries to independence and the attendant decline in the influence and prestige of the West in those areas. Another has been the emergence of the Soviet Union as a super-power willing and able to try to take advantage of that situation. Once Moscow had made the decision to approach the newly independent states, the Middle East, because of its proximity to the USSR and the continued weakening western presence there which the Soviets felt to confine and threaten them, was an obvious target. Since the mid-1950's the development of events in the area has made the policy regarding the Middle East one of the more important aspects of Soviet foreign policy.⁴

The Arabian Peninsula was included in Soviet Middle East policy not simply because of geography; it also aroused interest on its own. There was the traditional Russian interest in the Gulf, and the fact that Yemen and Saudi Arabia were two of the first states with which the Soviet Union had established relations.⁵ There was the fact that the largest state in Arabia was also (nominal) spiritual

homeland of a large number of Soviet citizens. But, above all, there were many of the last British dependencies on the periphery of the peninsula. These were supplying the West with much-needed oil, probably at a lower cost than would Sovereign States with control over their own oil; they were also providing it with military bases, strategically significant on a regional, or wider, basis. More recently, the situation inside the Peninsula countries has been changing and will probably continue to change, especially with Britain withdrawing its military presence. The Arabian Peninsula appears to present the USSR with a good chance to expand its influence and presence; clearly it is a region to which Moscow has been justified strategically and ideologically, in paying close attention.⁶

Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union have had an extremely limited contact over the years. The only exception was during the period 1926-38. Since that time diplomatic relations have not existed. Historians attribute this situation to the attitude of the Soviets towards Islam, and the fact there has been no civil war inside Saudi Arabia that the Soviets could take advantage of.

The Soviets have continually referred to Saudi Arabia as a servant of American imperialism. Saudi commentary on the Soviet Union has been generally negative since the Saudis see the USSR and communism as being a threat to Moslem principles and the conservative

monarchy.⁷

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, and continued to exercise military strength on the continent, particularly in Yemen and Oman, Saudi Arabia had little interest in reinstating diplomatic relations, even though such relations have been established with other Gulf States, including Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Bahrain.

II Influence of the Soviet Union in the Middle East

A Following the Bolshevik Revolution.

The Bolshevik Revolution added new dimensions to traditional Russian aims in the Middle East and Arabia; the desires to expand into Persia, and to weaken England by threatening its position in India were reinforced by the vision of world-wide socialist revolution, in which even the colonies and backward countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America would have a part to play.⁸ The latter idea was one of Lenin's most perspicacious adaptations of Marx's theories. For while Marx and Engels recognized the revolution potential of nationalism in the backward European countries for example, Poland and Ireland, in weakening the strong capitalist nations, they scarcely considered the possibility of revolution in the colonies; they assumed that the proletariat would triumph in the advanced industrial countries, and then would take over the colonies temporarily and lead them to independence as swiftly as possible.⁹

Before 1916, the nationality question in Lenin's theory applied (as it had in Marx's) more to the minorities in Russia and Eastern Europe than to the colonies. In 1916, however, Lenin wrote Imperialism : The Highest Stage of Capitalism in which he widened significantly the geographical focus of Marxist thinking about revolution to embrace not only the advanced industrial nations, but

the semi-industrial countries and the non-industrial colonies as well.¹⁰ The emphasis on the importance of the colonies to capitalism, and the implication that the revolution might begin (but could not be consummated) in the east rather than in the industrial West, represented a fundamental revision of Marx's theories. It was a revision which was to exert a lasting influence over the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and to be of great significance to its international position in the 1950's; the possibility of weakening capitalism by encouraging the colonies to struggle for independence, in combination with Lenin's thinking on the national question (and his belief in tactical flexibility) led him to advocate that the proletariat of the metropolitan countries (and later of Bolshevik Russia) should ally themselves temporarily with even the middle and upper-class independence movements in the colonies.¹¹

The question of the possibility (and desirability) of co-operation with Eastern national movements, and the degree of such co-operation, remained open; both Soviet theory and policy until 1955 vacillated between collaboration with and opposition to nationalist movements in the East which were not led by communists. The issue did not arise immediately after the revolution, for the Bolsheviks were preoccupied with internal problems and with the prospect of revolution in Europe, on which they believed the success of the revolutionary movement to depend. Nevertheless, Lenin realized that

the Soviet Union's weak international situation made it advisable to utilize all possible chances to weaken and distract the imperialist enemy.¹² Therefore, an attempt was made early in December 1917 to enlist the support of all Muslims in the Soviet Union and the Near East and to incite them to revolt:

Muslims of Russia ..., henceforth your faith and your customs, your national and cultural institutions are proclaimed to be free and inviolable. Order your national life freely and unrestrictedly. It is your right [Muslims of the Near East], it is not from Russia and her revolutionary government that your enslavement is to be expected, but from the European imperialist robbers ... Overthrow the despoilers and enslavers of your countries. Do not allow them to despoil your hearths and homes any longer! You yourselves must arrange your lives in your own way. That is your right, for your destiny is in your own hands¹³

The Bolsheviks' attention was principally directed westward. However, the "Eastern branch" of the ideology continued to develop. In November 1918 Stalin wrote several articles calling attention to spreading revolutionary unrest in the East; in "Don't forget the

East" he declared that complete victory over imperialism would be impossible until the latter was deprived of its "most reliable rear", and inexhaustible reserve", the colonies and semi-colonies.¹⁴

By 1918 Soviet committees and organizations had been established for the purpose of educating the government of other nations on the values and benefits of a socialistic system.¹⁵ The Muslim Commissariat was created within the Commissariat of Nationalities.¹⁶ The principal task of the Commissariat was to ensure Socialist education of the people of the East, and to deliver the people from oppression, and instilling in the workers and the peasants, a liberating spirit of revolution. Delegates to the Muslims Commissariat called for the people to rise up against international imperialism and declared their intention for revolution.¹⁷

The next month the Central Bureau of the Muslim Organization of the Russian Communist Party announced it would organize a Department of International propaganda to spread the ideas of communism quickly in the East and to draw together all peoples of the East.¹⁸

Within a short time, the Soviet Union recognized that a small number of communists could not have a sufficient impact to overthrow imperialist regimes. From the time of the Third Communist International, a new policy was initiated which sought to secure the temporary collaboration of the nationalist bourgeoisie with

revolutionary communists. At the end of 1919 the call for the overthrow of the established order was replaced with a more practical approach. Speaking to the Second All-Round Russian Congress of Communist Organizations of the people of the East (that is, of Muslim communists) in December 1919, Lenin reiterated that although "final victory can be won only by the proletariat of all the advanced countries ... they will not be victorious without the aid of the toiling masses of all the oppressed colonial peoples ...".¹⁹ Lenin restated several of his pre-revolutionary themes as well: his listeners would have to adapt the "true Communist doctrine ... intended for the Communist of the more advanced countries" to peculiar conditions in which the bulk of the population were peasants and in which the struggle would be against not capitalism, but medieval survivals; and they would have to base themselves on "that bourgeois nationalism which is awakening ... among those people [of the East]".²⁰ It was this thinking which was subsequently to enable the Soviet Union to co-operate with the bourgeois regimes of King Husayn of Hejaz and later with Ibn Saud and Imam Yahya of Yemen.

Soviet attention gradually turned to the East, where revolutionary ferment in several countries, including Persia, Turkey and Afghanistan, seemed to offer new opportunities. The theme of co-operation between the peasants and the nationalist bourgeoisie was developed in July 1920 at the Second Congress of the Communist

International, where Lenin called on workers and peasants to collaborate with the revolutionary bourgeois movements in the colonies and backward countries, and even to align unconditionally even if the movement was in an embryonic stage.²¹ This speech and similar views expressed by Lenin has been described as the theoretical foundation for a practical drive to win the East.²²

The theses on the National and Colonial Question also declared that "it is the duty of the class-conscious Communist Proletariat of all countries to be ... particularly attentive to national feelings ... in countries and peoples that have been long enslaved ...". Despite these statements, the approval of "bourgeois-nationalist movements" was so conditional (if taken literally) as to make it almost meaningless; for pan-Islamic and other pan-Asiatic movements were excluded from the favoured category, and bourgeois movements were included only if they "would not oppose us in our efforts to educate and organize the peasantry and the mass of exploited people in general in the revolutionary spirit".²³

Additional moves were made to enlist the support of the colonized peoples in August 1920 when the Executive Committee called upon the peasants and workers of the East, including Syria, Arabia, and Mesopotamia, to attend a Congress in Baku. The invitation stressed:

If you organize yourselves, if you arm yourselves, if you unite with the Red Army of Russian workers and peasants will be able to defy the British, French and American capitalists. You will be able to get rid of them. You will liberate yourselves from your oppressors by allying yourselves with the other workers' republics in the world. Then the wealth of your country will really belong to you. In your own interests and in the interests of workers throughout the world, the products of labour will be exchanged equitably and we shall aid each other.²⁴

The passing of a resolution calling for the establishment of peasants' and workers' Soviet governments showed that hope had not been abandoned completely, but the high point of the Congress was zinoviev's proclamation, to the tumultuous acclaim of his audience, of a holy war against British imperialism. Nothing could be more indicative, however, of the movement of Soviet policy away from encouragement of revolutionary movements in the Eastern Countries.²⁵ The "holy war" was to be directed by the newly created permanent Council of Propaganda and Action as an auxiliary of the Third International. This Council was subdivided into three sections, the

first of which assumed responsibility of Turkey, Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Armenia, Georgia, Persia, Azerbaijan and Dagestan.²⁶

The tactical flexibility was well illustrated by Soviet policy toward Arabia in the 1920's although not holding much hope in the Arab countries in the immediate post-Revolutionary period.²⁷ The Congress held its session from September 8th, 1920. The absence of Arab sympathy for the objectives of the Congress is underlined by the fact that of the 1,891 delegates attending, only three were Arabs, and none of them signed the final communique. In this connection, it has been remarked that the impact of the Bolshevik Revolution was smaller in the Arab World than elsewhere in the East, due primarily to the prevailing French and British influence in the region.²⁸

The speakers representing the Russian Communist Party were Zinoviev and Pavlovich. These communist dignitaries exhorted the delegates to declare a holy war against the British and French capitalists and to join with Soviet Russia in a common struggle. Thus, it is apparent that the Russian Communists controlled the entire procedure of the Congress and were its main speakers, while the non-Russian representatives not only kept in the back-ground but very likely failed to understand what their illustrious leaders were so vehemently trying to convey to them.²⁹ Meantime, in seeking to explain the reasons for Turkey's being drawn into the Communist

International, Enver Pasha, who claimed to represent the Turks, spoke about "the similarity of our ideas". It appeared, indeed, that Enver claimed even a greater responsibility than that of a Turkish delegate. "Comrades", he said, borrowing extensively from his own imagination, "I wish to declare that the union of the revolutionary organizations of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Tripolitania, Egypt, Arabia and Hindustan, which has sent me here as its representative, is in complete agreement with you".³⁰ Moreover, the participants at the Congress displayed a marked ignorance of conditions in the Middle East.

The shift in Soviet policy after the Baku Congress, toward the East in the direction of co-operation with existing bourgeois nationalist movements and governments, regardless of their repressive policies toward native communities, was exemplified in the Near East by the signature of treaties with the governments of Afghanistan and Persia in 1921, and by the development of friendly relations with Kemalist Turkey. Although the Soviet leaders were motivated by a desire to encourage governments such as these to break with the west, they wished to do this as far as possible with gradual and unobtrusive methods which would not jeopardize the growing Soviet economic and diplomatic relations with the capitalists.³¹

The Third World Congress of the Communist International, which met in Moscow on June 22nd, 1921, took cognizance of the fact that a new

situation had arisen through the failure of immediate revolution in the West. Even though the revolutionary situation looked negative in the West, they did not come to the conclusion that the East might offer more promising possibilities.³²

After other Eastern delegates had spoken, contributing nothing new, Zinoviev introduced a guest speaker, Makhul Bey, fraternal delegate from the Committee of Revolutionary Muslims. The Revolutionary Muslims were an organization of nationalists from various Islamic countries, who sought to lead the different liberation movements into a common strategic path, and who entertained friendly relations with the Comintern. Makhul Bey painted a glowing picture of the revolutionary dynamism of the Muslims. He pointed to the fact that positive developments were taking place in Turkey, in Morocco (where a revolutionary committee tried to start an insurrection) in Tripoli (where the rebels were said to have killed 35,000 Italians, and to have seized 70,000 rifles), in Egypt (where occasional terrorism occurred), in Albania, Persia, India, and Java. The speaker furthermore mentioned the Amir Ibn Saud of Arabia and the Imam Yahya of Yemen as outstanding anti-imperialist fighters for their opposition to Britain's allies, a reference to King Husayn in the Hejaz and the Idrisi ub 'Asir.³³

In the course of the year 1921-1922, the process which the Third Congress had characterized as "stabilization of capitalism"

continued. More and more, the revolution seemed to be on the defensive. Reduced to its national bastion, the Soviet State, communism became increasingly identified with that bastion. The Soviet State thus continued to gain an ever greater ascendancy over the International. At the same time as the revolution became embodied in one particular leader country, the peripheral action of communism also continued to express itself in national forms.

Soviet Russia continued her policy of establishing relations based on friendly collaboration with the governments of the East, and especially with those which had a national character and sought to combat the colonizing influence of Western powers.³⁴ In 1922, it became apparent to Soviet Russia that the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat was a distant prospect in the West; rather anti-communism and conservatism in Europe were increasing. A different approach was taken with a moderate attitude toward the West. This enabled the Soviets to direct their attention more effectively towards the people of the East.³⁵

At the end of 1922, when the Fourth Congress of the Communist International met, it was obvious that the discussion of the national and colonial question was going to play an important role. The Congress seemed to weaken Soviet chances of good relations when it re-affirmed the importance of the East in the weakening of imperialism, and undertook to support "every national revolutionary

movement against imperialism". Nevertheless, while warning Communists that alliances with the bourgeoisie must be only temporary and partial and that the struggle for communist leadership of the national liberation movement and for the fulfilment of the demands of the poor classes must not be foresworn,³⁶ in fact the Congress expanded the category of social groups with whom, in certain circumstances, transitory alliances were acceptable, to include the "feudal aristocracy" and the pan-Islamic movement.³⁷

In March 1923 Lenin wrote essays on the importance of the East:

... The outcome of the struggle as a whole can be foreseen only because we know that in the long run capitalism is educating and training the vast majority of the population of the globe in the struggle. In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China. etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And it is precisely this majority that, during the past few years, has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest shadow of doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of Socialism is fully and absolutely assured.³⁸

In 1924, Stalin defined those to whom Communist support could be given. This of course did not mean that the proletariat must support every national movement, everywhere and always, in every single, concrete instance. The point was that support must be given to those national movements which tended to weaken imperialism and bring about the overthrow of imperialism, and not to strengthen and preserve it. Cases occur when the national movement in certain oppressed countries comes into conflict with the interests of the development of the proletarian movement. In such cases, of course, support is entirely out of the question. The rights of nations are not an isolated and self-contained question, but part of the general question of the proletarian revolution, a part which is subordinate to the whole and which must be dealt with from the point of view of the whole.³⁹

The unquestionably revolutionary character of the overwhelming majority of national movements is as relative and specific as the possible reactionary character of certain national movements. The revolutionary character of a national movement in the conditions of imperialist oppression does not necessarily pre-suppose the existence of proletarian elements in the movement, the existence of a revolutionary or a republican programme of the movement, the existence of a democratic basis for the movement. The struggle which the Amir of Afghanistan is waging for the independence of his country is objectively a revolutionary struggle, despite the

monarchist views of the Amir and his entourage, for it weakens, and undermines imperialism, where the struggle is waged by "desperate" democrats and "socialists", revolutionaries and republicans.⁴⁰

It seems queer that the cold, far-off Soviet Union should be interested in Arabia and yet she is - because the capital of Arabia is an outpost from which British imperialist policy can be observed, because Moscow wishes the Arabs to see a friend and moral supporter in the Soviet Union, and because the Bolsheviks, despite their atheistic policies, cannot wholly ignore the spiritual bond that connects their millions of Moslem citizens with the holy places of Islam. The Soviet Union is one of the greater Mohammedan countries. This was an acknowledgement that co-operation with non-Socialist and even monarchical systems was desirable. When King Husayn declared himself Caliph in March 6th, 1924, he sent a telegram to Chicherin announcing the fact, and on August 6th, 1924, normal diplomatic relations were established, Comrade Khekimou was sent to Jedda (the capital of the Hejaz) as agent and Consul of the U.S.S.R., and Amir Lotfalla arrived in Moscow as Minister of the Hejaz.⁴¹

Upon the collapse of the Hashemite regime in the Hejaz, the Soviet Union quickly recognized Ibn Saud's government and soon afterwards concluded a Treaty of Commerce and Friendship with Imam Yahya of Yemen, who was regarded as being anti-imperialist.⁴²

B It is a mistake to assume that Russian-Saudi relations started off in the 1920's and that the initiative was taken by Sharif Husayn in the Hejaz, before that country was annexed by Ibn Saud to his Kingdom.

Historical events show that King Abdul-Aziz had contacts with the Russian Consul in Bushehr (Iran) and Basrah (Iraq) at the end of the 19th century, while the Al-Saud family were refugees in Kuwait, because Ibn Rashid had driven them out of Najd and taken over that area. During this phase the Russians (not yet Bolshevik or Soviet) were a major power like Britain, striving to extend their influence and interests in the region. They too were attempting to communicate with Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saud and his son Abdul-Aziz, through the Consul in Bushehr and Basrah. The Russians were offering guns and funds with other aid to strengthen Ibn Saud's forces which he was preparing to attack Najd.⁴³

Sheikh Mubarak, ruler of Kuwait, dissuaded father and son from accepting the Russian offer, and instead encouraged them to turn towards British sources of generosity. Britain had already warned Mubarak not to keep up diplomatic relations with the Russian Consul in Bushehr. So Abdul-Rahman Ibn Saud directed his messages to the British Consul in Bushehr, requesting British protection for the Al-Saud dynasty, who were hoping to return and occupy Najd. Before Ibn Saud captured Riyadh in January 1902, Mubarak had tried to contact

the Russians in 1901, but Britain warned him against that move for fear of intensifying great power rivalries. Meanwhile Sir N. O'Connor, the British Ambassador in Turkey had sent a telegram to the Foreign Office on 12th May 1901, the gist of which was that the Kuwaiti ruler was plotting with the Russian Consul General in Baghdad through Abbas Alyof. Britain wanted the Kuwaiti ruler to put an immediate end to Abbas' plans. Otherwise the Russian profile would become too prominent in the future. On the same day the British Political Agent in Bushehr sent a telegram to the Foreign Office, in which he said he had received a message from a responsible Briton called Winslow on 12th May to the effect that Mubarak was plotting with the Russian Consul in Baghdad. Once more Mubarak received a warning from the British, because he had not grasped the international implications of the conspiracy for the struggle between the imperial powers to maintain influence. From that time Mubarak kept informing his British allies of all the contacts and correspondence between him and the Russians. The Russian Consul had thanked him in a note for his hospitality on his visit to Kuwait and asking him to convey greetings to Ibn Saud.⁴⁴

The Consul's message, dated 16th March 1902, came after Ibn Saud's capture of Riyadh. In March 1903 Abdul-Aziz came to Kuwait to greet Mubarak and urge him to persuade the British to extend their protection to Ibn Saud. However, Britain refused that request. In Kuwait the Russian Consul visited Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud offering aid,

but Abdul-Aziz turned the offer down, since he wanted no help other than British. The Secret Service Agent in Kuwait mentioned in a letter to Campbell dated 8th March 1903 that the Russian Consul was accompanied by a naval Captain and two Russian Officers as well as a French Naval Officer, a Captain, with two Officers. Their ships had arrived on the Kuwaiti coast on 6th March 1903. They had breakfast with Mubarak and then proceeded to meet Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, spending two hours with him.⁴⁵

Next day the Russian Consul and ten of his sailors along with the French Captain and ten of his sailors visited Sheikh Mubarak. The Consul offered him rifles. Then they visited Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud and offered him a mortar gun; they spent two hours together and when the time came to depart, they asked Abdul-Aziz to join them that they might show him the two ships; but Ibn Saud excused himself on the grounds of weariness, and sent his brother instead. This showed his reluctance to align himself with Russia for fear of losing the confidence of the British.⁴⁶

After 1902 relations between Russia and the Saudis came to an end, when Saudi-British relations became stronger. At the same time the Saudis made secret treaties with Turkey; that was in 1914. In that year Ibn Saud signed the first of his treaties with Britain. Russian attempts to contact Ibn Saud were retarded. All the while the Saudis were informing the British of these attempts. Thus,

Russian competition collapsed in the face of British funding and the assistance they gave to Ibn Saud.⁴⁷

Official relations between the Soviet Republics and Arabia were first established in 1924 with King Husayn of the Hejaz. After mutual recognition and the establishment of diplomatic relations,⁴⁸ on 6th August 1924, Comrade Karim Khakimov arrived in Jedda (the capital of the Hejaz) as the 'Agent et Consul Général de l'USSR, Près de Sa Majeste Hachimite Le Roi d' Arabia'.⁴⁹

Comrade Khakimov was accompanied by a first Secretary Tuimetov, a Tatar from Caucasus, formerly a clerk in a cotton factory who spoke Russian, Turkish, and Persian. He was a communist and much trusted by Khakimov. Second Secretary Naum Markovitch Belkin, a Russian Jew, employed pre-war as an engineer on the Baghdad railway spoke Russian, German and French. Excluded from the inner councils of Khakimov and Tuimetov was the Interpreter, Ibrahim Amirkhanov, of Russian Tatar origin. Educated partly at American College, Beirut, he spoke English, Arabic, Russian and Turkish.⁵⁰ Three ladies and three small children also accompanied them. When they arrived without suitable clothing and nowhere to live, King Husayn instructed that they be temporarily housed in the Kaimmakam's residence.⁵¹ The Kaimmakam of Jedda later directed them to the Director of the Custom House, where they lived miserably in four rooms while they hunted for a house.⁵²

Comrade Khakimov, a Muslim Tatar from Ufa, and an agitator spoke Russian, Turkish, Persian, Arabic and French. Previously he had worked with the Soviet Missions in Tehran and Meshed.⁵³ Being a Muslim, Khakimov had one advantage over his foreign colleagues; he could go to Mecca. He went there in a car provided by the King soon after his arrival. The mission seemed to have plenty of money, and two cars and a launch were said to be on the way for their use.⁵⁴

Shortly after Khakimov reached Jedda, Ibn Saud began his campaign into the Hejaz and the policies to be adopted towards Husayn and Ibn Saud became a matter for debate in Moscow. Ibn Saud's campaign led to the abdication and flight of King Husayn and the establishment of Ibn Saud's power over the Hejaz.⁵⁵ After the fall of Mecca to Ibn Saud, Chicherin, in a report to the Central Executive Relations on October 18th, 1924, observed:

The opening of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Hejaz, which plays such an important role in the movement for the creation of a united greater Arabia, occurred just before the blow to that movement delivered by the attack of the primitive tribes of Wahabites on the Hejaz, led by that opponent of Arabism, Ibn Saud. We hope that the Hejaz will come through all dangers satisfactorily.⁵⁶

In contrast, ten days earlier, the Comintern had observed that 'Ibn Saud was becoming the chief of a great national movement' and suggested that a victory would stir the Muslims to revolutionary action as far as India, especially against British imperialism.⁵⁷

The Soviet Mission in Jeddah observed a strict neutrality in the conflict between Ibn Saud and the Hachemites, deviating on only one occasion from this policy.⁵⁸ This occurred when Khakimov tried to enlist Ibn Saud into the Soviet Union's scheme for a great revolution of the East against the "Imperialist" and "Colonising" powers especially England. Ibn Saud temporized, and was threatened vaguely that the Hachemites would receive help.⁵⁹ During the Najd-Hejaz war, the Soviet government were inactive but Khakimov sent prodigiously long cypher telegrams to his government and twice sent Naum Belkin to Rome with despatches.⁶⁰ The Soviet government's view of Ibn Saud also evolved on the same lines as that of the Comintern. The Soviet leaders had come to regard Ibn Saud in a more favourable light. In an article in Novy Vostok in 1925, his Ikwan (brothers) policy was considered an "extraordinarily interesting political-social program", and the Wahabi campaign was said to be a "major blow to England's policy of creating an Arab vassal state".⁶¹

Ibn Saud, by asserting his control over both the Hejaz and Nejd, had become the standard bearer of a national Arab conception.⁶² The Soviets decided to support Ibn Saud against the Hachemites. They

temporarily lost an opportunity of strengthening their position in the Hejaz, King Husayn felt himself betrayed by the British, and he invited Bolsheviks to Jedda to spread anti-British propaganda.⁶³

On the capture of Jedda on 22nd December, 1925, Ibn Saud addressed a letter to Khakimov, the Soviet Consul, thanking the Soviets for their neutrality in his struggle against the Hachemites.⁶⁴ The Soviet Mission stayed in Jedda during the siege.⁶⁵ Until the end of 1925 'a large part' of the Comintern continued to support Ibn Saud's movement in the belief that it was through the agency of the Wahabis that the British and French could be expelled from the Middle East. Similarly, Imam Yahya of the Yemen received praise from the Comintern as a revolutionary opposed not only to the pro-British Idrisi in 'Asia but also to the British in the Aden protectorate.⁶⁶

However, by the end of the year, after Ibn Saud had been in contact with the British, and Imam Yahya's reliance on Mussolini had increased, the Comintern abandoned the pretence that its 'anti-imperialist heroes' were genuinely revolutionaries.⁶⁷

In 1926 the Soviet government accorded Ibn Saud its fullest support. When in February Ibn Saud declared himself King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Najd, the Soviets were the first to recognize the new title.⁶⁸

The Comintern welcomed Abdul-Aziz' since they regarded him and Imam Yahya as independent Arab leaders opposed to British influence, whereas the Hashemite family, who the British had installed as monarchs in Transjordan and Iraq, were dependent for their position on 'imperialism'. After Abdul-Aziz was successful in uniting the Arab tribes in 1925 and claimed the title of King in January 1925, the USSR became the first state to recognize the government of Ibn Saud, by according him diplomatic recognition on 16th February, 1926. In response to the recognition, King Ibn Saud permitted the Soviet Mission in Jedda to remain.⁶⁹

On 16th February, 1926, Comrade Khakimov, the Agent and Consul General of the USSR forwarded a letter to the new King, which stated:

"By authorization from my government, and from the principles of people's right to determine their own dynasties along with the full respect to the will of the Saudi people to choose you as a King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Najd and its territories. Accordingly, the government of the Soviet Union considers itself in a natural diplomatic status with your government".⁷⁰

The King responded in a letter dated 19th February, 1926, which stated:

We have the honour to receive your letter of 3 Shapan, 1344 (16th February, 1926), No. 22, informed of the recognition by the government of the USSR of the new rule in the Hejaz, and the choice of Hejaz people for me to be King of the Hejaz and Sultan of Najd and its territories. My government expresses its thanks to your government and announces its full determination to establish diplomatic relations with the government of the Soviet Union as they apply to any friendly nation. Let the relations between our two governments be on a mutual respect grounds aimed at defending the full independence of the Holy Places and all other international traditions recognized by all nations".⁷¹

Ibn Saud thus responded with a warm letter of thanks but the British Consul in Jeddah observed that Ibn Saud had tied his hands by this ready acceptance of Soviet recognition of his kingship over the Hejaz. The King's declared policy of the brotherhood of the world's Muslims would, however, be seriously compromised if he refused representation in the Holy Places to millions of Soviet Muslims.⁷²

This letter was followed by a response from Comrade Khakimov dated April 2nd, 1926, which read:

"Your Majesty:

My government received with pleasure the letter of correspondence between your Majesty and the representative of the Soviet Union (Comrade Khakimov) which took place on February 16-18th, 1926, and resulted in establishing diplomatic relations between our two governments.

We are confident about the success of your important duties in external and internal policy which ultimately will lead to total benefits the Arab people.

My government will be very pleased if your Majesty will accept the humble gifts which are considered as a memorial for establishing diplomatic relations between our countries. We are also confident that your care for our representative in Mecca will facilitate his duty toward mutual benefits for both countries. The friendly relations that we establish between our two countries will increase in the future for the benefit of the Arab people and people of the Soviet Union".⁷³

On 2nd July, 1926, the Soviet Union's support of Ibn Saud at the Mecca Congress contributed to his overcoming opposition to his sovereignty of the Holy Places.⁷⁴ The Bolsheviks allowed the Chief Ecclesiastical Directorate of the Mohammedan Mosque in Russia with

headquarters in Ufa to send a strong delegation to the Mecca Congress, and thus contributed appreciably to the reinforcement of Ibn Saud's position in the Moslem world. Though relatively of minor importance, Moscow seeks in this and other ways to remind the Arabs of the existence of a big anti-imperialist power.⁷⁵

This support and the Soviet Union's early recognition of Ibn Saud as King of Hejaz led him to regard the Soviets with particular favour. It became a cause of concern to the British and Dutch governments who feared the effect of unbridled Soviet propaganda on their nationals participating in the hejj. The Soviet Consulate staff in Jedda had limited consular functions since the Soviets had arrived for the pilgrimage since the 1917 Revolution, thus freeing it to devote its efforts to propaganda. The Soviets themselves admitted that Hejazis were 'ignorant and ill-fitted to assimilate the advanced Soviet ideas', but that the hejj offered an 'excellent opportunity' to contact some of the most influential persons of the Islamic world and to spread socialist ideas among them. Soviet ideology would thus reach 'the minds of people who in their own country would be almost unapproachable'.⁷⁶

Despite these protestations the Hejazis were unresponsive to their propaganda. In Mecca Khakimov was watched too closely to indulge freely in propaganda, but he lost no opportunity of speaking against the British government and preaching the mission of the

Soviet Union to liberate the East.⁷⁷

The Soviet Agency gave a big festival on the occasion of the Soviet National Day. Practically all the Hejazi government officials were present.

Khakimov was unexpectedly heard boasting that Ibn Saud and his people were Bolsheviks. On 30th January, 1926, the late Egyptian Consul described Khakimov as a very capable and cunning man who had succeeded in winning over a certain Kasim Zainal, a wealthy merchant of Persian origin, influential and in high favour with Ibn Saud. Khakimov also succeeded in convincing the people of Jedda that the Soviet government was their best friend. He was in full confidence of Ibn Saud and the Soviet Agency Staff was very popular and loved.⁷⁸

Further opportunities for the Soviet Agency to spread propaganda occurred during the Mecca Congress when members of the Soviet delegation readily opened their house to any guests who presented themselves.⁷⁹ On 1st January, 1926, Khakimov paid a visit to Mecca and it was reported from a reliable source that his object was to organize Bolshevik propaganda amongst the pilgrims en route from Jedda to Mecca and that with the pilgrims from the Soviet Union, a number of special agitators were expected.⁸⁰ It was also suspected that the Soviet Consulate in Jedda was behind extremist articles in

the Egyptian and Sudanese press. Communist outbreaks in the Dutch East Indies were also attributed to the same source.⁸¹

Amin Bey Tewfiq the Egyptian Consul said that, in his opinion, the whole Soviet organization in the Hejaz constituted a real danger to those powers whose nationals were easily infected by the Bolshevik virus. From such an ideal distributing centre Bolshevik propaganda could be scattered through the Islamic world. He also thought that the Soviet agents would have an easy task to their corruption of Hejaz officials, more especially of the Syrians in the administration. These Syrians were adventurers and would be easily amenable to corruption.⁸² A Soviet-protected person, Sheikh Abdullah Musa al-Buk-ari, was suspected, in collaboration with Khakimov, of spreading Communist ideology among Indian pilgrims.⁸³

Lord Birkenhead said that it was desirable to take all possible steps to minimise the utilisation of the Hejaz pilgrimage as a means for the dissemination of Bolshevik propaganda, and to prevent Ibn Saud himself (if there was any risk of this) from falling under the influence of the Soviet government.⁸⁴ The Dutch Consul in Jedda was reported to be in possession of information that Khakimov had indulged in violent propaganda, partly against the Netherlands government but mainly against Britain.⁸⁵

The Um-el-Kura of the 15 contained the following official

notification:

"The newspaper 'Al-Ahram' published in its number of 28th November, 1926, an article taken from the 'Journal des Debats' entitled 'Javanese Communists and the Dutch Legation in Egypt'. It said that the Dutch Legation over a year ago wrote a report, since proved to be untrue, to the effect that the members of the Bolshevik Agency in Jedda are working to spread the spirit of Communism among Moslem pilgrims and are distributing revolutionary literature among them.

As such news is untrue and as the Hejaz government is satisfied that no such (Bolshevik) activities exist in all the Hejaz, the Hejaz government wrote to the Dutch government through the Dutch Consul in Jedda requesting that enquiries be made into the sources of this false rumour.

The reply of the Dutch Consul has now been received, after proper investigation. He denies the whole matter, and states that neither the Dutch Legation in Egypt nor any member of its staff has made a report in that sense. The news, therefore, is quite false".⁸⁶

From the point of view of general British interests, it is evident that some importance must be attached to the presence in the Hejaz of an active Soviet Mission. The advantages of Mecca and the Hejaz generally as a headquarters for anti-European agitation in the Near and Far East need hardly be dwelt upon. Not only did Moslems from all over the world come to the Hejaz for the pilgrimage, but they also settled for religious study at Mecca and Medina during periods varying from six months to several years. Among these pilgrims and students there must have been many who, by their contemplative and theorising natures, afforded excellent material for the inflammatory half-truths of the propagandist. In Mecca malcontents from Morocco could meet refugees from Syria, and agitators from India could compare grievances with their sympathisers from Java and Sumatra. It ought to have been easy for Soviet agents in Mecca to get into touch with Muslim peoples from all over the world.⁸⁷

The atmosphere of the Hejaz may differ from that of ordinary countries. The air did not blow freely there. There were no free newspapers, no easy means of communication with the outer world; the Hejaz was an enclosed space in which prejudice and misconception would spring up rapidly. Religion and the jealous conservation of religious exclusiveness accentuated the difference between the Hejaz and the rest of the world.

The Soviet Foreign Department considered the Hejaz as a promising post from which to encourage a cleavage between East and West, but it would have been a bad plan for Khakimov to plunge into active propaganda immediately the Soviet Mission was established. The present ruler of the country was friendly rather than antagonistic to the great colonial powers, and found that his business was very much with them. On Great Britain, Holland and France depended to some extent the survival and the prosperity of the Hejaz. Ibn Saud could not afford to view with indifference any tampering with India, or Javanese or Moroccan pilgrims while in Haj. The Soviets knew this, and realised that their cue, at the beginning, was to avoid arousing suspicion. Their best plan was to impress upon the people and authorities of the Hejaz that they represented their country in the ordinary Consular (or diplomatic) way, that they ate, drank, joked and grew weary as do other Moslem portions of the Soviet Union to supply them with considerable work in the future. The idea of 10,000 possible Soviet pilgrims from Central Asia was music enough in Hejaz ears.⁸⁸

A letter from Khakimov, intercepted in Alexandria, referred to his (Khakimov's) activities directed toward the creation of Communist organization in the Middle East.⁸⁹ The Egyptian Consul suggested that it should without delay consider co-operating with Ibn Saud to check the Bolshevik infiltration, the dangers of which to all Muslim countries under our aegis, especially to the Sudan and Egypt.

Obviously it was doubtless not to his interest that Bolshevism should find a centre of propaganda in the Hejaz. From a remark let drop by Amin Bey Tewfiq it would seem that some Hejaz officials at any rate were apprehensive lest Bolshevik propaganda in the Hejaz might induce the foreign governments concerned to discourage their subjects from making the pilgrimage. It seems, anyhow, possible that Ibn Saud and his government might co-operate to circumscribe Bolshevik activities in the Hejaz.⁹⁰

The widespread circulation of communist propaganda in Hejaz and in the other parts of the Middle East provoked the British authorities to suggest that Ibn Saud be urged to check Soviet influence in the Hejaz. In November 1925 from Cairo, Lord Lloyd advocated that Ibn Saud be persuaded to sever his relations with Soviet Russia.⁹¹ Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary, was convinced that the severance of relations between Ibn Saud and the Soviet Union was desirable, but the Foreign Office left it to the discretion of the British Consul in Jeddah as to whether to approach Ibn Saud on the subject of Soviet subversion among pilgrims in the Hejaz.⁹²

From Jeddah, Consul Jordan was warned that although the British government had no right to request Ibn Saud to curb Soviet activities, the King could be informed very confidentially of what the Soviets were doing. With regard to Soviet propaganda in Egypt, the Foreign Office observed that it was the responsibility of the

Egyptian authorities, and not Ibn Saud to curtail Soviet activity among the Egyptians.⁹³

The Soviets prepared a more serious attempt to acquire influence among the pilgrims when it was announced that food supplies would be dispatched to Jedda for 'gratuitous distribution' among pilgrims. 'A mission of propagandists' would also arrive 'for work among the pilgrims'.⁹⁴ Van der Meulen, the Dutch Consul in Jedda warned Ibn Saud that if Mecca was permitted to become a centre of anti-Dutch activities the Dutch government would be obliged to change its pilgrim policy. In reply, Ibn Saud stressed that Mecca must be a Holy City, not a centre of political activities.⁹⁵

On 10th May, 1927, another letter was sent to Ibn Saud by Comrade Kalenine, the Soviet President, which stated:

"Your Majesty,

After receiving your interesting letter which was handed by your son, Prince Faisal, during his visit. I share with you the true feelings of pleasure in establishing friendship ties between the Soviet Union and the Arab people. I hope I will have a chance in the future to greet your son in the Soviet Union, to whom I will be able to express the friendship and sincere feeling toward the fulfilment of the Arab people's desire for a course of

national unity and social progress that has been achieved by people of the Soviet Union.

Your Majesty, please accept my best wishes and my salutes".⁹⁶

Trade between the two countries began. Ships sailed from Odessa bringing Soviet goods to Jedda. The merchandise, however, was dumped in the market at extremely low prices and the merchants complained.⁹⁷

Haji Abdull, the Kaimmakam of Jedda, appeared to have heard of a paragraph in the "Times" to the effect that a Soviet ship "Tomp" was bringing pilgrims, flour and sugar to Jedda, and that it was hoped to establish a regular commercial service between Odessa and Hejaz. Haji Abdullah reminded Acting Vice-Consul Jakins that last year a Soviet vessel had called at the height of the pilgrimage season when, apart from a little natural curiosity, she had attracted no great attention. The flour she had brought had been easily absorbed. The Kaimmakam went on to say, however, that the question of establishing a regular service was a very different proposition, and if, as was rumoured, the Soviets intended to under sell the current market price, the Jedda merchants would sustain heavy losses on the stocks in hand and would be compelled to place future orders in the Soviet Union instead of India.

A Soviet agency had been touting the market for buyers, freely offering flour and sugar at £1 a ton less than the current price, and adding that he was prepared to undercut the market at any price. As soon as this news reached the Kaimmakam's ears he acted quickly. Calling together the chief merchants of the town, he drew up a memorial for their signature and sent it off to Mecca, begging for protection. As a result a meeting was arranged at Bahra, on the Mecca road, at which the Prince Feisal, the Acting Assistant Viceroy and the Director for Foreign Affairs met for discussion with the Kaimmakam and another representative Jedda merchant.⁹⁸ As a consequence of the meeting the Director of Foreign Affairs burst into Jedda on the morning of the arrival of the Soviet ship "Tomp" on 11th November, 1927, to inform the Consuls concerned that the plan, of which there had been vague rumours in the town, of levying some sort of discriminatory tax on Soviet goods, which would bring their prices up to market level, had been abandoned, and it had been decided to impose a boycott on the Soviet goods.

The Italian and Egyptian Agencies, who had followed the course of events with considerable anxiety, readily agreed to the proposal and immediately had their merchants warned. The 12th November, 1927, therefore, heralded a series of skirmishes between the Kaimmakam and the Bolsheviks, who, in the face of such opposition, were straining every nerve to prevent their venture ending in failure and passed in their interminable squabbles with lightermen, custom and municipal

officials, all of whom had been instructed to place every conceivable obstacle in the way of the new trades.

On 13th November, 1927, six Soviets had arrived by the vessel to take over the direction of Soviet commercial interests in the Hejaz.⁹⁹ The Italian Agent was immediately up in arms. Obviously, if the Soviets had brought their own commercial personnel they could themselves sell the wares. He therefore asked H. G. Jakins to join him in an official protest. Permission had been refused, he said, to certain Italians who had wished to establish themselves in Jedda, and in view of the grave political interests involved he was not going to stand by and meekly see the country thrown open to the Bolsheviks. Dr. Cesano, the Italian Agent reported to the Kaimmakam that the six new Soviets had no Hejazi visas on their passports. The opportunity which now presented itself was too good for Haji Abdullah to miss, and he issued an order that the Bolsheviks were to return to their ship at once. At this, the unfortunate individuals not unnaturally took refuge in the Soviet Agency, and when, later in the day, two ventured into the street, they were promptly seized by the police and clapped into goal.

In the face of this affront the Bolshevik representative set off for Mecca to see Prince Faisal, threatening that if he received no satisfaction he would go to Riyadh and see the King himself. While the ship was being unloaded and buyers again being sought in vain it

was decided that two of the six, one a doctor and the other a Consular secretary, should be allowed to remain. The other four must return from where they came. Consequently, when the "Tomp" steamed out of Jedda harbour on the 16th November the staff of the proposed Soviet commercial bureau went with her.¹⁰⁰

The attitude of the Hejaz' government towards the Bolsheviks is interesting. It was generally admitted that in internal politics the government had little to fear from the Bolsheviks. It was highly unlikely that the Soviet government would waste time upsetting this primitive monarchy while the Mecca Pilgrimage gave them unique opportunities for easy propaganda in the East. Their interests were best served by a stable government in the Hejaz to guarantee a regular influx of pilgrims. It is, therefore, difficult to believe that the Hejaz government took drastic action to oppose the consolidation of Soviet interests through nervousness of its own immunity from attack. The Minister for Foreign Affairs talked to Vice-Consul Jakins very largely of what the government, as represented by himself, did, and went so far as to say that if the Bolsheviks had not given themselves up he would have sent in to their agency and had them brought out. When the Bolsheviks representative saw Prince Faisal at Mecca he was informed that the government had no knowledge of the "Tomp", and it is clear that the King in Riyadh was not consulted. Indeed, it would not be surprising if the ship sailed before the King was aware of its

arrival.

All the evidence, in fact, points to the Kaimmakam as the hero of the piece. It must be remembered that not only was he the leading authority in the town, but he was also the biggest merchant.¹⁰¹

The Bolshevik representative apologised to the Hejaz' government for the technical breach of the regulations regarding entry of foreigners into the Hejaz. This, in itself, was a significant indication of the attitude which the Soviet government was likely to adopt. Kaimmakam imagined that he had frightened the Bolsheviks away for good, but he had probably under-rated their persistence. A single rebuff would not cause the Bolsheviks to abandon their scheme for a regular commercial service extending down the eastern coast of the Red Sea as far as Aden. Next time they would be better prepared, and it remained to be seen what effective measures could be taken to oppose them.¹⁰²

Khakimov sent a letter to Yousf Yasin, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hejaz upon Ibn Saud's assumption of the title of King of Najd dated 15th April, 1927, No. 162.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that my government has instructed me to advise you that it has taken notice of the Sultanate of Najd into a

kingdom under the name "Kingdom of Najd and Annexed Territories" and regarding the proclamation of His Majesty the King of Hejaz, Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud, as King under the name "Kingdom of Najd and Annexed Territories". In this connection my government sends its highest congratulations to His Majesty.¹⁰³

This did not decrease Ibn Saud's growing distrust of Soviet intentions. Instead he moved closer to Britain with whom he concluded the Treaty of Jeddah in May 1927. In the second article of the treaty each party undertook to use "all means" to prevent its territories from being used as a base for 'unlawful activities directed against peace and tranquillity in the territories of the other party'. Ibn Saud had thus undertaken to limit the activities of the Russian Consulate.¹⁰⁴

Many foreign powers were actively occupied in the Hejaz in ousting British trade and securing Hejaz's market, the most active among these powers were the Soviets.¹⁰⁵ In January 1928, Ibn Saud raised the question of Soviet economic influence in Arabia.¹⁰⁶ He also raised the question of the danger of Bolshevik' propaganda in the Hejaz in his letter to Lord Lloyd. Ibn Saud was prepared to control Bolshevik trade activities and combat Bolshevik propaganda in his dominions in return for assistance from his Majesty's government.

There seemed little reason to doubt the ability of Ibn Saud to control the Bolshevik activities in his dominions, should he find it in his interest to do so. The question was what His Majesty's Government could properly offer him.¹⁰⁷

Ibn Saud fully realised that the Hejaz might easily be made a centre of anti-British propaganda by Soviet agents who might seek to instil their ideas into the minds of pilgrims.¹⁰⁸ He had at all costs to prevent the dissemination of Bolshevik propaganda in the Hejaz because of the fear that pilgrims may be contaminated. It might appear at first glance that this danger was one to cause alarm to the governments of India, the Dutch East Indies, Malaya and Egypt rather than to Ibn Saud himself. The suspicion, however, that pilgrims were imbibing in the Hejaz the poison of Communistic doctrines would be quite sufficient to justify the governments affected in withdrawing from the pilgrimage their special sanction and support. The Soviet representative did not hide his disappointment at the meagre results obtained by his agency during their four years stay in the Hejaz. The open attempts to influence Ibn Saud in which Khakimov appears to have indulged in his first appointment here met with definite snubs. The Soviets' latest endeavour to gain favour and influence by the introduction and distribution of cheap food-stuffs had met with an equally decided check.¹⁰⁹

It was more difficult than might appear to "get at" pilgrims. From the moment of their arrival at Jedda they passed, according to their nationality, under the control of Mutawifs or their agents and no person of other nationality might attach himself to any party. Any attempts by an unauthorised person to visit these parties of pilgrims would be immediately detected in Mecca, where, owing to the concentration of all pilgrims in houses in the proximity of the Mosque, close surveillance was easily effected.¹¹⁰

Faud Hamza the Hejaz Foreign Minister admitted that it was to the interests both of His Majesty's government and the Hejaz that the Soviet activity in the Hejaz be carefully watched. Hamza assured Mr. Stonehewer-Bird that there was nothing to fear on that score. The Soviet government had, however, evolved a more insidious scheme for gaining favour with the people and pilgrims in the Hejaz and undermining British interests, namely, by sending to the Hejaz consignments of produce, sugar, flour, etc., for sale at much lower rates than those prevailing in the market for similar Indian commodities. The King had so far placed every obstacle in the way of unloading and selling of Soviet goods in the Hejaz. The latest instance was that of the Soviet ship "Kommunist", which had arrived four days earlier in Jedda with a considerable cargo. She had sailed without being permitted to unload a single bale. The King was acting, in his own view, against the commercial interests of the country in prohibiting the import of cheap commodities; he was also

laying himself open to criticism by the pilgrims who were asked to pay higher prices for Indian produce. His sole object in pursuing this policy was his desire to do nothing which might in any way harm British interests. At the same time he could not reconcile it to his conscience that by so acting he was causing material loss to his people.¹¹¹

Stonehewer-Bird replied that, while he felt justified in saying that His Majesty's Government would fully appreciate the mark of His Majesty's loyalty and friendship, he ventured to make two observations: one, that the attempt of the Soviet Union to oust British Indian trade would meet with strong opposition from the leading merchants, most of whom had been for years in business relations with India, and neither could nor would lightly transfer their allegiance; secondly, the Soviet Union could not afford indefinitely to supply goods at less than their economic price; these shipments of cheap goods were, as he himself realised merely propaganda whereby the Soviet Union hoped to gain a footing.¹¹²

Again the Soviet attempt to distribute free food and dispose of sugar and flour at low prices aroused the opposition not only of the Indian merchants but, also from the governor of Jedda who himself had important business interests.¹¹³ In 1928 the King embargoed all Soviet goods, and the Soviets were unable to persuade him to sign a trade agreement. As the King sought to limit contacts with the

USSR, Soviet interest in the Saudis soon waned. Contacts were infrequent until 1932.¹¹⁴

Khakimov's departure thus very probably marked the end of the first stage in the existence of the Soviet Agency at Jedda. From all appearances, that stage had been mainly a passive one. If the agency was to awaken to a more militant new life, signs of the change might be expected towards the end of the that year.¹¹⁵

On 28th May, 1932, a delegation from the Kingdom of Hejaz and Najd and its dependencies arrived in Moscow. It was headed by Prince Faysal, son of King Ibn Saud and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Viceroy of the Hejaz. With him were Faud-by Humza, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs; Major Khelid Al-eiyubi, Prince Faysal's adjutant; and Said Shagir Assemen, Secretary to the delegation. The delegation was met at the Polish frontier by the Chief of the First Eastern Division of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, Pastukhov; the referent of the Division, Polishov; and the former Minister to Hejaz, Comrade Khakimov.¹¹⁶

On 29th May, 1932, Izvestiya, in it's No. 147, in a leading article, described the historical rise of the Kingdom, including a statement that after having used the Arabs against Turkey, England had not kept its promise in the treaty of 1915 to King Husayn to create an independent Kingdom of Arabia under him, but divided the country up

with France, leaving Yemen as the only independent portion. "But", says Izvestiya, "the mighty influence of the October Revolution in Russia also had an effect on the Arabian East". The Arabian people undertook to create a national state by its own efforts and King Husayn was driven out of the Hejaz and a new state arose, consisting of the Hejaz, Najd and the territories attached to the Najd. "The Soviet Union was the first, and without any reservations, to recognize the independence of the new state and established normal diplomatic relations with it". The Soviet paper stated that the fact of the existence of a large independent national state on the Arabian Peninsula undoubtedly had great international importance and quoted approvingly the statement of the Rome monthly Oltremare to the fact that Arabia was no longer a Turkish province but was now divided into a number of states born of new nationalism developing there, that Arabia was a centre of international communication uniting three continents, and that it had a growing trade importance.¹¹⁷

On its arrival in Moscow the delegation was met by Acting Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Krestinski; the Assistant Commissar, Karakhon; member of the Collegium, Stomoniskov; Assistant Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs, Kamenov; other military and Moscow officials, together with a military escort and the Persian Ambassador.¹¹⁸ The delegation was received and entertained by Kalenin, President of the Central Executive Committee, and other

usual social amenities were extended to it. The delegation visited the Red Army House and a horse show, the October Camp, the Military Aviation Academy, the AMO automobile factory in Moscow before proceeding to Leningrad for 3rd and 4th June. After returning to Moscow the delegation left for Odessa and Istanbul. The Chief of the Protocol Section of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs was to accompany the delegates to the latter city.¹¹⁹

A speech was delivered by Kalenin, the Soviet President, on 29th May 1932, to honour the delegation. His comments were as follows:

"Your Highness:

It is my pleasure to have you here in the Soviet Union. You represent a friendly nation, and I salute the King through you. Through the past years the relations between our two nations has been very friendly and true. Without a doubt your visit is one happy side of our relations. I greet you in the capital of the Soviet Union as you represent one of the Arab peoples that has acquired full independence by the virtues of the King's bravery and leadership during World War I. The independence of the State is an important condition to the cultural and economics of the Soviet people and the government is looking very closely and seriously to the successful development of your government policy which

aims at defending the independence of the Arab nation and to achieve a high level of economic and cultural welfare. I am confident that friendship between our two nations responds directly to the interest and benefit of our people. Your visit to the Soviet Union will increase the strength of our friendship.

I urge you to carry my best wishes of good health and prosperity to King Abdul Aziz and I greet you warmly as a representative of a friendly nation and a leader of its Foreign Affairs. I truly wish the continuation of progress and prosperity to your people and to our friendly relations every strength and support".¹²⁰

As a result of Prince Faysal's visit, the Soviet Union offered to forgive a debt of 30,000 pounds sterling that the government had never paid, ironically, for the import of petroleum products. Moscow also offered a loan of one million pounds if the King would lift the trade embargo and sign both a commercial trade and a treaty of friendship. The King later ended the trade embargo but did not sign any treaty or accept a loan.¹²¹

On 3rd June, 1932, Pravda reported that Leningrad industry would take part in the permanent exhibitions of Soviet export goods being organized in Hejaz by the All-Union Chamber of Commerce.¹²² The

Moscow Daily News weekly edition of 5th June, 1932, contained an article on the visit of the delegation to the Hejaz.¹²³

Saudi-Soviet relations then became fairly inactive. The Soviets saw that Ibn Saud would not take active measures to challenge the British position in Arabia but was co-operating with London instead. Indeed, the Soviets themselves sought to co-operate with the British as the power of Hitler's Germany grew stronger. Whether it was to improve relations with London or for some other reason, in 1938 the Soviets withdrew their diplomatic mission from Saudi Arabia as well as from Yemen, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Persia.¹²⁴

April 1937 witnessed a brief revival of Soviet interest in Saudi affairs. The new doctor, M. Stepukov who arrived in Jedda to re-open the Soviet dispensary, knew only Russian when he arrived. He informed His Majesty's Minister soon after his arrival that he was swamped with patients sometimes as many as eighty in a day, but in November he said that his daily attendance was twenty to thirty (this was at a time when the British Indian doctor attached to His Majesty's Legation was seeing some two hundred patients a day).¹²⁵

The members of the Soviet Legation frequented local houses assiduously, and it was remarked that they learnt colloquial Arabic quickly. Ali Fattahov a new Soviet Secretary who replaced Khakimov, was popular and loved by the Hejaz' people.¹²⁶ His wife, a Turkish-

speaking Moslem, spent several months during the summer staying with the Turkish wife of Prince Faysal.¹²⁷

The Saudi Minister in London, Hafiz Wahba, informed the Foreign Office that if Ibn Saud could not get a small air mission from His Majesty's Government he might apply to the Soviet Union, the King realised the advantages that would result if he obtained assistance from some country like Holland or a Scandinavian country, which had no political interest in the Middle East, but a Soviet Mission would cost much less. It was thought at first that the King had "White" Russians in mind, but Hafiz Wahba asserted that it was a Soviet Mission that was in question, and that an offer had been made by the Soviet Embassy in Paris when Prince Saud was there. It seems, however, that Wahba was under a misapprehension. Fuad Bey assured His Majesty's Minister that there was no question of accepting a Soviet Mission and that Wahba must have been mistaken.¹²⁸

In 1938 members of the Soviet Legation contacted numerous government offices in Jeddah when the opportunity was taken to spread propaganda. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded by instructing all foreign missions to communicate with the Ministry alone. Apart from this brief flurry of activity, the Soviet Legation staff occupied itself with translating propaganda leaflets into Arabic.¹²⁹

These were to be among the last acts of the Soviets in the Hejaz for in May 1939 the Soviet government announced the closure of its Missions in both Saudi Arabia and the Yemen as a 'gesture of disapproval' at the Anglo-Italian Agreement concluded earlier that year.¹³⁰ The true reason for the closure of the Mission remained 'obscure' but the Soviet Union's general policy was 'to reduce foreign contacts'.¹³¹

Dr. Stepukov had settled down in Jedda, was living with a white Russian engineer named Max, who was employed in the Saudi Air Force. The doctor had applied for a license for practising in Jedda, the Health Department had agreed to grant his application, so that he could become an additional foreign doctor in Jedda. He appears to have been well-esteemed as a doctor, though his value to Arabs was diminished by the fact that he hardly spoke a word of Arabic, or any language except Russian.¹³²

A great many current stories were concerning the circumstances of his refusal to leave with the rest of the Mission. One story says that he told the Charge d'Affaires, Ali Fattohov, that he was quite sure he would be killed when he got back to the Soviet Union, so it would save a good deal of trouble if Fattohov would oblige him by killing him on the spot. Another story says that before leaving Jedda for the second and last time, Fattohov obtained from the government a certificate showing that he had tried his best to

persuade the doctor to come, without success; but the Kiammakam denied this story. Mr. Trott thought that Dr. Stepukov would eventually receive Saudi nationality. The Kiammakam also expressed great concern for the fate of Fattohov, who, he said, was not a Russian at all but a Turk, and a good Moslem.¹³³

According to one writer, those members of the Soviet Mission who returned to Moscow from Saudi Arabia were put to death by order from Stalin on account of the failure of the Soviet Mission in Arabia.¹³⁴ In Saudi Arabia the Soviets had gained from "the slight propaganda value of their doctor, they have never had any pilgrims. The Legation has long been little more than a translation bureau from Arab newspapers'.¹³⁵

B From the end of World War II until Stalin's death in 1953, few references are available as to any contact between the two nations. During the fifties and early sixties the Soviet Union was feeling its way in the politics of the Arabian Gulf. Its attitudes and comments were frequently contradictory. Soviet writers could not make up their minds whether the United States and Britain were bitter rivals there, or whether they were working hand in glove. Kuwait remained virtually a colony in their eyes, until independence in 1961. The same was true of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates which were still under British protection until their independence in 1971. In 1953, a Soviet writer gave full support to Iran's claim to Bahrain, stating that union with Iran was what the people wanted. In later years, such backing was no longer given.¹³⁶

The militant and unsympathetic propaganda line and the passive policy which the USSR conducted toward the Arab East until Stalin died was reflected in attitudes and policy regarding the Arabian Peninsula countries.¹³⁷ The Soviet Union made no attempt to develop closer ties with Saudi Arabia, but adopted a "wait and see" position. However, in 1956, a new line of propaganda began for the purpose of re-shaping the thinking of the Arab World mainly toward the West.¹³⁸ The Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopedia regarding Saudi Arabia Wahhabi dogma argued that it had originally had some progressive ingredients such as the unification of the tribes against Turkish rule. However, it condemned its transformation into

a reactionary ideology guarding a colonial feudal regime and directed against the national-liberation struggle in Arabia, against advanced democratic ideas".¹³⁹

The Soviets were not in favour of the Saudis allowing the United States to build and operate an air base in Dhahran, "the only base from which American bombers can reach the industrial centres of the Soviet Union. Ibn Saud was accused to selling out to the Americans. Surprisingly, even this most serious charge was not followed by direct bitter attacks; Soviet propagandists preferred, then as later, to depict Saudi Arabia and its ruler as victims of Western imperialism. An important aspect of this picture was a vitriolic campaign against Western oil companies operating in the area. These companies (and especially Aramco) were often described as ruling their concession areas like a state within a state, and were regularly reported to be plundering the Middle East, reaping gigantic profits mainly because of their inhuman exploitation "of the native workers, and beggarly wages".¹⁴⁰

The Soviet coverage of the Arabian Peninsula in the late 1940's and early 1950's such as it was, dealt mainly with the activities of the oil companies and with the competition of Britain and the United States for control of new sources of oil. Saudi Arabia received some individual attention.¹⁴¹ The Soviet Union's attitude toward Saudi Arabia reflected Stalin's toward Third World Nations in

general. The relation between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union would not change until a new leader was appointed.

The death of Stalin brought a fundamental change in Soviet policy toward the Middle East. Although the Soviets had begun to take the side of the Arabs in the Arab-Israeli conflict as early as 1954, when Malenkov was still Premier, the real change in Soviet policy did not emerge until Khrushchev ousted Malenkov from the premiership in February 1955. Unlike Stalin, Khrushchev was not afflicted with a two-camp view of the world. Instead, he saw the world as being divided into three main zones or blocs - the Soviet bloc, the capitalist bloc, and the Third World, which he hoped to win over to communism through political support and large doses of economic and military aid.¹⁴² By 1954, however, the Soviets had become somewhat more optimistic about the Arabian Peninsula. Undoubtedly the main factor in this change of mood was the more flexible way of looking at the underdeveloped world and its nationalism which developed in Moscow in 1952 and 1953; this allowed policy-makers to rediscover some past ideas regarding the value of nationalist and even traditionalist regimes to the realization of the Soviet wish to deny the Middle East to the West. Events in the Peninsula in the early 1950's were regarded in retrospect as encouraging.¹⁴³

The Soviets were pleased by King Saud's rejection of U.S. military

aid in February 1954 and by his refusal in 1955 to join the Western-sponsored Security Pact that was to become the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). Following the momentous Czech-Egyptian arms deal - the first major arms agreement between the Socialist bloc and a Third World State - the Soviets were hopeful that they could sell arms to the Saudis also. In 1952 Saudi forces occupied the Burami Oasis on the basis that it had been under Saudi rule in the nineteenth century. It was hoped oil would be found there, as this oasis was near Oman and Abu Dhabi where other oil had been found.¹⁴⁴

In October 1955 British, Omani, and Abu Dhabi forces re-took the oasis and pushed the Saudis out. Both Prince Faysal and Soviet officials were cited in the western press as claiming that Saudi Arabia was considering resuming diplomatic ties with Moscow and buying Soviet arms, but the Saudi government officially denied both stories. The Soviets did, however, express support for the Saudi position in the Burami Oasis dispute. The Soviets were also hopeful about the prospects for friendship with Riyadh, since King Saud then seemed willing to follow Nasser's lead by signing a security pact with Egypt and Syria in October 1955 (which was joined by Yemen the following year).¹⁴⁵ Moscow refused to abandon hope for King Saud, his trip to Washington was barely reported. On 22nd February, 1957, Le Monde issued a report, neither confirmed nor denied, that the Kremlin had invited King Saud to visit the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁶

In its efforts to win over the Near and the Middle East, the Soviet Union in 1956 made no pretence of relying on its own resources, whether political, military, economic, or cultural.¹⁴⁷ During these years, the Soviets were optimistic about creating a friendly relationship with Saudi Arabia, especially since they wanted to weaken the British position in Aden. The hope was dimmed when King Saud broke relations with Nasser. Saudi Arabia turned closer to the United States and accepted American aid. In 1957 King Saud renewed the U.S. lease on Dhahran air base which produced a demonstration in Riyadh, and the Soviets became more critical.¹⁴⁸ At the end of August, an article in New Times stated:

Using financial and other pressures, United States imperialism has been working to sever Saudi Arabia from other Arab States and convert her into an instrument of aggressive policy. So far that goal has not been fully achieved¹⁴⁹

In 1958 Soviet hopes for Saudi Arabia had dimmed, Soviet writers came to the conclusion that Saudi Arabia had joined the imperialist camp and changed from praising Wahhabism as a progressive, anti-British movement to condemning it as an instrument of the reactionary rulers to oppress the masses.¹⁵⁰

C Until the 1960's, the Soviet media maintained an ambivalent attitude towards Saudi Arabia. On the one hand the country was described as a symbol of 'reaction, backwardness, feudalism, tribalism, serving imperialism', but at the same time the Soviets described the Saudi rulers as 'victims of colonialism', exploited by the imperialist oil monopolies and forced to serve them.¹⁵¹

Soviet thoughts about Saudi Arabia were markedly friendlier in 1961 and the first nine months of 1962, despite King Saud's resumption of power in December 1960. The Saudis decided in March 1961 that America would not be allowed to renew the lease on Dhahran air base.¹⁵² The Yezhegodnik Bol'shoy Sovetskoy Entsiklopedii praised the Saudi government for its continued policy of neutrality, its non-participation in aggressive blocs and particularly its increased co-operation with other Arab States; the latter was a reference to the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Syrian Arab Republic and to the Saudi actions at the oil conferences in 1961 at which its delegate called for revision of unequal agreements and, incidentally, "disproved the statement of imaginary 'dangers' of the export of Soviet oil for the Arab countries". Moscow was also encouraged by Saudi actions at the United Nations during 1961. The Saudi permanent representative at the United Nations, Ahmed Shukairy, made several strong attacks on the British for their activities in Oman. In addition, he "exposed the hypocrisy of the Western powers' indignation over the resumption of nuclear testing

by the USSR at the same time as they supported French tests in the Sahara", and praised the Soviet Union for introducing a resolution in the General Assembly calling for an end to all colonial rule by the end of 1962, and, according to an Egyptian newspaper, had informal talks with Gromyko at the United Nations.¹⁵³

By September 1962 the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia were taking steps to restore diplomatic relations.¹⁵⁴ In that month the Mayor of Riyadh was touring the Central Asian Republics. More important, the Saudi Ambassador to the United Nations, Ahmad Shukairy (who later became the first head of the PLO), went to Moscow and was warmly received by Khrushchev. These were the first publicly acknowledged visits to the USSR by Saudi officials since Faysal went there in 1932.¹⁵⁵ Soviet News reported that he "expressed gratitude to the Soviet government and N. Khrushchev for their constant support for the Arab peoples in their struggle for national liberation", while Tass quoted him as saying that Saudi Arabia hoped for Soviet aid in building her heavy industry. Furthermore, the Daily Telegraph reported, a "high official of the Arab League" had revealed that Saudi Arabia had asked the Soviets to equip its army with modern weapons, but because King Saud would not allow Soviet technicians and advisers into the country to maintain the weapons and train the army, Moscow had refused the request.¹⁵⁶

Over the next few years the Soviets looked for new opportunities to

increase ties between the two nations. The revolution in North Yemen in 1962 closed all possibilities of a meaningful relationship between the two countries for some time to come. King Saud's decision to supply money and arms to the Imam's forces, and the Saudi invasion and clashes with the Republican army provoked a violent outburst in the Soviet press and journals on the nature and ancestry of the Saudi Kingdom. A. Stupak declared:

Discontent with the despotic regime in Saudi Arabia is growing every day. The Saudi royal family regards the country as its private domain and the State revenues as its purse. All matters are decided by the King Slavery still exists. Progressive ideas are considered as a crime against the State, and persons suspected of liberalism and opposition to the King are regarded as dangerous criminals.¹⁵⁷

Despite its stated policy, the USSR attempted to improve its relations with Saudi Arabia on the occasion of Faysal's Coronation in 1964. (An Izvestia correspondent, reporting on Faysal's desire to develop good relations with the Soviet Union, also mentioned 'positive measures' in the direction of social and economic reforms taken by the Saudi regime). This attempt was doomed to failure, not only because of Faysal's hostility to communism, but also because both countries were involved on different sides in the Yemen war.

The Soviets also tried, unsuccessfully, to distinguish between their activity in Yemen and their relations with the other countries of the Peninsula by presenting their Yemeni involvement as a function of their relations with Egypt and the struggle against British imperialism in Aden. When they realised that their efforts were to no avail, the Soviets renewed their attacks on Saudi Arabia, with Faysal becoming the symbol of 'Arab reaction' in the service of imperialism.¹⁵⁸

In July 1964 the Saudi government claimed to have uncovered a "Communist" network in the Eastern Province which had been plotting to disrupt the oil industry. The Saudis are given to hysterical outbursts about communists, but on this occasion their claims were all but confirmed by an appeal from the FNLSA in Pravda for all freedom-loving countries to apply pressure to the Saudi government to stop the arrests.¹⁵⁹

At one point there seemed to be a thaw in Saudi-Soviet relations. After Brezhnev and Kosygin ousted Khrushchev in October 1964 and Faysal deposed his brother King Saud the following month, the Soviets sent Faysal their congratulations, and the new King allowed a Soviet journalist to enter the Kingdom - the first to do so since the 1930's. Faysal told him that Saudi Arabia had no quarrel with the Soviet Union or prejudice against Russians, and that there were "no obstacles" to improving bi-lateral relations.¹⁶⁰ The Soviets

lauded the new King, as they did the improvement of Saudi-Egyptian relations that took place as the result of efforts to bring about a cease-fire and a political settlement in Yemen. The Yemeni peace efforts failed, however, leading to renewed Saudi-Egyptian polemics, and since Moscow sided with Cairo, the USSR and Saudi Arabia once again became hostile toward each other.¹⁶¹

The proposal for a union of Muslim nations, or Islamic pact, mentioned by King Faysal in December 1965, when he was visiting Iran was the target of continuous Soviet attacks. Moscow regarded it as an attempt to renew or continue earlier imperialist projects - "the so called Greater Syria plan, the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Fertile Crescent Federation, the Baghdad pact, and others". The pact was to include - in addition to "feudal, medieval, reactionary and fanatic" Saudi Arabia, Iran, Libya, Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait and others.¹⁶² Also, the USSR accused the sponsors of the Islamic Alliance to use it primarily on the home front against the national liberation movements, but at the same time it would undoubtedly strengthen the position of the imperialist positions.¹⁶³ Aleksey Kosygin during his visit to the United Arab Republic in May 1966 added his condemnation of the Islamic pact to President Nasser's:

Kosygin was careful to add that we respect the religious feelings of believers. But in this case religion is being used to mask a malevolent cause, directed against the

interests of the people.¹⁶⁴

In 1966 and the first half of 1967 many Soviet reports on Saudi Arabia dealt with two developments. One was the outbreak of activity by underground organizations in Saudi Arabia, the other was the growth of co-operation between Saudi Arabia and the West (particularly Britain), and of Saudi ambitions on the Peninsula.¹⁶⁵ The increasingly critical Soviet attitude to the Saudi regime did not prevent the development on a minor scale of Soviet-Saudi trade. The value of imports from the Soviet Union grew from 600,000 rubles in 1964 to over three million in 1965 and then dropped to two and a half million in 1966; the main increases were in cement and sugar (of which in 1965 the Soviet Union was the second largest supplier). In December 1966 Izvestia reported that the Soviet auto exports organization had concluded an agreement with a Saudi company for the sale of 500 cars and trucks.¹⁶⁶

Riyadh viewed Soviet foreign policy toward the Middle East as designed not to bring about a solution favourable to the Arabs but to enhance the influence of the Soviet Union over the Middle East instead. King Faysal was particularly critical of the USSR; in his view, although Moscow said it helped the Arabs, it was Soviet military assistance to the Jews that allowed Israel to survive in 1948. He also blamed the Soviet Union for the Arab defeat in June

1967; he accused the Soviets of falsely informing Nasser that the Israelis would not attack.¹⁶⁷ Riyadh also criticized the United States arms sales to Israel but accused the Soviets of providing Israel with soldiers by allowing large-scale emigration of Soviet Jews in the 1970's.¹⁶⁸

The Soviet attitude towards Saudi Arabia changed somewhat after the June 1967 Six Day War, when the Saudis joined the short-lived oil boycott and the attacks on Britain and the United States in the United Nations for their complicity in the Israeli aggression. However, Saudi Arabia undertook to provide financial support to Egypt, Syria and Jordan which had suffered in the war and to rebuild their armies from the ashes of the 1967 war. At that time, the Soviets again tried to re-establish diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia, but to no avail. Even if certain aspects of Saudi foreign policy served Soviet aims, in general, it was against the Soviet Union's interest, and so the Soviets preferred not to react directly. Although, for the most part, the Soviet media ignored them, there were from time to time Soviet outbursts against Saudi Arabia and its policy.¹⁶⁹ Occasionally the Soviets attempted to point out the advantage to the Saudi government of the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The USSR accused the imperialists, especially the United States, of having interest in relations not being established.¹⁷⁰

In April 1968 the Saudi government signed an agreement with Rumania for Petromin (the national oil company) to exchange nine million tons of crude oil for Rumanian equipment. This was Saudi Arabia's first venture into the international oil marketing field, and Saudi Arabia was apparently not happy with the equipment. In November 1969 it was announced that oil firms in Saudi Arabia had ordered several Soviet self-propelled drilling rigs.¹⁷¹ Soviet comments on Saudi Arabia internal affairs have been few but critical; they have generally revolved around two themes. The first is the continuing prominence in the economy of foreign companies, particularly Aramco. The second general theme has been the social and political situation in Saudi Arabia. Bodyanskiy and Lazarev conceded that King Faysal had made genuine efforts to bring about certain social changes (such as the prohibition of slavery and the expansion of the education system).¹⁷²

The Soviets gave some support to the Marxist rebels in Oman in 1970. The Saudis decided to help Sultan Qabus who overthrew his oppressive father in 1970. In the late 1960's and 1970's, the Saudis and the Soviets were in a struggle for influence over the states Oman, Aden, and Yemen, that bordered directly on the Kingdom.¹⁷³

The Soviet Union's position was made more difficult by the change in American policy in the region after 1970. The United States began to take a more active role in Arabian and Gulf politics and tried to

encourage its friends to follow suit. To aid their local allies in withstanding the pressure of the USSR and its Arab friends in the Arabian Gulf region, the United States increased its aid and attempted to solve, or at least alleviate, conflicts among them. It also encouraged the countries concerned to join forces to resist the subversion and attacks of the 'progressive forces'.¹⁷⁴

Most gratifying to the Saudis in 1972 was the fact that Sadat made the decision to expel the Soviet military presence from Egypt with encouragement from King Faysal. The series of developments in the Arab world seemed to initiate a new trend toward moderation, away from the Soviet Union. Some thought it reflected the growing financial clout of the conservative Arab oil producers, especially, Saudi Arabia. Expectations were being raised that a new era of Saudi leadership of the Arab world was beginning and that this would have a clear impact on Soviet influence in the area. Only Iraq and South Yemen seemed to be locked into the Soviet Orbit, beyond the lure of Saudi financial inducements. The Soviets continued to try to keep relations with Saudi Arabia open at every opportunity.¹⁷⁵

In the very next issue of New Times Volsky, another key Soviet commentator on Middle East affairs, warned against Saudi Arabia's increasingly important role in the Arab world:

What lies behind the activation of Saudi foreign policy? And what is this thing called the "phenomenon of Saudi Arabia", which the Western press is so zealously touting?

The Saudi monarchy is bent on becoming the bulwark of reaction throughout the Arab world generally. Year after year it spends dozens even hundreds of millions of dollars on what it calls "Arab policy", the aim of which is to thwart social and economic reforms in other Arab states and subvert their co-operation with the socialist countries. Saudi "dollar diplomacy" is out to rally the Arab nations not for struggle against imperialism and Israeli aggression, for stronger national independence and social and economic advancement, but on purely religious foundations. Riyadh endlessly thumps the drum of the "jihad" or "holy war" that King Faysal has declared against "Communism-Zionism", that fantastic invention of present day obscuratists.

And, as if to discredit Faysal even further, Volsky added:

There is no doubt that Saudi oil could effectively influence Israel's American patrons. But here is what

King Faysal said in an interview with Cairo weekly Al-Mussawar: "It is useless to talk about the use of oil as a tool against the United States. It is dangerous even to think of it". Sheikh Ahmed Yamani, the Royal Minister for Oil and Mineral Wealth, explaining the King's viewpoint, says: "It is our opinion that the best way for the Arabs to use their oil is as a basis for closer co-operation with the West, especially the United States."¹⁷⁶

The Soviets had good grounds for attacking Saudi Arabia on this point, because in late September Yamani had come to the United States and, in a speech to the Middle East Institute in Washington, stated that Saudi Arabia would raise production from 6 to 20 million barrels of oil per day by 1980 to satisfy the increasing U.S. oil needs in return for assured entry into the U.S. market.¹⁷⁷

Whatever the USSR policy in the region, the Soviets could not ignore Saudi Arabia's central position in international oil exports, nor its enormous financial power and position of leadership in the Arab world. Yet, Saudi Arabia's patriarchal "pre-capitalist" regime cooperated with the United States against attempts to establish a foothold in the Gulf and against the USSR's 'progressive' allies in the area. Notwithstanding, the Soviet attitude toward Saudi Arabia remained open-minded. Despite occasional outbursts against Saudi

Arabia's strong anti-Soviet policy, the Soviet media still tried to convince Riyadh that relations with the Soviet Union could prove beneficial. Once again, this demonstrated that in spite of familiarity with the Arabs, Soviet thinking remained removed from actuality and could not shake off the theories and pre-conceptions of the past.

Saudi Arabia equates atheism and communism with the very Devil, and considers the USSR as a threat to the foundations of the Muslim States. Evidently, as long as the existing regime remains in power in Saudi Arabia, it is well-nigh impossible for the USSR to come to understanding with it. But the Soviets believe that attitudes might change and in any case they do not wish to risk confrontation with the Saudis beyond their minor verbal attacks and indirect, limited aid to subversive elements in the Arabian Peninsula. In most cases these attacks too, were prompted by Saudi provocation concerning local developments.¹⁷⁸

The Soviets assume, moreover, the existence of a conflict of interests between oil-producing countries, Saudi Arabia in particular and Western oil-consuming countries, headed by the United States. They believe that their military power near this area and political and verbal support they have given to OPEC aggravates tension and, sooner or later, it will reach the point of explosion. Then, according to Soviet reasoning, countries like Saudi Arabia

will have no choice but to rely on the USSR for help. Their attitude to Riyadh oscillates therefore, between preaching to the Saudis, trying to persuade them that their interests lie with the USSR and emotional outbursts occasioned by Saudi activities, which incense the Soviets. According to the Soviets, Saudi Arabia's absence of relations with the Soviet Union was 'incompatible with the interest of both peoples of Saudi Arabia and the other Arab Countries'. Despite Saudi Arabia's anti-communist and anti-Soviet campaign in the Arab world and attempts to undermine the friendship between the Arab countries and the Soviet Union, its best interests would lie in 'settling and maintaining relations with the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁹

Soviet commentary on Saudi Arabia generally reached the following conclusions: (1) 'imperialism' is responsible for the bad relations between Saudi Arabia and the USSR; (2) Saudi Arabia's 'reactionary' rulers are 'willing servants of imperialism' and its allies. The tone of Soviet approaches to Saudi Arabia again became friendly during and after the October 1973 war, when King Faysal supported the use of the Arab oil weapon against any country friendly to Israel, especially the United States.

A message of congratulations sent in 1973 by King Faysal to the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet N. Podgorny, on the occasion of the anniversary of the Great October Revolution, led to much speculation

regarding its meaning and intentions.¹⁸⁰ Completely taken by surprise, in Moscow this message aroused hopes and great interest.¹⁸¹ Rumours circulated concerning the possibility of an improvement in relations between Moscow and Riyadh. Al-Nahar quoted contacts between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union taking place aimed to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries. And also, Al-Nahar claimed that King Faysal had accepted an invitation to visit Moscow but this did not occur.¹⁸² It is to be assumed that these rumours may have originated in Riyadh to provide leverage against the United States. Alternatively, they might also have been a Soviet attempt to test Saudi reaction to such a possibility or to sow dissent between Saudi Arabia and the United States.

That situation did not last for long. Saudi Arabia was strongly in favour of ending the Arab oil embargo against the U.S., and exerted pressure on Egypt to move closer to the United States, and tried (unsuccessfully) to make Syria turn away from the Soviet Union. By April 1974 the Soviet media had resumed its attacks on Saudi Arabia. A peace and progress broadcast in Arabic (4th April 1974) denounced King Faysal for equating Communism and Zionism, described Saudi Arabia as a country "where feudalism is in complete power" and where "Arab reaction" wants to strengthen still more its relations with American Colonialism".¹⁸³

King Faysal, a very conservative Moslem, was strongly anti-communist where it exists. He saw Communism and Zionism as being united in a conspiracy against the Arabs and viewed the USSR and Israel as close allies, no matter what they said publicly.¹⁸⁴

The assassination of King Faysal on 25th March 1975 shook the world and highlighted the importance of this under-developed country to the world's economy and politics.¹⁸⁵ The assassination received extensive Soviet coverage. Soviet commentators were careful, however, not to appear to be presenting their own positions. They attributed their remarks to quotations from the "Western press", the Arab press or what was being said in Riyadh. This enabled them to change their positions as developments required. The questions the Soviets asked : Who stood behind the assassination? What were their motives? Who would benefit from it? The answers to all these questions were usually: The U.S.A. and the American oil companies. The Soviets viewed the assassination as a Saudi-American plot to bring to power someone more amenable to their wishes. For their part, although relieved to be rid of their worst Middle East enemy, the Soviets feared that his successor would be even worse.¹⁸⁶

King Faysal had little faith in Soviet protestations of friendly intentions, and he insisted that the USSR was linked to Israel and that both opposed Arabs. He remained hostile toward the Soviets and to communism until his death. Khalid, his brother, assumed the

throne, and the security situation in the Peninsula greatly improved. Moscow and Riyadh did not cease to be critical of each other, but there were some more friendly statements, as when Crown Prince Fahd said that Riyadh wanted good relations with both East and West and that Saudi Arabia might "settle" its relations with the USSR. The Soviets welcomed all such statements but were annoyed by the Saudi desire to have friendship without "embassies". However, as Moscow and Riyadh continued to compete for influence in both South Yemen and the Horn of Africa, this mood of friendliness did not last.¹⁸⁷

After King Faysal, it seemed as if Saudi Arabia would continue as before. But the Saudi leadership has put less emphasis on the "Communist-Zionist conspiracy" (though this notion does continue to appear), but it emphasizes that Israeli and Soviet foreign policies have a similar goal to keep the Arab States weak.¹⁸⁸ Although conservative and isolationist, Saudi Arabia became different from the Gulf States in many ways. It was more aware of the outside world and had more ties with Western countries. Not only did it try to establish its importance in inter-Arab and Islamic arenas, but it also hoped to play a role in the Western world, of which it felt itself becoming more a part. The Soviets watched developments carefully in Saudi Arabia. It seemed as if they knew more about the country than before, but if one can judge from what they wrote or said, they did not always understand what they saw concerning Saudi

motivation and aims. Some sectors of the Soviet academic community, especially orientalist of Saudi Arabia, but with few exceptions, they had little influence over the Soviet decision-making process.¹⁸⁹

The Soviets compared the situation in Saudi Arabia to those in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan before the Soviet revolution, or in Ethiopia under Emperor Haile Selassie, or other similar historical situations. These led the Soviets to draw conclusions regarding the outcome of the situation in Saudi Arabia, but they forgot or ignored the fact that things were quite different in Saudi Arabia.¹⁹⁰

D Saudi Arabia's attitude toward the Soviet Union - indeed, toward the international system as a whole - has traditionally been determined by three factors : its strong desire to perpetuate a highly conservative traditional system of government and society, its firm interest in maintaining the political status quo in general and in the Middle East in particular in the face of radical forces bent on disrupting order and stability, and finally its self image as guarding the Islamic Spirit and Community against hostile political, social and economic forces.

It is against the background of these three factors that one must judge the Saudi perception of the Soviet Union. First, as a force striving to overthrow conservative regimes of the Saudi kind and revolutionize their social system; secondly, as a super power interested in altering the status quo and actively supporting local radical forces instigating upheavals and tensions throughout the region, as a power representing an alien, hostile, atheist ideology, and communism that constitutes a real threat to the traditional World of Islam, its values, beliefs and norms.

It seems that the Saudis, whose world view is moulded by an uncompromising religious ideology, cannot see the conflict with communism in any other terms than those of good and evil. They, to be sure, do not have much liking for Western materialistic civilization.¹⁹¹ The 'East', however, represents communism,

atheism, radicalism and social upheaval and is regarded, therefore, as a far more dangerous enemy than the forces and ideas of the West. Thus, the elimination - or at least the containment - of Soviet influence has become a cornerstone of the Saudi peninsular and regional policy.¹⁹²

The Saudi perception of the Soviet Union has been widely expressed in the Saudi media. The themes emphasised by the media, the terminology used and the genuine sense of danger conveyed are exemplified by the following editorial which appeared in the Saudi paper 'Ukaz' in early January 1979:

The Soviet Union is persistent in creating tension, generating class struggle and sowing sedition in all areas in order to achieve its expansionist and aggressive ambitions. International communism is pursuing its basic objectives aimed at assailing the unity of the peoples, destroying their economic resources, spreading moral decay and combatting heavenly ideologies in order to ensure the realization of their ulterior motives of domination and rule. Communism is against peaceful instincts and against all religions and beliefs. And since communism poses a real danger to all mankind, confronting its conspiracies and exposing its false slogans and misleading allegations

must be the duty of all those who believe in one God.

All communist moves reveal the truth about the communist plan to incite disturbances and encourage rebellion and chaos, so that in such a state of confusion, the Communists can take over power. The Arab and Islamic nations must, therefore, be aware of the communist plan to destroy the Muslim man and erase all human values.¹⁹³

Moscow radio broadcast in 1975 welcomed Prince Fahd's comments regarding the possibility of improving relations with the Soviet Union.¹⁹⁴ Another Soviet broadcast said:

The imperialists made substantial efforts to hinder the normal development of Soviet-Saudi relations ... which were ruptured through no fault of the Soviet Union The imperialists are persistently scaring the Saudi ruling quarters with the fictitious communist danger ... Far-sighted politicians in a number of Arab states have recently, and with increasing persistence, called for a settlement of Saudi Arabia's relations with the Soviet Union.¹⁹⁵

However, in April 1978, a commentary by V. Kudryavtsev stated that the billions of dollars which Saudi Arabia owned offered it the

opportunity to take giant strides along the path of economic and cultural development and that something was indeed being done in that respect.

However, the political superstructure is adapting to the changing economy at a snail's pace. Surviving feudal foundations and the unlimited power of the royal family, the fear of decisive steps in the sphere of education, which might in the opinion of the ruling clan lead to a radicalization of the populations opinions - all this is fraught with troubles for Riyadh within the country.

Kudryavtsev is Deputy Head of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with Asian and African Countries, an organization which serves as a link between the Soviets and 'national liberation movements', supporting those factions in Third World countries acting against regimes with whom the Soviets would like officially to appear as being friendly, or at least not against them.¹⁹⁶ He predicted that the longer the existing regime remained in power, the more radical would be the one which succeeded it:

As history confirms, the more a country's development is held back by political restrictions and the later a country embarks on the path of progressive development, the more strong, profound and painful are the social and

class cataclysms. That is why the Saudi Arabian government is devoting great attention to strengthening the internal political situation.

According to a Soviet comment in mid-1978:

The oil wealth and the immense currency reserves have impelled the Saudi rulers to modernize their kingdom technically. However, the medieval structures and autocratic rule and the entire anachronistic social and political mode of life have been preserved practically intact.¹⁹⁷

Soviet media gave considerable publicity in November 1978 to greetings from Prince Fahd to Brezhnev on the occasion of the Soviet National holiday. Hopeful that relations would eventually be established, the Soviets tried to hasten the process by having their media refer as little as possible to Saudi Arabia, avoiding all attacks on Saudi Arabia' regime, policy and leadership.¹⁹⁸ This sense of encirclement was further compounded by the 1978 revolution in Afghanistan, an Islamic country, which brought a pro-Soviet regime to power in Kabul. In an interview with a prominent American journalist at the end of 1978, the Saudi Crown Prince and First Deputy Prime Minister, Fahd, offered some insight into the Saudi perception of the new political realities created in the

region. Standing by a map, Crown Prince Fahd placed his right hand on Pakistan and solemnly swept it across Afghanistan and Iran to the Arabian Gulf. His left hand traced a path through Ethiopia and across the Red Sea to South Yemen and the tip of Arabia. 'That is what we call the Soviet and Communist pincer movement', he said 'and if Iran goes, then God help us'.¹⁹⁹

In December 1978 Al-Nahar reported that the USSR made attempts to contact Riyadh through the office of Arafat the Chairman of the PLO. According to that, Leonid Brezhnev had conveyed a message to Prince Fahd, expressing satisfaction at the establishment of contacts with Riyadh and hoping that they continued and established diplomatic relations. The Brezhnev message explained the Soviet position on the Arabian Gulf and the Horn of Africa, denying any offensive designs against Saudi Arabia.²⁰⁰

In April 1979, the Soviet airline Aeroflot resumed direct flights from Moscow to San'a, the capital of North Yemen, flying over Saudi air space.²⁰¹ The most dramatic act of rebellion against the Saudi monarchy was the seizure of the Grand Mosque at Mecca in November 1979 by a group of religious zealots. The Soviets portrayed the rebels as "gunmen" and "religious fanatics" as well as generally supporting the Saudi government's efforts to defeat them, even though Soviet commentary was sympathetic to the Shias demonstrating

in the Eastern Province at the same time. The Saudis also denied that the Soviets had played any role in the seizure. An important reason why the Soviets may have supported Riyadh on this matter is that Moscow did not want to provoke hostility in the Islamic world by saying anything favourable about the rebels.²⁰²

As the Soviets watched the mounting tensions between Washington and Riyadh, they apparently sensed an opportunity to make overtures of their own to the Saudis. In a major article in Literaturnaya Gazeta by Igor' Belyayev, one of the leading Soviet experts on the Middle East, stated that Saudi Arabia and the USSR "had never fought each other" and had never had "any insoluble conflict". Instead of continuing the earlier Soviet practice of labelling the kingdom "reactionary", "feudalist", the "Kingdom of Darkness", the article portrayed the country in sympathetic terms and stressed common positions, such as the rejection of the Camp David Accords.²⁰³

Although he adopted a conciliatory tone in the context of U.S. support of Camp David and its "inaction" in the face of Khomeini's threatening regime, Prince Fahd continued to talk about "ideological differences" with the Soviet Union and stated that "the question of diplomatic relations is premature".²⁰⁴

However, the Saudi disappointment with U.S. policy toward the Middle East, Igor' Belyayev hoped Saudi-Soviet relations would improve. The Saudi Foreign Minister, Sa'ud Faysal, expressed his appreciation

for Soviet support to the Arabs. Several more friendly statements were issued from Moscow throughout 1979, and again Prince Fahd predicted that ambassadors would be exchanged at some point.²⁰⁵ The Soviet Narodny Bank sought to open a branch in Jedda and a Soviet trade mission was said to be about to visit Saudi Arabia for talks on mutual trade.²⁰⁶ Contacts between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union were reported to have been maintained through Arafat, the Chairman of the PLO, and Crown Prince Fahd was even said to have met Soviet officials while visiting Moscow in May 1979. It thus became clear the Riyadh did not rule out improved relations with Moscow in various fields, short of diplomatic relations.²⁰⁷

The Saudi-Soviet rapprochement reached its peak in October 1979. In an interview with a Lebanese paper, the Saudi Defence Minister, Prince Sultan, made the following statement:

We are aware of the Soviet attempts to improve relations with us. We have noted that the Soviet media do not attack Saudi Arabia as they used to do in the past. Though we do not have diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, we have mutual relations in several other fields. We do not oppose the establishment of diplomatic relations provided the Soviets will understand that our position emanates from the principles and values of Islam. We do not wish to see foreigners (i.e. foreign

diplomats) in our country who preach heresy. If and when the causes for our concern are removed, there will be no reason for the absence of diplomatic relations between us.²⁰⁸

The Saudis feared the Soviet military threat, the revolutionary ethos of its doctrine, and the radicalism of its regional allies, but they couched their distrust in terms of inherent opposition between spiritual Islam and atheist, materialist Communism.²⁰⁹ While still indicating that Islam and Communism were irreconcilable Prince Fahd asserted that the USSR could not be ignored as 'a world superpower'. Indeed, toward the end of December 1979 there were reports indicating that Saudi Arabia was about to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. But at this particular juncture, the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan, throwing the Saudi leadership into disarray.²¹⁰

The Saudis capitalized on this action to defend their position. They emphasised the strategic-political dangers of the Soviet move as well as the threat against Moslem peoples as a whole. Saudi Petroleum Minister Yamani warned that the main motive of the Soviets is the oil fields, because of the declining Soviet oil production which would force the Soviet Union to need oil in the future. In the same spirit Foreign Minister Sa'ud Faysal suggested that the Soviet presence so close to the Straits of Hormuz was merely a step in the direction of the oil fields.²¹¹

Most Saudi statements carried strong Islamic overtones, claiming that "the hour of confrontation between Islam and Communism has begun violently", and that "the atheist threat" had to be checked.²¹² Consequently the Saudi newspaper Al-Rilad called on 1st January, 1980, for a meeting of heads of states to lay down a common strategy on "the Soviet threat ... [which] is pointed directly at the Islamic faith". The Saudi government played a leading role in convening the Islamic Conference in Islamabad (Pakistan) in late January. In his speech to the Conference Sa'ud Faysal described the Soviet action as a "flagrant challenge to the Islamic world, a gross disregard for Moslems and Islam". The Conference ended by supporting the Saudi position. It condemned "Soviet military aggression against the Afghan people", called for "immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Soviet troops", and urged the Soviets to "refrain from acts of oppression and tyranny against the Afghan people and their struggling sons". The Conference suspended Afghanistan's membership in the Organization of the Islamic Conference, discouraged recognition of, and recommended severing diplomatic relations with, "the illegal regime in Afghanistan", affirming "solidarity with the Afghan people in their just struggle to safeguard their faith, national independence and territorial integrity".²¹³ Stating its "complete solidarity with the Islamic countries neighbouring Afghanistan", the Conference called for the collection of "contributions from member states, organizations, and individuals" in support of the rebels, and for "non-participation in

the Olympic Games being held in Moscow in July 1980.²¹⁴

In cases like these, Saudi policy-makers attempted to reconcile the Kingdom's immediate strategic interests and its inherent Islamic beliefs. Consistency among the different components of the Saudi world view is important to reinforce the regime's legitimacy.²¹⁵

The opportunity for creating relations between the two countries was further damned when the Soviets entered Afghanistan. At times, various Saudi leaders had indicated a desire to have friendly relations with the Soviets. However, most agreed that such a relationship was not possible as long as the Soviets were in Afghanistan. The Saudis also would want the Soviets to reduce their military presence in both South Yemen and Ethiopia, and end all hostile propaganda against the Kingdom, and Soviet Muslims must be allowed greater freedom to practice their religion. The Saudis do not expect the Soviets to meet these conditions, and as a result, there is little possibility of improving the relationship between the two nations at the present time.²¹⁶

Twice in January 1980, interviews with Prince Fahd were published, and when he spoke of the USSR he emphasized the importance of recognizing the reality of Soviet power. "I would like to tell you that we have recently observed a positive development in the Soviet Union's policy. It began through its information media with the

expression of some views indicating that it behaves as though it understands us ... On our part we began dealing with it even indirectly in a reasonable way". Fahd went on to say that economic and trade relations were good and that "in a short time we will reach the desired level". Asked about diplomatic relations, Fahd said that public opinion must first be prepared. "However, we are sure that this will take place at the appropriate time".²¹⁷

A few weeks later Fahd again talked about the Soviet Union, this time with a somewhat different nuance. "We do not compete with the Soviet Union in any way. Nobody can use us as a tool. In the circumstances we cannot but admit that the Soviet Union is a major power and that we want no problems with it. A frequent error is to highlight Saudi Arabia as the only state that can resist the Soviet Union and fight it everywhere. This is a mistake, and we do not want to be nominated to a rank we cannot obtain".²¹⁸

However, in the absence of any force capable of standing up to the Soviet challenge and with the consolidation of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, the Saudis evidently realized that it was risky to antagonize Moscow. In the light of the American reaction to these events, the Saudis apparently concluded that no effective regional security, in which they could safely take part, was in the offing and decided to appease Moscow and remove their anti-Soviet label as the only means for minimizing the Soviet danger vis-a-vis the

Kingdom. Consequently, they not only toned down their criticism of the Soviet Union and sought to avoid references to the invasion, but they also reverted to conciliatory statements showing Saudi goodwill toward the Soviets. Reflecting this Saudi approach, Foreign Minister Sa'ud stated that an end to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan would remove 'any inhibition' Saudi Arabia might have 'about evolving and developing good relations with the Soviet Union'.²¹⁹

In devising a new attitude toward the USSR, the Saudis were more keenly aware than ever of the fact that they were essentially trying to reconcile two mutually exclusive systems: Communism and Islam. Hence they sought to provide their new policy with some ideological legitimacy. Whereas in the past they had constantly emphasized that Communism and the USSR were inherently atheist and expansionist and, by definition, enemies of Islam and Saudi Arabia, Saudi leaders now started to differentiate between Communism and the USSR. While still maintaining that communism was totally irreconcilable with Islam, they proposed, however, that the USSR be regarded as a global power and, as such, be treated on the basis of pragmatic considerations.²²⁰

The trend towards joining the Arab radicals led some in Saudi Arabia to consider going a step further and establishing relations with the Soviet Union. The Soviets had always expressed such a wish and, as

a first stage, were ready to accept official economic ties, with a permanent trade mission in Riyadh, together with a branch of the Soviet trade bank. The Saudis preferred not to permit this.

A senior Soviet commentator and Middle East specialist, writing in the Moscow Literaturnaya Gazeta in late 1979, called for the establishment of relations between the USSR and Saudi Arabia, he said, inter alia:

The Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia have never been at war with each other and they have never had any implacable conflicts. The social system of the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia are indeed different but surely this cannot be grounds for mutual enmity ...

In its relations with all countries the Soviet Union consistently adheres to the principle of non-interference in other states' internal affairs ... After all, the question of whether Saudi Arabia's subjects are acting correctly in adhering to Wahhabi postulates is never raised in the Soviet Union. That is their internal affair.²²¹

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Prince Sa'ud was asked whether he had read the article and 'if there are objections to establishing diplomatic relations, would you object to the establishment of

commercial relations'? His reply was : 'We have no objection to trade transactions with any of the world's countries. We have economic dealings with many countries in which we have no diplomatic representation'. As to 'the establishment of Soviet commercial agencies', Saud replied that these were usually established 'to facilitate existing trade and not the other way around'.

Asked if he had replied to the message that the PLO Chairman Arafat had brought him from Soviet leaders, and 'what the objections [were] to the establishment of diplomatic relations with them', Sa'ud ignored the first part of the question and said:

There were relations between us and the Soviets in the past, but they were the ones who stopped these relations. We wish to assert that the non-existence of diplomatic relations does not mean that we do not recognize the USSR or the importance of the role it plays in international politics. On the contrary, we have more than once expressed our gratitude for the positive stand it adopted toward Arab causes.

Reacting to this interview, Moscow radio in Arabic cited the Washington Post comment which 'pointed to the possibility of the restoration of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union'. The broadcast ignored references to trade relations.

It said that 'the statement is a recognition of the great role the Soviet Union plays in rendering assistance and support to the Arab countries.²²²

A Sovetskaya Rossiya article dealt at length with the matter of diplomatic relations:

... Reports have appeared in the press about the possible activation of Soviet-Saudi relations ... Saudi Arabia was the first Arab country with which the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations On the eve of the Second World War, Soviet representatives working in Saudi Arabia left for the USSR and since then there have been no diplomatic missions either in Moscow or in Riyadh, despite the Soviet Union's wishes.

... Some people in Saudi Arabia mention the incompatibility of Islam and Communist ideology as the main obstacle to the activation of Soviet-Saudi relations. But it is appropriate to note that the Soviet Union has good relations with many Monarchist and Muslim countries which cherish the ideas of Islam as closely as the Saudis.

Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister Prince Fahd said:

We are aware of the important role that the Soviet Union plays in international politics and we are anxious to ensure that this role supports the Arabs' just causes.

I do not believe that the absence of diplomatic relations between the countries must necessarily be interpreted as a sign of hostility. As far as the re-establishment of diplomatic relations, this is an issue which should be settled in accordance with events which contribute to a decision being reached.

Yevgenii Primakov, Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies, USSR Academy of Sciences, told a Beirut journal: 'personally at present I see no insurmountable obstacles to the development of normal Soviet-Saudi relations.

The indirect Soviet-Saudi dialogue continued, with the Soviet side trying to show restraint, ignoring Saudi attacks and accusations, in an attempt to persuade them to change their position and establish diplomatic relations.²²³

The Soviet response to the Riyadh policy toward Moscow came in the first of 1981. In the Literaturnaya Gazeta Yevgenii M. Primakov, Central Committee Member and Middle East specialist, mentioned with concern that the United States was encouraging the condemnation of Soviet policy Afghanistan as a way of trying to weaken Saudi relations with the USSR. Izvestiya picked up the same theme of the U.S. "policy of disorientation" aimed at influencing "certain representatives of the Saudi ruling circles, who have been talking

increasingly frequently about the 'Soviet threat' which allegedly exists for their country". In fact, the article asserted, it is the United States that threatens to seize Saudi oil and that keeps tensions high in the area.²²⁴

However, top Saudi leaders have had occasional meetings with the Soviet diplomats. When asked about the Soviet goal in the Middle East, one Saudi official said: "The answer is simple : our oil ... At this moment, we do not expect an invasion, but we do expect the Soviets to use their power to manoeuvre themselves into a position to make arrangements for a guaranteed oil supply". How the Saudis react to these anticipated Soviet pressures for accommodation will be in large measure a function of their relationship with and confidence in the United State.²²⁵

The fluctuations in the Saudi attitude toward the USSR in the 1970-80 period tended to illustrate Saudi dilemmas in shaping a coherent foreign policy in rapidly changing circumstances in the region. For the first time in this century, the Saudis had to face, as of the second half of the 1970's, a concrete Soviet threat to the security of the Kingdom and the stability of the regime. Condemning the Soviet Union and Communism on pure ideological grounds, as the Saudi leadership had done in the past, could not serve any more as a basis for Saudi attitudes toward the USSR. The Saudis were, thus, forced to decide whether to continue their public opposition and criticism

of the Soviet Union or to adopt a new approach, which would not antagonize Moscow and would remove the extreme anti-Soviet label attached to Riyadh. It seemed that the Saudi perception of the USA as weak, impotent and lacking in determination in face of Soviet advances was the major factor in Riyadh's opting for the latter course of action. In their pursuit of a more accommodating line toward Moscow, however, Communism did not seem to have posed an insuperable impediment for the Saudi leaders. Proceeding on the basics of pragmatic considerations, they managed to draw a line between Communism as an ideology, totally rejected and the USSR as a superpower, which must be reckoned with for the sake of Saudi security and interests. The distance between this pragmatic response to the Soviet threat and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and the USSR still seemed to be insurmountable.²²⁶

E The Soviet Union continued to request the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia. The press reported that the Soviets were asking Arab parties to mediate with Riyadh in this respect, saying that secret talks were under way between Moscow and Riyadh, either directly or through Kuwait, the PDRY, Syria and the PLO.²²⁷

Saudi Foreign Minister, Sa'ud Faysal, said that an on-going dialogue did exist between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union and that Saudi and Soviet diplomats were having meetings all over the world.²²⁸ Washington diplomatic sources report that the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia, which have not enjoyed diplomatic relations since before World War II, have been meeting secretly in Kuwait. The leader of the Soviet delegation in South Yemen recently told his hosts that negotiations were underway for a resumption of formal ties between the Saudis and Moscow. But sources familiar with Saudi diplomatic circles dismiss that notion as "nonsense". They say the talks are no more than a prudent way of the Saudis privately to sound out the Soviet position on such questions as the Iran-Iraq war, oil exports and Moscow's general policies in the Arabian Gulf.²²⁹

From 1981 to the present, the USSR and Saudi Arabia have issued generally negative commentary about each other. Occasionally, the Saudis have commented favourably on Soviet aid to the Arabs against Israel.²³⁰ The Soviets were extremely happy when Crown Prince

Abdallah, a harsh critic of U.S. foreign policy on the Palestinian question, told a Time-sponsored delegation of businessmen and editors visiting Saudi Arabia in 1981, that the most dangerous threat to the Middle East was not the USSR, as the Reagan Administration had argued, but the United States. He explained: "I say this because of your total alliance with Israel, which makes the mass of our people take it for granted that Americans are anti-Arab, and makes it convenient for the Arab people to look to the Soviet Union as a friend, since they feel they have been abandoned by the Americans".²³¹

In an interview with the Beirut daily Al-Safir, given before the Afghanistan debacle, Prince Fahd hinted that diplomatic relations with Moscow were on the cards. And the relations will be accomplished at the right time. However, in an interview with Al-Hawadith just after Moscow's move, Fahd advised the U.S. to show greater consideration in its dealings with Riyadh. "We are not obliged to be friendly with the U.S. Many other possible doors are open to us whether on the military, technological or economic levels - all the countries of Western Europe which have the capacity for industrialisation, armament and technology".²³²

A change has been detected in U.S. Middle East policy after Reagan became President, perhaps because Washington has seen the gravity of the threat posed by the Soviet southward thrust into the Arabian

Gulf to cut off the West's oil supply. The change is seen in increased military aid to some of the Middle East countries and the selling of sophisticated military equipment to them, as well as in U.S. declarations about reinforcing its military presence in the Gulf and the Middle East.

Egypt and Saudi Arabian welcome the U.S. hard line towards Soviet expansion and are for more military aid and arms supplied them. However, the Gulf States are against any foreign military bases in the area. They hold that the preservation of Gulf security is the duty of the literal states of the area, and they call for the strengthening of national defence capabilities and great unity. Prince Fahd pointed out that "the region is threatened by the Soviet Union and Israel". But "the Gulf States do not need anyone to participate in the defence of the region since the Gulf States are capable of defending themselves if they can obtain the necessary arms".²³³

Riyadh opposed Brezhnev's Arabian Gulf peace proposals. In a speech before the Indian parliament in December 1980, Brezhnev proposed that the Soviet Union, the United States, China, Japan, other Western powers, and any interested states should agree on a five-point set for mutual obligations: (1) not to establish foreign military bases in the area of the Arabian Gulf and adjacent islands, or to deploy nuclear or any other weapons of mass destruction there;

(2) not to use or threaten the use of force against the countries of the Arabian Gulf area, and not to interfere in their internal affairs; (3) to respect the non-aligned status chosen by Arabian Gulf states and not to draw them into military groupings with the participation of nuclear powers; (4) to respect the sovereign right of the states of the region to their natural resources; (5) not to raise any obstacles or threats to normal trade exchange and the use of sea lanes linking the states of the region with other countries of the world.²³⁴ In short, the Saudis have not dropped their opposition to Soviet foreign policy in these areas in order to seek co-operation with Moscow in others such as the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iran-Iraq war.²³⁵

When Israel bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor in June 1981, the Soviets claimed that the American-flown AWACS based in Saudi Arabia did nothing to stop the Israelis from flying over Saudi territory to get to and from Iraq. Soviet commentators have even claimed that the United States would take advantage of the Iran-Iraq war to move its forces into the region and then invade Saudi Arabia.²³⁶ However, in July 1981 the Soviet press reported that 'in recent months Muslim leaders from the Soviet Union have visited ... Saudi Arabia' and noted that 'negotiations are currently underway for sending Muslims from the USSR to schools in Saudi Arabia':²³⁷ 'The Soviet presence in Afghanistan seems an obstacle to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.'

It would appear more probable that the Saudis would establish political relations with China with whom it shares 'a common view of the Soviet threat'.²³⁸

In early August 1981, Prince Fahd, heir apparent and Deputy Prime Minister (since 13th June 1982, King of Saudi Arabia) put forward a set of principles, designed to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict, which were similar to the Soviet proposals on the same subject.²³⁹

The proposals made no mention of peace with Israel, nor of direct negotiations with it or official recognition of its existence. They did say that all states in the region should be able to live in peace, but made no direct mention of Israel.

The proposals called for Israel's withdrawal from all territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war including Arab Jerusalem, and that a Palestinian State should be established with Jerusalem as its capital. It was further stipulated that Palestinian refugees should have a right to return to their home after Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. There was provision for a transitional period under United Nations auspices, meaning that there would be no direct negotiations with Israel, which would transfer the territories to the United Nations, which in turn would hand them over to the PLO.

Fahd's plan was similar to Soviet proposals for a resolution of the

Arab-Israeli conflict, but what mattered to the Soviets was not a solution or non-solution of the conflict, but rather that their participation should be ensured in any negotiations on the matter, and that they should have a meaningful role in any implementation of the outcome of the talks. The Soviets feared a situation where the Fahd plan would be accepted by most of the Arab States and Western Europe - perhaps even the USA - and that they would all sit down and talk about it without inviting the USSR. It could even lead to a PLO-USA dialogue and an end to PLO dependence on the USSR. The Soviets suspected that Prince Fahd's aim was to bring about a split between them and the Arabs, and feared that acceptance of his proposals would act against their position in the Arab World.²⁴⁰

On 27th October, 1981, Brezhnev had assailed the Saudi proposal by innuendo, declaring that it was an effort to "satisfy the appetite of imperialism". But seeing the dissatisfaction and censure of the Arab countries, the Soviet leader suddenly changed his attitude towards the proposal and quietly notified the Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, that the Soviet Union considered the Saudi proposal a basis for the peaceful settlement of the Middle East problem.

Why has the Soviet Union changed its attitude? To seek hegemonism in this important region. The Soviet Union has been reconciled to its exclusion from the Middle East peace process and has always

desired to return to the area. Now that the Soviet Union has given its "support" to the Saudi 'proposal', its objective is very clear, it is attempting to take advantage of the weak point in U.S. Middle East policy and undermine U.S. influence in the area. Thus, the Soviet Union can win political kudos. Its goal is still to take part again in the Middle East peace talks.²⁴¹

The subject of Soviet-Saudi relations came up when PLO Chairman, Arafat, visited Moscow on 30th October, 1981, to be received by Brezhnev who specifically mentioned Soviet participation when he spoke of the proposal for an international conference. On Arafat's return he reported the substance of this talk to Prince Fahd in Riyadh. The latter was said to have responded by agreeing that the Soviet Union should have a part in the efforts to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict.²⁴²

On 5th November, 1981, the Saudi Foreign Minister announced his nation's intention to seek a United Nations resolution endorsing the Saudi peace plan. Passage of the resolution would be followed by an International Conference on the future of the Middle East, under the auspices of the U.N. Security Council. What does that mean? To engage the Security Council means one thing, and that is to re-engage the Soviet Union. And Soviet re-engagement is precisely what the Saudis have in mind. When asked recently if his proposal would lead to negotiations with the Soviet Union, the Saudi Foreign

Minister had this to say:

of course with the Soviet Union. It is part of the Security Council.

So much for the claim that Saudi Arabia stands against Soviet influence. Now, the Saudis are inviting the Soviets into the Middle East.²⁴³

After Syria's poor performance against Israel during the summer of 1982, the militant approach proved unworkable. The Soviets responded favourably to the modified Fahd proposal, since calling for U.N. Security Council guarantees would make approval by the USSR necessary.

The Saudi view has been and continues to be that the United States is more important than the USSR in bringing peace to the Middle East, since the U.S. has influence with Israel while the USSR does not. But the Saudis have also reached the conclusion that it is necessary to have some degree of Soviet support for any Middle East peace plan to work, since Moscow might be able to influence the radical Arab States to accept it as well. The Soviets, naturally, welcome the efforts of a conservative Arab State closely allied to the United States to bring the USSR into the Middle East peace process when American foreign policy has sought to exclude Moscow

from it.²⁴⁴

In December 1982 an Arab delegation which included the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Sa'ud Faysal, visited both Moscow and Beijing as part of a plan to brief the five permanent members of the United National Security Council on the League's eight-point plan for a Middle East settlement. The inclusion of the Saudi Minister had led to speculation that Saudi Arabia might be on the point of establishing diplomatic relations with one or both of the two communist countries. The delegation met with Andropov, Tikhonov, and Gromyko, and on 3rd December Sa'ud and Gromyko had another meeting. But soon after this visit the Saudi Information Minister ruled out any possibility of ties with Moscow.

Although excellent relations exist between Riyadh and Taipei, the Saudi English language daily Arab News signalled out Beijing's attitude toward the Arabs for special praise:

When the Arab Summit delegation, led by King Hussein, decided to go to the People's Republic of China, they knew that they were going to a friendly country for a genuinely sympathetic hearing. China has never wavered from its principled approach to the Middle East question and the plight of the Palestinian people ... This Chinese policy has been clear and steady. The

Palestinians must have a homeland, Israel must withdraw from the occupied lands of the Arab ... It has also condemned the unstinted support that the United States extends to Israel and warned the Arabs against excessive trust in Soviet intentions.²⁴⁵

With regard to Saudi-Soviet relations, the Al-Manama Gulf Mirror cautioned:

Observers should be warned about reading too much into the visit by Prince Sa'ud ... to Moscow. As a vital member of the Arab League's team, the Saudis had to be present. Therefore the conclusion that Saudi Arabia is on the point of resuming some form of diplomatic link with the Soviet Union is premature ... Although Saudi government officials have been quoted as praising the attitude of the Soviets toward the Palestinian problem, this cannot be judged as a change of heart towards Moscow. It is merely the wise acceptance of fact. There is still the matter of Afghanistan to be resolved.²⁴⁶

Both Moscow and Riyadh, then, have a common interest in seeing that Iran does not defeat Iraq. Some observers have claimed that this common interest has led to Saudi-Soviet co-operation in supplying arms to Iraq even before 1982 when Moscow appeared to be tilting

toward Iraq. According to William Quandt, "early in 1981 the Saudis allowed Iraq to take delivery of 100 East European tanks at Saudi Red Sea ports. This soon became a regular practice, with East European and Soviet ships calling at the small port of Qadima north of Jeddah to unload shipments of arms for Iraq. Aryeh Yodfat claimed that Soviet aircraft had begun to land in Badanah, in north-east Saudi Arabia, carrying supplies to Iraq. Such claims were denied by Saudi government officials. Given Saudi sensitivity over any kind of Soviet presence and the fact that Soviet arms were openly delivered to the Jordanian Red Sea port of Aqaba for transfer to Iraq, these accounts are remarkable. Yet even if the Saudis did allow the Soviets to directly deliver weapons or if Arab suppliers acting as intermediaries brought Soviet weapons into the Kingdom for re-transfer to Iraq, Soviet-Saudi co-operation to save Iraq would seem to have certain natural limits, since their interests regarding Iraq are not the same.

Saudi Arabia would like to see Iraq throw out the Iranians but would not like to see Iraq become strongly allied to the USSR or allow in a Soviet military presence in order to do it. Similarly, Moscow would not like to see Iraq become closely linked with either the West or the conservative Arab States at the expense of its ties to the USSR. In the extreme case, Saudi Arabia would regard its own security as seriously threatened if the Soviets intervened militarily to save Iraq, and the USSR would be extremely unhappy to

see Western military intervention of the same purpose. Thus, while neither Moscow nor Riyadh wishes to see Iraq defeated by Iran, the Soviets would like to retain or preferably increase their influence in Baghdad whereas the Saudis would like Soviet influence there to decline or end. Saudi and Soviet interests with regard to Iraq are basically competitive, not co-operative.²⁴⁷

Ceremonial greetings were exchanged between the Soviets and the Saudis on their national holidays and anniversaries. A Soviet broadcast on the occasion of Saudi Arabia's National Day (23rd September, the anniversary of the founding of the Kingdom in 1928) said that the Soviet Union was ready to build relations with Saudi Arabia.²⁴⁸ In exchanges of festive greetings between Brezhnev and King Khalid they wished each other 'prosperity and success'.²⁴⁹

Saudi Arabia's declared aim was to fight communism and diminish the Soviet role in the region. It succeeded in isolating PDRY, turning Egypt, Somalia and the YAR away from the Soviet Union, and preventing the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and some of the Gulf states. This was done primarily by providing financial aid. According to a Soviet commentator:

Saudi Arabia's finances reactionary forces not only in Arab countries but also in Africa, Asia and Western Europe. Moroccan forces ... were transported in 1977 to the war

against the rebels in Zaire at Saudi Arabia's expense. Recently Riyadh gave major financial aid to Zaire encouraged the Somalia regime's departure from a progressive course and its aggression against revolutionary Ethiopia ... Money flows from Saudi Arabia to anti-communist parties and organizations in Western Europe ... Saudi Arabia, when granting credits, strives to dictate a certain political course ... it allocates resources, sometimes quite considerable resources, to countries that have suffered from Israeli aggression, and to a number of Palestinian organizations. At the same time, Riyadh welcomes strikes both against the revolutionary wing of the PLO and against progressive forces in Arab countries. Also, the Saudis spent billions of dollars on Egypt's return to a conservative path.²⁵⁰

The revolutionary nationalism of the 1950's and 1960's gave way to the political pragmatism of the 1970's and 1980's : revolutionary leaders were replaced by more pragmatic ones, or simply by men who had moderated their views as time went on. Thus, while it was Egypt's Nasser with his fiery brand of revolutionary anti-western oratory who dominated the Arab political theatre in the early period, the principal actors in the 1970's and in the 1980's were pro-Western, status-quo leaders such as King Faysal and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia.²⁵¹

As the move away from nationalist, revolutionary politics gathered momentum, and as the conservative, pro-West leaders, hitherto on the defensive, emerged to play central roles in the international relations of the region, the influence of the Soviet Union began to wane. Indeed, the conservative states, at whose helm stood Saudi Arabia, went on the offensive to try to exclude the Soviet Union from the area. This was clearly spelled out in a statement made by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Fahd in 1974 : 'I intend to get the Russian Communists out of Somalia. My policy will be to help the moderate forces in South Yemen. I will help the Sudan resist Communist subversion'. And the Prince was true to his word. By the 1980's, Saudi aid to the Sultanate of Oman, a country which had been fighting Communist insurgents for long periods, amounted to over \$3,000 million. Saudi aid was also instrumental in persuading North Yemen to expel considerable numbers of Soviet advisers and reduce her reliance on the USSR. Similar tactics were used successfully with Somalia, and the Saudis publicly handed a cheque for \$25 million to the Afghan rebels at the Islamabad Islamic Conference in May 1980. The Riyadh government has also extended financial support to the Eritrean insurrection against the Marxist Ethiopian regime.²⁵² Indeed, Saudi aid has gone to distant countries such as South Korea, Taiwan and Zaire simply because of their government's anti-Communism policies.

A condition of Soviet-Saudi competition developed in the region,

with the Soviet side often finding itself the loser. Although generally attacking Saudi Arabia's policy, the Soviet media would, from time to time, point out the error of the Saudis' not having diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.²⁵³ They argued that the USSR was anxious to have ties with Riyadh and that the differences in regimes need not be an obstacle. Soviet commentators cited the example of Kuwait which, in spite of having a conservative regime, had diplomatic and trade ties with the USSR.²⁵⁴

Riyadh continues to be concerned about the Soviet military presence in Aden. The Saudis also oppose Soviet-backed Ethiopia's attempt to conquer the Moslem insurgents in Eritrea. In 1982 the Saudis hosted a meeting at Jeddah of the three main Eritrean guerrilla organizations, at which they agreed to co-operate; Eritrean leaders continue to thank the Saudis for their support. Riyadh has continued to express support for and give aid to Afghan guerrillas the Soviets are trying to conquer.²⁵⁵

In the first half of 1983, Soviet commentary about Saudi Arabia became very hostile indeed, with Tass accusing Riyadh of using torture against its internal opponents. What really seemed to annoy Moscow, however, was that the Saudis were using Afghanistan as an "excuse" for not establishing diplomatic relations with the USSR.

The Saudis, however, appear serious in regarding Afghanistan as an

obstacle to friendly relations with Moscow. At times, various Saudi leaders have again indicated that friendship with the USSR was possible.²⁵⁶ When Crown Prince Abdallah said in March 1983 that he favoured establishing diplomatic ties with Moscow "at the right time", and when Saudi Ambassador to the U.S. Prince Bandar invited Soviet' Ambassador Dobrynin to dinner as well as later telling the press that the Arabs would turn to "Moscow, Paris, and London", for weapons if they could not buy them from Washington. Crown Prince Abdallah later said that Riyadh had no intention of establishing relations with the USSR or Socialist bloc, and the Saudi Press Agency said that Prince Bandar was "misquoted".²⁵⁷

Once more the Saudi officials have made it clear that the Soviet Union must meet four conditions before Riyadh will improve relations with Moscow: (1) Soviet forces must be withdrawn from Afghanistan; (2) the USSR and its allies must reduce their military presence in South Yemen and Ethiopia; (3) the USSR must end all hostile propaganda against the Kingdom; and (4) Soviet Moslems must be allowed greater freedom to practice their religion. The Saudis do not realistically expect the Soviets to meet these conditions and as a result do not foresee Saudi-Soviet relations improving any time soon.

These four Saudi conditions, as well as the history of Soviet efforts to establish ties to Riyadh, show that the primary obstacle

to friendly relations between the two nations is Soviet foreign policy in the region surrounding Saudi Arabia. While it wants good relations with Riyadh, Moscow has never regarded this goal as important enough to warrant not supporting governments or radical groups in neighbouring countries opposed to Saudi interests.²⁵⁸

Since World War II, Saudi Arabia has not exchanged ambassadors with the USSR or with any other Communist country.²⁵⁹ The Saudis believe that the most effective deterrent to direct Soviet military intervention in the region is a sound global balance of power. If the prospect of nuclear war does not deter the Soviets, a few American divisions near the Arabian Gulf were unlikely to do so. Lesser contingencies can best be dealt with on an ad hoc basis and by building Saudi military power.²⁶⁰

Even the absence of diplomatic relations with Riyadh has not prevented a spectacular increase in Saudi-Soviet trade during the past two years, and Saudi Arabia is now, together with Iraq, one of the two leading suppliers of oil to the USSR. According to the latest monthly statistics review of Soviet foreign trade, overall trade with Saudi Arabia in the first quarter of 1984 was worth 155.9 million roubles (\$198 million) as compared with 37.3 million roubles (\$47.2 million) in the first quarter of 1983. When Soviet petroleum purchases are discounted, the increase in trade is even more remarkable: its value in the first quarter of 1984 was 93.6

million roubles (\$118.3 million), while in the first quarter of 1983 it was worth just 2.1 million roubles (\$2.7 million), consisting only of Soviet exports to Saudi Arabia.²⁶¹

Conclusion

A year after the Russian departure, Ibn Saud came to regard the Soviet Union as the menace both to Arabia and Britain and requested that these views be transmitted to the British government. He affirmed that the Soviets had proved themselves to be no friends of the allies after their alliance with Nazi Germany. It was his belief that the Soviet Union would try to get at the Arabian Peninsula, which was separated from Russia by only Turkey and Iraq. Of these countries, Turkey had failed to declare itself prepared to stand in the way of any Russian aggression.

If war broke out, the Arab States, and British interests therein would be threatened. Ibn Saud therefore hoped that Britain would strengthen the Arab States not only arming them, but also by assisting them to 'compose their differences'. He went on to assert that the Arab States would be able to resist 'the Soviet threat' to their independence more effectively 'if they were in some way associated under the aegis of His Majesty's government, than if each was fighting alone'.²⁶²

Suspicion has continued to mark Saudi Arabia's attitude towards the Soviet Union to the present time. However, there was little, if any, contact between the Soviet Union and the governments of the Peninsula after the departure of the Russians in 1938 until the 1950's when Soviet writers came to value the 'nationalist and even traditionalist regimes as a means of denying Arabia to the West'. Slowly the Soviet Union began

to adopt more flexible attitudes as strikes and demonstrations which occurred along the Western Coast of the Arabian Gulf 'seemed to indicate to the Soviets the class and political consciousness of the Arabian working class'.²⁶³

The first hesitant move toward the restoration of relations occurred in 1954 when Soviet citizens were permitted to participate in the pilgrimage to Mecca. In their turn, the Arab States believed that the Western powers were preparing to increase their influence in the Arab world and to 'organise the area into an anti-Soviet defence organization' which would necessarily divert them from their real enemy, Israel.²⁶⁴

The Soviet Union entered the Middle East and Arabian Peninsula at the invitation of the Arab governments at a time when its ideological and national interests coincided with the Arabs' interests : to rid the Middle East of every form of Western influence and rule. The Soviets had traditionally been regarded with friendly eyes by knowledgeable Arabs as the enemy of their enemies: Turkey, Persia, Britain. Since 1955 the Soviet Union has built up influential positions in the Middle East; however, the strength of these positions has been largely derived from Moscow's support of Arab causes, against Israel, and (in the Peninsula especially) against Britain, and against the oil companies. Now the British are leaving, the oil producers are forcing the companies to increase their payments, and in the foreseeable future the concessions will expire. If, perchance, a satisfactory solution to the Arab-Israeli

conflict were to be found, the common interests would have largely disappeared and the Soviet positions would be undermined. This is not to say that the Soviets would lose all of their influence; residual friendship and gratitude toward the USSR, stemming from the help it has rendered over the past 15 years, would assure the Soviets of a warm welcome in most Arab States (especially if the assistance was continued).

However, the Soviet presence would once again be dependent on invitation, on the Arab governments' judgement that good relations with the USSR would be in their interests. The Arabs have not struggled against Western tutelage in order to come under Soviet influence; they wish to be able to initiate free and equal relations with any countries they chose, and to impose their own limits on great-power politics directed them. The history of Soviet relations with the Arabian Peninsula countries indicates that Moscow would not jeopardize existing relations in order to halt this process by some kind of active intervention. The policy of caution and flexibility in response to events will almost certainly be continued.²⁶⁵

The Saudis can and do trade with the Soviet Union, and diplomatic exchanges and meetings occur regularly. Moreover, in Saudi-Soviet relations, as elsewhere in the Middle East, the very issue of whether or not there are diplomatic relations is unduly charged, as if the mere exchange of envoys would presage a major diplomatic shift. But as an indication of diplomatic position, and as a practical facilitator of

contact, such a move obviously benefits the Soviet Union.²⁶⁶

The USSR and Saudi Arabia have supported Iraq in its war with Iran, and both of them do not want to see Iran defeat Iraq. They have been on the same side of the Arab-Israeli conflict for a relatively long time. Moscow and Riyadh both supported the Arab side and opposed the Israelis during the 1956, 1967, and 1973 Middle East wars and during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Both have called for Israel to withdraw from all Arab territory occupied since June 1967 and for the creation of a Palestinian State.²⁶⁷ In addition to their both opposing Israel, the USSR and Saudi Arabia are not friends with the People's Republic of China either. Yet Riyadh's refusal to establish diplomatic ties with Peking is of little comfort to Moscow, since the Saudis have not established relations with any other Communist state either.²⁶⁸

The reason for Moscow's failure to achieve an improvement in relations with the "moderate" States lay in its miscalculation of several factors; one being the genuine antipathy felt in traditional Islamic States to Communism, an antipathy multiplied the-fold by the events in Afghanistan. This antipathy stems not only from these States' ideological objections to Communism, but also from fear of its subversive potential within their own States. They are therefore unlikely to enter into any close relations with the USSR or its regional allies which might destabilize the internal basis of their own regime. Secondly, Moscow underestimated the dependence of the elites in these countries on Western values,

Western lifestyles and traditional economic links with Europe and the United States. Such is the strength of these links that countries like Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the Gulf Sheikhdoms would continue to favour the West almost irrespective of what kind of policy the United States chose to pursue towards Israel. Relations may deteriorate between these States and Washington, and they may choose to draw closer to European countries as a result, yet the establishing of ties with Moscow is not seen as the logical alternative that it was in the 1950's. A tactical alliance might have been possible on the single issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict before the Iranian revolution and the invasion of Afghanistan, but following these events, at least in the short term, any leader who moved too close to the Soviet Union risked being accused of flaunting Islamic principles.²⁶⁹

Soviet foreign policy toward Saudi Arabia so far can only be judged a failure. Moscow's attempts to be friendly with Riyadh have not resulted in diplomatic relations since Stalin withdrew his mission from Jedda in 1938. Nor have the Soviets been able to bring about a shift in Saudi foreign policy from close relations with the United States to neutrality between the superpowers; Moscow has been unable to exploit potential differences between Washington and Riyadh over foreign policy issues such as the Middle East and oil. Nor have the Soviets succeeded in promoting revolution or a coup that would bring to power a government more friendly to the USSR, since Saudi opposition groups have proved weak. The Soviets can only hope that somehow either the government's view of the USSR or

the prospects of the regimes opponents will change and thus provide them with an opportunity to gain some measure of influence in the country.

How might this occur? One change that would benefit the Soviets would be a new King, with different foreign policy views than his predecessors, who would want to have ties with Moscow. That the Soviets have warmly greeted every new Saudi King and promoted an improvement in Saudi-Soviet relations indicates that they have hoped for this. Though disappointed in the past, they could succeed in the future. Crown Prince Abdallah's positive statements about the USSR may be a sign that as King he would permit better Saudi-Soviet relations. However, Fahd made similar statements as Crown Prince (and even as King), but relations have not improved. In addition, a new King and probably the senior members of the royal family would have to be willing to overlook all the many foreign policy differences that have hitherto divided Moscow and Riyadh, including Afghanistan, South Yemen and the Horn of Africa.

Another change that the Soviets hope for is a coup or revolution overthrowing the monarchy. Moscow can be expected to immediately recognize and offer support to any new Saudi government, just as it did with the Yemeni republicans even though the USSR enjoyed good relations with the Imamate. The Soviets would prefer a Marxist government to come to power but would welcome any government, particularly if it were anti-American and willing to become friends with the USSR.

The weakness of the opposition and the strength of the central government in Saudi Arabia, however, make either a coup or a revolution seem unlikely in the near future. As long as revenues from oil exports allow the government to provide the populace with a high standard of living, discontent over economic issues is not likely to spark opposition to the government. Since known Saudi oil reserves are estimated to last until 2050 at current rates of production, economic decline and the political disruption this might cause do not seem imminent.²⁷⁰

What this means for the USSR is that while it would like to improve relations with the present government or promote revolution in the Kingdom, it must wait for some kind of change to take place within Saudi Arabia for either of these two policies to succeed. If the past is a guide to the future, however, such a change will not arise soon.

One of the basic components of Saudi foreign policy orientation is non-alignment. Saudi Arabia is a founder-member of the non-aligned movement, and has participated in five of the seven summit conferences (1961-1983), yet Saudi Arabia has no diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc; all its relations are with the West. The Soviet Union was, however, one of the very first countries to recognise Abdal Al-ziz Ibn Saud's new authority and to establish diplomatic relations in the 1920's. Moreover, the Soviet bloc has been in the forefront in supporting the Arab cause, whether against the old colonial empires or against Israel since 1954. Did not these countries (with the exception of Rumania) break off

diplomatic relations with Israel following its initiation of the 1967
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Formerly Secretary at Tehran.

Babadjan, Benjamin - Described as a Tartar from the Crimea. Holds a doctor's diploma of Petrograd. Formerly at Kabul.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS WITH IRAQ (1920 - 1980)

- I Introduction

- II Brief Historical Perspective of Iraq

- III The Saudi Arabia-Iraq Boundary

- IV The Saudi Arabia-Iraq Relations (1920-1980)

- V Conclusion

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I Introduction

The relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iraq has been one of conflict and disagreement. However, through the years, leaders of both countries have made many attempts at reaching an agreement that would let them live together as neighbours in the Middle East. The struggle has been stimulated by differences in political and religious ideology, as well as tribal and border disputes. Another factor that must be considered is the fact that throughout history most tribal groups have the desire to isolate themselves from outside influences, and consider their territory as belonging to them, with their own government, tribal customs, and traditions being inflexible creating conflict between factions. In spite of these factors, the two nations have much in common and are in some ways interdependent. Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Islam, contains the two holy cities, Mecca, and Medina. Iraq, as an Islamic nation, has close links with these cities since followers of Islam make annual pilgrimages. They also have in common a mutual interest in OPEC, and the stability of oil prices and production, as both nations are heavily dependent upon oil as a major contributor to the gross national product. It is against this background that we now examine the Saudi-Iraqi relationship.

The following is the history of the relationship of these two nations, and their struggles to maintain a peaceful relationship.

II Brief Historical Perspective on Iraq

The geography of Iraq is distinguished by the number and identity of adjacent countries. Iraq is bounded by six countries : in the north by Turkey, in the east by Iran, in the south by Kuwait, in the southwest by Saudi Arabia and Jordan, and in northwest by Syria. This maximizes Iraq's national security problems, particularly in the light of population structures and resource availability in the area. Bordered by desert in the south and a multitude of passes in the north, Iraq is virtually without defence against invasion. The area of Iraq is estimated at 172,000 square mile.¹

In terms of access to the sea, Iraq is the most geographically disadvantaged Arabian Gulf State because it has a short coastline at the head of the Gulf flanked by Iran and Kuwait. This limited access to the Gulf waters is to Iraq's disadvantage both in economic terms resulting in less fishing and continental shelf zones and in strategic terms limiting Iraq's naval capability.

The Iraqi population was estimated in 1977 to be 14 million² making it the second largest population among the Gulf states, next to Iran with 40 million. About 25% of the people are Sunni Muslims concentrated in the upper Euphrates region. The Sunnis have traditionally been the political elite both under Ottoman and British rule. The rest of the population is shi'ites Moslems, a few

Christians and there is also a small proportion of Jewish residents.³

From 1638-1918, Iraq was under the direct rule of the Ottoman Empire legislative power with the Turkish Sultan. Before 1839, the only source of law in the Ottoman Empire was the Islamic law. Islam served as the constitutional legislative, and administrative law. After World War I and the collapse of the Turks, Iraq became a British mandated territory. Upon its formal independence in 1922, Iraq signed a Treaty of Alliance with Britain. This treaty recognized the elected ruler of Iraq as the King. Although Britain had always formally acknowledged Iraq's national sovereignty, the legal status of Iraq was until 1932 "A" class mandate.

Between 1914 and 1921, during direct British administration, limited change was made in the commercial, civil and maritime codes which had been established by the Turks. All these codes remained in force until the national administration was established in 1922-32.

From the 1930's forwards, Iraq began to develop its own national legal system and in doing so was much influenced by the Egyptian legal system. Many Iraqi law students would go to Egypt to study law, particularly for higher degrees and research. Many more would consult Egyptian legal literature in Iraq both for academic and professional purposes.⁴

Although the British mandate officially ended in 1932 when Iraq was admitted to the League of Nations as an independent country, the British connection continued in the form of a Treaty of Alliance. This gave the British the use of two Iraqi air bases and precedence in providing military training, economic assistance, and "advise". When this treaty expired in 1955, Iraq became a member of a new defence agreement, the Baghdad Pact, which included Turkey and later Iran, Pakistan, and Britain. The United States was a member in all but name. The Pact ensured continued Western support of the regime.⁵

The revolution of 4th July, 1958, headed by Brigadier Abdul Karim Kassem eliminated the monarch, and began the new history of an Iraqi republic.⁶

Today Iraq is dominated by the Socialist Arab Ba'ath party.⁷ Iraqi foreign policy is based on four basic pillars : Iraqi nationalism, pan-American, Ba'ath party political and economic ideology, and the views of Saddam Hussain. However, the domestic environment has great influence on Iraqi foreign policy.⁸

III The Saudi Arabia-Iraq Boundary

Delimitation of Saudi Arabia's boundary with Iraq was one of the issues confronting the Saudi government during the period of the 1920's and 1930's. Settlement was exacerbated by a host of questions involving Bedouin tribes in the disputed areas; the most important factors determining both relations between the two countries and settlement of their boundary related to the tribes' migratory patterns, grazing rights, and extradition of offenders. The British government's role in these complex issues was important.

Central to understanding the difficulties of the boundary issue is that the boundary area, between the northern extremity of Saudi Arabia and the southwestern parts of the Euphrates, for centuries had been economically necessary to the Najdi tribes in their migration toward the Euphrates in search for water and grazing lands. One of the best descriptions of this matter is provided by George Lenczowski :

Since time immemorial tribesmen have wandered in the wastes of the Peninsula in search of water and grazing grounds. Claims to ownership were usually limited to a coastal town, an oasis, or a water well. The desert in between could be likened to a high sea, to which no one could justify laying exclusive claims of control.⁹

For the first time in the history of the Arabian Peninsula the status quo was challenged by the concept of the territorial state - a concept having as its premise the notion that state-hood depends on the existence of boundaries. While this concept was familiar to Saudi, Iraqi, and British authorities, it was unknown to the tribes. The problem was aggravated in 1921 when a large group from the Shammar tribe, who paid tribute to Ibn Rashid, migrated to Iraq and began raiding Saudi territories in an attempt to challenge Ibn Saud's authority in Hail province. The result was heavy losses among the tribes on the Saudi side, and retaliation. Raids and counter raids rendered the area unstable and began a chapter of unfriendly relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq.¹⁰

The British government, fearing that the situation might escalate to a war, called for a conference at Mohammarah in May, 1922. Its purpose was to settle the differences between Najd and Iraq.

On 5th May, 1922, in the presence of Sir Percy Cox, the Treaty of Mohammarah was signed by delegates from Najd and Iraq. Article I of the agreement stipulated that Shammar of Najd appertained to Najd while Amarat, Dhafir and Muntafiq belonged to Iraq. The boundary between the two countries was to be based on the location of pastures and wells used by the said tribes. It was further decided that a party of delegates from both sides should meet in Baghdad under the presidency of a British official to work out the details

of this boundary. Article II ensured the safety of pilgrims and Article III provided for normal commercial intercourse between the two countries. Articles IV and V dealt with freedom of travel and grazing fees while Article VI declared that if there should occur a breach of relations between Najd, Iraq and Great Britain, the treaty would become null and void. Pending the decision of the projected meeting in Baghdad, the Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces were pledged not to attack Iraqi tribes.¹¹

Even though representatives of the governments agreed, the treaty required ratification by Ibn Saud and King Faisal I of Iraq. Ibn Saud rejected the sections of the treaty assigning certain tribes to Iraq, arguing that the Saudi representatives had gone beyond their authority and that the Saudi natural northern boundary could extend to areas bordering the Euphrates.¹²

It appears that Ibn Saud's rejection of the Mohammarah Treaty was based on important considerations. By 1922, Ibn Saud's territory was surrounded by three hostile rulers : Abdullah in Transjordan, Faisal I in Iraq, and their father Sharif Hussain in the Hijaz. Hostility to Ibn Saud was a result of the clashes between Hussain and Ibn Saud during 1919-1920 over Khormad and Turbah and the struggle for power in the Arabian Peninsula. The Mohammarah Treaty did not provide a guarantee that these three rulers would not combine against Ibn Saud. Such a guarantee could only come from

Britain, a mandatory power over Jordan and Iraq. But Ibn Saud was unable to secure such a commitment from the British.¹³ King Faisal of Iraq also refused to return leaders of the Shammar tribes who had entered Iraq and who constituted a challenge to Ibn Saud's authority in Hail province. This act of King Faisal was calculated. The Shammar tribes had joined the Iraqi Anazah tribe and formed a tribal alliance against Ibn Saud. This alliance could be used by Faisal as a source of instability in northern Saudi Arabia if Ibn Saud had any intentions of military force against Faisal's father in the Hijaz or his brother Abdullah in Transjordan. The return of the Shammar tribe was for Ibn Saud politically and militarily important, but strategically unwise for Faisal. The Mohammarah Conference and the resulting treaty failed. The boundary and tribal problems remained unsettled. Raiding and counter raiding across the boundary continued.

In December, 1922, developments in Iraq led the British government and Iraq to arrange a new conference with Saudi Arabia. On 1st October the Turkish forces penetrated into the Mosul district in Iraq. Anti-government agitation through the Kurdish districts to the northeast threatened to destroy the country, and gave increased local unrest.¹⁴ King Faisal of Iraq found himself in difficulties, faced not only with challenges and agitation inside his territory but with instability at both the northern borders with Turkey and the southern borders with Saudi Arabia. Contacts had to be

established with Ibn Saud. Messages were sent to Ibn Saud, expressing Faisal's intention of ending the instability and confusion on the boundary area as well as the need for fixing the Iraq boundary.¹⁵ Sir Percy Cox, the British High Commissioner in Iraq, dispatched a message to Ibn Saud expressing the importance of a conference with the aim of reaching settlement of the boundary between Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

The Uqair Conference was held on 21st November, 1922, on the coast of the Arabian Gulf, and the parties were convinced that as long as the boundary remained undefined, tribal raids would continue and relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq would deteriorate. Two difficult ideas had to be reconciled : the concept of a territorial state with defined boundaries and a nationality-determined population, on the one hand, and that of uncontrolled, nomadic, and undefined tribal communities on the other. Finally, on 2nd December, 1922, settlement was reached and the Uqair protocols, which were appended to the Mohammarah Treaty, were signed. These protocols fixed the Saudi Arabia-Iraq boundary of approximately 426 miles. According to the Uqair protocols the two governments agreed that there would be free movement of Saudi tribes to watering and grazing places on the Iraqi side of the boundary, provided they were nearer than those within the Saudi boundary (Article II). The parties agreed (Article III) that there would be no fortification or troop concentration by their party at wells or watering places. A

diamond-shaped zone at the southeast extremity of the boundary was declared a neutral zone and common territory (Article I). The Saudi Arabia-Iraq boundary traverses desert throughout its length.¹⁶

Creation of a neutral zone appeared, at the time, to be the only arrangement that could prove successful. The area was rich with water wells, which were, of course, vital to the Saudi and Iraqi tribes of the area. Any other solution that failed to recognize the tribes' needs and their unfamiliarity with boundary lines separating an extended desert area or the idea of a boundary treaty involving international obligations would have unsuccessful.

Even though the Uqair protocols fixed the boundary between the two countries and settled the problems of watering and grazing rights, the issues of extradition and the prevention of raids remained unresolved. Resolution of these remaining issues involved larger political-tribal problems. The Shammar tribal leaders, who had taken refuge in Iraq in 1921, were abusing their asylum by raiding Ibn Saud's territories.¹⁷ This constant strain in relations between the two countries was one of the major agenda items discussed at the Kuwait Conference in 1923 sponsored by the British government.¹⁸ Saudi representatives urged the Iraqi government to prevent the tribe from using the country as a base against Saudi territories. If the Iraqi government was unable to prevent these raids, the Saudis insisted, the tribe and its leaders must be expelled. The

Iraqi delegation refused to consider such a demand.¹⁹ The conference was interrupted and re-convened for a total of ten sessions between December, 1923, and April, 1924, without resolving the issue of extradition upon which the stability of the two countries' boundary seemed to depend.

After the breakup of negotiations at the Kuwait Conference, instability along the boundary continued, but efforts toward stability and peace persisted, and in January, 1925, Ibn Saud sent a message to the British Resident in the Gulf area, Lt. Colonel F. B. Brideau, expressing his desire to persevere in negotiations :

I am still prepared to conclude special agreement with the Iraq Government or His Britannic Majesty's Government in their capacity as Mandatory Government for the purpose of establishing safety on the frontiers of the two countries, Najd and Iraq, and for the stemming up of raids by the tribes of two countries.²⁰

On 11th October, 1925, Ibn Saud and Sir Gilbert Clayton, the British representative, convened yet another meeting, the Bahrah Conference in the Hijaz. In the negotiations leading up to the conclusion of the Bahrah agreement,²¹ Ibn Saud pressed for agreement on extradition of offenders. Without such an agreement, Ibn Saud argued, boundary disputes would plague the two countries.

Disagreement over what constituted criminality postponed agreement on extradition, but a compromise was reached. Article IX gave the two governments the power to exact guarantees from a tribe under the other contracting party's jurisdiction, if this tribe had migrated to one party's territory. Migration must not be for raids into the territory in which it had resided. If such aggression occurred, punishment and sanctions (provided in Articles I through VII), would be strictly applied. The parties agreed to negotiate an extradition agreement within a period not exceeding one year from the date of signing the Bahrah Agreement.

The Bahrah Agreement marked considerable progress toward friendly relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, but within ten months of signing the Agreement and, ironically, as soon as positive results became apparent, the Iraqi government established several police posts near the Saudi Arabia-Iraq boundary, which gave rise to a new series of heavy and sudden raids into Saudi and Iraqi territories. The Iraqi government's apparent objective was supervision of tribal activities along its borders as well as establishment of a deterrent force against what the Bahrah Agreement termed "tribal aggression". In Article III of the Uqair Protocols the Iraqi government agreed that there would be no "fortification or troop concentration" along the boundary. The Saudi tribes in the area, headed by Faisal Al-Dwaish, did not differentiate between fortifications or troop concentrations and establishment of police posts. Despite King Ibn

orders²² to his tribes not to engage in raiding, Faisal Al-Dwaish led a tribe in heavy raids across the Iraqi boundary against the police posts and other tribes near the area. The attacks resulted in retaliation by the Iraqi tribes inside Saudi territories.

Fear that instability along the Saudi Arabia-Iraqi boundary could, in addition to jeopardizing stability in Iraq, spill over into Kuwait and disturb the status quo²³ determined the British government to bring to an end these perpetual raids, and British planes in 1930 took dramatic action, bombing both the tribes and Faisal Al-Dwaish's followers.²⁴ Removal of Al-Dwaish in 1930 from Iraq created a quiet situation on the border between Saudi Arabia and Iraq.²⁵

Between 1931 and 1939 a series of agreements took place between Saudi Arabia and Iraq over migration, nationality of tribes, boundary regulations, and administration of the neutral zone. They still have a bearing on the boundary between the countries. No boundary disputes have been reported since the 1930's.

The next move came on 18th April, 1975, when the governments entered into negotiations with the intent of agreement on the status of the neutral zone. This materialized on 2nd July, 1975, when the governments concluded an agreement according to which the diamond-shaped zone would be divided between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, by a

simple line through the middle. Both countries have annexed their respective shares. They clarified, for example, the status of a 640-Km border stretch delineated under the 1922 Al-Mohammarah Treaty and that of a demilitarized "neutral zone" (separate from the Saudi-Kuwaiti neutral zone) of 4,000 Km² set under the 1922 Uqair Protocols.²⁶

Conclusion of this agreement and its timing were based on the conviction that the status of the neutral zone, agreed upon in the Uqair Protocols and based on the necessity of grazing and watering rights, had lost its utility by 1975. Discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia in 1938 and the revenue from large-scale production had an immediate and massive effect on the country, particularly on the Saudi tribes.²⁷ The discovery, with its potential for revolutionizing the economic base of the country, rendered obsolete the issues of tribal grazing and watering rights. During the early years of oil development in Saudi Arabia, thousands of Bedouin tribesmen, attracted by high wages, a regular income, and the unprecedented chance for a non-nomadic, settled life, worked as unskilled workers in the oil fields.²⁸ The cumulative effect of these benefits was reluctance to return to their traditional life.

Since 1940 the Saudi government has adopted an active land settlement policy, encouragement of tribes to form agricultural communities. Agriculturists were provided with land, seed, and

money. Old wells and irrigation systems were repaired, and new irrigation projects constructed. In 1949 the government proclaimed readiness to make grants of State land to any citizen who undertook to cultivate it.²⁹ By 1975 the government introduced inducements to agricultural activities.³⁰ Although not all tribes have become either agriculturalists or labourers in the extractive oil industry, large numbers have been attracted to the cities. The final boundary agreement of 1975, dividing the Saudi Arabia-Iraq neutral zone, has been affected by the wealth from oil and the new economic situation.

IV The Saudi Arabia-Iraq Relations - 1920's-1980's

Relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq have generally not been friendly from the time of the establishment of the Iraqi government.³¹ Until 1958, relations between the two countries were dominated by the historic feuds between the Al-Saud and Hashemite dynasties. While the Arabian Peninsula was politically and territorially divided among rulers with uncertain allegiances, the antagonism of Abul Aziz Ibn Saud in Najd towards the pro-Ottoman Sharif Hussain in the Hijaz created a confrontational atmosphere. The Al-Sauds claimed that their authority over the Arabian Peninsula was based on the doctrine of tawhid (absolute oneness of God) whose main objectives was to restore Islam to its original purity.³³ The Al-Saud dynasty's concern was considerably reinforced following Sharif Hussain's self-proclamation as the "King of the Arabs".³⁴

Ibn Saud's efforts to unify Arabia led to the armed conflict with the Hashemites in May, 1919.³⁵ The Hashemites were defeated, but their political setback created unique opportunities. That setback was a result of the Franco-British Sykes-Picot Agreement, which re-drew the map of the Levant and removed Hussain's son, Faisal, from the throne in Damascus. As a compensation, the British offered him the Iraqi throne on 23rd August, 1921.³⁶

On 11th March, 1922, Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces attacked Iraqi

tribesman at Abu Ghar slaughtering many of them and stealing their camels and their livestock.³⁷ The feeling of Iraqi public opinion was agitation. The Iraqi nationalist's consulted the clergy to discuss the situation, which led to an agreement to hold a conference.³⁸ The Najaf clergy held a number of meetings discussing the Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces aggression, and then decided it was necessary to have a general conference with the clergy participating along with the leaders of the tribes and the nationalists.³⁹ On 12th April, a general meeting was held in the Court of Iman Hussain Ibn Ali, and all the delegates participated in the meeting.⁴⁰ Mohammad Ja'afar Abu Al-Tamen addressed the public describing the massacre committed by Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces against Iraqi tribes in Abu Ghar and Sammuwa.⁴¹ The delegates signed two documents, the first was presented to King Faisal I and the second to the clergy. These documents stated that due to the fact that Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces had done uncivilized acts, killing, stealing, and vandalism against Iraqi Moslems, they had decided to support the tribes and fight Ibn Saudi's Ikhwan forces, and ask Iraqi authorities to aid the suffering people and compensate the victims according to the observed laws.⁴² The conference was seen as the only way to stop the aggression from Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces.⁴³

The British Foreign Ministry sent a protesting telegram to Ibn Saud by its resident representative in Bahrain, Ibn Saud replied to that telegram declaring his urgent intention and his determination to

punish the offenders and prevent any offensive in the future.⁴⁴

The Iraqi Council of Ministers suggested that the British Colonial Office should use economic sanctions against Ibn Saud, and force him to punish the attackers and compensate the victims.⁴⁵ Instead, Sir Gilbert Clayton the High Commissioner for Iraq suggested that flares should be dropped from the air on the tribal regions telling the Bedouins to stay 400 miles away from the Iraqi border.⁴⁶

Between 1923 and 1926, Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces continued to expand their territorial hold in the north by gaining the support of Iraq tribes whose allegiances shifted with their migratory patterns.⁴⁷ In time, tribal mobility not only upset Najdi and Iraqi territorial domains, but also disturbed the orderly collection of taxes.⁴⁸ Increasingly, such economic factors exacerbated the personal hostility between King Faisal I and Ibn Saud who agreed, however, through a series of British sponsored agreements, to settle their border disputes.⁴⁹

Relations between Najd and Iraq did not improve until after Faisal Al-Dwaish had been surrounded. He surrendered to the British authorities in Iraq on 9th January, 1930. He had been placed on board a British warship in the Arabian Gulf. However, the British authorities handed him over to Ibn Saud, who promised to treat him humanely.⁵⁰

On 22nd February, 1930, Sir Francis Humphrys, the High Commissioner for Iraq,⁵¹ invited Ibn Saud and King Faisal I on board the British warship Lupin in the Arabian Gulf. The two Kings held a meeting for the first time face to face.

Soon they discovered that they had underestimated and misunderstood each other, and that they were united by a common love-love of Arabia. The two monarchs agreed to open diplomatic relations between their countries for the first time.⁵²

On 12th April, 1931, the Iraqi Prime Minister, Nuri Said with Taha al-Hashimi, brother of Yasin Pasha, visited Saudi Arabia. The result was a Treaty of Bon Voisin-age, friendship, and extradition signed between Saudi Arabia and Iraq on 5th April, 1931.⁵³ The visit was returned in 1932 by Prince Faisal, the second surviving son of Ibn Saud. The visits helped the improvement of the relations between the two countries.⁵⁴

Clearly, economic necessities had prompted Ibn Saud to accept a diplomatic settlement with King Faisal I. But in the Hijaz, Ibn Saud's efforts to control the Arabian Peninsula continued to clash with Sharif Hussain's rival claim to the custodianship of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Madinah. With the support of the Ikhwan, Ibn Saud defeated Hussain and in 1932, united the tribes of the Peninsula to create the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. His sharp

disagreements with the Hashemite dynasty were to abate, however, as Iraq's King Faisal I strengthened his ties with London. The London-Baghdad relationship was viewed in Riyadh with suspicion and ambivalence. Yet, the British-Iraqi rapprochement notwithstanding, Riyadh would pursue contradictory policies for several decades as its internal political structures experienced significant changes. Its foreign policy would largely be influenced by what Iraq would do and it may be safe to assert that the impact of the Hashemite-Al-Saud rift hampered the political development of both Iraq and Saudi Arabia.⁵⁵

However, on 10th January, 1935, the Iraqi Prime Minister Ali Al-Ayobi contacted the Saudi Ambassador Sheikh Hafex Wahbah in London, and expressed to him his wish to signal a "Brotherhood Treaty" between his country and Saudi Arabia, on one condition, that Yemen could join them later.⁵⁶ On 25th March, 1935, Wahbah visited Baghdad to discuss the principles of the treaty with the Iraqi officials.⁵⁷ On 2nd April, 1936, an official announcement was issued in Baghdad declaring that an Arab and Islamic friendship treaty had been signed between Saudi Arabia and Iraq.⁵⁸ The reasons the treaty was signed was in accordance with Islamic ties and national unity, the necessity of co-operation between them to discuss the affairs which are in the interest of the States, and to consider a peaceful settlement and solutions for any conflict or disputes between them. Yemen joined the treaty.⁵⁹

When the revolution in Palestine increased in 1936, Ibn Saud made some efforts to unite the Arab States. He telegraphed his representative in Baghdad to inform the Iraqi Prime Minister about his opinion regarding the situation, and the necessity of helping Palestine in its current situation.⁶⁰ However, when the decision was made to divide Palestine, Saudi Arabia rejected it along with Iraq. The rejection had not been taken in accordance with the Arab brotherhood treaty principles, but to the facts of the Saudi objections to any major role for the Hashemites in Syria (Sham States). Saudi Arabia wanted also to know the Iraqi position and to stop unity between Jordan and the remaining Arab section of Palestine. Ibn Saud was very satisfied when the Iraqi Prime Minister Hikmat Sulieman and his cabinet was replaced by Jameel Madfai, and his cabinet. The satisfaction could be deduced from Ibn Saud's statement to the Iraqi minister Thabet Abal Noor in Menah during the pilgrimage season when Ibn Saud said, "The Iraqis are our brothers and cousins", and swore by God that he would respect the treaty.⁶¹

Despite the treaty between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, no success had been achieved on the field of co-operation between the two countries with regard to Arab affairs. Jameel Madfai complained about Ibn Saudi's changing policies, and accused him of being a British agent.⁶²

The relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq had never been fully compatible. Since the 1930's, all the Iraqi ministries tried to improve the Iraqi-Saudi relations. All these efforts have been unsuccessful because neither state could agree on foreign affair issues. The Saudi position can be explained by its continuous objection to the defence projects that were suggested by Iraq to defend the Arab States.⁶³

However, Riyadh watched carefully the event in Iraq.⁶⁴ When the Rashid Ali' revolution took place in 1941, and the Iraqi-British relations deteriorated,⁶⁵ Ibn Saud sent a letter to Rashid Ali protesting that he did not consult him in the disputes with Britain.⁶⁶ Ibn Saud considered that the consultation between Saudi Arabia and Iraq in foreign affairs issues was very necessary according to the 1931 treaty between the Iraqi and the British armies, Riyadh became very alarmed that the war would be extended to its territories as a result of increasing German influence in Iraq.⁶⁷

On 15th May, 1941, Baghdad sent an official delegation to Riyadh, headed by Naji Swaidi⁶⁸ to solicit utilization of an Arab and Islamic friendship treaty signed between the two states on 2nd April, 1936. However, Rashid Ali contacted Asaad Faqech, the authorized minister of Saudi Arabia in Baghdad, and asked him to inform Ibn Saud that the Iraqi army was in need of his help to block

the Jordanian-Iraqi highway, to prevent the British army from attacking the Iraqi army in various fronts. So Ibn Saud replied that Baghdad did not consult him when they disputed with the British, and when they had an agreement with Germany.⁶⁹

However, Ibn Saud met Naji Swaidi, and he complained as usual because the Iraqi government did not consult him on many occasions. Ibn Saud refused to co-operate with Iraq against Britain, and he literally took (Article IX) from the 1936 treaty between his country Iraq.⁷⁰ Thus, Riyadh foreign policy did not co-operate with Baghdad foreign policy. And Ibn Saud refused to support Rashid Ali' revolution.

On Britain's exhortation, King Faisal revived the Old Fertile Crescent Project in the spring of 1943, which proposed to group Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Transjordan as a political entity bound to Iraq within the framework of an Arab League.⁷¹ Riyadh feared potential Iraqi expansion in the Arabian Peninsula when backed by such a regional organization. It found an ally in Egypt, equally alarmed at the establishment of a Baghdad-Damascus axis. In a move aimed at thwarting Hussain, Cairo proposed in July 1944 that an association open to all Arab states be constituted.⁷² This endeavour was supported by Saudi Arabia primarily because it limited the rising influence of the Iraqis, and in time an independent League of Arab States (LAS) came into being. The creation of the

Arab League, however, did not prevent the two dynasties in Iraq and Jordan from forming a pro-Western block, which prompted Cairo to engineer a collective security pact with Riyadh, Damascus, Beirut and Aden.⁷³

However, relations between Riyadh and Baghdad were very tense. Ibn Saud feared that the Hashemites would rise up and revenge themselves for unfriendly relations since thirty years ago. In addition, Baghdad was unfriendly due to the Buraimi issue. These reasons were the cause of deteriorating relations between the two states.⁷⁴

Saudi Arabia and Egypt remained united in their opposition to Baghdad's alliance throughout most of the 1950's. Nasser successfully persuaded King Saud to oppose any pact concluded under the aegis of the Kingdom's principal ally, namely the United States.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, King Saud's contradictory policies placed Saudi Arabia in a precarious position in the Arab world. On the one hand, his anti-communist stance bound him to Washington and, on the other, his opposition to the ruling Hashemite dynasty in Baghdad compelled him to become Nasser's ally. The catalyst to Riyadh's reservations toward Baghdad was the 1956 Suez war when, ironically, both monarchies adopted similar positions at the November 1956 Beirut Conference, rejecting an Egyptian proposal to break diplomatic relations with France and Britain.⁷⁶ For the first time, Riyadh and Baghdad shared a similar policy. That policy was

primarily adopted because both regimes feared the consequences of permanent closure of the Suez Canal ... their major oil route.

Despite the recovery of Riyadh-Baghdad relations in 1956, Saudi Arabia did not join the Baghdad Pact. However, the increase of Nasser's influence in the Arab world encouraged closer relations between Riyadh and Baghdad.⁷⁷

On 20th September, 1956, King Faisal II visited Saudi Arabia for the first time. Faisal held a meeting with King Saud in Dammam. The two Kings agreed to improve relations between their countries.⁷⁸

While King Saud was on a state visit to the United States on 1st January, 1957, Iraq's Crown Prince Abdul Ilah happened to be in Washington at the same time. Saud met the Crown Prince, and the two agreed to bury the hatchet and co-operate in meeting the real danger to their realms and thrones, which lay in the revolutionary ideology promoted by Nasser. Although both the Saudi and Iraqi governments had previously engaged in double-talk and double-dealing with each other, the meeting between these two men at that particular place and under the particular circumstances prevailing at the time established at least a presumption of earnestness to be tested by their respective future behaviour. The record of that behaviour was to show that the meeting was of substantial consequence.⁷⁹

However, after the phoney crisis over Syria's Communist-inspired threat to its neighbours subsided, King Saud resumed and intensified his rapprochement with Iraq.⁸⁰ Shifting alliance in the Arab world made expedient a change in the former animosity between the ruling Saud family and the Hashemite dynasties of Iraq and Jordan. A growing suspicion of Egypt by Saudi leaders prompted King Saud to visit Iraq for the first time on 11th May, 1957, at the conclusion of the visit the Saudi and Iraqi Kings issued a joint statement condemning communism, imperialism, and zionism.⁸¹

Despite Saudi Arabia's apparent rapprochement with Iraq, Riyadh remained suspicious of Baghdad's regional ambitions. The most significant change in Saudi relations with Iraq, however, came in 1958 with the overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy and the establishment of a radical, military regime headed by Brigadier General Abdul Karim Kassem.⁸² The Iraqi revolution produced tensions between Iraq and Saudi Arabia that endured through the 1960's and into the 1970's. The Saudi leadership felt insecure because of the Kingdom's strategic position bordering on revolutionary Iraq which was supported and armed by the Soviet Union and which considered Saudi Arabia as a base for "imperialist" penetrations in the region.⁸³

From Riyadh's perspective, the Nasserist-inspired military coup in Baghdad placed Iraq and Egypt in an anti-Western camp. Saudi Arabia tried to counter this development by forging closer ties with the

United States. It supported the Eisenhower Doctrine while Iraq revolutionaries supported national liberation movements in the Arab world aiming at the overthrow of conservative monarchies.⁸⁴

Iraq's increasing rapprochement with Moscow and pro-Soviet forces disturbed the Saudi leaders. For example, Iraq provided political, military, and financial assistance to the anti-Saudi Marxist-Lennist Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf (PFLOAG) in Oman.⁸⁵ The Iraqis were actively involved in the political interactions of the Gulf region.

The crisis over Kuwait developed rapidly. On 25th June, 1961, Abdul Karim Kassem declared that Kuwait was part of the Republic of Iraq.⁸⁶ This declaration held improving relations with Saudi Arabia. Riyadh support of Kuwait, characterised by King Saud's assurance to the Shiekh of Kuwait that "Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are one country, what affects Kuwait affects Saudi Arabia", inevitably limited the prospects for developing Iraqi-Saudi relations.⁸⁷

Consequently, when King Faisal ascended to the Saudi throne, he outlined a new conservative approach for Muslim countries to follow: fight all ideologies which are inconsistent with "Islam". Faisal's principal targets were Iraq and Egypt, as relations with the latter soured. When on 17th July, 1968, the Ba'ath party came to power in Baghdad,⁸⁸ Iraq's already close ties with Moscow improved dramatically. Yet, Saudi Arabia's real disquiet with Iraq would not

reach alarming proportions until the signing, in 1972, of the Soviet-Iraq Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation.⁸⁹ This event, more than any other, determined Riyadh's policy in the region for the next decade.

Yet, despite its concern with the Soviet-Iraq relationship, Saudi Arabia's opposition to Israel converged with Baghdad's. For example, Riyadh agreed to Baghdad's call to stop all oil exports during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.⁹⁰ Within a few months, however, the two countries' positions diverged as Saudi Arabia opted for a lifting of the embargo. The same divergence of approach between Saudi Arabia and Iraq surfaced again during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Instead of joining OPEC's oil embargo decision, Iraq argued the OPEC states should sever their diplomatic relations with the United States which was providing military assistance to Israel and withdraw their deposits from American banks.⁹¹ Moreover, Iraq called on Saudi Arabia and all other Arab states to nationalize all American interests in the area. Although Riyadh may have privately sympathized with these arguments, it refused to cut its ties with Washington or to nationalize U.S. interest in the Kingdom. Instead, Saudi Arabia and OPEC opted for the gradual implementation of a coordinated oil production reduction and a selective embargo. On 18th October, 1976, Riyadh initiated the application of these measures but Iraq deemed them insufficient. Rather, Baghdad chose to nationalize any remaining "Western" interests in the Basra Petroleum

Company, including American and Dutch interests as well as those belonging to Calouste Gulbenkian.⁹² These actions notwithstanding, Iraq refused to participate in the 1973 oil embargo. Saudi and Iraqi positions became irreconcilable after the 1973 war. Riyadh, supported by Egypt and Syria, favoured negotiations with Israel through the United States acting as an intermediary, whereas Baghdad rejected any form of negotiations with Israel.

However, the Saudis found themselves to be impotent in their efforts to effect a reorientation in Iraqi policies and attitudes, primarily because Iraq was an oil-rich state in its own right and possessed substantial military resource and could withstand traditional Saudi "financial" and diplomatic pressure. An improvement in relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq began in the mid-1970's and was dependent less upon Saudi initiatives than upon changes in the attitudes of the Iraqi leaders.⁹³

After the Iran-Iraq border dispute over the Shatt al-Arab was settled in 1975,⁹⁴ however, relations between Baghdad and Riyadh also began to improve. Apparently, during the OPEC Algiers meeting, Saddam Hussain invited Crown Prince Fahd to visit Iraq.⁹⁵ Subsequently, Saudi Arabia and Iraq signed an agreement to resolve their own border dispute and rebuild "the 1,280 Km road between Najaf (Iraq) and Madinah (Saudi Arabia) to provide Iraqi and Iranian pilgrims with a direct route to Makkah".⁹⁶ In June 1975, Prince

Fahd visited Baghdad to discuss Arabian Gulf security questions with President Ahmmad Hassan al-Bakr and Vice President Saddam Hussain Al-Takrti and, according to press reports, "the visit resulted in the settlement of Iraq's conflict with Kuwait over sovereignty of the two islands of Bubiyan and Warbah.⁹⁷ Later developments, however, revealed in 1985 that the conflict over the islands might not have been settled. But clearly, bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq seemed to improve.

An agreement demarcating the joint boundary of the Iraqi-Saudi neutral zone was concluded in July 1975; subsequently, the Iraqi regime terminated its propaganda campaign against the Saudi monarchy. Reciprocating these Iraqi actions, Saudi Arabia has been instrumental as a mediator in helping to resolve the tensions between Iraq and its neighbours, Iran and Syria.⁹⁸ In 1977, Riyadh and Baghdad announced that they had concluded an economic, technical and trade co-operation agreement.⁹⁹

There is thus little doubt that the gradual normalization of Iraq-Saudi relations during 1978 occurred as a result of fundamental modifications in Iraqi attitudes primarily brought about by indigenous factors. Power struggles within the Ba'ath party leadership, disquiet in the armed forces, and the increasing alienation of the large Shi'ia community from the Sunni ruling elite (given a dramatic boost in January 1979 by the Iranian revolution)

seem to have convinced the Iraqi leaders that the pursuit of radical and revolutionary policies in the Arabian Peninsula would ultimately affect their already turbulent domestic situation.¹⁰⁰ Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan paid an official visit to Iraq in April 1978, and, after talks with President al-Bakr and Vice President Hussain, he declared that there were "no points of disagreement on any topics discussed". The Iraqis confided that agreement had been reached "to remedy problems of common concern". Immediately after this visit Saudi Arabia despatched Planning Minister Hisham Nazer to Teheran, reportedly to convey to the Shah the willingness of Iraq and Saudi Arabia to establish with Iran "a form of co-operation in the field of defence and security to meet any future developments in the region". Similarly in June 1978, the Iraqi Information Minister confirmed that Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia were co-operating to safeguard oil routes.¹⁰¹

However, a diplomatic rapprochement also came as a result of the convergence of two developments in the region in 1978-79, the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty and the Iranian Revolution. Co-operation between the two ideological opposites in the Arab world had first been manifested during the Baghdad Conference I in 1978. Their parallel interests were further emphasized during the Tunis Summit in November, when the Iraqis refrained from pressing Riyadh to put more "teeth" in the Baghdad anti-Sadat resolutions. Iraq's restraint at Tunis preserved a measure of harmony in the already

weakened front.¹⁰² During the Baghdad Conference II in 1979, Saudi Arabia abandoned its traditional softer policy toward the peace process and joined Iraq in condemning Sadat's Egypt and imposing diplomatic and economic sanctions on Cairo.¹⁰³

The Iranian Revolution also spurred better relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq. The conservative Saudi and republican Ba'athists feared the revolution's rising influence among their subjects, whether Shias or Sunnis. Furthermore, the other conservative Gulf states perceived Iran's internal turmoil as a destabilizing factor in regional security matters. Immediately after the fall of the Shah in January 1979, Iraqi Interior Minister Izzat Ibrahim, an influential member of the Ba'ath Party's Command and Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council, spent seven days in Saudi Arabia discussing Gulf security. On 5th February, 1979, Saudi Arabia and Iraq concluded an internal security co-operation agreement, which also covered border security.¹⁰⁴ On 17th July, 1979, Saddam Hussain assumed the presidency when Al-Bakr, on grounds of ill health, handed in his resignation.¹⁰⁵ At that time Saddam was seeking allies to help him confront domestic opposition groups including the Iraqi Communist Party which was violently purged. Saddam also wished to consolidate the state's authority over Iraq's Shia subjects which represented the majority of the population.¹⁰⁶ For its part, Saudi Arabia shared with Iran the fear that Iran's anti-

Western militancy would reach the conservative monarchies through the local Shia populations and was especially concerned with the Eastern Province where Saudi Shias work in the oil fields.

Iraq was also galvanised into action by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on 27th December, 1979, resulting in a considerable strengthening of a nascent trend in their Arab relations - one of tacit, if not acknowledged, Riyadh-Baghdad co-operation. In fact, the parallel responses of Saudi Arabia and Iraq to the Soviet invasion marked an important step toward the subsequent development of a full Riyadh-Baghdad alignment during the summer and fall of 1980.¹⁰⁷ The Iraqi condemnation of the Soviets was elaborated during the first week of January 1980 in a series of articles in the authoritative Al-Thawra newspaper.¹⁰⁸

Riyadh and Baghdad positions were not yet as harmonious as they would be later in the year. In particular, these nations differed both on the importance of the Islamic aspect of the Afghanistan crisis and on the appropriate role of the great powers in the region. Thus, while the Iraqis pursued a course somewhat parallel to that of Saudi Arabia, their policies illustrated another older theme of inter-Arab relations; that of Iraq as the "odd man out" of Arab politics. That at this juncture was even farther apart from the other Arab "radicals" than it was from the "conservatives" was manifested in the varying responses to the Soviet invasion by the

newly active front for steadfastness and confrontation.¹⁰⁹ On 19th January, 1980, Saudi Foreign Minister Sa'ud visited Iraq within the framework of co-ordination to discuss the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.¹¹⁰ On 23rd January, the Iraqis formally announced that they would participate in the Islamabad (Pakistan) Conference on 29th January, 1980¹¹¹ - another sign of increasing Baghdad-Riyadh co-operation, and improving relations between them. The Conference ended with Iraq supporting the Saudi position.¹¹²

However, the most important development to emerge from the shifts in the Arab balance of power in 1978-1980, was the formation of an Iraqi-Saudi-Jordanian axis (see Appendix 1). Iraq played the key role in creating the new alignment, partly because Saddam Hussain had achieved good rapport with the two monarchies at the Baghdad Conferences.¹¹³

The Iraqi-Saudi-Jordanian axis became an increasingly viable bloc in 1980 and 1981. On 8th February, 1980, Saddam proposed a National Covenant (see Appendix 2), which was designed to suggest the principles upon which inter-Arab co-operation should be based. The two most important guidelines in this document were a ban on the use of force in disputes between Arab states and a doctrine of neutralism which precluded commitments to either superpower. The covenant not only enhanced Saddam Hussain's leadership role, but further ensured the hegemony of the Iraqi-Saudi-Jordanian axis.¹¹⁴

The extent of Baghdad-Riyadh alignment on Arab issues came into full view during the conference of Arab, foreign, economic, and finance ministers held in Jordan's capital, Amman, on 6-9th July, 1980.¹¹⁵ However, Riyadh and Amman stood solidly behind Baghdad's effort to prevent a linkage between short-term political issues and long-term economic-strategic ones, although Riyadh in particular refrained from embracing the anti-Syrian tenor of Iraq's statements. Iraqi Foreign Minister Sadon Hammadi confirmed that Baghdad and Riyadh enjoyed solid and excellent relations. He also declared Iraq would not use the oil weapon unless all the Arab countries agreed to use it as well. Hammadi's declaration was a dramatic shift from Iraq's stand in the past, and brought the radical Ba'ath in Baghdad into line with the conservatives in Riyadh.¹¹⁶

Against the backdrop of such developments, high level contacts between Riyadh and Baghdad culminated in the 6th August, 1980 visit by Saddam Hussain to Taif (Saudi Arabia). This "was the first time an Iraqi head of state had been to Saudi Arabia since the overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy on 14th July, 1958".¹¹⁷ What transpired between King Khalid and President Saddam remains uncertain. The official communique announced that the two heads of state had reviewed the regional situation and discussed the implications of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan for the security of the Arabian Gulf as well as the Israeli government's declaration proclaiming Jerusalem as Israel's eternal capital.¹¹⁸ At the end of

their talks, Khalid and Saddam declared that both countries would sever economic and diplomatic relations with all states which recognised the Israeli proclamation. This joint Saudi-Iraq position on Jerusalem may have been Riyadh's warning to Washington not to accept yet another Israeli orchestrated fait accompli. A more plausible explanation for the Saudi acceptance of a strongly worded Iraqi initiated ultimatum may be found in Riyadh's desire to strengthen its ties with Baghdad at a time when the Iranian regime was embarked on a crusade to export its revolution to Iraq and the conservative monarchies. Toward the Iranian threat, the Khalid-Saddam negotiations enjoin[ed] "that peripheral differences should be discarded and ranks should be closed". Conceivably, King Khalid may have wished to foster relations between the world's largest oil exporter and the Arab world's greatest military power.

From its perspective, Iraq attempted to capitalize on this newly-found co-operation. Reportedly, in a March, 1980, declaration, Saddam Hussain had gone so far as to "pledge military assistance to Saudi Arabia" if Soviet troops invaded Saudi territory.¹¹⁹ Such exuberant statements drew mild responses from Riyadh which wished to rebuild its strained ties with Tehran.

From some time the Iraqi approach to Riyadh has been couched in terms intended to attract the Arab nationalism of the younger, secular-educated members of the royal household and any government

technocrats, with antagonizing the equilibrium of the ruling circle commanded by King Khalid and Crown Prince Fahd. The result of the August negotiations was that in public the Saudi position was one of benevolent acquiescence to Iraqi plans. In private - though expressed in public by the Saudi's acknowledged spokesman in the Gulf, the Qataris - the position was more active support covering a range of Iraqi requests in the event of war with Iran.¹²⁰

Yet, when the Iraq-Iran war broke out on 22nd September, 1980, and Iraq pressed its requests, no one in Riyadh or elsewhere in the Gulf could be sure which way the Saudi leadership would spring, publicly or privately. Despite considerable coaxing from Baghdad, the Saudis remained anxious that an open conflict between the Arabs and Iran would provide new opportunities for the Soviet Union - in Iran, as it continued to deteriorate, and in Iraq, if it got tied down in a costly war, to guard against that contingency, Riyadh believed it essential to retain its "American option" - the possibility of an American intervention on the Saudis' behalf - whatever the other Arabs thought.¹²¹

So, Saudi Arabia had no choice but to express its total support of Iraq, believing perhaps that a rapid victory would end the perceived Iranian threat.¹²² Riyadh opened its port facilities to help Iraq receive military supplies, committed a portion of its oil exports to help make up for the Iraqi losses and interceded on

Baghdad's behalf with European states for the sale of advanced weapons. On 16th April, 1981, the Kuwaiti daily Al-Rai Al-Am reported that the Arab Gulf States (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain) had committed themselves to providing Iraq with \$14 billion, of which \$6 billion would originate in Saudi Arabia.¹²³

The first weeks of the war witnessed a concerted Iraqi campaign to mobilize Arab support behind its thrust into Iran.¹²⁴ Formally, this campaign was successful. Thus, Baghdad's propaganda machine also succeeded in winning the Arab world's support of Iraqi's struggle against the "racist Persian aggressors", through the years of the war.

Because of the Iranian Revolution and the Gulf war, Iraq moved closer to Saudi Arabia and in doing so toned down its hitherto intransigent political rhetoric. In fact, Baghdad's newly found flexibility was notably apparent in its oil pricing policies. In 1979, Iraq abandoned its hard line stance on pricing and aligned its policy with that of Saudi Arabia. This was a major victory for the kingdom. On the political front, Iraq came to support the King Fahd peace plan despite its previous rejection of U.N. Resolution 242. However, these changes in Iraqi-Saudi and Iraqi-Arab affairs must be evaluated with caution. Iraq's long-term ambitions in the Gulf region include the fulfilment of a long-sought leadership role.

Undeniably, while Iraq and Iran are entangled in war, Riyadh is making a bid for that leadership position. Whether Baghdad or Tehran would acquiescence in Riyadh's rising influence in the area is subject to debate. Nevertheless, what Arab Gulf States cannot ignore is a potential Iraqi bid for leadership within the Arab regional organization. Clearly, such a development would substantially alter the conservative nature of the Arab Gulf States and threaten its quest for regional security and stability based on principles espoused by Arab Gulf States.

Conclusion

Thus another area in which Saudi Arabia foreign policy has encountered problems has been in relations with Iraq.

The reason for tense relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq was Ibn Saud's Ikhwan forces offences against the Iraqi border. Despite the fact that many agreements and treaties had been signed between the two countries (1922-38), relations between them were tense and unfriendly.¹²⁵

Since Abdul Karim Kassem's revolution in Iraq in 1958 - generally perceived as an image of "radical, socialist and Soviet-oriented" Iraq posing a threat to the "conservative, pro-Western" Gulf States of the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman), relations between Riyadh and Baghdad remained insubstantial.¹²⁶

The Iraqis were actively involved in the political interactions of the Gulf region. In 1961, Saudi Arabia and Iraq were on the verge of armed conflict as Baghdad revived its territorial claim to Kuwait. The Kuwaiti affair worsened the relations between Riyadh and Baghdad.

During the regime of the two Arefs (1963-68), little change occurred in relations with Saudi Arabia. This relationship remained tense and insubstantial. Although Saudi Arabia's opposition to Arab League

involvement in the Gulf Sheikhdoms, and its contributions to the British-inspired Trucial States Development Fund, created resentment in Baghdad, the major factor affecting Iraqi-Saudi relations was not in the Gulf but in Yemen. Given the severity of the conflict in Yemen between the Egyptian-backed republican government and the Saudi-based royalist insurgents, it is hardly surprising that the Aref regime's pursuit of a "unified political command" with Egypt limited the prospects for an improved Saudi-Iraqi relations.¹²⁷

The government that emerged in July, 1968, led by Ahmmmed Hassan Al-Bakr, was "Ba'athist, radical, socialist, and backed by the Soviet Union". Al-Bakr's regime was an anti-Saudi regime, called Saudi Arabia base to the imperialism in the region.¹²⁸ Also, Baghdad called upon Saudi people to overthrow their King, and establish a socialist republic.¹²⁹ At that time the relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq were the worst since King Ibn Saud met King Faisal I of Iraq on the British warship, HMS Lupin on 22nd February, 1930.

However, after the 1975 agreement between Iraq and Iran, little development occurred in Riyadh's relationship with Baghdad. On 17th July, 1979, Saddam Hussain took over from the ailing al-Bakr. The new Iraqi regime started with an eagerness to improve relations with Saudi Arabia, in the hope that co-operation between the two countries could ensure a specifically Arab role in the maintenance of the Arabian Gulf security.¹³⁰ Riyadh was anxious not to find herself at odds with their

newly assertive and potentially powerful neighbour, and began to work to improve Saudi-Iraqi relations.

On ideological grounds this seemed a strange match. The Ba'athists in Baghdad were secular socialists. They had long been identified in the West with extreme positions, had a reputation for violence, and had concluded a Treaty of Friendship and co-operation with the Soviet Union. But by 1980 Iraq had somewhat tempered its position on the Arab-Israeli dispute, had edged away from Moscow's embrace by opposing Soviet actions in Afghanistan and in Ethiopia, and had broken its close ties with the Marxist-Lennist in South Yemen.

The Saudis, perhaps self-servingly, took some credit for these developments, but whatever the reason the stage was set for an unprecedented degree of co-operation between Baghdad and Riyadh. Both regimes were worried about the Islamic revolution in Iran; both expressed concern about the superpower rivalry in the Arabian Gulf; both opposed the Camp David accords; and both had an immense stake in OPEC pricing decision.¹³¹

While the new relationship with Baghdad was hedged with qualifications and was probably not destined to last indefinitely, it did demonstrate that Saudi Arabia was prepared to co-operate with so called radical Arab regimes if that might reduce pressures in inter-Arab debates. For example, early in 1981 the Saudis allowed Iraq to take delivery of 100

East European tanks at Saudi Red Sea ports. This soon became a regular practice, with East European and Soviet ships calling at the small port of Qadima, north of Jaddah, to unload shipments of arms for Iraq. By fall 1981 more arms were reaching Baghdad via Saudi Arabia than by any other route, at a time when Iraq was actively at war with Iran, Saudi support was particularly important.

Saudi leaders hoped that Baghdad would continue its policy of non-alignment and that the Iraqis might curtail their disruptive actions in countries of special interest to Saudi Arabia, such as North Yemen and Oman. While harbouring few illusions about the ultimate compatibility of Iraqi and Saudi interest, the Kingdom's leadership was prepared for pragmatic accommodations with Baghdad. For example, within OPEC a joint stand by Saudi Arabia and Iraq on prices would be very hard to resist since together they account for well over one-third of OPEC's total productive capacity. Thus Riyadh has a strong incentive to discuss oil policy with the Iraqis. One concrete example of co-operation on oil might be a pipeline from Basra in southern Iraq across Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea, a project that was seriously discussed in mid-1981.¹³²

Whatever the excellent relations between Riyadh and Baghdad in the 1980's, still the two regimes did not trust each other. To illustrate the point, at a reception in Baghdad, Forces cornered a Saudi diplomat and asked him: if Saudi Arabia felt genuinely threatened, would you call Baghdad or Washington first? He gave them by, way of reply, a long and

troubled state that clearly said: Washington. Besides, if the Saudis wanted to team up with another Arab State, they would most likely choose Egypt rather than Iraq.¹³³

On 5th February, 1981, the Creation of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) was announced by the foreign ministers of six Gulf Arab States (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman). They did not invite Iraq to be a member in the GCC. It is absolutely clear that Saudi Arabia and the rest of the GCC members did not trust the Baghdad regime, and they did not want Baghdad to be involved in their domestic and foreign policies.¹³⁴

Iraq, in short, despite its role as bastion of anti-monarchical sentiment and revolutionary Socialism in the Arabian Gulf, is far more isolated and weak, both militarily and politically, as a result of the war with Iran.

Baghdad indeed joined Riyadh's conservative line and fall in the conservative Arab Gulf States orbit. Relations between Riyadh's regime and Baghdad's regime in the 1980's, the best relations between them since 1920, although they did not trust each. Obviously, the Gulf war played an excellent role in good relations between Riyadh and Baghdad.

Footnotes

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- 133 See Forbes, 18th August, 1989, p. 41.

- 134 For further information about (GCC), see Abdulh F. Neffessi, Majlis al-Tawin al-Khalyjya : Al-Atar al-Sayasia Wa al-Astrataja, (Gulf Co-Operation Council : Political and Strategic Frame), London: Ta-tla Publisher Ltd., 1982; Majid Al-Majid, Gulf Co-operation Council, London: Ta-tla Publisher Ltd., 1984; Gulf Co-operation Council Digest, December 1982, Riyadh: GCC Publishing; "Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) Vital to Regional Development, Peace and Stability", Saudi Arabia Monthly Newsletter, Washington D.C.: July 1984, pp. 1-7; and Abdulh Bishara, "The GCC Achievements and Challenges", Amer-Arab Affairs, Winter 8384, p. 10.

Appendix I

Arab Alignments since March 1979

Syrian-Libyan Counter-Axis	Egyptian Bloc	Iraqi-Saudi-Jordanian Axis
Syria	Egypt	Iraq
Libya	Sudan	Saudi Arabia
	Oman	Jordan
Affiliates	Morocco	Affiliates
P.L.O.	Somalia	Kuwait
Algeria	Neutral States	UAE
South Yemen	Tunisia	Bahrain
Lebanon	Mauritania	Qatar
	Djibouti	North Yemen

Source: Alan R. Taylor, The Arab Balance of Power, Syracuse, New York:
Syracuse University Press, 1982, p. 124.

Appendix 2

National Covenant Proposed by Iraq, Baghdad, 8th February, 1980.

In the light of the current international situation and the possibilities of its future development and in the light of the dangerous possibilities that might ensue from this development, threatening pan-Arab sovereignty and security on the one hand, and world peace and security on the other; in response to the dictates of pan-Arab responsibility toward the Arab nation and its people, land, culture, civilization and heritage; and in accordance with the principles of the non-aligned movement, Iraq finds itself called upon to initiate the issuing of this declaration so that it can serve first as a charter to regulate relations among the Arab countries and second, as a pledge by the nation to neighbouring countries which proclaim their respect for and commitment to this charter.

The declaration is based on the following principles:

- (1) The rejection of the presence or the facilitation of the presence of any foreign armies, bases or armed forces in the Arab homeland in any form, under any pretext and guise or for any reason, the isolation of any Arab regime which does not adhere to the principle, boycotting such an Arab regime politically and economically and resisting its policies by all available means.

- (2) Banning an Arab state from resorting to armed force against any other Arab state and resolving any dispute that might arise among the Arab countries by peaceful means and within the context of the principles of joint pan-Arab action and the supreme Arab interests.

- (3) The application of the principle cited in Clause (2) above to the relations between the Arab nation and its countries, nations and states neighbouring the Arab homeland.

Of course, you know that the Zionist entity is not included because it is not considered a state. It is a freak entity occupying Arab land and is not included in these principles.

It is not permissible to resort to armed force in disputes with these states, except in the case of self-defence and the defence of sovereignty against the threats which undermine the security and basic interests of the Arab countries.

- (4) The solidarity of all the Arab countries against any aggression, violation or state of actual war which any foreign side might undertake against the territorial integrity of any Arab country. These countries will jointly repulse this aggression or violation and will thwart it by using all ways and means, including military action, collective political and economic boycott and any other methods dictated by necessity and pan-Arab interests.

- (5) The affirmation of the Arab countries commitment to international laws and norms pertaining to the use of waters, airspace and zones by states which are not in a state of war with any Arab country.

- (6) Keeping the Arab countries away from the circle of international conflicts or wars, and commitment to total neutrality and non-alignment toward any party to the conflict or war as long as these parties to the conflict or war have not violated Arab territorial integrity and the inalienable rights of the Arab countries, which are guaranteed by international laws and norms. The Arab countries will not allow their military forces to participate in part or whole in military conflicts and wars inside and outside the area on behalf of any foreign state or quarter.

- (7) The commitment of the Arab countries to establish developing and constructive economic relations among themselves in order to provide and strengthen a joint groundwork for a developed Arab economic edifice and Arab unity. The Arab countries will shun any behaviour which might harm these relations or impede their continuity and development, irrespective of the diversity of Arab regimes and the peripheral political differences among them, as long as the parties concerned are committed to the principles of this declaration. The Arab countries will adhere to the principles of pan-Arab economic integration. The Arab countries which are economically capable will pledge to offer all kinds of economic assistance to other Arab countries so as to prevent their possible dependence upon foreign forces, which might undermine their independence and pan-Arab will

(8) While drawing up the principles of this declaration, Iraq affirms its readiness to be committed to this declaration before every Arab country and before any party which is committed to it. Iraq is ready to discuss this declaration with the Arab brothers and to listen to their remarks in order to enhance this declaration's effectiveness and to deepen its context.

Iraq also affirms that this declaration does not constitute a substitute to the Arab League Charter, the joint defence treaty and the economic co-operation among the members of the Arab League. Iraq considers this declaration as a strengthening of the Charter and Treaty commensurate with the current international circumstances, the dangers which threaten the Arab nation and the pan-Arab responsibilities which result from the current and future circumstances.

Source: Ibid., pp. 153-155.

CHAPTER FIVE

SAUDI ARABIA PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN RELATIONS (1920-1980)

I Introduction

II Brief Historical Background of the PDRY

III The Saudi Arabia-PDRY Boundary

IV The Saudi Arabia-PDRY Relations

V Conclusion

Footnotes

I Introduction

Before South Yemeni independence, contact was quite close between the two regions. Many thousands of South Yemenis lived and worked in the Saudi Kingdom. In contrast with the largely unskilled North Yemeni labourers, the southerners were mostly educated clerks, accountants, or merchants, often of considerable substance - thus, members of the bourgeois class that was to become a casualty of the revolution in their homeland. Saudi relations with the protecting power had been clouded by several territorial disputes in which Britain championed the interests of the states with which it had special treaty arrangements. The Saudis and the British never reached a meeting of minds on the border between the Kingdom and the Aden Protectorate. While the British dealt officially with Riyadh on behalf of South Yemen, the Saudi ruling elite maintained cordial informal contact with many of the rulers, themselves aristocrats of traditional outlook.

After independence in 1967, and when the National Liberation Front (NLF) took power from the Front of the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY), Saudi Arabia became alarmed. To Riyadh, the NLF represented a communist party. The establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was viewed as the creation of a communist regime. The formation of a communist state in the Arabian Peninsula could not be tolerated by traditionalist Saudi Arabia.

Riyadh long abstained from entering into official relations with the independent South Yemeni regime. However, the Saudi leaders tried very hard to overthrow the regime.

The history of the relations between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY covers many turbulent years. The relations have been greatly affected by the Saudi role in countering communism and the influence of the Soviet Union in the area. In addition, the existing hostility between the two Yemens continues to pose a threat of war in the region which would place Saudi Arabia in a difficult position, bordering both nations.

II Brief Historical Background of the PDRY

The British government announced that its presence in Aden would be terminated on 30th November, 1967.¹ The Soviet Union waited for such opportunity as might be presented by developments in Aden during the confusion usually associated with a newly independent state. In 1967, two groups emerged as claimants for power: the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY), strongly supported by Egypt, and the National Liberation Front (NLF), which was wary of Egyptian control.² King Faysal had always seen the NLF as dangerously communist, and he urged the British not to hand over power to them. Instead of fostering FLOSY, Britain, in opposition to President Nasser's ambitions in the Yemen and his close relations with the Soviet Union, allowed power to the NLF, an umbrella organization for a motley mixture of Marxist-Leninist and Maoists.³

On 30th November, 1967, South Yemen was proclaimed an independent state and named the People's Republic of South Yemen (PRSY).⁴ The ruling regime that emerged after independence was strongly Marxist. It was divided, however, into a faction led by the new President, Qahtan al-Shaaby, who supported a relatively moderate course of action and efforts to maintain good relations with Aden's neighbours, and a much harder-line Marxist faction backed by Salem Rubaya Ali, Abdul Fatah Ismail, Ali Nasser Mohammad and Mohammad Ali

Haytham. In March 1968, the NLG split over these policy differences, and al-Shaaby emerged as the initial victor.⁵

These orientations in the PRSY's leadership and the economic conditions of the new state gave the Soviet Union an opportunity.⁶ Military assistance, economic aid and Soviet advisers and "technicians" rushed into the PRSY.⁷ Moscow's assistance, important for fixing power internally, strengthened the PRSY's military capabilities vis-a-vis the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and enabled it to support the Dhofari rebellion which had been threatening Oman's stability since 1965. The Soviet Union became the major outside supporter of the PRSY. The Saudi government considered the Soviet presence and influence near its southern boundary as a serious potential threat.⁸

The regime of the PRSY and especially the more radical elements of the ruling NLF, together with the Chinese, continued to support the rebellion in Dhofari.⁹ Marxist-oriented, and dedicated to the overthrow of the 'feudal' regimes in the Arabian Peninsula, the NLF and "The Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf" (PFLOAG) were loathed by Saudi Arabia. As British intentions to end their commitments in the Arabian Gulf were revealed in 1968, Riyadh became deeply concerned about the goals of PFLOAG and the NLF's socio-political revolutionary programme.¹⁰

The PRSY has an estimated population of only 1.5 million. It ranks among the poorest countries of the Arabian Peninsula. However, because of its strategic position and proximity to the world's major oil sources, the PRSY is an important political force in the Arab world. Aden remains the most important city, as shipping, oil refining, and other large-scale economic operations have given the people a high standard of living. Outside the cities, the PRSY is sparsely populated, with a tribal social structure made up of Shafa's Muslims. Most of the foreign labour and European interests have fled from the country.¹¹

In foreign relations, the new regime unequivocally placed itself in the revolutionary Socialist camp and made determined efforts to develop its ties with Communist countries. Relations with the West, on the other hand, deteriorated sharply. Not only was "world revolution" preached, but Aden, an important centre of revolutionary movements, intensified its subversion of 'reactionary' governments. It was voted to Marxist-Leninist ideology.¹²

III The Saudi Arabia-PDRY Boundary

Saudi Arabian is bounded on the south by the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), lying along the Gulf of Aden and the Arabia Sea. Saudi Arabia's vast Rub al-Khali (empty quarter) desert roughly demarcates Saudi territory from Qatar in the east in an arc to Yemen (Aden) in the south.¹³ The boundary between these two countries has never been defined. The difficulty can be attributed to two sets of factors.

The first set stems from the conflicting interests of Saudi Arabia and Britain in the Arabian Gulf area before the final British withdrawal from Aden on 20th November, 1967.¹⁴

The tense relations between Saudi Arabia and Britain over the Burami issue,¹⁵ debated for over forty years, prevented any discussion between the two governments concerning the Saudi-South Yemen boundary. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were severed during the Suez war of 1956. During the 1950's the British government was preoccupied with plans to form a Federation of South Arabia,¹⁶ to include the nine small states in South Arabia and the colony of Aden. A boundary between Aden and Saudi Arabia did not appeal to the British authorities. More important, probably, was the Saudi government's reluctance to establish a final boundary with Aden when it was a British colony. To do so would have meant

acceptance of colonialism in Aden at a time when the Saudi government and all the Arab states were calling for an end to colonialism and independence of Arab territories under foreign rule.¹⁷ A final boundary settlement was postponed until the eventual British withdrawal from Aden and the Gulf area.

After the British withdrawal from Aden in 1967, new and even more complicated factors emerged, affecting the boundary question between Saudi Arabia and the new independent state of South Yemen. The Soviet Union's support of the PRSY immediately after the British withdrawal from Aden in 1967 marked the beginning of unfriendly relations between Saudi Arabia and its southern neighbour.¹⁸

Southern Yemen's border with Saudi Arabia has never been delimited. In November and December 1969 fighting occurred within the areas of Sharurah and Al-Wadeiah. South Yemen claimed that Saudi Arabia had annexed the areas with British consent before independence. The fighting lasted only a week. The press reported that aerial dogfights had taken place between Saudi aircraft supplied by Britain and South Yemeni' MiG's supplied by the Soviet Union. The fighting ended with re-occupation of the disputed areas by Saudi Arabia.¹⁹

However, in late 1969 Saudi-PRSY relations worsened, reaching their highest level of conflict when clashes occurred at the Saudi border checkpoint al-Wadeiah.²⁰

In 1970, Saudi Arabia built up her troops near the border. The build up, combined with major Saudi payments to some of the South Yemeni tribes, forced Aden's regime to reduce the fighting along its Saudi border to minor encounters between Saudi and Yemeni backed tribal factions.²¹

Finally, Riyadh turned its attention to the many South Yemenis who escaped after 1967 into Saudi Arabia. Mainly ex-Sultans and Sheikhs with their followers, members of the moderate South Arabian League (SAL), and tribes who opposed the NLF, these refugees served as a nucleus of the Army of National Salvation (SNS) which invaded Hadramout in the last months of 1971. However, despite initial success the attempt proved to be a complete failure as a result of dissension, lack of determination and leadership within the ANS. Thus, again in late 1977 clashes occurred at the Saudi border checkpoint of Al-Wadeiah.²²

In January and February 1978 there were several reports of border clashes between Saudi Arabia forces and the South Yemen forces, four Saudi planes were reported to have been shot down by South Yemen MiG's (one reason, perhaps, why the clashes did not develop into anything more serious).²³

The Soviet military daily Krasnaya Zvezde described a continuing threat to the PDRY. It claimed that Saudi Arabia was concentrating

forces near the PDRY border. PDRY Defence Minister Ali Antar was quoted as saying that 'in the event of an attack ... we shall turn to our friends'. Krasnaya Zvezde went on:

As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it is always prepared to act consistently on the side of people defending their right to independent self-determined development. The Soviet people decisively condemn the subversive activity and plots against Democratic Yemen ... The Soviet people have given and will continue to give help and support to the PDRY to strengthen its national independence and implement progressive socio-economic transformations.²⁴

However, in 1982, PDRY' Minister of Interior flew to Riyadh to discuss demarcating the PDRY-Saudi Arabian border; although no agreement was reached, both sides announced the talks had been "useful" and the way seemed to be open for further normalization.²⁵

The only Saudi boundary still undefined is that with the PDRY, whose political orientation is in sharp contrast to that of Saudi Arabia. The divergence of the two political systems has thus far precluded any settlement of a common boundary.

IV Saudi Arabia-PDRY Relations

The most sensitive area of Saudi Arabia relations with states in the Arabian Peninsula was its relationship with the People's Republic of South Yemen (PRSY) which was a potential threat to Saudi Arabia.

For the whole of 1968 the Aden regime regarded Saudi Arabia as their most dangerous enemy. From the very beginning of the PRSY King Faysal regarded the NLF, who had ousted his federal friends, as a menace which he worked to overthrow, and refused to recognise the Communist regime in Aden.²⁶ In February 1968, he assisted the attempt by the Sharif of Bayhan to regain his country, and he supported other attacks during that summer. His agents were also active in the Hadhramout, which some people believed that he aimed to annex - if he could have established an oil terminal at Mukalla, he would have been able to avoid depending on the Straits of Hormuz. The Aden government hit back as best it could, and in November Qahtan al-Shaaby, the President of the PRSY called on the Saudi people to oust their King. Qahtan successors later claimed that Riyadh had spent \$600 million on support for their enemies. Refugees from the PRSY were paid to be in readiness for an armed return; Saudi funds financed a newspaper in Jeddah and a radio station in Najran which attempted to stir up unrest with claims that Islam was in danger.²⁷

In 1969 two sets of events precipitated a further deterioration in relations between Saudi Arabia and the PRSY; first, the abortive coup attempts of June and September by Saudi nationalist elements within the armed forces which the Saudi leadership believed stemmed from the increasing radicalization of politics on the Arabian Peninsula; and second, the occurrence of sporadic attacks by the PRSY forces on Saudi outposts along their common frontier during the autumn.²⁸ In response to these developments, Saudi Arabia permitted dissident tribal leaders from Hadhramout to resume using its territory as a base for operations against the Aden government. As in 1967, the evident purpose of this move was to create some sort of buffer state between Saudi Arabia and the PRSY.²⁹

The Aden government began to turn progressively more radical. Al-Shaaby was severely criticized by the militants under the Secretary-General of the National Front.³⁰ At the first Congress in Zinjibar in early March 1968, an aspiring leader named Abdul Fatah Ismail framed the Zinjibar Resolutions for leading the country to Marxism.³¹ In June 1969, al-Shaaby, the leader of the moderate, pan-Arab-oriented faction of the National Front which curbed the extremists, was overthrown and replaced by Salem Rubaya Ali, a militant but also an arch rival of Ismail.³² As a reflection of this further shift to the left, on 30th November 1979, the country's name was changed to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY).³³

However, Saudi Arabia developed a new policy towards the PDRY ('re-Arabization'), hoping that moderation would effect the removal of the Soviets and the rise of a less extremist PDRY leadership.

However, despite the PDRY's readiness to receive aid from anyone ready to provide it, and to pursue both Marxist and Arab nationalist policies, it did not appear likely that even Salem Rubaya Ali would leave the path of the Socialist revolution and turn to 'bourgeois' Arab nationalism. PDRY co-operation with other Arab countries could however continue mainly for as long as pan-Arab activity was directed against Israel or the West was hence in the PDRY's interest.³⁴

President Anwer Sadat of Egypt succeeded in convincing Riyadh of the importance of strengthening solidarity with the PDRY, binding it more strongly to other Arab countries than to the USSR by providing financial aid.³⁵ Although the economic aid of Saudi Arabia and its allies and the development of closer diplomatic relations with them did not however cause a noticeable change in the PDRY's relations with the Soviet Union.

Faysal's diplomatic skill and unobtrusive firmness immensely increased Saudi Arabia's prestige and influence. Without a trace of flamboyance he had become an international star personality. Among the Arabs his tendency was always toward moderation and conciliation

rather than confrontation. With the exception of quasi-Marxist Democratic Yemen, which he always refused to recognize, he maintained relations with other Arab regimes of which he certainly disapproved.³⁶

The Saudi leadership for some time has considered its southern border to be strategically vulnerable and it has been apprehensive over the intentions of the Marxist regime of the PDRY. A major Riyadh concern is the prospect of a possible merger of the two Yemens. Such an occurrence - in Saudi eyes - would present a formidable threat to the Kingdom, particularly as the more dynamic and better organized Marxist leadership of the PDRY would be likely to emerge as the dominant political authority, drawing upon a combined population of a million.³⁷ Riyadh acted swiftly and strongly to quash moves toward unity in 1972 and 1979. Riyadh found willing allies in these efforts among the northern tribal Shaykhs who see, in the National Front's destruction of tribal autonomy in the PDRY and commitment to strong party government in a united state, a threat to their privileged position in the Yemen Arab Republic polity. Unity plans between the Yemens will continue to be opposed by Saudi Arabia and by powerful tribal Shaykhs in the YAR. Riyadh's interest in keeping the Yemens divided is clear.³⁸

After the 1972 agreement on union between the Yemens, the hostility between Riyadh and Aden continued unabated. A month after the

signature, Prime Minister of the PDRY Ali Nasser Mohammad alleged that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Britain, and the United States were linked in "a reactionary neo-colonialist plan" to seize the Hadhramout. In March 1973 he sent ministers around the Arab world to accuse "Riyadh reaction" of working against union between the Yemens.³⁹

Saudi Arabia continued to finance the armed refugees from the PDRY and its radio put out unremitting attacks on atheistic communism and such practices as the appointment of a woman as a judge or, as Aden put it, "symbolic figures agency announced from the agenthood in Riyadh their hostility to the Revolution and the uniting of Yemeni people".⁴⁰

The pragmatic President Salem Rubaya Ali made strong efforts to lead his country out of its isolation in the Arabian Peninsula by improving relations with Arab countries. He also tried to end his country's complete dependence upon the Soviet Union.⁴¹ During the Rabat Arab Summit with Faysal, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates joined Kuwait in giving economic aid to the PDY (although indirectly).⁴² Upon Rubaya Ali's return he said "with regard to Saudi Arabia all I want is an end to the sabotage operations against my country, an end to the supply of weapons to the mercenaries, the liquidation of mercenary camps and halt the hostile campaign. We categorically refuse to be an aggressive state. There is not a

single shred of evidence that we committed an aggression against Saudi Arabia but we have much evidence that some Saudi officials have supplied and supported our enemies". This indication that the King himself might not have been to blame for the past and the end of the call for his overthrow was indeed an olive branch. A few days later President Abrhim al-Hamdi of the YAR came to Aden and tried to help along the reconciliation between Aden and Riyadh.⁴³

The control, of the country was divided between the state apparatus of power, run by Rubaya Ali, and the party apparatus, run by Abdul Fath Ismail.⁴⁴ As the PDRY's economic situation worsened, Rubaya Ali increasingly found himself in a position in which he could survive only with outside Arab economic aid and in which Saudi Arabia was the only Arab nation willing to provide the scale of assistance he required. It was clear, however, that such Saudi assistance would continue only if the PDRY ended its support of the Dhofar rebels and broke with the USSR.

Riyadh did not make things easy for Rubaya Ali. The Saudi's were slow in providing the financial aid they promised, and they used their growing financial power to take a number of steps that isolated the PDRY from the rest of the Arab world. Rubaya Ali thus tended to lose strength between 1973 and 1975, and when the PDRY's State Security apparatus was organized into a Ministry of Sate Security in 1974, and new Homeland Defence Laws were passed, Abdul

Fath Ismail seems to have been able to purge some of Rubaya Ali's key support.⁴⁵

Ismail also benefited from the fact that he long had the status of an orthodox Marxist-Leninist with very close ties to the Soviet Union. Rubaya Ali was aligned with the People's Republic of China and was a more theoretical and gradualist Marxist in the Arab nationalist mode. As long as Saudi Arabia refused to provide major aid, the PDRY's only real source of military and economic assistance was the Soviet Union. This situation invariably favoured Ismail and it allowed him to strengthen his ties to Yemen's Soviet, East German, and Cuban advisers and to obtain their aid for his People's Militia. Although the PDRY signed friendship agreements with the PRC in November 1974 and the USSR in December 1975, this sequence of events was misleading. The PRC was to all intents and purpose on its way out, and the USSR was on its way in.⁴⁶

Riyadh came to recognize this fact in 1975, and the defeat of the Dhofar rebels enabled Rubaya Ali to meet the Saudi demand that a cease-fire take place between the PDRY and Oman. Indeed Riyadh and Aden would have welcomed the withdrawal of the Iranian troops that Sultan Qabus needed against the rebels. Riyadh now appeared to be ready to change its policy from paying people to attack the PDRY to paying its government to behave.⁴⁷

As a result the assassination in March 1975 of Saudi Arabia's King Faysal, a bitter opponent of communism and leftist radicalism in any form, Saudi Arabia has been able to pursue a more conciliatory policy toward the semi-communist regime in the PDRY. The objective, which so far had only limited success, has been to wean the PDRY away from the Soviet Union. Also, King Kahlid and Crown Prince Fahd believed there was a chance of weaning the PDRY away from the fomenting revolution among its neighbours.⁴⁸

In 1975 a secret meeting had taken place in Cairo between Saudi Foreign Minister Saud and PDRY Foreign Minister Muti.⁴⁹ In July from the same year there were unconfirmed reports from Riyadh that a meeting would soon take place between Saudi and PDRY representative as a result of mediation by Iraq.⁵⁰

In 1975 Salem Rubaya Ali set down a series of conditions under which he would be prepared to normalize relations with Riyadh. These were subsequently formalized at the National Front Sixth Congress in March 1975, which accepted the principle of normalization with Saudi Arabia provided "it respect our sovereignty and our national independence, that it not interfere in the internal affairs of our country, that is stop its repeated attacks upon us, that it terminate the mercenary camps on the borders and that it stop the propaganda campaigns".⁵¹

On 25th February the PDRY Foreign Minister Muti went secretly to Riyadh and the deal was done. On 10th March 1976, Saudi Arabia and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen agreed to establish diplomatic relations for the first time since the PDRY's independence in 1967.⁵² It was reported that Riyadh had given the PDRY \$1 billion worth of aid to bolster its economy. It also pledged to pay the salaries of the PDRY Army and police for five years and support its economy, developing the much under-used oil refinery in Aden which had been vacated by the British Petroleum Company.⁵³ The two radio stations, long used to violent polemics, broadcast a joint statement that "proceeding from a spirit of Islamic and Arab fraternity ... (the two countries) desired to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding" and would have good relationships. Both spoke of Zionist aggression, colonialist activities, and "religious, historical and cultural ties and a common destiny". In April 1976 the Saudi Airline opened an office in Aden and flights from Jeddah were resumed.⁵⁴

In July 1976 Muti was received publicly in Riyadh by King Khalid and Crown Prince Fahd "in a cordial and fraternal atmosphere". However, Riyadh offered the PDRY \$100 million as the first series of loans that would free the PDRY from dependence on the USSR.⁵⁵

For a year Riyadh seemed to regard the PDRY as being "on probation" and events moved slowly. In April 1976 there were reports that the

PDRY expected to receive up to \$400 million in Saudi aid over five years, almost double the total planned PDRY investment for that period.⁵⁶ In the fall of 1976 Rubaya Ali sent a warm message to King Khalid, and in his National Day speech praised support for the PDRY from "fraternal States headed by Saudi Arabia. In May, however, it was reported that the Soviet Union had offered expanded aid to the PDRY. Clearly, Riyadh was providing her aid slowly, and the PDRY was trying to play Riyadh against Moscow.⁵⁷

In March 1977 Fidel Castro visited the PDRY, and Riyadh was alarmed about the visit.⁵⁸ In the same month Saudi Foreign Minister Saud went to the PDRY to investigate Castro's visit. He was apparently reassured, expressed courteous admiration for the achievements of the regime and 'in a spirit of love and brotherhood', agreed to a great extension of bilateral relations.⁵⁹

In April 1977 the first Saudi Ambassador to the PDRY presented his credentials, over one year after the agreement to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries.⁶⁰ In May an agreement was signed between the PDRY and Saudi Arabia by which the latter would supply the Aden refinery with one million tons of crude oil annually.⁶¹ Vast projects, including an 800 mile pipeline from the oil fields of Dhahran across the Rub al-Khali (empty quarter) to Mukalla and a railway linking Aden with Jeddah and Riyadh were discussed in a heady atmosphere, and in a more practical vein, a

loan of \$20 million for rural electrification was made. This was followed a few days later by another \$14 million for a housing scheme and a guarantee to cover the purchase of Boeing 707's for the Aden Airline.⁶²

On 29th July 1977, Salem Rubaya Ali, President of the PDRY, made an official visit to Saudi Arabia, the first ever by a PDRY Head of State. heralding a period of closer relations, Saudi Arabia extended financial assistance to improve the PDRY's deteriorating economy.⁶³

The honeymoon between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY was soon over. On 12th October 1977, the radical Abdul Fath Ismail, Rubaya's rival, denied that the PDRY would seek reconciliation with Oman,⁶⁴ and in the middle of the same month Prime Minister Ali Nasser Mohammad attacked Oman and Iran and there were reports of border clashes on the PDRY-Oman border. That brought Saudi Foreign Minister to Aden for talks with Rubaya Ali over the Oman situation. The PDRY continued its support of PELOF and close ties with the Soviet Union. Riyadh felt that the PDRY had failed to keep faith, particularly over Oman; the offer of loans was abruptly withdrawn. Saudi Arabia continued to sponsor the PDRY counter-revolutionaries along the border and anti-unity forces in the YAR. Relations between the two thus deteriorated, and on 14th November 1977, Saudi Arabia recalled its ambassador from Aden.⁶⁵ PDRY's radio accused Riyadh of

complicity in the murder of Abrhim al-Hamdi, President of the YAR, while Riyadh's radio denounced the godlessness of a regime which permitted "naked women in places of debauchery like cinemas" and even women standing as candidates in elections.

Relations between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY further declined in the first quarter of 1978 as a consequence of the PDRY's vocal and material support for the USSR policy in the Horn of Africa. In February 1978 a serious frontier clash occurred between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY forces in which the PDRY's MiG's were said to have shot down four Saudi Lightnings. This was subsequently denied by Saudi officials.⁶⁶

Salem Rubaya Ali tried, through the mediation of Kuwait, to improve relations between his country and Riyadh, but this failed. On 15th April 1978, he sent his Interior Minister, Saleh Qassem, to Riyadh for a discussion of the border situation, and for negotiations to improve the relations.⁶⁷ The political backdrop to these negotiations, however, remained their broad dichotomy of interests in the Horn of Africa. This divergence, in turn, served as a further reflection of the structural ideological nature of the conflict between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY (one rooted in their contending patterns of national order). Hopes that the April meeting might ameliorate their strained relations were dashed upon the assassination of pro-Riyadh YAR President Ahmed al-Ghashmi in

Sanaa on 27th June 1978.⁶⁸

Al-Ghashmi was killed by a bomb carried to his office in the briefcase of a special envoy claiming to have been sent by Rubaya Ali.⁶⁹ On 25th June Rubaya Ali was "suspended" by the Central Committee of the PDRY's political organization while a commission was established to investigate his role in Al-Ghashmi's assassination. On 26th June fighting broke out in Aden between army units loyal to Rubaya and popular militia forces loyal to Abdul Fatah Ismail, ending in Rubaya's surrender and his execution two days later on charges of Al-Ghashmi's death and of rebellion, being in league with reactionary forces abroad, and undermining the PDRY-USSR relations.⁷⁰ It is more likely that Rubaya's opponents, especially Ismail, hatched the plot to discredit his moderate policy toward the YAR and Saudi Arabia and his political position generally.⁷¹

In retaliation for Al-Ghashmi's bizarre death, Saudi Arabia took the unprecedented step of sponsoring sanctions against the Aden regime within the Arab League. There was a recognition, however, that the political and economic isolation of the PDRY would only increase its dependence on the USSR.⁷²

On 29th June 1978, Abdul Fatah Ismail became the new President of

the PDRY and Ali Nasser Mohammad became the Prime Minister.⁷³ Ismail was a Shia Muslim and Riyadh was well aware of this. Although a Marxist, advocating a pro-Soviet policy, he was independent enough not to accept everything that came from Moscow. He saw himself as "a better Marxist" than many Soviet leaders whom he considered as deviants (because of their Soviet interests) from the "true faith". He too was in favour of maintaining relations with Saudi Arabia, at least in order to receive financial assistance.⁷⁴ By this time, the PDRY, with its Marxist Leadership, had assumed a position as a Soviet Satellite State.⁷⁵ The PDRY's foreign policies may appear relatively inconsequential to the rest of the world, but they are of major concern to the YAR and Saudi Arabia.⁷⁶

Four months after Abdul Fatah Ismail became President, the PDRY and Saudi Arabia were brought together by a common hostility to the Camp David agreements. During the November 1978 Baghdad Summit (assembled to deal with Sadat's signing of the Camp David agreements), Ali Nasser, the PDRY's Prime Minister, met the Saudi Crown Prince Fahd.⁷⁷ It seemed by 15th December that the moderate line was having some affect in the PDRY's regime. The PDRY's radio reported that Ali Nasser had received a hand-written message from "his brother" Crown Prince Fahd regarding bilateral relations between the "brotherly" countries. And at the end of the same month Fahd wrote to Ismail inviting him to visit Saudi Arabia.⁷⁸

The fighting between the two Yemens broke out on 23rd February 1979, when Saudi Arabia was seeking to improve its relations with the PDRY.⁷⁹ Mohammad Saley Muti, the PDRY Foreign Minister, was then in Riyadh to discuss arrangements for a visit to Saudi Arabia by Abdul⁸⁰ Fatah Ismail. At that time there was an unconfirmed report that Prince Sultan, the Minister of Defence, was among groups in the Saudi government who were against improving relations with the PDRY's regime. These groups encouraged the YAR to stage border provocations in order to prevent rapprochement between Riyadh and Aden.⁸¹ In the fighting Riyadh as usual supported the YAR, even placed the nation's military forces on alert in case intervention became necessary, and announced its intention to withdraw its 1,200 man contingent from the Arab Deterrent Force (ADF) in Lebanon. In early March 1979 reports circulated that Saudi Arabia had sought American support of a possible Saudi intervention on the side of the YAR. Riyadh had asked for permission, as required under American Law, to use American-built weapons in the action against the PDRY.⁸²

It took considerable time for relations between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY to recover after Riyadh's hostility to the PDRY during the Yemen's fighting. On 2nd September 1979 Abdul Fatah Ismail met Saudi Prince Abdulh, the Second Deputy Premier and Commander of the National Guard in Libya; neither side even admitted the meeting. Nevertheless, at the end of the month, Ismail said that relations with Saudi Arabia were based on "mutual respect and non-interference

in internal affairs"; furthermore, he stressed his "desire to establish good and normal relations with Saudi Arabia". At that time the PDRY's economy deteriorated and he was seeking financial assistance from Riyadh.⁸³

Abdul Fatah Ismail visited the USSR from 23rd to 26th October 1979, when a USSR-PDRY Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation was signed by Leonid Brezhnev and Abdul Fatah Ismail. The treaty was to last 20 years.⁸⁴

On 31st March 1980, Riyadh' government renewed its attempts to improve relations with the PDRY.⁸⁵ In the same month Crown Prince Fahd and Prince Saud, the Foreign Minister, held meetings in Jeddah with Salem Salh Mohammad the PDRY Foreign Minister, to discuss bilateral relations and developments in the region. A press release stated that Saudi Arabia was "determined to continue rapprochement (with the PDRY) for the sake of Arab and Islamic causes".⁸⁶ PDRY's Foreign Minister returned with an invitation from Fahd to Ismail to visit Riyadh for summit talks. Ismail refused the invitation.⁸⁷

On 20th April 1980, President Abdul Fatah Ismail resigned from all his posts. "Ill health" was the official reason for his resignation.⁸⁸ The Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) Central Committee accepted the resignation. The Soviets had welcomed Ismail into exile in Moscow where he lived in a manner befitting a retired head

of a friendly country. On 21st April 1980, Ali Nasser Mohammad became the new President of the PDRY. According to his associates, he was convinced that the time had come to end the PDRY's isolation in the Arab world, which had lasted more than a decade, and to seek foreign aid from its wealthy Arab neighbours for its languishing⁸⁹ economy while maintaining its ties with the Soviet Union.

Ali Nasser, described by one Western diplomat as "more flexible, more pragmatic and less doctrinaire" than Ismail, strongly supported closer relations with neighbours Saudi Arabia and the YAR which it was felt could be jeopardised by further moves towards the Soviet Union.⁹⁰ He stated he wanted "normal, good-neighbourly relations" with Saudi Arabia, and that he would be happy to visit Saudi Arabia if invited.⁹¹

On 28th June 1989, President Ali Nasser visited Saudi Arabia and was received by King Khalid, with whom he had "brotherly and frank" discussions. According to the Kuwait News Agency, he established "a new basis for relations based on equality, mutual respect and non-interference".⁹² Ali Nasser denied the existence of any Soviet bases in his country.⁹³ And he tried to convince the King not to attach too much importance to the military equipment (surface-to-surface missiles, MiG-23 aircraft and T-62 and T-72 tanks) obtained by Aden from the Soviet Union. King Khalid stressed the lack of wisdom of allowing foreign forces in the region.⁹⁴ Ali Nasser

seized the opportunity to parade his credentials as a good Muslim by going to visit Mecca. He denied, however, that he had been promised \$200 million in economic aid.⁹⁵

Ali Nasser participated in the Islamic Summit in Taif in January 1981 despite opposition at home because of the certainty that the Summit would condemn the continuing presence of Soviet forces in Afghanistan. After the Summit, Ali Nasser held a successful talk with King Khalid and his Crown Prince Fahd, which led to the improvements of the relations between the two countries. At that time relations between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY seemed better than they had been at practically any other time since the PDRY had become independent.⁹⁶

The agreement between the PDRY and Oman on 15th November 1982, left the PDRY in a state of comparative peace with its neighbours for the first time in its national existence.⁹⁷ It occurred as the result of Riyadh' promises of major economic aid during a visit by Saudi Interior Minister Naif to the PDRY, on 9th June 1982.⁹⁸ The timing of Naif's visit was particularly striking because Aden had announced on 3rd June that it was pulling out of the talks scheduled with Oman in Kuwait and because an Iranian representative visited Aden on 4th June as part of the regular meetings Iran was holding with members of the Stead Fastness Front. While it is impossible to do more than speculate, this timing implied that Saudi Arabia achieved peace by

outbidding the competition, and interpretation that is confirmed by the timing of transfers of funds and aid from Abu Dhabi and Kuwait.⁹⁹

The PDRY normalization with Oman also speeded up the rapprochement between Riyadh and Aden. In July 1983 Saudi Arabia and the PDRY agreed to exchange ambassadors again for the first time since 1978. According to Ali Nasser, the object of such normalization was to build bridges of fraternity, peace, security and stability in the area in general and also to keep our area free of the imperialist bases that threaten the region's peoples'.¹⁰⁰

President Ali Nasser, ousted during the civil war in the PDRY in January 1986, campaigned for moderate regional accommodation.¹⁰¹ He eventually restored diplomatic relations with Oman and even achieved a modicum of co-operative interaction with Saudi Arabia. He also favoured economic liberalisation and more financial assistance from the conservative Arab states and the West.¹⁰² By the end of January, more than 12,000 people had been killed.

Foreigners left the country, as the [Marxist tribes] warfare spread to the remotest regions of the country.¹⁰³

Although the civil war was a power struggle between rival political personalities, after January 1986, Haider Abu Bakr al-Attas, the

former Prime Minister under Ali Nasser, was installed as President, and Ali Selam Al-Bayd became Prime Minister. Both Al-Attas and Al-Bayd have shown themselves more committed to fundamental Marxist policies.¹⁰⁴

Salem Saleh Mohammad, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Yemen Socialist Party, believed that Ali Nasser, the deposed President, could not make a military comeback. It was suggested that the Soviet Union's displeasure with Ali Nasser's flirtation with the West, was the cause of the uprising.¹⁰⁵ The brief but vicious war in the PDRY, illustrates how quickly events in this country can get out of control even though a major foreign power intervenes. Although Marxism has been in existence for the last nineteen years, tribal traditions extend back hundreds of years, and will always have a strong influence on the government, as well as the desire to remain part of the Arab nations.¹⁰⁶

From what we have seen, it is very difficult to speculate about the relation between the sudden change of leadership in the PDRY and Saudi Arabi. The general view, however, remains that the PDRY will continue to assert its destabilising pressures against its conservative Arab neighbours as soon as its own internal circumstances permit such indulgences.

V Conclusion

The costs in purely practical terms of the PDRY regime's orientation are particularly obvious in its relations with its wealthy neighbour to the north, a potential source of massive economic aid. With the sole exception of support for the Palestinian Arab cause there is no common denominator of the two countries foreign policy objectives and thus no readily apparent basis for the development of friendship and co-operation.

Saudi Arabia has long posed particular foreign policy problems for the South Yemeni revolution. The Kingdom has always been opposed to the establishment or growth of revolutionary socialism on the Arabian Peninsula, recognizing the danger that any such trend poses for its own autocratic and oppressive socio-political system. Consequently, it has always assumed the leading counter-revolutionary role in the area, supporting the Royalists against the Republicans in the YAR, the South Arabian League against the NF in the PDRY, and the Sultanate against the PFLO in Oman. Following South Yemeni independence in 1967 (and even more so after the Corrective Step in 1969), Riyadh threw its weight behind emigre groups and hostile propaganda campaigns aimed against Aden. It has also actively campaigned against Yemeni unity, fearing that a united (and demographically larger) Yemen would pose a serious national security threat to the Kingdom. The leaders of the PDRY have always

recognized Saudi Arabia's generally opposing interests in the region; indeed, the Kingdom's socio-political system and strong ties with the United States rendered it the epitome of local reactionary client regimes of imperialism which the National Front so decried. Yet at the same time Saudi Arabia is too close, too big and too powerful to make direct confrontation easy.¹⁰⁷

Many aspects of the PDRY's internal policies, such as the nationalization of private property and the public employment of women, are anathema to the Saudi regime as inconsistent with Islam, and the entrenched Soviet position in the PDRY is perceived as a menace to regional security and stability as well as to the life expectancy of the ruling dynasty. For their part, the PDRY regard the nature of the Saudi regime, and its close ties with the United States and other Western countries, with undisguised distaste.¹⁰⁸

Since independence it has generally been the President who has held sway over regular foreign policy-making, and as a result the international behaviour of the PDRY has always borne something of the personal stamp of the President of the day. Under Salem Rubaya Ali, for example, the PDRY proved wary of an over-tight Soviet embrace and gradually improved its relations with Saudi Arabia. This process slowed down with the Marxist Abdul Fatah Ismail while relations with the Soviet Union improved to the point where a twenty-year Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation was signed with

Moscow in 1979, reportedly on Presidential initiative. Ismail was more committed to a militant policy, and the relations with Saudi Arabia worsened. Ali Nasser, while not lessening the ties with Moscow, did pursue a moderate foreign policy beyond previous levels, overseeing rapprochement with Saudi Arabia, the YAR and Oman. However, during his years in power the PDRY had the best relations with Saudi Arabia since independence.

In the 1970's, Riyadh made quiet overtures to the PDRY offering financial aid if the government would moderate its militant foreign policies. Some progress was made, but when the PDRY continued to co-operate with the Soviet Cuban and East German military effort by Ethiopia against Somalia, Riyadh began re-thinking her strategy.

Recent Saudi policy has persevered in the effort to reduce tension among the Arabian Peninsula States and to work for co-ordinated policies and actions. While the response from the PDRY has been minimal, the Saudis have not reverted to their former policy of active hostility and punitive actions, such as preventing bank transfers by South Yemeni workers in the Kingdom and refusing to supply crude oil to the Aden refinery. Thus there appears to be some possibility that the friction which is inevitable between the two countries can be kept within manageable bounds.

The position therefore of the PDRY in the Arabian Peninsula and the

Arab world at large could be likened to the position of Cuba in the Western hemisphere.

Footnotes

- 1 For more information about Britain's withdrawal from Aden and the Arabian Gulf, see Jacob Abadi, Britain's Withdrawal from the Middle East, 1947-1971 : The Economic and Strategic Imperatives, Princeton, New Jersey: The Kingston Press, 1982, pp. 196-214.
- 2 For the struggle for power between these two rival groups, Tom Little, South Arabia : Arena of Conflict, London: Pall Mall Press Ltd., 1968, Tareq Y. Ismael, The Arab Left, Syracuse University Press, 1976, Peter Mansfield, The Middle East, A Political and Economic Survey, 4th ed., London: Oxford University Press, 1973, and Aaron S. Klieman, "Bab Al-Mandab : The Red Sea in Transition", in Orbis, Vol. 11, Fall, 1967, pp. 758-771.
- 3 See Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "The Soviet Union and the Arabian Peninsula" in The World Today, November, 1979, p. 445.
- 4 Tareq Y. Ismael, Governments and Politics of the Contemporary Middle East, Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1970, p. 424, Peter Kilner, "The Future of South Yemen", April, 1965; and also see Peter Kilner, "South Arabian Independence", August 1967: Both articles in The World Today.
- 5 Richard Nyrob, Area Handbook for Yemens, 3rd ed., Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, pp. 96-99.
- 6 New York Times, 10th February, 12th May and 22nd September, 1968.
- 7 For further information concerning the extent of the Soviet presence in the PDRY, as well as Cuban and East German interests, see Rubinstein, pp. 445-447.

- 8 For further information concerning the tense relations between the two Yemens, and the frequent armed clashes between them, and Riyadh position for that, see The Middle East Journal, Vol. 33, 24th February, 1979, p. 363.
- 9 At the Conference of Harmin in September, 1968, Dhofari leaders and the PRSY representatives agreed that their movement had the mission to achieve these objectives :
- (1) The elimination of the leadership in Oman, and the extension of the revolt to embrace the whole of the Arabian Gulf;
 - (2) The adaptation of the principle of prolonged people's war as the fundamental method of achieving their goals;
 - (3) The working for a long-term strategy and the eventual creation of a single state, the Arab People's Republic of the Gulf; and
 - (4) The explicit adoption of Marxist-Leninist ideology.
- These objectives are listed in Ghuraba Joseph, Conflict and Tension Among the States of the Arabian Gulf, Oman and South Arabia, Air University, Alabama, U.S.A., 1969, pp. 58-59.
- 10 Mordechair Abir, Oil, Power and Politics, London: Frank Cass, 1974, pp. 37-38, and also see, Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, Harmondsworth Penguin, 1974, pp. 361-386.
- 11 Mohmuad Kamal, Al-Yemen North and South, Beirut: Dar al-Ilm lil-Malayin, 1986, pp. 92-94.

- 12 For more information about the South Yemeni foreign policy from the beginning see, Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, pp. 227-232. Also, see David E. Long, and Bernard Reicch, eds., The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa, Colorado: Westview Press, Inc., 1980, pp. 203-204.
- 13 Richard Nyrob, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, 3rd ed., Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, p. 46.
- 14 For more information concerning the history of the British control of Aden and its military and commercial importance for Britain from 1839 until its evacuation in 1967, see R. J. Gavin, Aden Under British Rule : 1839-1967, London: C. Hurst and Co., 1975, Gillian King, Imperial Outpost : Aden, Its Place in British Strategic Policy London: Oxford University Press, 1964; and Julian Paget, Last Post : Aden 1964-1967, London: Faber and Faber, 1969.
- 15 The Buraimi Oasis area consists of nine small villages: Buraimi, Hamasa, al-Qimi, Al-Ain, al-Muwaiqil, al-Mutaradh, Hili, al-Qattaruh and Sara.

For more details of conflicts and disputes over the Buraimi Oasis since 1800, see J. B. Kelly, Eastern Arabia Frontiers, New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964, and Husain al-Bahrana, The Legal Status of the Arabian Gulf States : A Study of their Treaty Relations and International Problems, Manchester University Press, 1968, pp. 208-237.

- 16 For further information concerning British attempts and aims in the establishment of this federation, see King, pp. 55-67.
- 17 Anan Mohammad, Saudi Arabia wa Homan Al-Arab Saudi Arabia and the Arab' Crisis, Beirut: Al-Maktab Al-Almai, 1970, pp. 49-52.

- 18 For further information about the Soviet Union's commitment to South Yemen from 1967-1984, see Stephen Page, The Soviet Union and the Yemens, Influence in Asymmetrical Relationships, New York, Praeger Publisher, 1985.
- 19 See, Sunday Telegraph, 7th December, 1969, and also see, Area Handbook for the Peripheral States of the Arabian Peninsula, pp. 66-67.
- 20 New York Times, 9th December, 1969, p. 20.
- 21 Al-Nahar, 15th March, 1970, (Beirut).
- 22 See, Mordechair Abir, p. 38.
- 23 C. Legum and H. Shaked (eds.), Middle East Contemporary Survey, 1977-78, New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979, pp. 561-562.
- 24 Aryeh H. Yodfat, The Soviet Union and the Arabian Peninsula, London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1983, p. 55.
- 25 Al-Jazirah, 15th March, 1982, (Riyadh).
- 26 Al-Riyadh, 27th May, 1968, (Riyadh).
- 27 Robin Bidwell, The Two Yemens, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1983, pp. 241-242.
- 28 See, Robert Litwak, Security in the Persian Gulf, Sources of Inter-State Conflict, London: Gower Publishing Co., 1981, p. 88.
- 29 Ibid.

- 30 National Front "Liberation" was dropped from the Party's name soon after independence, see Richard Nyrob, Area Handbook for Yemens, p. 66.
- 31 The dispute came to a head at the Front's Fourth Congress at Zinjibar in early March 1968. The Left presenting a radical program, swept all before it. Decisions were taken to "begin immediately to form a Council of Workers [aimed apparently at removing some of al-Shaaby's power], to carry out radical agrarian reform in the interests of the poor peasants, to take effective measures to liquidate foreign capital and create a state sector to purge the civil service and army, and to create a popular militia"; a special resolution was also passed on the necessity of developing friendship and co-operation with the USSR and the other socialist countries. In a further resolution, the NF pledged to "take up its historical responsibilities toward the Arab Gulf and all areas of the Arabian Peninsula for the elimination of the international imperialist and reactionary forces". See Stephen Page, p. 18, and Mordechair Abir; also see Fred Halliday, pp. 232-237.
- 32 For further information about the ousted al-Shaaby and his successor. See Peter Mansfield, The Middle East, A Political and Economic Survey, standard ed., London: Oxford University Press, 1980, pp. 156-158.
- 33 The name adopted by the NLF in 1967 for the independent Southern Yemen was People's Republic of South Yemen (PRSY). The constitution of November 1970 changed the name of the country to People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). This change of name reflected the thinking of the ruling party in two ways. First, the omission of the word South meant a commitment to a united Yemen. Secondly, the addition of the word Democratic meant a commitment to socialist ideology.

- 34 A. Yodfat and M. Abir, In the Direction of the Persian Gulf, The Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf, Britain: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1977, p. 115.
- 35 Al-Ahram, 29th November, 1975, (Cairo).
- 36 See Peter Mansfield, The New Arabians, Chicago: J. G. Ferguson Publishing Co., 1981, p. 99.
- 37 For further information about the unity between the two Yemens and how Riyadh opposed it, see F. Greory Gause III, "Yemeni Unity : Past and Future", The Middle East Journal, Vol. 42, No. 1, Winter 1988, pp. 33-47.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 For more details see Alan R. Taylor, The Arab Balance of Power, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982, pp. 101-105.
- 40 For more information about King Faysal's policies toward the Aden regime see Haliq Omar, Hadith fy Al-Shyisah al-Sudia, Saudi Arabia' Politics, Riyadh: Al-Dar al-Sudiah L-ansher, 1977, pp. 278-292.
- 41 For more information about Ali Rubaya's domestic and foreign policies see B. R. Pridham, Contemporary Yemen : Politics and Historical Background, London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1984, pp. 219-220, and also see, Al-Watan Al-Arabi, 26th April, 1973, No. 218, pp. 20-31.
- 42 Al-Rai-al-Am, 30th October, 1974, (Kuwait).
- 43 Robin Bidwell, The Two Yemens, p. 297.
- 44 See Richard Nyrob, Area Handbook for Yemens, p. 99.

- 45 Anthony H. Cordesman, The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability, Saudi Arabia, the Military Balance in the Gulf, and Trends in the Arab-Israeli Military Balance, Boulder, Colorado: West Press, 1984, p. 446.
- 46 Ibid., p. 447.
- 47 For more details about the Omani-PDRY war, and the Saudi-Iraqi involvements see James F. Dunnigan and Austin Ray, A Quick and Dirty Guide to War, New York: William Morrow and Co., 1985, and also see al-Hawadith, 4th May, 1975, pp. 20-24.
- 48 See Richard Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, 3rd ed., Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, p. 210.
- 49 Al-Nahar, 28th July, 1975, (Beirut).
- 50 Washington Post, 3rd August, 1975.
- 51 Al-Safir, 28th March, 1975, (Beirut).
- 52 Arab Report and Record, 16th-31st March, 1976, p. 195; also see Richard Nyrop, Area Handbook for Yemens, p. 91.
- 53 See Al-Syasa, 13th March, 1976, (Kuwait); and also see Aryeh H. Yodfat, The Soviet Union and the Arabian Peninsula, p. 50.
- 54 Robin Bidwell, The Two Yemens, p. 297.
- 55 Richard Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, p. 210.
- 56 Middle East Economic Digest, 2nd April, 1976.
- 57 Stephen Page, The Soviet Union and the Yemens, p. 63.

- 58 Fidel Castor's main purpose was to persuade the Ethiopian, Somalian, and the PDRY leaders to agree on the federation proposal then being promoted by Moscow in a desperate attempt to avoid a full-scale war between its old and new friends on the Horn. Castro's mission failed, but apparently the PDRY' were willing to go along with it, Ibid., p. 65.
- 59 Robin Bidwell, The Two Yemens, p. 298.
- 60 Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Politics, Economics and Society, London: Frances Pinter Ltd., 1986, p. 148.
- 61 Middle East Economic Digest, 13th May, 1977.
- 62 Robin Bidwell, The Two Yemens, p. 298.
- 63 Arab News (Saudi Research and Marketing Company, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia), April, 1980, p. 1; and also see Middle East Economic Digest 1st July, 1977.

Salem Rubaya Ali's talks with King Khalid and Crown Prince Fahd during his three-day visit to Saudi Arabia appeared to go well. It was announced following the meeting that Khalid would visit Aden later in the year. The communique referred to a "spirit of love, fraternity, and true co-operation" and to a "spirit of Arab and Islamic fraternity"; however, since it also referred to the "historical neighbourliness" of the two countries, these phrases could have been more for the sake of from that accuracy. The PDRY' side seemed to give more than it received; a paragraph in the communique emphasised the importance of dialogue in settling Arab

differences, a reference to PDRY-Oman relations. Another paragraph referred to the need to preserve the Red Sea as a zone of peace and to "keep it free of any international conflict or ambitions"; this was a much more ambiguous phrase than the South Yemeni usually used, and the Saudis certainly intended it to refer to Soviet ambitions; at the same time, however, the 'Arabism' of the Red Sea was not mentioned. There was no mention of the subject nearest to Rubaya's heart - more Saudi economic aid. See Stephen Page, p. 67.

- 64 Middle East Economic Digest, 17th June, 1979.
- 65 Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, p. 148.
- 66 See Adeed Dawisha, "Saudi Arabia's Search for Security", p. 21, in Charles Tripp (ed.), Regional Security in the Middle East, published for IISS by Gower Publishing Co. Ltd., 1984.
- 67 Arab Report and Record, 1st-15th June, 1978, p. 220.
- 68 New York Times, 27th June, 1978.
- 69 Al-Riyadh, 28th June, 1978, (Saudi Arabia).
- 70 For further information about Al-Ghashmi's death, the execution of Rubaya Ali, and isolation of the PDRY, see George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, 4th ed., New York: Cornell University Press, 1985, pp. 251-252; and also see Robert D. Burrowes, The Yemen Arab Republic, The Politics of Development, 1962-1986, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1987, pp. 92-93.
- 71 Al-Jazirah, 2nd July, 1978, (Saudi Arabia).

- 72 Notwithstanding Riyadh's skilful diplomatic manoeuvres in the Arab League, the PDRY affair must rank as one of Saudi Arabia's less successful attempts to exercise influence over other regional actors. Similar setbacks occurred in the case of Syria, which continued its onslaught against the Lebanese Muslims in 1976 despite the withdrawal of Saudi aid, and in the case of Algeria, which refused to halt its support for the Polisario guerrillas in the Western Sahara despite a promise of massive Saudi aid. From these failures, Riyadh learned that there are limits to the effectiveness of financial aid as an instrument of foreign policy. See Adeed Dawisha, Orbis, A Journal of World Affairs, Vol. 23, No. 1, Spring, 1979, p. 141.
- 73 The Political Economy of the Middle East : 1973-78, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 21st April, 1980, p. 188.
- 74 For more information about Abdul Fatah Ismail, see his long interview with M. Onanies published in a book, M. Onanies, Abdul Fatah Ismail, the Culture and the Education in the Socialist State, Beirut: Dar Ibn Khaldun, 1986; and also see Aryeh Y. Yodfat, The Soviet Union and the Arabian Peninsula, pp. 58-59.
- 75 See Ahmad Hussain, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen' Through History, 4th ed., Riyadh: Dar Al-Katab Publisher, 1986, p. 95; and also see George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, p. 653.
- 76 David E. Long and Bernard Reich, eds., The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa, Colorado: Westview Press Inc., 1980, p. 206.
- 77 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia, The Ceaseless Quest for Security, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 291.

- 78 Arab Report and Record, 1st-15th December, 1978, p. 901.
- 79 For more information about the war between the Yemens, see Mark N. Katz, "Sanaa and the Soviets, Problems of Communism, January-February, 1984, Vol. 33, p. 24.
- 80 See Keesing's Contemporary Archives, London, 1980, p. 30197; also for more information about the war between the Yemens and the mission of Muti.
- 81 Events, 23rd March, 1979, p. 19.
- 82 For more information about the war between the Yemens, and Riyadh, Moscow and Washington, stands from the war, see Murry Gordon, Conflict in the Persian Gulf, New York: Facts of File, 1981, pp. 119-121; and also see al-Hawadith, 12th March, 1979, pp. 26-29.
- 83 C. Legum and H. Shaked (eds.), Middle East Contemporary Survey, 1978-1979, p. 67 and 732.
- 84 For the whole treat between the Soviet Union and the PDRY, see S. H. Amin, Political Strategic Issues in the Persian-Arabian Gulf, Glasgow: Royston Ltd., 1984, pp. 40-41.

Article 8 - in the treaty was against "colonism and racism in all their forms and manifestations" and in favour of co-operation and support "of the just struggle of people for their freedom, independence, sovereignty and social progress". In its wording, the article allowed the parties to be against Oman, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Egypt - in fact, against everyone that each side wished.

- 85 Al-Riyadh, 3rd April, 1980, (Saudi Arabia).

- 86 Arab News, 12th April, 1980, (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia).
- 87 Financial Times, 22nd April, 1980.
- 88 For more information about Ismail's resignation and the copy of his resignation, see David Gardey, Kant Honak, Aden's Ahdath 86, Aden's Uprising 1986, I was there, Nicosia: Dar al-Mosray Publishing and Distribution House Ltd., 1986, p. 119.
The Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Rai-Al-Am, 22nd April, 1980, reported that Ismail was removed by Moscow precisely because he had been attempting to effect a rapprochement with Saudi Arabia and weaken PDRY-Soviet relations.
- 89 See Pranay B. Gupe, "South Yemen Seeks to Widen Arab Ties", New York Times, 22nd April, 1980, p. 4.
- 90 See Jonathan Crusoe, "Aden : change at the Top", Middle East Economic Digest, 25th April, 1980, p. 48.
- 91 C. Legum and H. Shaked (eds.), Middle East Contemporary Survey, 1979-1980, p. 666.
- 92 Nadva Safran, Saudi Arabia, The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 394
- 93 Al-Majallah, 3rd-17th July, 1980, (Saudi Arabia).
- 94 Al-Nahar, 21st July, 1980, (Beirut).
- 95 Okazh, 29th July, 1980, (Saudi Arabia).
- 96 C. Legum and H. Shaked (eds.), Middle East Contemporary Survey, 1980-1981, p. 722.

97 In the summer of 1982, mediation by Kuwait and the Gulf Co-operation Council finally resulted in ambassador-level discussion between the two side in Kuwait. This in turn led to a meeting of the PDRY and the Omani Foreign Minister in October, and to a four-point agreement outlining the future development of relations. This called for:

- (1) a commitment by both parties to normalize relations, and to establish a joint technical committee to resolve border disputes;
- (2) mutual undertakings to deny the use of national territory to any foreign power engaged in aggression against the other;
- (3) agreement to cease all hostile propaganda;
- (4) the promise of future diplomatic relations.

Despite continuing tensions over the United States bases in Oman and PFLO facilities in the PDRY, the two countries duly established diplomatic relations in 1983. In 1985 the PDRY also agreed to an Omani proposal to formally exchange ambassadors. See Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, pp. 146-147.

98 New York Times, 10th June, 1982.

99 Anthony H. Cordesman, The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability Saudi Arabia, the Military Balance in the Gulf, and Trends in the Arab-Israeli Military Balance, pp. 454-455.

100 See Middle East Economic Digest, 29th July and 4th August, 1983; also see Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, p. 149.

- 101 During the civil war in the PDRY, Saudi Arabia and the YAR were very alarmed, but they chose neutrality acts. However, the Saudi media blamed the uprising and the turmoil on the Soviet Union.

Abdul Fatah Ismail, the former President of the PDRY, returned to Aden in 1985 from Moscow where he had lived in exile since 1980. Ismail began to build an alliance against the policies and personalities of the years of Ali Nasser's in power. In May he was elected a member in the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), and became an active participant in the domestic political conflict of 1985. A lot of reports circulated that accused Ismail of causing the uprising to oust Ali Nasser from power. Abdul Fatah Ismail was killed in Aden during the civil war, and Ali Nasser escaped to Sanaa.

For more details about the civil war in the PDRY see Manfred Wenner, "The 1986 Civil War in South Yemen : A Preliminary Assessment", in the Arab Gulf and the Arab World, B. R. Pridham, ed., London: Croom Helm, 1988, pp. 272-290. Also see David Garodey, Aden's Uprising 1986, I was there, and also see Al-Watan Al-Arabi, No. 467, 24th-30th January, 1986, pp. 22-26.

- 102 Al-Jazirah, 24th February, 1986, (Saudi Arabia).
- 103 Michael Ross, "South Yemen : Blood and Struggle", Los Angeles Times, 13th February, 1986, p. 1.
- 104 See S. H. Amin, Law and Justice in Contemporary Yemen, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic, Glasgow: Royston Ltd., 1987, p. 88. And for further information about Al-At-tas and Al-Bayd policies, see Fakrey Karim Al-Nahj, Documents of Communist and Workers Parties in the Arab Countries, Centre of Socialist Research and Studies in the Arab World, Damascus, Syria: No. 7, February, 1987.

See the communique of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), pp. 20-29.

- 105 Soviets reportedly mediating power struggle in the PDRY, New York Times, 17th January, 1986, p. 1.
- 106 Michael Ross, "Yemen : Latest Fight Brief, Vicious", Los Angeles Times, 17th January, 1986, p. 1.
- 107 Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael, The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, p. 147.
- 108 Robert W. Stookey, South Yemen A Marxist Republic in Arabia, London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1982, p. 102.

CHAPTER SIX

SAUDI ARABIAN RELATIONS WITH EGYPT (1920-1980)

I Introduction

II Brief History of Egypt

III The Saudi Arabia-Egypt Relations 1920-1980

IV Conclusion

Footnotes

Appendices

I Introduction

Historical factors going back to the 1930's complicate the political and military relations existing between Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

These factors include the bonds that unite the two countries, namely ethnicity, religion and language. Saudi Arabia and Egypt belong to the Arab nation, share the Islamic faith and speak the Arabic language.

In addition, though they eventually developed very different political systems, they shared a common monarchical form of government at the beginning of the 1930's.

In Saudi Arabia where the political system remains traditional, centralized, autocratic and small, the personal role of the ruler is much greater. But even here there are political pressures upon the King and ones that are more difficult to discern than those in Egypt.

Nasser's revolution eliminated the monarchy in Egypt, and changed Egypt's political system completely. His revolution brought new ideologies to the Middle East that alarmed the "reactionaries" regimes especially the Saudi regime.

In the final analysis all one can say is that the conflict between

the "revolutionary" forces under the leadership of Egypt and the "conservative" camp led by Saudi Arabia for Arab leadership did no more than attract the support of the two superpowers. And so the polarization of the core Arab Middle East further became a permanent base for the Cold War.

II Brief Historical Background of Egypt

Egypt is the home of one of the most ancient civilizations of mankind. The beginnings of this civilization are not our present concern; yet they have some relevance to the modern history of Egypt, and a brief glance at ancient origins may help in the understanding of recent developments.¹

Situated at the meeting point of two continents, Asia and Africa, Egypt is a geographical phenomenon. Although the total surface of the modern state of Egypt is over 363,000 square miles, habitable and historical Egypt - the Nile valley and Delta - occupies but a narrow strip of land between vast deserts. Yet the valley of the Nile is one of the oldest meeting places of man, and the fertile ground upon which one of the first civilizations developed and flourished for over 4,000 years. To speak of the living Egypt, therefore, is to speak of the 15,000 square miles upon which 98% of Egyptians live, work, procreate and die - an area slightly less than 5% of the total surface of geographical Egypt. Since then, Egypt's population has been growing with uniform, though alarming, speed, so that in 1979 nearly forty million Egyptians are squeezed into this historical valley of the Nile. It is estimated that at the end of this century over sixty million people will inhabit it.²

During the first 3,000 years of known Egyptian history, thirty

pharaonic dynasties followed one another, and Egyptian civilization and the colossal monuments which worked its evolution became widely known. At length, disintegration and decay set in, and the Pharaohs of the last four dynasties occupied their thrones under Persian domination (525-332 BC).

In 332 BC Alexander the Great conquered the country from the Persians. He founded a Greek Empire in Egypt and for the next 300 years successive Ptolemaic kings, descended from his general Ptolemy Soter, held their Graeco-Egyptian courts in Alexandria. Their rule ended with the deaths of Cleopatra and Mark Anthony in 30 BC, and Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire. When the Roman Empire was divided between East and West 400 years later, Egypt became part of the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire.³

The importance of the Arab conquest of Egypt, led by Omar Ibn al-As in 641 AD, ended the Byzantine domination and absorbed Egypt in the Umayyad Empire. Omar imposed upon a Christian Egypt a new faith, Islam, and a new language, Arabic. The natives relinquished Coptic and Greek in favour of Arabic, and abandoned Christianity for Islam. Theories regarding this massive shift in religion and language have preoccupied scholars of this period for a long time. There is strong evidence to support the argument that the native population was alienated by the Byzantine attempt to establish one monotheistic creed in the Empire at all costs, including persecution and torture

of heterodox sects such as the Coptic majority of monophysites in Egypt. Some scholars contended that Omar's benevolent and tolerant administration, which gave tax relief to the Egyptians, served as an added attraction of Islam. Regardless of the reasons for the mass acceptance of Islam by the Egyptians, after the seventeenth century Egypt gradually became part of the Islamic-Arab tradition and civilization, and eventually its very centre.⁴

Subsequently, after a period of semi-independence under the nominal rule of the Abbasids, Egypt became the centre of the Fatimite dynasty, which founded Cairo. Towards the end of the eleventh century AD Egypt was conquered by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, and it was ruled for the next 400 years by a series of military oligarchies known collectively as the Mamelukes. The period of Mameluke rule, which lasted until the Ottoman conquest in 1517, was notable both for military glory and for artistic achievement. Under the Mameluke rule most of the remaining architectural glories of Cairo were created. Under the Ottoman rule the Mamelukes were reduced to the position of domestic tyrants who were, however, allowed to do much as they pleased in Egypt so long as they paid an annual tribute to Constantinople. Under the conditions of oppressive and inefficient government which prevailed, Egypt was reduced to the lowest depths of economic and cultural decay.⁵

In 1820-39, Mohammad Ali used Egypt as a springboard in his quest

for aggrandizement and the extension of his dominion at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, and to exclude European influence. The revolutionary leadership of the Egyptian Free Officers in the 1950's sought, in the name of Arab Nationalism and Arab Socialism, to lead at least the Arab Islamic world to development and power and, in doing so, to exclude Western Europeans and Americans - some would argue outsiders in general - from exerting influence or control in the Middle East.⁶

However, the dilemmas faced by Egypt in asserting its political identity were considerable and were discussed by President Nasser in his brief apologia The Philosophy of the Revolution. He said that he saw Egypt as being at the centre of a group of circles - Arab, African and Muslim. The search for a suitable policy touched upon issues in all three circles, but the essence of Egypt's policy lay in the first, the Arab, and in particular in Nasser's attempt to lead and influence the Arab world. Nasser's method was to champion the Arab nationalist cause and to encourage the other Arab states to strive for "independence" but with the aim of creating simultaneously an exclusively Egyptian zone of influence in the Middle East. Western-inspired defence systems were rejected, and arms were purchased from the Soviet bloc in order to show how independent Egypt's decisions had become.⁷

III The Saudi Arabia - Egypt Relations (1920-1980)

It has been in Egyptian national state interest to maintain a balance in the Arab East against the rulers of Arabia. This policy too is not Nasserite innovation. As early as 1915-16, Egypt, before becoming an independent state and still under British protection, sought to undermine any potential power constellation arising in the Hejaz under the British-sponsored Sharif Hussein of Mecca. This policy was camouflaged in the interstices of the ostensibly religious question of the Caliphate that arose at that time on the occasion of the Arab Revolt. The same religio-political issue under new conditions and between different protagonists became a point of difference and basis of conflict between Egypt and the new master of Najd and the Hejaz, that is, Ibn Saud, in 1924-26.⁸ In this sense, Egyptians have again sought to undermine the potential extension of Saudi power over the Peninsula by infiltrating South Yemen as was the case in the North Yemen episode of the period 1962-67. Egypt therefore has been, and continues to be, a serious contender for Arab leadership and the control of regional Arab politics.⁹

The Wahhabi forces embroiled Ibn Saud in a dispute with the Egyptian government over a question of not more than ceremonial significance at the very first pilgrimage held after the conquest of the Hejaz; and when the controversy was referred to the theologians of Najd, they gave a ruling which substantially endorsed the attitude of the

troops and left Ibn Saud with no alternative but to resign himself to a rupture with Egypt and bide his time.¹⁰

However, Ibn Saud failed to dissuade his counsellors from provoking a quarrel with Egypt that was to cause a ten-year breach between the two countries. The quarrel arose after the convoy bringing the traditional Egyptian carpet covering for the Kaaba in Mecca had been seized by Wahhabi forces on the grounds that the covering was too gaudy; and try as he might, for a long time Ibn Saud could not persuade his advisers to make and amends to the outraged Egyptians.¹¹

Egypt objected to Ibn Saud's 1924 acquisition of the Hejaz and its holy cities of Mecca and Medina.¹² An ambitious King Fouad of Egypt wished to establish Cairo as the capital of Islam and himself as Caliphate. His ambition, coupled with jealousy and traditional Egyptian hatred of the zealous Wahhabis, led to a break in relations between Riyadh and Cairo between 1929 and 1936.¹³ This break was triggered by Fouad's refusal to recognize the Saudi Arabian political agency which had been headquartered in Cairo since 1950.

The result of the Hejaz-Egyptian controversy over the Mahmal¹⁴ in 1926, Iban Saud decided to manufacture the Holy Carpet at Mecca instead of obtaining it from Egypt as before.¹⁵ However, Ibn Saud

had been able to maintain his objection to the transport of the Mahmal from Jeddah to Mecca with its guard and its band, and his acceptance of the despatch of the Mahmal as far as Jeddah can only be considered as a device to save the face of the Egyptian government to some extent.¹⁶

The rise of Ibn Saud to power in the Arabian Peninsula had involved a bitter struggle against the Hashimites, who subsequently established themselves as rulers in Transjordan (later Jordan) and Iraq and sought to extend their power throughout the Fertile Crescent. Ibn Saud therefore had an equal interest in opposing the designs of the Hashimites, which made him the natural ally of Egypt.¹⁷

In 1927, Ibn Saud wished to appoint an official representative in Egypt, but first ascertain the Great British government's opinion in this respect. However, Ibn Saud wanted his representative to be assisted and advised by Britain's representative in Egypt as in Damascus.¹⁸ Lord Lloyd, Britain's representative in Cairo saw no objection on other ground and said it is desirable that Ibn Saud's representative should look to us rather than elsewhere for advice.¹⁹ Sir W. Tyrrell (Britain's Foreign Office Chief) wrote to Lord Lloyd to inform Ibn Saud that His Majesty's government had no objection to his appointing an official representative in Egypt, and that His Majesty's High Commissioner in Cairo would accord his good office to

his Highness's delegate. However, Ibn Saud must obtain the consent of the Egyptian government.²⁰ Sir W. Tyrrell instructed Lord Lloyd that Ibn Saud's representative at Cairo would represent him primarily as Sultan of Nejd, in which capacity he has long been recognised by His Majesty's government, and only incidentally as de facto authority in Hejaz.²¹

In 1929, King Fouad refused to recognize Ibn Saud's authority in Hejaz and had exhausted his patience and prompted him to demand the closing of the Egyptian political agency which was located in Jeddah. Relations between the two countries were eventually resumed in 1936, when a new King, Faruq, assumed the Egyptian throne.²² At that time, the Egyptian Guardianship Council approved the restoration of diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia.²³

On 18th November 1936, Fouad Bey Hamza, Deputy Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, visited Egypt and met Nahas Pasha, the Egyptian Prime Minister. Hamza and Pasha had friendly negotiations and signed a treaty of mutual understanding in which Egypt fully recognized Saudi Arabia's independence and sovereignty. Hamza returned to Jeddah from Egypt on 22nd November, and expressed great satisfaction at the removal on the grounds of the friction which had hitherto been so harmful to Saudi-Egyptian relations.²⁴ On the whole, the result of the negotiations between the Saudi Deputy Minister and the Egyptian Prime Minister must be considered as an almost complete victory for

Ibn Saud after being officially ignored by Egypt since his conquest of the Hejaz.²⁵

Saudi Arabia began to improve relations with Egypt after 1936. There were sufficient grounds to draw the two countries into close relations; the two Kings of Saudi Arabia and Egypt shared their hostility to the Hashimite rule in Iraq and Jordan. Also, Saudi Arabia was much in need of Egyptians to staff its educational institutions and government administration.²⁶

The improvement of the relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt can be traced to the way in which Ibn Saud responded to the Egyptian call for forming the Arab League. In fact, relations between the two countries from 1936 to 1943 could be described as good and steadily improving. On 22nd March, 1945, the beginning of a friendship between Saudi Arabia and Egypt was evident, and the relationship was further cemented when the Egyptian Sovereign arrived at the Port of Yanbu in Saudi Arabia on 27th December, 1945.²⁷

King Faruq's visit was a success, with Ibn Saud personally meeting and welcoming his visitor upon his arrival. Soon after, Ibn Saud accepted King Faruq's invitation to visit Egypt. That trip occurred on 10th January, 1946, and he received a tumultuous welcome from the Egyptians. By then, cordial relations between the two Kings had

been firmly established. Their talks included bilateral relations as well as their relations with Britain. Despite his differences with Britain over the Buraimi Oasis, Ibn Saud advised King Faruq to reach a settlement of the dispute over British occupation of the Suez Canal zone.²⁸ One report has it that Ibn Saud watered his visit with a handsome secret retainer to King Faruq.²⁹

The tone of the Saudi monarch's visit and of overall Egyptian-Saudi relations at that time was described by the late President Sadat in the following words:

... indeed, the whole country prepared for it for a long time. The late King Ibn Saud was a noble and generous hero. He had proved quite hospitable during King Faruq's visit to Saudi Arabia and the latter wanted to return his hospitality. Above all, King Saud loved Egypt. The Saudi ruling family's love for Egypt is traditional, and each monarch is always careful to maintain good and close relations with Egypt.³⁰

In 1949, Ibn Saud and King Faruq united against the emergence of a Syrian-Iraqi accord. As long as Adib al-Shishakli remained the dictator of Syria, the Arab balance of power was tilted in favour of the Saudi-Egyptian bloc.³¹

The warm relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt continued to develop until 23rd July, 1952, when the Free Officers ended monarchial rule in Egypt.³² Neither the internal military struggle which continued in Egypt until Nasser assumed power in March 1954, nor the death of Ibn Saud on 9th November, 1982, affected the cordial relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Upon Ibn Saud's death, his eldest son, Saud, ascended the Saudi throne. Although King Saud carefully watched Egypt's political struggle, Saudi Arabia remained neutral.³³ When Nasser finally assumed control of Egypt in 1954, King Saud welcomed his leadership and prepared himself for continued close and fruitful relations with Egypt.

However, King Saud started his reign on a note of continuity. He intended to follow his father's strategy of trying to check the Hashimites diplomatically through informal understandings (for example, with Egypt and Syria) while building up a deterrent force for internal and external purposes.³⁴ However, the initial years of the succeeding monarch, King Saud, witnessed a paradoxical coincidence of interest between the conservative Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the revolutionary republic of Egypt, headed by Gamal Abd al-Nasser.³⁵

President Nasser came to Saudi Arabia for a state visit in 1954 for

the first time.³⁶ King Saud embraced Nasser as a brother. When Nasser went to Mecca to do his pilgrimage and to request Saudi Arabia partnership in his crusade to unite the Arab world the new King responded to the new president warmly.³⁷

King Saud found Nasser as engaging and inspiring as most other Arabs did.³⁸ Saud drank in the Egyptian's heady notions of Arab unity and power, and he was flattered that Nasser had turned to him and not to the hated Hashimites for help. King Saud equated Nasser's struggle to eject the British from the Suez Canal zone with his own battle for Buraimi; and eagerly pledged Saudi support for the aggressive and independent Arab stance of Egypt's new regime.³⁹

However, over the months that followed, the incongruous linkage between the Saudi monarchy and revolutionary Egypt took on solid form. In January 1955, King Saud invited an Egyptian military mission to help organize and train the Saudi army alongside the American Mission.⁴⁰

While the Baghdad Pact was still being discussed, King Saud made common cause with Egypt in trying to dissuade Iraq from going ahead with it.⁴¹ In the process he espoused the themes of neutralism and Arab nationalism that Egypt was using in the joint struggle, even though these were highly charged concepts that could undermine Saudi rule domestically and endanger Saudi-American ties.⁴² After Iraq

signed the alliance with Turkey, King Saud concluded a mutual defence with Egypt in October 1955, and co-operated with Nasser in efforts to isolate Iraq and to prevent Syria and Jordan from joining the Pact.⁴³ Saudi Arabia and Egypt denounced the attempt to create the Pact by an old colonial power to maintain its dominance over the Arabs.⁴⁴

Displaying the same muddled enthusiasm with which King Saud had taken up Aristotle Onassis's tanker scheme, Saudi seized on Nasser's ideas as a chance to prove the originality and independence of his new regime, and as a substitute for the philosophy of a specifically Arabian modernization that he could not work out for himself.⁴⁵ However, King Saud could sense the trend that Nasser represented, but he appeared to have little idea of how to adapt and apply that trend to his own Saudi monarchy. Egyptian advisers arrived to set up the bureaucratic procedures of the King's new civil service and teachers to staff his new schools.⁴⁶

Once King Saud committed himself to following Egypt's line, he felt compelled to support actions by its leader that went far beyond the immediate issue of Iraq. Thus, when Nasser announced in September 1955, the conclusion of an arms deal with the Soviet Union, which brought the Soviets into the Arab region for the first time,⁴⁷ King Saud supported Nasser's purchases of Soviet arms. But then intelligence reports started to suggest that these arms were being

paid for, in part at least, by Saudi oil revenues from Aramco. In October 1955, King Saud went on to sign the military alliance with Egypt.⁴⁸

However, King Saud's flirtation with Nasser was aiming Saudi Arabi on an impossible course. Nasser courted the Saudi monarchy because he wished to get the benefit of its independent prestige and of its money. But a few evenings listening to Cairo radio made the ultimate objective of his "Arab Socialism" clear to anyone.⁴⁹ Egypt and Saudi Arabia were supposed to be friends, but somehow this did not prevent Egyptian broadcasters from seizing on the tales of Saudi extravagance and corruption that came their way.

In the Spring of 1956, King Saud visited Egypt to confer with Nasser.⁵⁰ However, Nasser had a scheme to bring together Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia in a grand three-cornered union to dominate the Middle East,⁵¹ and King Saud reckoned he was better off inside such a grouping than excluded from it. The role Nasser envisaged for Saudi Arabia was paymaster to its two more radical partners. Nasser had an annoying habit of calling the produce of the Arabian Gulf "Arab Oil", as though the wells of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Sheikdoms were communal property for him to enjoy of right; and though King Saud would not go as far as union with Egypt and Syria, he did agree to finance a tripartite alliance and to stand by both Egypt and Syria in peace and in war.⁵²

In July 1956, Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal, which was avowedly done in retaliation against the United States for withdrawing a promise to help Egypt build a high dam at Aswan.⁵³ However, Nasser's momentous step threatened the possibility of war with the West and certainly that 40% of Aramco's oil shipments together with 75% of Saudi sea supplies, which passed through the canal, would be cast in jeopardy.⁵⁴

Although support for Egypt throughout the Arab world all this time remained at its highest pitch and, on the surface, virtually unanimous, there were some who were hesitant or doubtful. One such was King Saud. He was offended because he had not been consulted over a major decision taken by someone who was supposed to be an ally - a decision which could well have involved his country in war. He, and all leading members of the royal family, felt neglected, and this prompted uneasy (but unspoken) suspicions that perhaps this neglect reflected their true stature on the international stage. They wanted reassurance. This is something that the royal family and Saudi Arabia are always seeking - to be kept informed, to be asked for advice, to be flattered. But, alas, such reassurance is something which not all the money in the world can buy.⁵⁵

Nasser decided to go to Saudi Arabia on 23rd September 1956. The Saudis suggested that he and the King should meet at Dahrán rather than Riyadh; the choice of the oil capital as the venue would have a

symbolic significance. Nasser welcomed the idea. For the Saudis the presence in the kingdom of Nasser, now the principal figure on the international stage, would enhance their prestige. At Nasser's suggestion they were to be joined by President Quwatli of Syria.⁵⁶

Although the visit had not been announced in advance, Nasser was met by tumultuous popular demonstrations hailing him as the Saviour of the Arab world. It was embarrassing for Nasser because everyone knew that the people were there to cheer him, not their King, so he made a point of grasping Saud's hand demonstratively. When Nasser arrived in Riyadh, as in Dahran, tens of thousands of spectators rushed through the police barriers, desperate to touch the godlike figure. The army had to force a passage for Nasser's car along the road into the capital, and whenever Nasser appeared in public in the course of his brief stay, pandemonium broke loose.⁵⁷ A keen observer inside King Saud's court reported that in the wake of the visit, the King's advisers reversed themselves and, instead of supporting the project of a Syrian-Egyptian-Saudi federation that Nasser had come to discuss, they determined to destroy him.⁵⁸

In October and November 1956, British, French and Israeli attacked Egypt, in response to the nationalization of the Canal.⁵⁹ King Saud did his duty as a good Arab, he offered Saudi airstrips to Nasser's war planes, and he broke off diplomatic relations with Britain and France and declared an embargo on oil shipments to them.⁶⁰ But at

heart, King Saud was furious with Nasser. Saud had had to plead with the Egyptian leaders for the safety of the pipeline which carried Saudi oil via Syria to the Mediterranean. The closure of the Suez Canal and the oil boycott of Britain and France meant that the Saudi King had to suffer a 40% drop in revenues at a time when he was heavily in debt and all this sacrifice was for the greater glory of Nasser, whose role as champion of the Arabs was guaranteed for a decade by his Suez "victory" over the Israelis and Western powers.⁶¹

In January 1956, King Saud joined forces with Egypt in inciting, with Arab nationalist propaganda and Saudi gold, massive riots and rebellion in Jordan to compel its government to reverse its intention to join the Baghdad Pact and force it to break away from Britain. Saudi Arabia and Egypt had their way, keeping Jordan out of the Pact after causing the downfall of several governments within a few weeks and shaking King Hussein's throne.⁶²

On 12th January, 1957, Saudi Arabia joined with Egypt and Syria in undertaking to pay Jordan £12.5 million annually for a least ten years to replace the British subsidy.⁶³ But King Saud was already apprehensive about the rapid rise of radical revolutionary Arab nationalism led by Nasser and about the increasing Soviet influence in the Middle East.⁶⁴ But in 1957, during the disturbances in Jordan King Saud sent Saudi troops to buttress the power of King

Hussein. Saud did it out of rivalry with Nasser.⁶⁵

By the time the Suez war was over, King Saudi and his advisers were seriously reconsidering the alliance with Nasser's Egypt. On the one hand, the Hashimites threat, which had been the *raison d'etre* of the alliance, seemed to have abated; Iraq was contained and Jordan was altogether destabilized. On the other hand, Nasser had emerged as an increasing popular Arab hero, and the association of the Saudi government with him appeared to give license and legitimacy of expressions of identification with him among the peoples of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Nasser seemed to have embarked on an ever more extreme revolutionary course and to have developed the habit of taking drastic decisions without consulting his ostensible allies and without regard to the fact of his decisions on them.⁶⁶

After he had wrested political victory from the jaws of military defeat in the Suez war, Nasser's appeal to the Arab masses became greater than ever, and all restraints on whatever new initiatives he chose to take seemed to have collapsed.⁶⁷ What course he would choose next was not quite clear; but his increased co-operation with the Soviets, who had spoken of sending "volunteers" to Egypt and had offered to replenish its arsenal destroyed during the war, did not bode well.⁶⁸

However, reconsideration of the situation led King Saud in 1957 to

try to revitalize the American connection as a security asset against Nasser, to reverse his relationship with the Hashimite monarchs from one of hostility to one of co-operation for the same reason, and at the same time to handle his relations with Nasser so as not to incur his open hostility. For a while circumstances helped King Saud manage this seemingly impossible feat; but as the year wore on, the pretence behind this diplomatic and strategic reversal wore off, and Saud and Nasser came to a mortal confrontation.⁶⁹

On 30th January, 1957, King Saud began a state visit to the United States.⁷⁰ The Americans invited Saud with the aim of building him up as a counterpoise to Nasser in the Arab world. King Saud explained that if he was to stand as the representative of an alternative policy to Nasser's neutralism, the United States must provide support in practical and visible terms to the Kingdom.⁷¹ However, King Saud promised in return to explain the Eisenhower Doctrine to the other Arab leaders.⁷²

In fact, King Saud never endorsed the Eisenhower Doctrine unequivocally. He seems to have believed somewhat naively that he could persuade Nasser, if not to accept the Doctrine, to remain neutral. On his way home Saud stopped in Egypt to brief Nasser about his American visit. But Nasser's opposition was relentless. He saw the Doctrine, like the Baghdad Pact, as an attempt to

perpetuate Western domination of the Arabs and dragoon them into hostility toward the Soviet Union.⁷³

On 21st April, 1957, Saudi police uncovered a plot to assassinate King Saud. The Saudis accused the Egyptian military attache in Jeddah for the plot.⁷⁴ Nasser dispatched to Mecca an Egyptian religious leader who swore dramatically that the Egyptian government and the military attache had known nothing about the plot. But King Saud was not impressed, and he decided to retaliate.⁷⁵ According to H. E. Mohammad Riad, Egypt's foreign minister in 1964 and later during 1967-1971, the "plot" in actuality was a C.I.A. (Central Intelligence Agency) ruse designed to embitter relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Mr. Riad subsequently charged that the C.I.A. planned the operation and passed details of the supposed plot through Syrian President Quwatli. He believed that, even then, the United States wanted to isolate Egypt from the Arab world in order to secure Israel's existence.⁷⁶

However, the honeymoon which had existed between Saudi Arabia and Egypt came to an end. Political relations between the two countries rapidly deteriorated, and in 1957 Nasser launched a violent propaganda campaign against the House of Saud. To wit, Nasser began supporting an Arab "revolution" that was aimed at the overthrow of the "conservative" regimes in the Arab world and the creation of a single Arab nation. To further his goal, particularly vis-a-vis

Saudi Arabia, Nasser allowed radical and socialist groups such as the Arabian Peninsula People's Union (APPU), an anti-Saudi movement, to operate from Egypt.⁷⁷

On 15th May, 1957, King Saud paid a state visit to Baghdad, the centre of pro-Western anti-Nasserism in the Arab world, and finally made peace with his former Hashimite enemies.⁷⁸ Nasser's response was to launch his immensely powerful propaganda machine against King Saud. Ahmd Said, Director of Cairo's Voice of the Arabs and possibly the best known figure in the Arab world after Nasser, poured out scornful invective. He had abundant material in Saud's personal extravagance and the arrogant misbehaviour of some of the Saudi princes and shayks.⁷⁹

However, in August 1957, King Saud publicly offered to mediate between Syria and Turkey and called on all sides to avoid interference in Syria's affairs. Nasser was pleased by his position and showed his appreciation by sending to Saudi Arabia another batch of his obsolete fighter planes, thus giving renewed expression to the military alliance between the two countries.⁸⁰

On 1st February 1958, President Nasser and President Shukri al-Quwatli of Syria jointly proclaimed the union of the two countries, "the throbbing heart of Arabism", which became known as the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.). Other Arab countries were invited to

join.³¹ The U.A.R. invited Saudi Arabia to join, but King Saud asked for more time to consider.³² It was clear to Saud that his country would lose its independence if it joined the U.A.R., would be threatened by the U.A.R. if joined its rival, and would be vulnerable and isolated if it did neither. Caught in that dilemma, King Saud turned to conspiracy in search for a solution and displayed the feverishness and simplemindedness of a desperate man.³³

King Saud dreamed up a plot of his own, a double pronged attempt to subvert Syria and Egypt at the same time, by bribing the Syrian intelligence chief, Abdul Hamid Sarraj, to sabotage the union between the two countries, and King Saud put £2 million into the attempt.³⁴ On 5th March, 1958, Sarraj revealed to a press conference that King Saud had bribed him to carry out a plot aimed at foiling the union and arrange for the assassination of President Nasser and President Quwatli as well. However, Saudi Arabia formally denied the story.³⁵

Whether this charge was true or not, the Arab world believed it, and Nasser seized on his chance to launch an all out propaganda assault. Every night Cairo Radio exhorted the Arabian people who had cheered him in Dahran and Riyadh to rise up against King Saud.³⁶ However, on 25th March 1958, King Saud was forced to relinquish his power to his brother, Prince Faisal, after the Syrians revealed the alleged

plot by King Saud. Faisal was regarded at that time as less pro-Western and more pro-Egyptian than King Saud.⁸⁷

Faisal spent the second half of 1957 in the United States undergoing two operations.⁸⁸ He returned via Egypt, where he had spent the entire month of January 1958, there, part of it was Nasser's state quest. Faisal had several meetings with Nasser; his public statements, although careful and cautious as was his way, expressed support for Nasser's neutralist policies. He certainly conveyed to Nasser the impression that he believed Saudi Arabia could live with the union, and his first actions upon assuming power confirmed that impression and distanced himself from Saudi's policies.⁸⁹

On 15th August 1958, Faisal went to Cairo for three days discussions with Nasser.⁹⁰ By the end of the discussions Faisal had agreed to denounce the American and British military interventions in Lebanon and Jordan as "aggression". He had proclaimed his support for Arab nationalism and apparently indicated his willingness to try to get Saudi Arabia to join the U.A.R.⁹¹

Faisal himself was too shrewd not to recognize the long-term dangers involved in a strategy that depended so completely on appeasing the principal potential opponent. He had subscribed to it at a time of stress, when no viable alternative appeared to exist, but he was bound to modify it as soon as an opportunity presented itself.⁹²

Such an opportunity arose in April 1959, when Nasser could not let Abd Al-Krim Qasim's challenge go unanswered, when Iraqi jails were full of Nasserites, without a drastic loss of prestige. The bitter struggle between Nasser and the revolutionary leadership of Iraq finally settled into a hostile stalemate. The seemingly irresistible tide of Nasser's personal and ideological sway over the Arab world had been checked by Baghdad's new regime, supported by Moscow.⁹³ But to oppose Qasim effectively Nasser had to adjust his stand towards other parties, for which he paid a price. He had to mend his relations with the Saudi government in order to seek her co-operation in isolating Iraq - within the Arab League - for unsympathetic as the Saudi government might be to a fire bank like Qasim, she had reason to relish the sight of Nasser in difficulty and could not be expected to go out of her way to help him fight his battles.⁹⁴

Faisal took advantage of the situation to steer what he called in a declaration in October 1958, an "independent" Saudi policy based on "neutrality and Arab nationalism".⁹⁵ The policy continued to keep the U.S.A. at arms length and paid obeisance to the prevailing dogma of Arab nationalism but regained some room for manoeuvre by capitalising on the hostility between Nasser and Qasim.⁹⁶

In 1961, Syria withdrew from the United Arab Republic,⁹⁷ dealing a severe blow to Nasser and his ambitions. Though the union

disintegrated before it could threaten Saudi Arabia. By 1962 the war of words between Nasser and the "reactionary" camp reached venomous proportions. In January of that year the Egyptian newspaper Al Ahram accused King Saud, then convalescing in the United States, of plotting a religious, political, and economic attack upon Egypt.⁹⁸ Saudi Arabia's reliance upon the Americans became but another item in the propaganda war that continued at fever pitch. In April Faisal promised "a fight to the finish" against Nasser's propaganda, and in May Saudi Arabia rejected Egypt's Kiswah (Holy Carpet for the Kaaba) and turned back Egyptian pilgrims wishing to make the Hajj. In July Nasser charged King Saud with paying 25 million Saudi riyals to support a conspiracy against Egypt.⁹⁹

However, since Syria withdrew from the U.A.R. Nasser began searching for a means to regain his lost prestige in the Arab world.¹⁰⁰ The North Yemen revolution in 1962 provided such an opportunity. Nasser immediately dispatched an expeditionary force into Yemen to help the republicans. His ultimate objective, however, was not just Yemen but the entire Arabian Peninsula; and Yemen was only a foothold.¹⁰¹

On 1st October 1962, Nasser sent paratroopers and military equipment to Yemen, and Egyptian ships began landing at the newly finished port of Hodeida shipyard carrying tanks, arms, ammunition and staff officers.¹⁰² The Egyptian intervention in North Yemen started with

only two airplanes and about 300 Egyptian soldiers.¹⁰³ By 24th September 1962, Egyptian newspapers began castigating King Saud and threatening him about the fate awaiting him.¹⁰⁴ Cairo Radio, "The voice of the Arabs", too attacked King Saud and admonished him against extending any kind of assistance to the royalist headed by Prince Hasan, who had arrived in Yemen via Saudi Arabia from New York, to fight the republicans.¹⁰⁵

In November 1962, the Egyptians dropped arms inside Saudi Arabia, hoping that the arms would be found by the anti-Saudi regime and used against them. The Saudis claimed that Nasser was planning to infiltrate Egyptian soldiers into Saudi Arabia disguised as pilgrims on their way to Mecca. But these were disorganized attempts; and when Abdulh al-Sallal, the Yemeni revolution leader broadcast appeals for a united "Republic of the Arabian Peninsula" the Nasserites forced him to stop using what they considered too radical a slogan.¹⁰⁶

On 10th November 1962, a treaty of mutual defence was signed between Egypt and the new republican regime in North Yemen. This treaty subsequently obliged Nasser to increase the number of his troops in Yemen to protect the new republic.¹⁰⁷ However, King Saud began arming the royalists in an attempt to stymie the Egyptian presence in Yemen. As a result of Saudi involvement in Yemen two Saudi pilots defected to Egypt with their planes, and Egyptian forces were

subsequently increased in Yemen.¹⁰⁸ Egyptian intelligence, which at the time was good on Saudi Arabia, essentially confirmed that the defection of the Saudi pilots had caused King Saud to suffer a nervous breakdown for fear of a plot.¹⁰⁹

Egypt and Saudi Arabia used the Jeddah Military Pact of 1956,¹¹⁰ to justify their intervention in Yemen in 1962. Article Two is the most significant one and states:

The contracting states consider any armed aggression committed against any state thereof or against their forces as an aggression against them. Therefore, and in implementation of the legitimate individual and collective right for the defence of their entity, each of them is bound to hasten to the assistance of the state against whom aggression is committed and to adopt forthwith all measures and to use all measures at its disposal, including the use of its armed forces, in order to repel aggression and to restore security and peace.¹¹¹

In an attempt to interdict the flow of money and war material to the royalists, on 15th November 1962, Nasser ordered U.A.R. air strikes against the Saudi border towns of Najran and Jizan which were serving as points of supply for the Yemen royalists.¹¹² Also, in January 1963 the U.A.R. planes bombed Saudi positions along the

border area from which royalists were operating.¹¹³ As a result of the U.A.R. attack on Abha in the spring of 1963, thirty six patients inside an Abha hospital were killed.¹¹⁴ These bombardments of Saudi territory added a new and dangerous element to the conflict. However, Saudi Arabia's forces were incapable of defending Saudi territory against the U.A.R. attacks during that time.¹¹⁵

Moreover, Nasser embraced the old Egyptian belief in Egypt's centrality to the region around it and its supremacy and its urge to pursue its destiny in places such as the Sudan, Syria, and the Arabian Peninsula. Consequently, that kind of belief alarmed Saudi Arabia's leaders, whose forefathers had been driven out of the Arabian Peninsula in the early 19th century by Mohammad Ali and his son Ibrahim.¹¹⁶ The military attacks and media campaigns against Saudi Arabia continued throughout 1962 and early 1963. Against these developments, Saudi Arabia had no choice but to break off diplomatic relations with Egypt in November 1962, and to prepare to defend its southern borders.¹¹⁷

However, the Egyptian intervention and the situation in Yemen in 1962 and 1963 were viewed seriously and intolerable by the Kingdom. Saudi Arabia was left with no alternative but to defend itself against Nasser and his attacks. Accordingly in 1963, in the face of the Egyptian assault, Faisal delivered three speeches in main Saudi cities, Riyadh, Dammam and Taif, for general mobilisation. For

example, he made his attitude clear in a speech in Riyadh:

"Our Country", he said, "is by nature a peaceful country, but it does not accept injustice".

Egypt's rulers declared that they had sent their expeditions to fight in Yemen to threaten the very existence of this country, to conquer it and destroy it. We were, therefore, driven into a position where we had no alternative but to defend ourselves. Every state and every country in the world is entitled to self-defence. He concluded by telling his audience: "You are responsible for everything in the country. The government is nothing but a representative expressing your will, your feelings and your wishes".¹¹⁸

Beyond question, the situation in Yemen had posed serious problems for Nasser. His decision to attack Saudi borders meant that for the first time in ten years as Egypt's President he would initiate offensive military action against an Arab state. He justified his break with tradition on the grounds that he was helping the revolutionaries in Yemen. Nevertheless, Egypt's intervention in Yemen and its attacks on Saudi Arabian borders alarmed many Arab states, particularly Syria, Jordan and Iraq. In response, these

countries expressed their intention to prevent Nasser from expanding his authority throughout the region. The Syrians and the Jordanians interpreted Nasser's move into Yemen as the first step in taking over Saudi Arabia. Further, they saw the threat to Saudi Arabia as presenting a threat to Syria and Jordan.¹¹⁹

Saudi's determination to remove the Egyptians from Yemen intensified after Faisal finally took power from his brother Saud in November 1964. King Faisal evolved a two-point strategy to deal with the Egyptian-Yemeni threats. First, he decided to avoid direct Saudi military intervention at all costs. Instead, he chose to fight the Egyptian and republicans by proxy, through providing all possible support to the royalists and to any tribes that could be bought. Faisal realized that the royalists could not defeat the Egyptian forces decisively and that his strategy could at best result in a long war of attrition, stalemate, and negotiations; but he also realized that he had no other choice. The Saudi armed forces, even with a Jordanian contribution, were no match for the Egyptians, and their loyalty was questionable.¹²⁰ Were they to suffer a serious defeat, the consequences could be fatal. Moreover, intervention would give the Egyptians an excuse to extend the war to Saudi Arabia itself and thus encourage internal uprisings, while placing the regime in an unfavourable position to obtain assistance from friendly outside powers. Second, now that the Nasserite threat was so close to home, Faisal decided to drop all pretence of non-

alignment and incur the liability of seeking the help of the United States and Britain. Ironically, he had more success with the latter, with which Saudi Arabia had broken diplomatic relations in 1956, than with the United States, whose friendship had been taken for granted.¹²¹

Indeed, the U.A.R. attacks on the Saudi border towns were working against Nasser and undoubtedly in favour of Saudi Arabia in terms of world opinion.¹²² However, Nasser's real motives from these attacks were to create a state of unrest within Saudi Arabia and to force Riyadh to stop its aid to the royalists.¹²³

Nonetheless, Egyptians and Saudi involvement in North Yemen enlarged the conflict from a local struggle to regional dilemma. Instead of being restricted to a local struggle between royalists and republicans, the North Yemeni civil war thus became an international military and ideological conflict in which the Egyptian military effort on the republican side was approved by the radical socialist Arab regimes with the Soviet Union and China, while Saudi aid in funds and arms to the royalists was supported and approved by the Arab monarchies, Britain and the United States.¹²⁴

In fact, Nasser's intervention in North Yemen was a miscalculation, as he had anticipated an easy victory. Faced with strong resistance from the ex-Imam and his supporters, Nasser was obliged to increase

the number of his troops every day.¹²⁵

The first Saudi-Egyptian efforts to find a solution for the Yemeni crisis occurred in February 1964 when two representatives from Iraq and Algeria arrived in Riyadh.¹²⁶ There, in a number of meetings with Faisal, they offered to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Faisal appreciated their concern and accepted their role, as well as the intended arrival of an Egyptian delegation to discuss the Yemeni conflict. Consequently, in March 1964, a U.A.R. mission headed by Vice President Abdul-Hakim Amir visited Riyadh and held talks with Faisal.¹²⁷ The two sides agreed on March 3rd, 1964, to the restoration of diplomatic relations between their countries,¹²⁸ and the Egyptians conceded the principle that it was for the Yemenis to determine the future of their country, but Faisal nevertheless put off further negotiations to a meeting between himself and Nasser scheduled for two months later, in late April or early May.¹²⁹

In April 1964, Nasser paid his first visit to North Yemen¹³⁰ in order to prepare a new Egyptian offensive. The aim of this campaign was not to finish the royalists, but to inflict a defeat on them that would strengthen Nasser's bargaining position at the Second Arab Summit Conference, scheduled for September of that year.¹³¹

The second attempt between Saudi Arabia and Egypt to find a solution for the Yemeni conflict materialized during the Second Arab Summit

in September 1964 in Alexandria, Egypt.¹³² Faisal met with Nasser for the first time to discuss the Yemeni crisis.¹³³ The two leaders decided to co-operate "to help the people of Yemen towards stability, security and freedom".¹³⁴ Specifically agreed on a seven-month cease-fire during which Egyptian troops would withdraw gradually and Saudi Arabia would halt its aid, and they pledged themselves to create a Yemeni coalition government that would include royalists as well as republicans but exclude both President Abdulh al-Sallal and Imam al-Badar.¹³⁵ The significance of this agreement was that Egypt for the first time acknowledged the political existence of the royalists.¹³⁶

Under pressure from Nasser and Faisal, royalists and republicans met on 30th October 1964, at Erkwit in the Sudan. There the sides agreed on a cease-fire would come into force on 5th November, and planned a National Congress in Haradh, Yemen, on 23rd November of that year to be attended by one hundred and sixty nine tribal, religious and military leaders to realize the agreement fully.¹³⁷ However, the National Congress did not meet as scheduled. Instead the cease-fire broke down and fighting resumed, with the Egyptian's bombing royalist positions in late November 1964, and the royalists resuming ground operations shortly thereafter. Given the opposition of Sallal and the Imam to the Alexandria agreement, it is not difficult to see why the cease-fire did not hold.¹³⁸

The Egyptian's were paying a large price for the war in Yemen and it had become clear to them that their original objectives were inaccessible. They had failed to crush the royalists; the Saudis were secure; and with the increasing losses in the North Yemen war had become very unpopular in Egypt itself, where it was seen as a major cause of the economic difficulties the country faced in the mid 1960's.¹³⁹ And the royalist military successes in the summer of 1965 were instrumental in convincing the Egyptians to search for new ways to extricate themselves from North Yemen. As a consequence, on 22nd August 1965, Nasser flew to Jeddah in Saudi Arabia and met with King Faisal in an attempt to reach a peace settlement on the Yemeni crisis.¹⁴⁰

Nasser and Faisal agreed on another cease-fire date and signed the well-known Jeddah agreement on 24th August, 1965.¹⁴¹ However, the Jeddah agreement made plain a philosophical and fundamental disagreement between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Nasser insisted on the retention of the words "Republic of Yemen", and Faisal held that the term must be eliminated in favour of the "State of Yemen". No one even seemed to consider what the Yemenis might think, except to assume that whatever Nasser and Faisal agreed upon would be acceptable to republicans and royalists. It was the Yemenis, however, who were the first to undercut the Jeddah agreement.¹⁴²

The Harad Conference was held on 23rd November 1965, in accordance with the Jeddah agreement, and both Saudi and Egyptian representatives attended the conference.¹⁴³ But the conference was soon deadlocked over two issues. The Saudi representative and the royalists wanted the interim regime to be titled "the Islamic State of Yemen", as a means of postponing the issue of monarchy or republic until the plebiscite, the Egyptian representative and republicans insisted on maintaining the title "Republic". More than this, the Egyptians and the republicans were unwilling to concede the possibility that members of the deposed Imam's family should hold political office in any capacity, which again in Saudis and royalist eyes was a pre-judgement of the issue.¹⁴⁴

It could not be known for certain to what extent, if any, the Egyptians and Saudis were responsible for the intransigence of their Yemeni clients. It might be surmised that both Nasser and Faisal were only trying to buy a little time at Jeddah. Nasser, in order to avert a debate on Yemen at the impending Summit meeting in Casablanca and to facilitate the resumption of American surplus - food deliveries - Faisal, to avoid an Egyptian attack on his territory while he went shopping for stronger Western diplomatic and military support (he concluded a deal for \$500 million worth of British and American air defence equipment just as the Haradh Conference was breaking down).¹⁴⁵

In December 1965, the Haradh talks were adjourned until 20th February, but in fact they never resumed. By March, Nasser was declaring that his army was prepared to remain indefinitely in North Yemen, and renewing his threats to attack royalist bases inside Saudi territory.¹⁴⁶

However, Nasser felt extremely provoked by Faisal's campaign on behalf of an "Islamic Pact", which he began with successful visits to Iran in December 1965 and Jordan in January 1966, to enlist their rulers' support.¹⁴⁷ Faisal delivered a speech in the Iranian Majlis (Parliament) denouncing Arab socialism, communism, and any alien ideology to "Islam" in the Middle East. Although he did not mention Nasser by name, everyone knew that Nasser was his target.¹⁴⁸

Faisal's visit to Iran angered Nasser because the Shah of Iran had been at odds with Nasser for several years.¹⁴⁹ The Shah had criticized Nasser's intervention in Yemen and had occasionally shipped arms and money to the royalists. Nasser saw in Faisal's project the "Islamic Pact", another attempt inspired by Britain and the United States,¹⁵⁰ similar to the "Baghdad Pact", and to the "Eisenhower Doctrine", to organize an alliance against him and his policies, by the Saudi regime under the banner of the "Islamic Pact".¹⁵¹ The creation of the Pact refined the ideological conflict between the traditionalism and the modernity.

In February 1966, Nasser made one of those dramatic speeches¹⁵² that

punctuated his career, in which he virtually tore up the "Jeddah agreement", derided Faisal's "Islamic Pact" as a tool of imperialism, and charged him with supporting a plot by the Egyptian Muslim Brethren to overthrow the Egyptian government.¹⁵³ By March 1966, Nasser introduced his so-called "long breath policy", which resulted in increasing his troops from fifteen thousand in October 1962 to seventy thousand in December 1966.¹⁵⁴ He declared his determination to stay in Yemen "even five more years" if necessary to protect the republican regime from the reactionaries, Faisal and the royalists.¹⁵⁵

Faisal's response was to re-double his efforts along the already established lines. He continued to pursue his "Islamic Pact" project by travelling to Kuwait, Pakistan, Turkey, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Mali, Guinea and other places between April and September 1966 in search of supporters.¹⁵⁶ The purpose of Faisal in calling for such an "Islamic conference" was mainly to attack Arab socialism and the revolutionary regimes in Arab countries.¹⁵⁷

However, Faisal's challenge to Nasser was genuine and powerful as he was the acknowledged leader of anti-Nasser elements. But his diplomatic achievements were limited because, except for Iran and Jordan, the key states in his potential Islamic front - Pakistan, Turkey, and Sudan - declined to commit themselves to anti-Egyptian policy, and his proposal for a summit meeting of Moslem Heads of

State in Saudi Arabia came to nothing.¹⁵⁸

To add to Faisal's discomfiture, the Egyptians pulled off a minor diplomatic coup on 18th December 1966, by producing in Cairo none other than Faisal's deposed brother Saud. The former king, castigated in his time by the Cairo press and radio as the incarnation of benighted reaction, had turned down an invitation to come home to retire in Arabia and preferred to settle in the capital of the Arab socialist revolution.¹⁵⁹

Nasser, busy in the Yemen left the Egyptian sky defenceless and open to the frequent raids by the Israeli Air Force. Riyadh radio endlessly hammered home the question : is it advisable to fight in the Yemen whilst threats are coming from Israel? Therefore, Faisal sent a message to Nasser at the end of 1966,

"Dear Nasser, you must know that the enemy is lying in wait for us. Your policy, and that of your collaborators, is disastrous to our common welfare. You have allowed the atheist forces to establish themselves on Arab territory dear to all of us. Thus giving Israel justification to enter our countries. I have learned that the more the Soviets give you munitions, the more the Americans give to

the Israelis. It could be asked if you are preparing Israel's defences for war against your brother countries? My duty is to remind you that I give my support to the disapprobation shown to you by the Arab countries hereafter".¹⁶⁰

Nasser's reply was to order a new offensive in the Yemen in February 1967, with its corollary, the systematic bombing of Saudi territory. But, aided by supplies from Faisal, the royalists repulsed the Egyptian expeditionary force, and pushed them back as far as the gates of Sanaa.¹⁶¹

On 24th March 1967, Nasser ordered another offensive on the royalists and it was successful.¹⁶² The Egyptian's regained territories lost to the royalists in February. They pulled off another diplomatic coup on 30th March, by producing the former King Saud, this time not in Cairo, but in Yemen. The Egyptians took the former king for a tour around the territories they had just regained from the royalists. The former King Saud held a press conference in Yemen, and he condemned his brother King Faisal's intervention in Yemen.¹⁶³

The massive defeat of the combined forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan on 6th June 1967, by Israel shifted the attention of Egyptian policy decision makers from Yemen. It was the prelude to a permanent

disengagement of Egyptian forces from Yemen. No longer was ideology the all important factor in the conflict between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The immediate need of Egypt was the restoration of its army and its shattered economy in the wake of the defeat.¹⁶⁴

On 29th August 1967, the Arab Summit took place in Khartoum with Nasser and Faisal in attendance. On 30th August of that year Nasser and Faisal met in Mohamed A. Mahgoub's house (President of the Sudan) to discuss the "Yemen Peace Plan".¹⁶⁵ On that night Nasser and Faisal agreed on settling the Yemen problem.¹⁶⁶ Not only was settling the Yemen problem agreed upon by the two leaders, but Saudi Arabia joined with Kuwait and Libya in providing Egypt, Syria and Jordan substantial annual financial support to help them recover from the Six Day War.¹⁶⁷

It was very unfortunate, however, that the Yemeni Civil War broke out on 26th September 1962 (the first anniversary of the break up of the union between Egypt and Syria), and that was a good opportunity to teach King Saud a lesson. He had financed the break up of the union and led the campaign against Egypt, while his country had common borders with the Yemen. So when the Presidential Council met in Cairo to consider the Yemeni request for assistance, Anwar al-Sadat was the first to support it. He convinced the Council of the necessity of supporting the Yemeni revolution, and they did so.¹⁶⁸

The Nasserites defend Nasser's position by holding Sadat responsible for Egypt's intervention in Yemen.

However, Nasser's military support for the republicans against the royalists in the Yemeni war should go down in history as his greatest blunder, apart from the financial burdens which it imposed on the Egyptian economy, and the shedding of Arab blood.¹⁶⁹

For the Royal House of Saud, as well as for Nasser, the Yemen conflict had become a matter of Sharaf - a type of honour highly important to the Arabs. Thus, neither Faisal nor Nasser wanted to make the first move towards a disengagement from the Yemen Civil War. Although Nasser was reportedly anxious to withdraw his troops from Yemen, he could not allow the Sallal government to fall after having committed his prestige to its continued existence. As for Faisal, he was convinced that Nasser's intervention in Yemen was aimed ultimately at the overthrow of the House of Saud. And he correctly surmised that Nasser's Yemen adventure had become a severe financial and military drain on the U.A.R., therefore, Faisal was disinclined to make any propitiatory moves which might extricate his chief Arab adversary from a quagmire.

Following the 1967 war, Saudi foreign diplomacy was very much less active and King Faisal no longer attempted to take any strong lead in the Arab world. He refused to agree to the holding of a further

Arab Summit Meeting on the grounds that this should await the outcome of the mission of Dr. Gunnar Jarring, the UN Special Envoy. His relations with Egypt were correct but cool.¹⁷⁰

However, Nasser declared in March 1969 a "war of attrition" against Israel designed to force it to renounce its 1967 conquests on his terms.¹⁷¹ The war went on until August 1970. He called upon the Soviets for further assistance to recover and keep going, and the latter responded positively and appeared to entrench themselves deeper and deeper in the country. By the first months of 1970, there were some seventeen thousand Soviet advisers in Egypt.¹⁷² At the time, however, it looked to most observers, and certainly to Riyadh, as though the Soviets were well on their way toward turning Egypt into a dependent proxy if not a satellite. This apparent entrenchment, suggested to Riyadh a systematic Soviet encirclement and subduing of Saudi Arabia.

The war of attrition against Israel went a long way toward restoring Nasser's prestige and the credibility of the Arab nationalist cause that he led after the setbacks they suffered in the 1967 defeat.¹⁷³ This became apparent when, in May 1969, military officers headed by Colonel Jaafer al-Nimeiri overthrew the conservative regime in the Sudan, proclaimed its adherence to Arab socialism, and moved the Sudan toward co-operation with Egypt and the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁴ Four

months later, in September 1969, another military coup, headed by Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi, overthrew Libya's King Idris al-Sanussi, proclaiming the new regime's adherence to Arab nationalism, and offered to merge Libya with Egypt.¹⁷⁵ Riyadh's anxiety in the face of this resurgence of revolutionary pan-Arabism and Arab-Socialism was particularly active because in the months between the Sudanese and Libyan coups Riyadh uncovered and suppressed similar coup attempts in the Kingdom, involving a large number of senior military officers and civilians, some with Egyptian intelligence connections.¹⁷⁶

Against that formidable combination of dangers there was not much that Faisal could do on his own initiative. One of the things he tried was to revive his pet project from the early 1960's of an "Islamic Pact" as a means to counter the resurgent Arab socialism and Arab radical trends.¹⁷⁷ Taking advantage of an incident in which a mentally deranged Australian set fire to the Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, Faisal took the lead in arranging an Islamic Summit at Rabat, Morocco in September 1969 to consider a Muslim response. Ali Sabry led the Egyptian delegation because Nasser could not stomach sitting down with Faisal and other reactionaries leaders.¹⁷⁸

From the first session onward, the summit polarized into the "traditional" and "progressive" camps, with Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey and some African countries in the former, and the rest, led

by Egypt and Algeria, in the second. Al Aqsa Mosque itself, the ostensible reason for the summit, was hardly mentioned. But the summit, with its squabbles, bitterness and divisions, did much to persuade Faisal that his idea of Arab dominance throughout "Islam" was not sound. This was the major outcome of the affair, laying the foundations for Saudi Arabia's future role in inter-Arab politics and Faisal's co-operation with Nasser and Nasser's successor.¹⁷⁹

In December 1969, Faisal paid a two-day visit to Cairo.¹⁸⁰ With friendship and amity such a new concept between Faisal and Nasser, it was inevitable that some old points of argument should remain, but the two leaders got on better than they had expected, and in effect decided to respect each other's point of view. A communique issued at the end of the meeting said they agreed on "the broad lines of Islamic and Arab solidarity for the confrontation with Israel". More practically, some old disputes between the two countries, such as settlement of claims by Saudi Arabia for property of its nationals seized in Egypt, were amicably agreed. The meeting, the first between Faisal and Nasser since the 1967 Khartoum Summit, marked the definitive rapprochement of the leaders of the Arab world.¹⁸¹

Thus, at the December 1969 Arab Summit, again being held in Rabat, Nasser surprised Faisal, with whom he had ostensibly co-ordinated positions a few days before, by making an impassioned speech calling

upon the Arabs to close ranks in their struggle against Israel, and concluded with a tacit demand that Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil producing countries confront the United States and the West by using their oil as a potential weapon.

However, Nasser himself walked out of one session, not over any single point, but because he felt that the discussion was getting nowhere, a view which later proved absolutely accurate. The failure of the summit was due at least partially to Saudi Arabia's refusal to increase its financial support for the Arab countries directly confronting Israel by the amount these countries desired.

However, the encounter at the Rabat Summit showed that President Nasser had recovered much of his old punch and willingness and was prepared to strike surprise blows at Saudi Arabia were they could hurt most.¹⁸²

On 15th September 1970, King Hussein unleashed his Bedouins army against the Fedayeen (the PLO guerrillas) in Jordan. The fedayeen defended themselves, the battle raged for several days, but in vain. They had been taken too much by surprise, and could not hold out against the entire army. That massacre today goes under the name of Black September.¹⁸³

While the fighting was still going on, Nasser had called a rump Arab Summit in Cairo to deal with the crisis,¹⁸⁴ and Faisal discovered

that for once his interest coincided with that of the Egyptian leader. Nasser and Faisal wanted the PLO disciplined and cut down to size without appearing to sanction all of Hussein's actions, and both therefore pushed for a cease-fire and mediation without pressing Hussein too hard to comply and without punishing him as other Arab leaders were demanding.¹⁸⁵

On 28th September 1970, President Nasser died of a heart attack.¹⁸⁶ This event removed from the scene a formidable adversary and the foremost leader of pan-Arabism and Arab-Socialism.¹⁸⁷

Riyadh, always suspicious of Nasser, was pleased that his successor was Anwar al-Sada, one of the few top Egyptian officials whom the Saudis had cultivated over the years and in whom they had some confidence.¹⁸⁸ Above all, they believed him to be much less pro-Soviet than Nasser. Anwar al-Sadat, someone Riyadh preferred to Nasser, even though "Faisal held Sadat personally responsible for the Yemen Crisis".¹⁸⁹

For Sadat, the ultimate constraint was the unavailability of resources to pursue an active Arab foreign policy and to compete with countries with immense financial resources such as Saudi Arabia.¹⁹⁰ This view was reinforced in early 1970 by his desire to develop a broad Arab consensus against Israel in preparation for the war. Consequently, Egypt followed a policy of coexistence with

other Arab regimes, primarily those that had oil wealth and happened to be conservative.¹⁹¹ Once again Egyptian goals began to coincide fairly closely with Saudi objectives, and the two states found themselves increasingly on the same side in inter-Arab disputes.¹⁹²

In November 1970, shortly after Nasser's death, Faisal sent his brother-in-law, chief of Saudi intelligence, and confidant, Kamla Adham, on a confidential mission to explore the possibility of an understanding with new President Sadat. Among other things, Adham had stressed to Sadat Riyadh's concern over the extent of the Soviet presence and influence in Egypt and pointed out how that factor also caused the Americans to associate themselves with Israel much more strongly than they would like. Sadat replied that he needed the Soviets as long as he faced the probability of war with Israel.¹⁹³

Having sensed direct danger in 1970, and perceiving new opportunities after Nasser's death, Riyadh tried under King Faisal to use its influence to weaken the Soviet influence in the Middle East.¹⁹⁴ Early in 1971, Sadat put down a challenge from a pro-Soviet faction headed by Ali Sabry, an act that further convinced Faisal that Sadat was the best person to back in Egypt.¹⁹⁵

However, on 19th June 1971, Faisal began a week long visit to Egypt in which he accomplished at least two things : he secured Egypt's

endorsement of the Saudi-Iranian understanding on the Arabian Gulf, and he helped from the joint Saudi-Egyptian mission to mediate the remaining conflict among King Hussein and the PLO.¹⁹⁶

One story relates that President Richard Nixon urged Faisal in mid-June 1972 to pressure Sadat to get rid of the Soviets as a precondition to an active U.S. role in the Arab-Israeli conflict.¹⁹⁷ However, Faisal's cultivation of the connection with Sadat was finally vindicated when on 8th July 1972, Sadat suddenly ordered the Soviet advisers and military personnel, by then numbering 21,000, to leave the country within ten days.¹⁹⁸ Fortunately for the Saudis, just as they began the game of wooing Egypt towards centrist position, Saudi oil revenues were rapidly increasing. This made Saudi Arabia a much sought after friend in the Arab world. After Sadat ousted the Soviets from Egypt, Riyadh was delighted and was more than willing to help Egypt economically.¹⁹⁹

President Sadat visited Riyadh in August 1973, to inform Faisal of the exact time of the Egyptian-Syrian attack against Israeli troops on 6th October 1973, and to enlist his support and co-operation. Faisal was the only person trusted by Sadat and asked about the attack on Israel. Faisal went along with Sadat's decision, agreed to contribute \$500 million to Egypt's war chest, and promised to weigh in by using the oil weapon.²⁰⁰ According to Mohammad Heikal, who reported that promise, Faisal added : "But give us time, we do

not want to use oil as a weapon in a battle which goes on for two or three days and then stops. We want to see a battle which goes on for a long enough time for world opinion to be mobilized".²⁰¹

On 6th October 1973, Egypt and Syria launched simultaneous surprise attacks, beginning what came to be known as the Yom Kippur War.²⁰²

On 20th October 1973, the Saudis declared an embargo on all oil shipments to the United States and the Netherlands.²⁰³

The Arabs saw the war as a victory, and the Saudis took credit for having played an essential part in it. Henceforth they would not be allowed to remain on the sidelines and plead that the oil weapon was a two-edged sword that should never be wielded.²⁰⁴

After the October war the Riyadh-Cairo axis (based on a trade-off between Egyptian muscle and Saudi money) aimed to discourage any revolutionary ideology or "practices subversive of the status quo".²⁰⁵

The axis acquired military teeth through the official formation of the Arab military armaments organization (AMIO), founded in 1975 as a joint venture by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. AMIO was endowed with more than \$1.4 billion in an effort to combine oil money with Egypt's skilled labour force. By 1978 the groundwork was laid for the establishment of a basic Arab

defence industry located mainly in Egypt.²⁰⁶

If the 1973 war marked the high point of Saudi co-operation with Egypt that did not last for long.²⁰⁷ Sadat was soon moving on his way toward peace with Israel, leaving the Arab states. In the 1970's economic factors played a crucial role in the determination of Egypt's foreign policy objectives. Sadat's decision to visit Israel was largely motivated by economic considerations, the reduction of defence expenditures (37% of the GNP in 1977), the encouragement of foreign private capital, and the need for more U.S. aid. Even before this step, Sadat's Arab policy and his forging of a Cairo-Riyadh alliance had also been predicted on expected economic gains.²⁰⁸

On 19th November 1977, Anwar al-Sadat made his historic visit to Jerusalem and addressed the Israeli Knesset as a first step in an attempt to break the impasse that left the Arab-Israeli conflict unresolved for decades.²⁰⁹

Saudi Arabia viewed Sadat's initiative as doubly negative : for being harmful to the country's inter-Arab standing, and for calling into question the traditional Saudi attitude toward Israel. On the first count, Saudi pique was caused by Sadat's failure to consult it in advance, and was heightened by his concealment during a visit to Riyadh on 2nd and 3rd November 1977, of the plan he had already

evolved. More seriously, on the second count, Sadat had upset the delicate balance in Saudi Arabia's policy on the conflict.²¹⁰ For these reasons the basic Saudi attitude to Sadat's initiative was negative, a reaction reinforced by traditional Saudi hostility (coloured by concepts of Wahhabi Islam) towards Israel.

A statement issued by the Royal Court as early as 18th November 1977 (before Sadat's arrival in Jerusalem) asserted that because of "attitudes with uncertain results not in harmony with the general Arab situation ... the Arab cause has at the present time passed through a different phase".²¹¹

However, the reactions of Arab states to the visit differed markedly. Morocco, Sudan, Somalia, and Oman supported the move, Algeria, Libya, Syria, Iraq, South Yemen, and the PLO condemned it in a meeting they held in Tripoli in December 1977. Sadat responded by severing diplomatic relations with the five Arab states. In the middle, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the Arab Gulf states were neutral, giving Sadat the benefit of the doubt. Relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt were not affected by the visit to Israel.²¹² Indeed, Saudi Arabia agreed to represent Egyptian interests in Iraq, Syria and South Yemen after the severing of diplomatic relations.²¹³

An important indication of Saudi Arabia's and the Arab Gulf States' interest in the maintenance of Sadat's regime was the fact that

financial aid to Egypt was neither suspended nor, as far as we know, cut back. Reports to the contrary were quickly denied by official quarters. Moreover, Saudi and Kuwaiti deposits in Egypt's Central Bank were not withdrawn as scheduled in order not to aggravate that country's balance of payment problems. The Gulf Organization for the Development of Egypt, established in 1976 by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, continued to function as before. So did the Arab Military Industries Organization, formed in 1975 by Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Following a meeting of its Higher Committee in Abu Dhabi on 21st February 1978, the Saudi Defence Minister, Prince Sultan, expressly ruled out the possibility that "Arab differences" could affect the Organization's activities.²¹⁴

On 26th July 1978, Crown Prince Fahd and his Foreign Minister, Prince Saud, arrived in Alexandria for two days of talks with Sadat.²¹⁵ Fahd reported to the Cabinet that he had come back with "tangible facts", that Sadat would "close the Suez Canal to Tel Aviv" and "open it to the Arab Capitals", and he also added "adherence to not signing a separate peace with Israel".²¹⁶ On 8th August 1978, Sadat announced that he would attend the Camp David Summit together with the Israeli Prime Minister, Saudi Arabia's effort collapsed.²¹⁷

Despite Saudi Arabia's dispute with Egypt over its policy toward Israel, there was active co-operation between them concerning Soviet penetration into the Horn of Africa and Black Africa. Apparently, it was Riyadh that initiated and financed the Egyptian military aid to Somalia and Chad. Saudi Arabia and Egypt held close consultations on the future of Eritrea, on the events in Zaire, and on the strengthening of the Sudanese regime.²¹⁸ They also worked together in considering the political repercussion of developments in South and North Yemen in June 1978. Saudi economic aid was not used as a lever against Egypt. Nor did political differences affect the situation of Egyptians working in Saudi Arabia who were estimated to number 500,000 in 1978. Egypt opened a special office in Riyadh to look after their interests. Sadat said on several occasions that Saudi Arabia had committed itself to financing Egypt's five-years military plan. A minor diplomatic incident was created when the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Butrus Ghali, made an ill-advised statement to the Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee about the possibility of the transfer to Egypt of the F-15's purchased by Saudi Arabia for the U.S. in the event of war with Israel. But an Egyptian communique promptly denied that Ghali had ever made such a pronouncement.²¹⁹

Saudi Arabia's reaction to the Camp David accords was guarded at first. The Saudi's declared that "what has been reached at Camp David cannot be considered as a final acceptance formula for peace",

and specified that it "did not make absolutely clear Israel's intention to withdraw from all the Arab territories it occupies, including Jerusalem".²²⁰ They also attacked the accords for not giving the Palestinians the right to set up their own state and for ignoring the PLO. Yet the Saudis also maintained that they did not have the right to interfere with the efforts of any state to regain its territories whether through armed struggle or peaceful means, unless this clashed with higher Arab interests. The dilemma was that whereas the Saudis were strongly opposed to what Egypt had done to disrupt Arab solidarity, they were afraid to risk the fall of Sadat and the possible radicalization of Egypt if support were withdrawn. Thus, in the immediate post-Camp David period, Saudi Arabia became the leader of a bloc of Arab countries which sought to prevent the isolation of Egypt.²²¹

At the Baghdad Summit Conference (Baghdad I) on 2nd-5th November 1978, (see Appendix 1), (Egypt had not been invited), Saudi Arabia and its allies initially indicated that they would not condemn or isolate Egypt.²²² But when Sadat refused to receive a delegation of high-ranking emissaries from the conference or to accept a \$5 billion annual grant offer, Saudi-Egyptian relations began to chill. The summit ended with an agreement that if Egypt concluded a separate peace plan, it would be expelled from the Arab League and a boycott would be imposed on Egyptian companies doing business with

Israel. Later in the month, Sadat shunned a conciliatory message from Crown Prince Fahd because Saudi Arabia had adhered to the summit agreement.²²³

However, Egypt reacted with anger, and perhaps with a degree of surprise to Saudi Arabia's joining the anti-Egyptian, anti-American front during the Baghdad Summit, and its decision to form a coalition with such unlikely bedfellows as Syria, Libya, Iraq, and South Yemen. The Egyptian media accused Riyadh of complicity with the Bath regimes, the U.S.S.R. and the Warsaw Pact, by failing to back the Camp David accords.²²⁴ The Saudis maintained that they had done their best to defend Egypt from the radical Arabs and would not cut off financial support "no matter what happens", they said "our relations with Egypt will remain the same". Nevertheless they made it clear that the extent of future aid would depend largely on the degree to which Sadat succeeded in linking the prospective treaty with Israel to an overall settlement.²²⁵

The second Baghdad Conference on 27th March 1979, (see Appendix 2) was convened in the wake of the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, just as the first had been convened in reaction to the Camp David accords.²²⁶ However, it was not a summit but a conference of ministers of foreign affairs and economy. Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Saud, agreed on the conference resolutions and the implementation.

The ambassador of Saudi Arabi left Cairo on 1st April 1979,²²⁷ Egypt responded on 7th April, by recalling its ambassador from Riyadh.²²⁸ This was followed by the formal breaking of diplomatic relations by Saudi Arabia on 23rd April 1979.²²⁹

Although Saudi Arabia hesitated to immediately cancel subsidies already committed to Egypt, its intention to abide by the spirit of Baghdad II seemed assured when the Arabian Gulf Organization for Development in Egypt, supported by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, was disbanded on 26th April 1979. The aid from similar organizations was also discontinued, and on 24th May Saudi Defence Minister Sultan announced that the Cairo-based Arab arms industry was to liquidated.²³⁰

In response to Saudi Arabia's increasingly hard line, Sadat accused the Saudis on 1st May 1979, of paying other Arab states to sever diplomatic relations with Egypt.²³¹ He described the political system in Saudi Arabia as "wrong", and referred to the November 1979 attack on the Mecca Mosque which did not take Egypt by surprise, since it had warned the Saudi government of such an eventuality.²³² Sadat implied that under its present leadership Saudi Arabia had forfeited its claim to Islamic leadership, a fact painfully illustrated by the failure to prevent the tragedy in Mecca. Sadat warned the Saudis of the Soviet danger, suggesting that the real aim of the Afghanistan invasion was the Gulf oil, and advised them not

to delude themselves into believing that by giving in to Soviet enticement they would escape that danger. He offered help not only against the "Soviet danger", but also against "Islamic revolutionism", headed by Ayatollah Khomeini.²³³

In the final analysis, though, it would appear that both Egypt and Saudi Arabia were interested in finding middle-ground, allowing for some rapprochement. Meanwhile, mutual bitterness, disappointment, and misunderstanding dominated their relations. Egypt was bitter at the Saudi failure to realize that it was in its own interest to align itself with Egypt, while the Saudis kept trying to offer Egypt the end of the rope by which to abandon the Camp David process which Egypt persistently declined to accept.²³⁴

However, the Saudi ambassador returned to Cairo for some time in May 1979, ostensibly for family reasons, but he held political talks with Egyptian officials. Reports of secret meetings between Saudi and Egyptian officials around that time were denied by both sides.²³⁵

In early 1980, Cairo concentrated its efforts in pursuing three distinct objectives. Most important was the drive to win support of the countries of the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian Gulf, with its primary interest in a reconciliation with Saudi Arabia, the most influential of the moderate Arab group both in the region and

in Washington.²³⁶ Sadat apparently rated the chances of reconciliation highly. The Saudis, he argued, were not aware of the danger threatening them : "Saudi Arabia is the sleeping duck, that is to say, it is relaxed and its eyes are shut. This is a luxury which we cannot afford". Ready to "shoulder its national pan-Arab and Islamic responsibilities", Egypt offered "to give military facilities, or to offer military aid to Saudi Arabia or any Arab Gulf states should they be exposed to any foreign aggression". Likewise, Egypt supported the establishment of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) : favoured the sale of American AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia (and denounced Israel's objection to the deal), and if there was any truth in the many reports to that effect held secret, high level contacts with the Saudis. The Saudi reaction, however, was extremely cautious, if not cool and Cairo was still awaiting an affirmative response to its overtures.²³⁷

It is most instructive to listen to the Egyptian voices, because this country has provided the major leadership of recent years, both toward pan-Arabism under President Nasser and toward an independent peace with Israel, the Arabs have been and are unlikely to initiate either an effective peace or a war with Israel.

IV Conclusion

The other serious contender for Arab leadership in the decade 1956-67 seems to have been Saudi Arabia. More conservative, yet as autocratic in its domestic politics as Egypt, Saudi Arabia again like Egypt, has not had to face the same problem of political identity as the countries of the Fertile Crescent. One can hardly mention any notable Saudi contribution to the huge literature, folklore or mythology on Arab Nationalism or pan-Arabism.²³⁸

Until 1958 the Saudis and Egyptians found it mutually convenient to join forces to oppose and contain the ambitions of the Hashimites in the Fertile Crescent. This short-lived co-operation was affected usually over the question of who was to control, or dominate, Syria. It was, furthermore, a continuation of a convenient co-operation which earlier rulers of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, Ibn Saud and Farouq had found beneficial to their respective countries.²³⁹

On the other hand, relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt were cordial, culminating in a Treaty of Friendship between the two countries in 1936. The initial years of the succeeding monarch, King Saud, witnessed a paradoxical coincidence of interest between the conservative Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the revolutionary republic of Egypt headed by Nasser. Nasser's bitter attacks on the Hashimite Kings of Iraq and Jordan in the wake of the Baghdad Pact

were welcomed in Saudi Arabia, given her long-standing rivalry with the Hashimites, and between 1954 and 1957 she closely and loyally followed Egyptian policy, to the extent that one Western observer suggested that the Kingdom was "on the way to becoming Egypt's most valuable colony".²⁴⁰

Indeed a mutual defence pact between the two countries was signed in October 1955, and this was later to expand into the Tripartite Jeddah Pack which included the Yemen. In January 1957 the Treaty of Arab Solidarity was signed by Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Jordan for a period of ten years. During all the major controversies of this period - over the Baghdad Pact - the Czech arms deals, the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company and the Suez crisis Saudi Arabia was firmly on the side of Egypt.

However, at the beginning of 1957, Saudi policy began to shift. For a variety of reasons, King Saud was becoming wary of his pro-Nasser, anti-imperialist role, because it was leading to a potential conflict with the United States. In January 1957, he visited the U.S. and was successfully persuaded to re-assess his loyal adherence to Nasserist principles and policies. While no immediate clash occurred between them, Egypt and Saudi Arabia were beginning to drift apart. King Saud, increasingly conscious of the common interests binding him to other Arab monarchs, soon began to perceive Nasser and his radical policies as a threat to the Saudi monarchy.

It was becoming evident that Saudi understanding of Arab nationalism was markedly different from Egypt's. As one analyst observed :

To the Saudis rulers, their Arabness was much a self-evident fact that no theoretical elaboration was needed. Being of tribal stock, they thought of themselves as the real, ethnically-pure Arabs. While they recognized the special ties among Arab countries, they attributed them as much to religion and proximity as to Arabism. They did not recognize any mystical links emanating from Arab nationalism. If unity was to be the goal, it should be based on "Islamic", rather than Arabism.²⁴¹

To deal with the threat from Nasser and his Arab-Socialism, the Saudis have resorted to a wide range of "tactics". Least effective were clumsy attempts to buy influence and politicians, including an abortive attempt by King Saud to finance an assassination attempt against President Nasser.²⁴²

Ideological and political polarization of the Middle East into the "conservative" camp led by Saudi Arabia and the "revolutionary" forces under the leadership of Egypt began with the succession of Syria from the United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) in September 1961. Nasser therefore unleashed a bitter ideological and political

offensive against the backers of the Syrian separatists in the Arab world, particularly King Saud. Saudi Arabia immediately responded by intensifying her own campaign against Nasser's socialism, equating it with "atheistic communism" and describing Nasser as a "staunch communist who is still to communism as he was on the day he joined the secret communist organization in Cairo as a junior member".

King Saud also presented the "Islamic Charter" which, in criticizing "false nationalism based on atheistic doctrine", implied condemnation of Nasser's policies. The year 1962 witnessed a vehemently bitter interaction between Cairo and Riyadh during which radio propaganda was most effectively used. Saudi Arabia also used the "Holy Shrines of Mecca as instruments of her foreign policy".²⁴³

This polarization became complete in September 1962, with the eruption of the civil war in Yemen. Egypt immediately dispatched troops to help the republicans, where Saudi Arabia, viewing the war as the inevitable clash between the two ideological poles, uncompromisingly aided the royalist faction with money and equipment. She felt that victory for Egypt in Yemen would constitute a direct ideological and strategic threat to her own political order. After an Egyptian air-raid on the Saudi border, designed to neutralize the source of aid to the royalists, Faisal severed diplomatic relations with Egypt.

However, during that period, Saudi Arabia was reinforcing her position as the leader of anti-radical, conservative forces in the Middle East. In 1965, Faisal called for an "Islamic Pact", and tried to use it against Nasser's pan-Arabism, Arab-socialism, and against any alien ideology to "Islam" in the Middle East. But he absolutely failed because Nasser and his policies were very strong and the majority of the Arab masses loved Nasser and believed in his policies.²⁴⁴

If using "Islam" was not the Saudi suit, economic aid proved to be a more persuasive instrument. Nasser's anti-Saudi crusade was blunted at the Khartoum Summit in August 1967 by generous offers of aid from Arab oil-producing countries, including Saudi Arabia, to the militarily and economic prostrate Egypt.

By keeping channels open to the radical Arabs and by providing some aid, the Saudis hoped to be in a position to exert moderating influence and to exploit internal changes that might bring new leaders to the fore. This gamble seemed to pay off in 1970, a critical year in inter-Arab politics. On 28th September 1970, the Arab leader, Nasser, died of a heart attack and was succeeded by Anwar al-Sadat, someone Riyadh preferred to Nasser, and also someone Riyadh can do business with.²⁴⁵

However, under Sadat Egypt had good relations with Saudi Arabia and

the October war plus the use of the oil weapon marked the highest point of Saudi relations with Egypt.²⁴⁶ Although Saudi Arabia's importance began to emerge after the 1967 war, it was the quadrupling of the oil prices in 1973 and 1974 that brought Saudi Arabia to the forefront of Arab politics.

Sadat embarked upon a diplomatic offensive in the Arab world which began in Riyadh before going on to Damascus and other Arab capitals. It was indicative of Saudi Arabia's burgeoning regional importance that, although President Assad of Syria had been Sadat's ally and "bother-in-blood" during and after the 1973 October war, the first Arab leader to hear the details of the Sadat-Kissinger talks was not the Syrian President but the late King Faisal. The same Egyptian strategy was pursued after the signing of the Sinai Accord in September 1975, when General Husni Mubarrak, the Egyptian Vice-President, (the present President of Egypt), went to Riyadh to receive the all-important Saudi blessing. He delivered a detailed message from Sadat to King Khalid and then held a series of discussions with the King. Indeed, Egypt openly admitted that Saudi Arabia's approval of the agreement had been obtained before Kissinger embarked upon his mission. There is little doubt that the primacy of Saudi Arabia in Egyptian calculations and policies related in no small measure to the fact that between July 1974 and June 1975 she injected over \$1,200 million into the Egyptian economy.²⁴⁷

However, economic problems forced Sadat to seek a solution for the Arab-Israeli conflict. He took the initiative and made the historic visit to Jerusalem on 19th November 1977. Riyadh doubted the policy of "wait and see" to the visit. But when Sadat signed the Camp David accords, Riyadh had no choice but to go along with the "Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation" (Jabhat al-Samud wa al-Tasadi), and broke her diplomatic relations with Egypt on 23rd April 1979. However, "privately Riyadh was against breaking diplomatic relations with Egypt and using any kind of sanction against her". She did it because of lack of leadership.

However, the breaking of diplomatic relations did not affect the thousands of Egyptian professionals and technical experts working in Saudi Arabia. In fact, it did not affect "anything", for example, if you watch Saudi television you felt that you are sitting in Egypt watching Egyptian television and not Saudi television. Indeed, Saudi Arabia needs Egypt and not vice-versa.

The Arabic example says, Egypt Aum al-Arab [Egypt is the mother of the Arabs]. In short, it is very difficult to deny Egypt a role in the Arab world, even if Egypt herself opts for a more national policy of "disengagement" from the wider arena of Arab politics.

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- 53 See the American Statement on the withdrawal of their offer of financial aid to Egypt for the building of the Aswan High Dam, 19th July 1965, and Nasser's speech justifying nationalization of the Suez Canal, 28th July 1956, in T. G. Fraser, The Middle East : 1914-1979, Documents of Modern History, London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1980 pp. 87-89.

- 54 See Robert Lacey, The Kingdom, p. 314, and also for more information see Erskine B. Childers, The Road to Suez, London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1962.
- 55 Mohammad H. Heikal, Cutting the Lion's Tail : Suez Through Egyptian Eyes, London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1986, p. 1970.
- 56 See Richard I. Lawless, The Middle East in the Twentieth Century, London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd., 1980, p. 46.
- 57 Mohammad H. Heikal, Cutting the Lion's Tail : Suez Through Egyptian Eyes, p. 172, and also see Robert Lacy, The Kingdom, p. 314.
- 58 See Jose Arnold Golden, Swords and Pots, London: Gollancz, 1962, p. 134.
- 59 For more information, see Donald Neff, Warriors At Suez, New York: The Linden Press - Simon and Schuster, 1981.
- 60 For more details, see Ibn Hazloul, Tarikh Muluk al-Saud [History of the Saudi Kings], 1st ed., Riyadh: Dar al-Nashir, 1960, pp. 120-125.
- 61 Robert Lacy, The Kingdom, p. 315.
- 62 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 79.
- 63 See Peter Mansfield, The Middle East : A Political and Economic Survey, p. 115.
- 64 For more details, see Humphrey Trevelyan, The Middle East in Revolution, London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1970.

- 65 For more information about the situation in Jordan, see Arnold Hottinger, The Arabs : Their History, Culture and Place in the Modern World, London: Thames and Hudson, 1963, pp. 275-277.
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- 67 See H. B. Sharabi, "Power and Leadership in the Arab World". Orbis Fall 1963, p. 590, and also see P. J. Vatikiotis, Nasser and His Generation, London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1978.
- 68 A. I. Dawisha and K. Dawisha (eds.), The Soviet Union in the Middle East : Policies and Perspectives, London: Heineman Educational Books Ltd., 1982.
- 69 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 81
- 70 See Al-Bilad, 2nd February, 1957, (Jeddah).
- 71 See Chapter two, footnote 26 and 27.
- 72 Peter Mansfield, The New Arabians, Chicago, Illinois, J. G. Ferguson Co., 1981, p. 81.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Amin Said, History of Saudi Arabia Reign Saud Ibn Abdul Aziz, pp. 203-206.
- 75 Robert Lacey, The Kingdom, p. 317.
- 76 Saeed M. Badeeb, The Saudi-Egyptian Conflict Over North Yemen, 1962-1970, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986, p. 13.

- 77 See Anthony H. Cordesman, The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability : Saudi Arabi, the Military Balance in the Gulf, and Trends in the Arab-Israeli Military Balance, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984, p. 231.
- 78 See footnote 81, chapter four.
- 79 See Al-Ahram, 17th May 1957, Al-Nahar, 20th May 1957, and Roz al Yousuf, 25th May 1957.
- 80 Nadav Safan, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 84.
- 81 For more information about the union between Egypt and Syria, see U.A.R., The Provisional Constitution of the United Arab Republic, Cairo. Ministry of Information and National Guidance, 1958, and also see Raymond Flower, Napoleon to Nasser : The Story of Modern Egypt, London: Editions Ltd., 1972, pp. 219-227.
- 82 Most Arab countries were not happy to hear of the union between Egypt and Syria. Saudi Arabia in particular wanted Syria to remain neutral, as the Saudi shared a common border with Syria. King Saud was worried that the union of the two countries might present a threat to Saudi borders, and, at the very least, he feared an increased threat to Saudi Arabia's security and stability. In his autobiography, the late President Sadat, then deputy speaker for the Egyptian Presidential Council, recounted a conversation he had with the Crown Prince Faisal in Cairo a few days before the unity agreement was signed:
- Faisal : "which way are you going?" referring to our union with Syria. Sadat : "It's too late to do anything about it". Faisal : "tell Nasser that that country [Syria] is tribalist and factious, we know better than you do. This union won't survive - it won't fit in with the political current over there and will do you harm"

- Sadat : "It's all over, Faisal, Alkuatli will be here in two day's time for the union to be officially declared. This decision is irreversible". Faisal : "I'm telling you this just to clear my conscience. You can be sure this union will end in disaster". See Anwar al-Sadat, In Search of Identity, pp. 151-152.
- 83 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabi : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 86.
- 84 For details on the episode, see Yaccov Caroz, The Arab Secret Services, London: Corgi Books, 1978, pp. 243-252.
- 85 See Al-Nahar, 6th March 1958 (Beirut), Al-Ahram, 7th March 1958 (Cairo), and Al-Thawra, 6th March 1958 (Damascus).
- 86 British Broadcasting Corporation, Summary of World Broadcasts : Part IV, The Middle East, London: 20th March 1958, p. 6.
- 87 George lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, pp. 594-595.
- 88 Al-Bilad, 23rd December 1957, (Jeddah).
- 89 For more details about the meeting between Nasser and Faisal, see Ahmd Shuquairy, Tariq al-Hazima [The Road to Defeat], Beirut: Dar al-Awda, pp. 100-112.
- 90 Al-bilad, 17th August 1958, (Jeddah).
- 91 Middle East Journal, Autumn 1958.
- 92 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 89.
- 93 See footnote 82, chapter four.

- 94 See Malcolm H. Kerr, The Arab Cold War : Gamal Abd al-Nasser and his Rivals, 1958-1970, 3rd ed., London, Oxford, and New York: Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. 118-119.
- 95 Al-Bilad, 12th October, 1958, (Jeddah).
- 96 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 90, and Al-Nahar, 16th October, 1958, (Beirut).
- 97 Syria's defection was a blow to Nasser's pride as well as the first major reverse in his triumphant progress as a pan-Arab leader. He never fully recovered from the wound thus inflicted and, as some observers maintained, till the end of his life he was obsessed with Syria. See George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, 4th ed., New York: Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 584.
- 98 Menahem Mansoor, Arab World : Political and Diplomatic History, Washington, D.C., 1972, Vol. 4, 26th January 1962.
- 99 Ibid.
- 100 There are other reasons which made Nasser interfere in North Yemen:
- (1) The National Charter, inaugurated in May 1962 by Nasser, establishing an ideological basis for socialism in Egypt declared:
- Revolution is the only means by which the Arab nation can free itself of the dark heritage which burdened it. For the elements of suppression and exploitation which long dominated the Arab nation and seized its wealth will never willingly submit.
- Moreover, the Charter asserted:
- The United Arab Republic (U.A.R.), is firmly convinced that she is an integral part of the Arab nation, must

propagate her call for unity and the principles it embodies, so that it would be at the disposal of every Arab citizen, without hesitating for one minute before the outworn argument that this would be considered an interference in the affairs of others.

- (2) "Elements of traditionalism and reaction against foreign influence are present but Arabism is characteristically the feeling that the only way for the Arabs to be anything is for them to be themselves".
- (3) In 1965 Nasser described the context within which the initial Egyptian intervention took place:

You know the circumstances in which the U.A.R. decided to intervene militarily to help the people of Yemen. They followed the Shtaura Conference held in August 1962, when the separatist force in Syria aided by the reactionary, isolationist and defeated forces in the Arab world launched a violent psychological offensive against all the revolutionary forces in the Arab world. Suddenly, in this terrible atmosphere, the revolution exploded in one of the parts of the Arab world where it was least expected. The great meaning of this event is that it was not possible for any force whatever to suppress the legitimate aspiration of an Arab people to run its own life. Our attitude from the first was to give moral support to the Yemeni people and to allow it to assume its responsibilities.
- (4) The Egyptians were caught up in their own rhetoric to the point that they actually believed that what was hindering the achievement of Arab unity on the basis of revolutionary socialism was a small group of reactionary leaders and that the Arab "masses" were in fact ready to fall behind Egyptian

leadership in sweeping away the few reactionary obstacles to the fulfilment of their common dream.

- (5) Egyptian action in Yemen was viewed as a continuation of Egyptian desire to strengthen its influence in the Arabian Peninsula and, by so doing, to deny Western imperialism the opportunity to continue its presence in the Arab world.
- (6) The official explanation given by Egypt for its military involvement in Yemen was that Sallalthe, the leader of the revolution had asked for help in protecting the new regime from its enemies.

See, United Arab Republic, The Charter, Cairo: Information Department, 1962, p. 11; Charles D. Cremean, The Arabs and the World, New York: Praeger, 1963, p. 57; Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1975, pp. 106-107; Jay Walz, The Middle East, New York: Atheneum, 1965, p. 128; Kathryn Boals, Modernization and Intervention in Yemen, Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 272; Nasser Speech of 25th November 1965, in Al-hram, 27th November 1965, (Cairo); Hisham Sharabi, Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World, New York, London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1966, p. 118; and A. I. Dawisha, "Intervention in the Yemen : an Analysis of Egyptian perception and politics", Middle East Journal, 29 Winter 1975, p. 50.

- 101 See Miles Copeland, The Game of Nations : the Amorality of Power Politics, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969, p. 246.
- 102 Harold Ingrams, The Yemen, New York: Praeger, 1964, p. 133.
- 103 Professor Charles O. Lerche, defines intervention as "the interference by one state in the internal affairs of another, and

may assume either defensive or offensive forms". Defensive intervention aims at preserving a particular regime or system, and offensive intervention attempts to alter such a system. The former aims at preserving the balance of power in a particular area, while the latter desires to materially purpose of offensive intervention is to cause a government or a policy in another states to change. See, Charles O. Lerche, and Abdul A. Said, Concepts of International Politics, 2nd ed. Englewood, California, N. J. Prentice Hall, 1970, pp. 116-117.

- 104 Al-Ahram, 1st October 1962, (Cairo).
- 105 For more information, see Peter Mansfield, Nasser's Egypt, Penguin Books Ltd., 1965, and Amos Perlmutter, Egypt The Peratorian State, New Brunswick, New Jersey, Transaction Books, 1974.
- 106 Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, p. 109.
- 107 See Edgar O'Balance, The War in Yemen, London: Faber and Faber, 1971 p. 78.
- 108 Robert Stookey, Political Change in Yemen, Austin, Texas: University of Austin Press, 1972, p. 500.
- 109 See Mohammad H. Heikal, Ya Sahab al-Jalallah [Your Majesty], Cairo: Dar al-qawmiyn Lil-Tibah wl-Nashir, 1963, pp. 80-82.
- 110 Al-Ahram, 30th May, 1956, (Cairo) and Ukaz, 5th June, 1956 (Jeddah).
- 111 For the 12 articles of the military pact, see Mohammad Khalill, The Arab States and the Arab League : A Documentary Record, Vol. 2, Beirut: Khayats, 1962, p. 251.

- 112 See Christopher J. McMullen, Resolution of the Yemeni Crisis, 1963 : A Case Study in Mediation, Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 1980 pp. 1-2.
- 113 Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, p. 109.
- 114 Robert Lacey, The Kingdom : Arabia and the House of Saud, New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1981, p. 346.
- 115 See Robert Stookey, Political Change in Yemen, p. 501.
- 116 See Fouad Ajami, The Arab Predicament, London: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. 80-81. For general reviews of the Egyptian invasion of Arabia in 1838-1839 and the occupation of Syria in the 1830's, see M. S. Anderson, The Eastern Question, 1774-1923, New York, N.Y., 1966.
- 117 Marcel Gros, Faisal of Arabia : The Ten Years of a Reign, London: Emge-Sepix, 1976, p. 79.
- 118 See Gerald de Guary, Faisal : King of Saudi Arabia, London: Arthur Barker, 1966, p. 172, and for Faisal's speeches in Dammam and Taif, see Marcel Gros, Faisal of Arabia : The Ten Years of a Reign, p. 93, and Amin Said, Tarikh al-Sawla al-Saudiyyah Ahd Saud Ibn Abdul Aziz, [History of Saudi Arabia Reign Saud Ibn Abdul Aziz], Vol. 3, Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, 1964, pp. 288-291.
- 119 For more information see Mohammad H. Heikal, Nasser wa al-Alam [Nasser and the World], Beirut: Dar al-Nhar, 1973, pp. 214-224, and also see Saeed Badeeb, The Saudi-Egyptian Conflict Over North Yemen 1962-1970, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986, p. 41.

- 120 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 95.
- 121 Ibid., p. 96.
- 122 See C. J. McMullen, Resolution of the Yemen Crisis, 1963 : A Case Study in Mediation, p. 1.
- 123 Mohammad H. Heikal, Nasser and the World, p. 184.
- 124 See Haddad George, Revolution and Military Rule in the Middle East : The Arab States; Part 2 : Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, and Libya, Vol. 3, Santa Barbara, California: University of California Press, 1973, p. 265. And for the Soviet Union and the United States roles in the Yemen Conflict, see Saeed Badeeb, The Saudi-Egyptian Conflict over Yemen, pp. 60-69, and Mohamad A. Zabarah, Yemen Traditionalism vs. Modernity, New York, N.Y.: Praeger Publishers, 1982, pp. 78-80.
- 125 See Anthony Nutting, Nasser, London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1972, p. 343.
- 126 Saeed Badeeb, The Saudi- Egyptian Conflict Over North Yemen, p. 80.
- 127 Ibid., p. 81.
- 128 King Saud met President Nasser at the Arab Summit held in Cairo in January 1964. Both discussed the Yemeni Crisis, and agreed to the resumption of diplomatic relations between their countries. But at that time there was a power struggle going on between King Saud and his brother Prince Faisal, and it was very hard to tell who is in charge in the Kingdom, because each one claimed that he is the true King of Saudi Arabia.

- 129 See Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 101.
- 130 A. I. Dawisha, "Intervention in the Yemen : An Analysis of Egyptian Perception and Policies", Middle East Journal, 29 Winter 1975, p. 55.
- 131 See Manfred W. Wenner, Modern Yemen : 1918-1966, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967, p. 212, and also see Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, p. 110.
- 132 See P. J. Vatikiotis, The History of Egypt : From Mohammad Ali to Sadat, 2nd ed., London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980, p. 405.
- 133 Faisal's anticipated trip to Egypt to pursue the Yemeni Peace Talks with Nasser was put off until September 1964, when the Second Arab Summit met in Alexandria, because of the dangerous situation inside the Kingdom caused by the power struggle between Saud and Faisal.
- 134 Amin Said, Tarikh al-Dawla al-Saudiyyah Ahd Saud Ibn Abdul Aziz [History of Saudi Arabia Reign Saud Ibn Abdul Aziz], Vol. 3, pp. 362-363.
- 135 See Edgar O'Ballance, The War in Yemen, Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1971, p. 130.
- 136 Dana Adams, Yemen : The Unknown War, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968, p. 207.
- 137 Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, p. 111.
- 138 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 102.

- 139 For more information, see Anthony Nutting, Nasser, pp. 346-348, Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, pp. 111-112, and Arab Report and Record, 16th-31st May, pp. 120-121. Egypt lost 15,195 soldiers who were killed in North Yemen between October 1962 and June 1964, see Dana Adams, Yemen : The Unknown War, p. 234.
- 140 Marcel Gros, Faisal of Arabia, p. 97 and Middle East Journal, Spring 1967.
- 141 The text of the Jeddah agreement could be found in Saeed Badeeb, The Saudi-Egyptian Conflict Over North Yemen, p. 82, Zaid al-Wazir, Mutamar al-Taif [The Taif Conference], Beirut: Ittihad al-Gowa al-Shabiah al-Yemaniah, 1965, pp. 66-69.
- 142 Malcolm H. Kerr, The Arab Cold War : Gamal Abd Al-Nasser and his Rivals, 1958-1970, 3rd ed., London, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 108.
- 143 See Abdulah al-Husni, Mutamar Haradh [The Haradh Conference], Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-jadid, 1966.
- 144 See Malcolm H. Kerr, The Arab Cold War, p. 108, and also see "Yemen: The War and the Haradh Conference", Review of Politics, Vol. 28, No. 3, July 1966, pp. 321-325.
- 145 Malcolm H. Kerr, The Arab Cold War, p. 109.
- 146 See Abdulh al-Husni, Mutamar Haradh, [The Haradh Conference], p. 131.
- 147 For more information, see Tareq Y. Ismael, Government and Politics of the Contemporary Middle East, Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1970, pp. 376-377; Stephen Humphreys, Islam and Political Values in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria in Michael Curtis ed.,

Religion and Politics in the Middle East, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981, pp. 249-295, and Sallah al-Minjad, Ahadith An Faisal Wa Tadamin Al-Islami, [Faisal and the Islamic Alliance], Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Jadid, 1974.

148 See Al-Itlat, 23rd December, 1964, (Tharan), and also see Kyhan, 25th December, 1964, (Tharan).

149 Al-Ahram, 29th December, 1964, (Cairo).

150 The sponsors of the "Islamic alliance wanted to use it primarily on the home front against the National Liberation Movements, but at the same time it would undoubtedly strengthen the position of the imperialist powers. "The Islamic Pact is being created to fight against the Liberation movements and sap them from within". See Aryeh Yodfat, Arab Politics in the Soviet Mirror, Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1973, p. 249.

151 For more details, see Shawqy Abdul Nasser, Thoritah Nasser [Nasser's Revolution], Nicosia, Cyprus: Sharkit al-Mouqaf al-Arabi Littbah Wanshir, 1980, pp. 469-477.

152 The speech can be found in Ibid., pp. 501-502.

153 See Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 121.

154 See Yaacov Shimoni and Evyatar Levine, (eds.), Political Dictionary of the Middle East in the Twentieth Century, London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1972, p. 427.

155 Al-Ahram, 27th March, 1966, (Cairo).

- 156 For more information, see Helen Lackner, A House Built on Sand, p. 115, and also see B. Melekhov, International Affairs, No. 4, 1966, pp. 86-87.
- 157 For more information about Faisal's purpose, see Omar Hlyaq, Hadith Fiy al-Siyyasah al-Sudyyah, [Saudi Arabia's Politics], 2nd ed., Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Dar al-Sudyyah Lnashir, 1968.
- 158 See Peter Mansfield, The Middle East : A Political and Economic Survey, pp. 116-117.
- 159 Malcolm H. Kerr, The Arab Cold War, pp. 113-114, and see Ruz Al-Yousuf, 26th December 1966, (Cairo).
- 160 See Marcel Gros, Faisal of Arabia, p. 104.
- 161 Ibid., p. 105.
- 162 Al-Ahram, 25th March, 1967, (Cairo).
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- 164 For more information, see David Lamb, The Arabs, New York, N.Y.: Vintage Books, 1987.
- 165 For more details, see Mohamod Ahmed Mohgoub, Democracy On Trial : Reflection On Arab and African Politics, London: Andre Deutsch Ltd., 1974, pp. 156-163.
- 166 The terms of the Yemen Peace Agreement reached between Nasser and Faisal on 30th August 1967, in Khartoum are as follows:

Anxious to clear the Arab atmosphere; to strengthen ties of friendship and brotherhood among the Arab people; and in order to settle the problem of Yemen, agreement has been reached as follows:

- (1) The formation of a committee of three, which will be entrusted with dealing with the problem. This committee shall comprise three Arab states - one to be chosen by Saudi Arabia, one to be chosen by the U.A.R., and the third to be chosen by the Foreign Ministers of the Arab States or by mutual agreement of both parties.
- (2) The committee will draw up plans to guarantee the withdrawal of U.A.R. forces in Yemen and stop the military assistance extended to Yemenis by Saudi Arabia.
- (3) The committee shall make every effort to enable the Yemenis to unite, live in harmony and achieve stability in accord with the true desire of the people of the country, and in recognition of Yemen's right to full independence and sovereignty.
- (4) The committee will consult with the Saudi Arabia Kingdom and the U.A.R. on all problems hampering its progress, with the aim of solving them and reaching an understanding acceptable to all parties concerned so that all causes of this dispute can be removed, Arab blood saved, Arab ranks consolidated, and so that goodwill can prevail.

See Mohamad Ahmd Mahgoub, Democracy on Trial : The Reflection on Arab and African Politics, pp. 164-172, and also see Arab Report and Record, 16th-31st August, 1967, p. 269.

- 167 Fred Khouri, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma, 2nd ed., Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1976, p. 233.
- 168 See Anwar al-Sadat, in Search of Identity, London, Glasgow, and Toronto: William Collins and Sons Co. Ltd., 1978, p. 162.
- 169 Nasser called his Yemen venture, "my Vietnam". For more information see Anthony Nutting, Nasser, p. 338-357.
- 170 See Peter Mansfield, The Middle East : A Political and Economic Survey, p. 118.
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- 173 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 138, and Mohammad H. Heikal, Nasser wa al-Alam [Nasser and the World], p. 95.
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- 178 See John Bulloch, The Making of a War : The Middle East from 1967 to 1973, London: Longman Group Ltd., 1974, p. 36.
- 179 Ibid., p. 37.
- 180 Al-Bilad, 15th December, 1969, (Jeddah).
- 181 See Al-Moufaq Al-Arabi, 26th December 1969, pp. 12-15, (Cairo), John Bulloch, The Making of War, p. 37, Al-Bilad, 25th December, 1969, Jeddah, and Ruz al-Yousuf, 29th December, 1969.
- 182 For more information, see R. Hrair Dekmejian, Egypt Under Nasser : A Study in Political Dynamics, London: University of London Press Ltd., 1972, and Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest For Security, p. 139, and Shhawqy Abdul Nasser, Thoritah Nasser [Nasser's Revolution], p. 138.
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- 184 Al-Ahram, 20th September, 1970, (Cairo).
- 185 Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest for Security, p. 144, Al-Nahar, 26th September 1970, (Beirut); Shawqy Abdul Nasser, Thoritah Nasser [Nasser's Revolution], p. 205; and Mohammad H. Heikal, Nasser wa al-Alam [Nasser and the World], p. 110, and Mohammad H. Heikal, The Road to Ramadan, pp. 98-103.

- 186 Al-Ahram, 29th September, 1970, (Cairo), and Al-Riyadh, 29th September, 1970, (Riyadh).
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- 189 William B. Quandt, Saudi Arabia in the 1980's : Foreign Policy, Security and Oil, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1981, p. 66.
- 190 For more information about Sadat's foreign policy after he took power, see Raymond A. Hinnebusch Jr., Egyptian Politics Under Sadat : The Post-Populist Development of an Authoritarian - Modernizing State, Cambridge, London: Cambridge University Press, 1985, and also see Anwar al-Sadat, In Search of Identity.
- 191 See Ali H. Dessouke, "The New Arab Political Order : Implications For The 1980's", in Malcolm H. Kerr and Sayed Yassin (eds.), Rich and Poor States in the Middle East : Egypt and the New Arab Order, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982, pp. 330-336.
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Toronto: William Collins and Sons Co. Ltd., 1975, p. 118.

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- 197 See Bhagat Korany and Ali H. Dessouki, The Foreign Policies of Arab States, Boulder, Colorado : Westview Press, 1984, p. 143.
- 198 For more details, see Mohammad H. Heikal, The Road to Ramadan, p. 178, Al-Ahram, 10th July, 1971, (Cairo), Nadav Safran, Saudi Arabia : The Ceaseless Quest For Security, p. 147, and Mohammad H. Heikal, Karif al-Katab [The Anger at Autumn], pp. 82-85.
- 199 See William B. Quandt, Saudi Arabia in the 1980's : Foreign Policy, Security and Oil, p. 18.
- 200 For more information, see Walter Lacqueur, Confrontation : The Middle East War and World Politics, London: Wildwood House Ltd., 1974, pp. 46-48.
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- 203 Al-Riyadh, 21st October, 1973, (Riyadh), and Al-Jazirah, 22nd October, 1973, (Riyadh).
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- 206 Bahgat Korany and Ali H. Dessouki, The Foreign Policies of Arab States, pp. 126-127.
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Appendix I

Final Statement Issued By The 9th Arab Summit Conference,
Baghdad on 5th November 1978

The Arab Summit Conference issued a final statement at the conclusion of its meetings, which lasted for four days. The following is the text of the final statement:

By the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Iraq and at the invitation of President Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr, the ninth Arab Summit Conference convened in Baghdad during 2nd-5th November 1978.

In a high spirit of pan-Arab responsibility and joint concern about the unity of the Arab stand, the Conference studied confrontation of the dangers and challenges threatening the Arab nation, particularly after the Camp David agreements signed by the Egyptian Government and the effects of these agreements on the Arab struggle to face the Zionist aggression against the Arab nation.

Proceeding from the principles in which the Arab nation believes, acting on the unity of Arab destiny and complying with the traditions of joint Arab action, the Arab Summit Conference has emphasized the following basic principles:

First : The Palestinian question is a fateful Arab issue and is the essence of the conflict with the Zionist enemy. The sons of the Arab nations and all the Arab countries are concerned with it and are obliged to struggle for its sake and to offer all material and moral sacrifices for this cause. The struggle to regain Arab rights in Palestine and in the occupied Arab territory is a general Arab responsibility. All Arabs must share this responsibility, each in accord with his military, economic, political and other abilities. The conflict with the Zionist enemy exceeds the framework of the conflict of the countries whose territory was occupied in 1967, and it includes the whole Arab nation because of the military, political, economic and cultural danger the Zionist enemy constitutes against the entire Arab nation and its substantial and pan-Arab interests, civilization and destiny. This places on all the countries of the Arab nations the responsibility to share in this conflict with all the resources it possesses.

Second : All the Arab countries must offer all forms of support, backing and facilities to all forms of the struggle of the Palestinian resistance, supporting the PLO in its capacity as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied land, struggling for liberation and restoration of the national rights of its people, including their right to return to their homeland, to determine their future and to establish their independent state on their national soil. The Arab States pledge to preserve Palestinian national unity and not to interfere in the internal affairs of the Palestinian

action.

Third : Commitment is reaffirmed to the resolutions of the Arab Summit Conferences, particularly the sixth and seventh Summit Conferences of Algiers and Rabat.

Fourth : In light of the above principles it is impermissible for any side to act unilaterally in solving the Palestinian question in particular and the Arab-Zionist conflict in general.

Fifth : No solution shall be accepted unless it is associated with a resolution by an Arab Summit Conference convened for this purpose.

The Conference discussed the two agreements signed by the Egyptian Government at Camp David and considered that they harm the Palestinian people's rights and the rights of the Arab nation in Palestine and the occupied Arab territory. The Conference considered that these agreements took place outside the framework of collective Arab responsibility and are opposed to the resolution of the Arab Summit Conference, particularly the resolutions of the Algiers and Rabat Summit Conference, the Arab League Charter and the U.N. resolutions of the Palestinian question. The Conference considered that these agreements do not lead to the just peace that the Arab nation desires. Therefore, the Conference has decided not to approve of these two agreements and not to deal with their results. The Conference has also rejected all political, economic, legal and other

effects resulting from them.

The Conference decided to call on the Egyptian Government to go back on these agreements and not to sign any reconciliation treaty with the enemy. The Conference hopes that Egypt will return to the fold and join Arab action and not to act unilaterally in the affairs of the Arab-Zionist conflict. In this respect the Conference adopted a number of resolutions to face the new stage and to safeguard the aims and interests of the Arab nation out of faith that with its material and moral resources the Arab nation is capable of confronting the difficult circumstances and all challenges, just as it has always been throughout history, because it is defending right, justice and its national existence.

The Conference stressed the need to unify all the Arab efforts in order to remedy the strategic imbalance that has resulted from Egypt's withdrawal from the confrontation arena. The Conference decided that the countries that possess readiness and capability will co-ordinate participation with effective efforts. The Conference also stressed the need to adhere to the regulations of Arab boycott and to tighten application of its provisions.

The Conference studied means to develop Arab information media beamed abroad for the benefit of the just Arab issue. The Conference decided to hold annual meetings for the Arab Summit Conference and decided that the

month of November each year will be the date for holding the Summit.

After studying the Arab international situation, the Conference asserts the Arab nation's commitment to a just peace based on the comprehensive Israel withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967, including Arab Jerusalem, the guaranteeing of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian Arab people, including the right to establish their independent state on their national soil.

The Conference decided to embark on large-scale international activity to explain the just rights of the Palestinian people and the Arab nation. The Conference expressed its deep appreciation and gratitude for all the states that stood on the side of the Arab rights.

The Conference expressed its appreciation to the Syrian Arab Republic and its heroic army, and to the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan and its heroic army, and expressed its pride in the struggle of the Palestinian people and its steadfastness inside and outside the occupied territories, under the leadership of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The Conference praised the "Charter for joint national action" signed by fraternal Syria and Iraq, and the Conference regarded the Charter as the great achievement on the way to Arab solidarity. The Conference also expressed its great appreciation for the initiative of the Iraq

Government under President Ahmd Hasan al-Bakr in calling for the convening of an Arab Summit Conference in Baghdad so as to unify Arab ranks and to organize Arab efforts to face the threats to which the Arab nation is currently exposed. The Conference expressed its thanks for President Al-Bakr's effects to make the Conference a success.

The Conference took a number of resolutions and measures to face the next stage and to protect the aims and interests of the Arab nation. These resolutions stem from the conviction of the Conference that the Arab nation is able, through its material and moral capabilities and through its solidarity, to face all the difficult circumstances and all the challenges, as it always faced them through history, because it is defending justice and right and protecting its national existence.

Source : Alan R. Taylor, The Arab Balance of Power, Syracuse, N.Y.:
Syracuse University Press, 1982, pp. 147-149.

Appendix 2

Resolutions Of The Arab League Council

Following Meetings Of The Arab Foreign

And Economy Ministers

Baghdad, 31st March, 1979

As the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt has ignored the Arab Summit Conferences' resolutions, especially those of the sixth and seventh Conferences held in Algiers and Rabat; as it has at the same time ignored the ninth Arab Summit Conference resolutions - especially the call made by the Arab kings, presidents and princes to avoid signing the peace treaty with the Zionist enemy - and signed the peace treaty on 26th March 1979; it has thus deviated from the Arab ranks and has chosen, in collusion with the United States, to stand by the side of the Zionist enemy in one trench; has behaved unilaterally in the Arab-Zionist struggle affairs; has violated the Arab nation's rights; has exposed the nation's destiny, its struggle and aims to dangers and challenges; has relinquished its pan-Arab duty of liberating the occupied Arab territories, particularly Jerusalem, and restoring the Palestinian Arab people's inalienable national rights, including their right to repatriation, self-determination and establishment of the independent Palestinian state on their national soil.

In order to safeguard Arab solidarity and the unity of ranks in defence of the Arab's fateful issue; in appreciation of the Egyptian people's struggle and sacrifices for Arab issues and the Palestinian issues in particular; in implementation of the resolutions adopted by the ninth Arab Summit Conference that convened in Baghdad during 2nd-5th November 1978, and at the invitation of the Government of the Republic of Iraq, the Arab League Council convened in Baghdad from 27th March 1979 to 31st March on the level of Arab foreign and economic ministers.

In the light of the ninth Arab Summit Conference resolutions, the Council studied the latest developments pertaining to the Arab-Zionist conflict, especially after the signing of the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt of the peace (as-sulh) agreement with the Zionist enemy on 26th March 1979.

The Arab League Council, on the level of the Arab foreign ministers, has decided the following :

1. A. To withdraw the ambassadors of the Arab States from Egypt immediately.
- B. To recommend the severance of political and diplomatic relations with the Egyptian Government. The Arab governments will adopt the necessary measures to apply this recommendation within a maximum period of one month from the date of issue of

this decision, in accordance with the constitutional measures in force in each country.

2. To consider the suspension of the Egyptian Government's membership in the Arab League as operative from the date of the Egyptian Government's signing of the peace treaty with the Zionist enemy. This means depriving it of all rights resulting from this membership.

3. A. To make the city of Tunis, capital of the Tunisian Republic, the temporary headquarters of the Arab League, its General Secretariat, the competent ministerial councils and the permanent technical committees, as of the date of the signing of the treaty between the Egyptian Government and the Zionist enemy. This shall be communicated to all international and regional organizations and bodies. They will be informed that dealings with the Arab League will be conducted with its secretariat in its now temporary headquarters.

- B. To appeal to the Tunisian Government to offer all possible aid in facilitating the settlement of the temporary Arab League headquarters and its officials.

- C. To form a committee comprising representative of Iraq, Syria, Tunisia, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Algeria, in addition to

representative for the General Secretariat. The aim of this committee will be to implement this resolution's provisions and to seek the aid it requires from the member states. The committee will have all the authorization and responsibilities from the Arab League Council necessary to implement this resolution, including the protection of the Arab League's properties, deposits, documents and records. It is also entitled to take necessary measures against any action that may be taken by the Egyptian Government to hinder the transfer of the Arab League headquarters or harm the Arab League's rights and possessions.

The Committee will have to accomplish its task of transfer to the temporary headquarters within two months from the date of this resolution. This period of time may be extended for another month if the Committee so decides. The Committee shall submit a report on its accomplishments to the first forthcoming meeting of the Arab League Council.

D. A sum of \$5 million shall be placed at the Committee's disposal to cover the transfer expenses. The sum shall be drawn from the credit accounts of various funds. The Committee has the right to spend more than that amount if required. Expenditures for this purpose shall come under the supervision of the committee or of those it authorizes. The expenses shall be paid by the member states, each according to the percentage of its annual contribution

the Arab League budget.

E. To transfer the Arab League General Secretariat officials who are employed at the time of the issuing of this resolution from the permanent headquarters to the temporary one during the period defined in paragraph 3C of the resolution. The Committee referred to in the above-mentioned paragraph 3 will have the responsibility of paying them financial compensation compatible until a permanent system is drafted for this purpose.

4. The competent and specialized Arab organizations, bodies, establishments and federations named in the attached list, No. 1 will take the necessary measures to suspend Egypt's membership. They will transfer their headquarters from Egypt to other Arab states on a temporary basis, similar to the action that shall be taken regarding the Council General Secretariat. The executive councils and boards of these bodies, organizations, establishments and federations shall meet immediately following the implementation of this decision within a period not to exceed the period specified in paragraph 3C above.
5. To seek to suspend Egypt's membership in the non-aligned movement, the Islamic Conference Organization and OAU violating the resolutions of these organizations pertaining to the the Arab-Zionist conflict.

6. To continue to co-operate with the fraternal Egyptian people and with Egyptian individuals, with the exception of those who co-operate with the Zionist enemy directly or indirectly.
7. The member-states shall inform all foreign countries of their stand on the Egyptian-Israeli treaty and will ask these countries not to support this treaty as it constitutes an aggression against the right of the Palestinian people and the Arab nation as well as a threat to world peace and security.
8. To condemn the policy that the United States is practising regarding its role in concluding the Camp David agreements and the Egyptian-Israeli treaty.
9. To consider the measures in this decision to be temporary and subject to cancellation by an Arab League Council decision as soon as the circumstances that justified their adoption are eliminated.
10. The Arab countries will pass legislation, decisions and measures necessary for the implementation of this resolution.

The Arab League Council, on the level of Arab foreign and economy ministers, has also decided the following :

1. To halt all bank loans, deposits, guarantees or facilities, as well as all financial or technical contributions and aid by Arab governments or their establishments to the Egyptian Government and its establishments as of the treaty signing date.
2. To ban the extension of economic aid by the Arab funds, banks and financial establishments within the framework of the Arab League and the joint Arab co-operation to the Egyptian Government and its establishments.
3. The Arab governments and institutions shall refrain from purchasing the bonds, shares, postal orders and public credit loans that are issued by the Egyptian Government and its financial foundations.
4. Following the suspension of the Egyptian Government's membership in the Arab League, its membership will also be suspended from the institutions, funds and organizations deriving from the Arab League. The Egyptian Government and its institutions will cease to benefit from these organizations. The headquarters of those Arab League departments residing in Egypt will be transferred to other Arab states temporarily.
5. In view of the fact that the ill-omened Egyptian-Israeli treaty and its appendices have demonstrated Egypt's commitment to sell oil to Israel, the Arab states shall refrain from providing Egypt with oil

and its derivatives.

6. Trade exchange with the Egyptian states and private establishments that deal with the Zionist enemy shall be prohibited.

7. The economic boycott :

A. The Arab boycott laws, principles and provisions shall be applied to those companies, foundations and individuals of the Arab Republic of Egypt that deal directly or indirectly with the Zionist enemy. The boycott office shall be entrusted with the following up implementation of these tasks.

B. The provisions of paragraph A shall include the intellectual, cultural and artistic activities that involve dealing with the Zionist enemy or have connections with the enemy's institutions.

C. The Arab states stress the importance of continued dealings with those private national Egyptian institutions that are confirmed not to be dealing with the Zionist enemy. Such institutions will be encouraged to work and maintain activities in the Arab countries within the framework of their fields of competence.

D. The Arab countries stress the importance of caring for the

feelings of the Egyptian people's sons who are working or living in the Arab countries as well as looking after their interests and consolidating their pan-Arab affiliation with Arabism.

E. To consolidate the role of the Arab boycott and to enhance its grip at this stage, in affirmation of Arab unanimity, the assistant secretary general for economic affairs will be temporarily entrusted with the task of directly supervising the major boycott office in Damascus. He will be granted the necessary powers to re-organize and back the said department and to submit proposals on developing the boycott in method, content and scope. He shall submit a report in this regard to the first meeting of the Arab League Council.

8. The United Nations will be asked to transfer its regional offices, which serve the Arab region, from the Arab Republic of Egypt to any other Arab capital. The Arab states will work collectively toward this end.
9. The Arab League General Secretariat will be assigned the task of studying the joint Arab projects so as to take the necessary measures for protecting the Arab nation's interests in accordance with the aims of these resolutions. The General Secretariat shall submit its proposals to the Arab League

Council in its first forthcoming meeting.

10. The Zionist plot must be faced by drafting an Arab strategy for economic confrontation. This will lead to utilizing the Arabs' own strength and will emphasize the need for realizing Arab economic integration in all aspects. The strategy will strengthen joint Arab development and regional development within the pan-Arab outlook and will expand the establishment of joint Arab projects - projects that serve the aims of emancipating, developing and integrating the Arab economy - and will promote the projects already in operation. The strategy will also develop the methods, systems and substances of the Arab boycott of Israel and will diversify and promote international relations with the developing countries. The Arab League General Secretariat shall rapidly submit studies relevant to the strategy of joint Arab economic action to the forthcoming session of the Arab Economic Council. This will be a prelude to the convention of a general Arab economic conference.

11. The above-mentioned committee shall be assigned the task of supervising the implementation of these decisions and of submitting a follow-up report to the Arab League Council in its first forthcoming meeting.

12. The Arab states will issue the decisions and legislations pertaining to these decisions and will take the necessary measures to implement them.

13. These measures taken by the Arab and economy ministers are considered minimal requirements to face the threat of the treaty. Individual governments can take whatever measures they deem necessary in addition to these measures.

14. The Arab foreign and economy ministers call on the Arab nation in all Arab countries to support the economic measures taken against the Zionist enemy and the Egyptian regime.

Source : Alan R. Taylor, The Arab Balance of Power, pp. 149-153.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS WITH YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC (1920-1980)

I Introduction

II Brief Historical Background of the YAR

III The Saudi Arabia - YAR Boundary

IV The Saudi Arabia - YAR Relations (1920-1980)

V Conclusion

Footnotes

I Introduction

Saudi Arabia and Yemen Arab Republic (YAR)* recognise Islam as the official religion. In addition, Saudi Arabia is responsible for safeguarding the two holiest cities of Islam, Mecca and Madinah. Since they are both Islamic states, Saudi Arabia and North Yemen recognize the shariah, or Islamic law, as the basis for their legal systems.¹

Similarities in domestic ideological orientation form the basis for a mutual understanding between the two countries. This is largely the result of a shared religion and the place it holds in the state, highly traditional societies, and conservative political systems.²

The paramount considerations in Saudi Arabia's view of North Yemen's political importance turn on geopolitics and manpower. North Yemen's geopolitical significance is derived in great part from its location, which commands the Strait of Bab al-Mandab. Freedom of navigation through this strait holds critical importance to Saudi Arabia primarily because this waterway is used extensively to transport oil from the Arabian Gulf to Europe. North Yemen's proximity to the Kingdom and to the other Gulf oil-producing states is another salient geopolitical factor. Further, North Yemeni

* The YAR is also known as North Yemen

manpower represents a significant source of unskilled and semi-skilled labour in Saudi Arabia in particular and the Gulf area in general.³ Both geopolitical and manpower factors make North Yemen's political allegiance and friendship vital to the success of Saudi political goals, especially within the Arabian Peninsula.

This chapter reviews the history of the relations between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen over many turbulent years.

II Brief Historical Background of the Yemen Arab Republic

Yemen Arab Republic lies at the extreme south-western corner of Arabia. It has an estimated size of 74,000 square miles, comprising of two well-defined climatic and topographical zones - the highlands inland, and the Tihama (the coastal strip along the Red Sea). Its frontiers march with Saudi Arabia in the north (Asir) and east (Najran). The western boundary is the Red Sea from a point opposite the Farasan Islands to Shaikh Said Peninsula, opposite Perim Island. In the south, Yemen is bounded by the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.⁴

In classical times Yemen, with the Hadhramaut, formed the south-eastern part of Arabia Felix, which also included south Hejaz and the remainder of the Peninsula south of Arabia Deserta. The best-known of the southern-Arabian Kingdoms was Saba (or Sheba/Sabu).⁵ It had a recorded history from 950 to 115 BC, but no authentic evidence has yet been found of a "Queen of Sheba". The Sabbeans earned great profits from the incense trade; but their prosperity slowly dwindled in competition with the Indian trade routes through Iraq and Syria, and with the Roman exploitation of commercial navigation from the Gulf and the East through the Red Sea to Egypt and Europe.⁶

In the fourth century, Christian missionaries settled in the

country. There was also a blend of Judaism after the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. From the sixth to the second century BC Arabia Felix was ruled by the Himayrite dynasty, from whom the modern Imams claim descent. Some rulers embraced Judaism, others were Christian. In AD 525 the Christian Ethiopians of Axum invaded and overthrew the Himayrite Kingdom. Ethiopian rule was overthrown in AD 575 by an Iranian invasion. Within another one hundred years the country had submitted to Islam. Following the rise of Islam in the southwestern periphery of the Arabian peninsula, the land known as Arabia Felix, was mainly cut off from the mainstream of Arab development.⁷

The poverty and physical characteristics of the region were not conducive to development but rather were left to tribal groups who inhabited the area. The Ottomans extended their authority to Yemen in the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Their hold over the south, however, was precarious. When Yemen's Zaidia Imams gained independence at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the orthodox Shafti south was considered under their jurisdiction. The Ottomans paid little attention to the poverty-stricken southern borders of their country.⁸

At the opening of the nineteenth century, Yemen was entered into by the Wahhabis (the Sunnis). After the Egyptian victory of 1818, Ibrahim Pasha descended on the Tihama, which had been overrun by the Wahhabi forces. The Wahhabis were expelled and the Zaidi Imam was

restored to authority in return for a subsidy to the Sultan in Constantinople who placed Egyptian garrisons in Hodeida and Moak, the main ports. The Egyptians withdrew in 1840, but Turkish suzerainty.⁹

After World War I Imam Yahya emerged as an independent ruler, largely by default, in as much as there was no power ready and willing to assume imperial responsibilities in the area. No official proclamation of independence was ever issued in Sanaa, but Yahya quite obviously did not consider himself bound either by the Mudros armistice provisions or by the earlier British-Ottoman agreements regarding the boundaries in Arabia.¹⁰

Under the rule of the Zaidi Imams, Yemen was governed according to Zaidi politico-religious theory in so far as possible, creating probably the closest modern approximation of the theocracy. In theory, God rules the Zaidi state, in political terms, God is represented by the Quran, the Hadith, and the Zaidi interpretations of the significance and contents of these two basic sources. The Imam, as such, is merely God's temporal representative. Again, in theory, all judicial, executive, and legislative powers are vested in the Imam. In practice, of course, strict adherence to the theory was impossible and there inevitably grew up a complex set of arrangements designed to deal with the immediate problems of administering the political entity known as Yemen.¹¹

III The Saudi Arabia - Yemen Arab Republic Boundary

When diplomacy fails to resolve an impasse between two parties, then resorting to force is likely, and a case in point is the dispute between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen Arab Republic over the delimitation of their boundary. Until 1926, Saudi Arabia had no boundaries with North Yemen; the Emirate of Asir, which serves as a buffer state, separated the two countries.¹² As a result of the struggle between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen over the destiny of Asir and its final incorporation into Saudi Arabia in the 1930's, the boundary issue between the two countries became acute.¹³⁰

In 1925 and 1926, Asir was threatened by internal disorder and external expansionist ambitions. Internally, the hold of the Amirs of Asir, the Idrissis, began to weaken as early as 1923, the date of the death of the Amir Mohammed II al-Idrissi, founder of the dynasty. Struggles for power reduced the dynasty to disorder and instability.¹⁴ Externally, the threat to the dynasty came from the ambitions of the ruler of Yemen, Imam Yahya, who seized the opportunity of Asir's internal disorder to put his plans into operation. Between 1925 and 1926, Imam Yahya's forces captured some of Asir's cities along the coast and succeeded in occupying Jeizan, far into the interior.

The Idrissi Amir Hasan was left with two options. The first was to

accept the reduction of his authority as a fait accompli, and, to avoid disaster, accept the role of nominal ruler of Asir under the authority of North Yemen. The second was to ally himself with a powerful neighbouring state that could limit or end Imam Yahya's expansionist ambitions.¹⁵

Considering the circumstances, the second alternative appeared the more profitable. Amir Hasan sent a delegation of his principal amirs to Saudi Arabia petitioning the Saudi government to expel Imam Yahya's forces from Asir. The Mecca agreement was signed on 21st October, 1926, by which Asir became a Saudi protectorate.¹⁶

After assuming responsibility for conducting Asir's foreign affairs and defending it against external threats,¹⁷ Saudi Arabia hastily made its commitments to Asir widely known, informing Imam Yahya of these developments in Saudi-Asiri relations. To ensure that Imam Yahya was aware of the new Saudi role and the new status of Asir, a Saudi delegation was sent to Sanaa, the capital of Yemen. Imam Yahya's insistence that Asir was a part of Yemen territories rendered these initial Saudi attempts without result.¹⁸ Subsequent meetings between the two governments attempting to define the boundaries between Asir and Yemen lasted from 1926 to 1930, and finally succeeded. In 1931, Saudi Arabia waived its claim to a hilly territory in the southern part of Asir known as the Aaro

mountain, in favour of the Yemen. Imam Yahya abandoned all of his so-called rights to the rest of Asir in favour of Saudi Arabia.¹⁹

The agreement was soon disturbed by developments in Asir, which was a turning point in Saudi-Yemeni boundary relations. On 26th October, 1932, Amir Hassan al-Idrissi revolted against Saudi Arabia.²⁰ The revolt, together with the concentration of Yemeni troops in the neighbourhood, and Italy's manoeuvring and long-standing ambitions in the Fasan Island, constituted a serious threat of Saudi Security.²¹ Saudi Arabia announced in 1932, that Asir had been annexed to the Saudi Kingdom, becoming part of its territory. The act of annexation made Saudi Arabia an immediate neighbour of North Yemen, and in June 1932, Ibn Saud sent a personal message to Imam Yahya proposing an urgent meeting to fix the boundary.²² Imam Yahya was unwilling to accept the annexation of Asir to Saudi Arabia as a fait accompli, and in spite of the conciliatory attitude implicit in the messages exchanged between the two governments Imam Yahya's forces advanced toward Najran, part of annexed Asir, a neutral zone between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen. In October 1932, a Saudi force proceeded to that area to put an end to Yemen's attempt to annex Najran. The first armed clash ended with the withdrawal of Yemen's forces from Najran, and boundary negotiations began between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen.²³

The Abha Conference was held on 2nd November, 1933, with the aim of

resolving certain outstanding problems and fixing the Saudi Arabia-Yemen boundary. The issue of Asir was not raised, an indication of Yemen's acceptance of Saudi Arabia's incorporation of Asir.

The question of sovereignty over Najran remained. The Yemeni delegation insisted Najran be annexed to the Yemen; the Saudi proposed that Najran be considered a neutral zone.²⁴ The Conference, after sixteen days, reached an impasse, nor was there any agreement or further negotiations. Force seemed to be the only alternative. In February 1934, Saudi Arabia sent an ultimatum to Imam Yahya to the effect that the Saudis would invade the Yemen unless a boundary agreement was concluded within a given time,²⁵ which expired without response from Imam Yahya, who was stalling while he attempted to secure arms and munitions from the Italian government.²⁶ The Saudi government was aware of Imam Yahya's tactics and on 22nd March 1934, declared war on Yemen.²⁷

As a result of a war lasting seven weeks, Hodaidah, the main port of Yemen, as well as the disputed area of Najran, fell under the control of Saudi forces. Control of Hodaidah was not part of a Saudi design to annex territories. The object was to use it as a pawn in negotiations to secure Imam Yahya's recognition of Saudi Arabian sovereignty over Najran and a boundary agreement.²⁸ Another result of the war, which helped lead to a boundary agreement, was

the appearance of British, French, and Italian naval forces in the waters off Hodaidah. The powers had their interests in the region particularly in the Yemen.²⁹ If the Saudi-Yemeni war had escalated, it would have provided an opportunity for the powers to achieve their objectives.

External threats had an effect on both Saudi Arabia and the Yemen, as well as other parties.³⁰ They were moved to bring the war to a speedy conclusion and begin negotiation, which took place at Taif, Saudi Arabia, and resulted in an agreement on 20th May 1934.³¹ The state of war was terminated (Article 1)., Najran was included in Saudi Arabia, and a boundary fixed (Article 4). The agreements fostered a new era of relations between the two countries.

Saudi Arabia's boundary with the Yemen Arab Republic was the only one of its boundaries to be established by war. The use of force in this instance succeeded in promoting a final boundary agreement.

Conflicts have since occurred between Saudi Arabia and Yemen Arab Republic, but not over the location of the already determined boundary. Rather, the boundary was occasionally used as a pretext in order to achieve certain political and economic ends, at times coloured by ideological issues, which were unrelated to the boundary.

IV The Saudi Arabia - Yemen Arab Republic Relations (1920-1980)

The relations between the two young governments, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, were totally friendly because there were no major disputes between them.³² But this situation did not last for long.

The immediate cause of the conflict between Ibn Saud and Imam Yahya was Asir, a small principality immediately north of Yemen on the Red Sea coast. Under the Ottoman Empire, it had been administered as a qa'immaqa-miyya within the Wilayat of Yemen, although it was in fact two separate areas governed by different families. The north portion was ruled by the A'ids, formerly subject to the Wahhabi rulers of Najd; the southern portion was ruled by al-Sayyid Mohammad al-Idrissi of the Idrissi dynasty.³³

In April 1915, al-Idrissi signed an agreement with the British by which they recognized his independence, guaranteed him protection from attack (on his coastal cities), and provided him with a subsidy as well as armaments.³⁴ At the end of World War I, the British demonstrated their appreciation for the al-Idrissi's attitude - he was the first Arab ruler to join the allies during the war - by turning over to him the towns and surrounding territories of al-Hodaidah and al-Luhayya, which had been taken from the Empire, but which Imam Yahya believed to be a part of "Greater Yemen". This action quite naturally, incensed Imam Yahya, who thereupon planned

to regain these territories. For over five years, the al-Idrissi was in possession of the coastal plain, known as the Tihama.³⁵

Shortly after World War I, the two rulers of Asir became involved in a dispute.³⁶ Shaykh Hassan Ibn Ali appealed to Ibn Saud for support, the latter, willing to accept the pretext for expanding his domains, sent his son Faisal in 1920 to annex these highland portions of Asir. The new arrangement was recognized by Mohammad al-Idrissi in a treaty drawn up in 1920.³⁷

Upon the death of Mohammad al-Idrissi, the rule passed to his eldest son, Sayyid Ali, then only eighteen years old, who proved to be a weak and ineffectual ruler. Soon after his accession, Imam Yahya took advantage of this weakness and the internal divisions in the al-Idrissi house to annex the entire Tihama area and its ports as far north as Maydi and also to threaten the cities of Jizan and Sabya.³⁸ By this act he extended his area of the coastal lowland, and gained access to the Red Sea, and acquired control of the trade routes between the ports and Sanaa, the capital.³⁹ Sayyid Ali fled to Aden, and his uncle, Hassan Ibn Ali, proclaimed himself the new Imam and ruler; he appealed to Ibn Saud to support his claim, in accordance with the terms of the 1920 treaty.⁴⁰

However, Ibn Saud was only too happy to have another excuse to extend his own influence in the south western corner of the

peninsula, and his troops quickly occupied Sabya and Jizan. Sayyid Ali, however, had not given up his claim to the throne, a civil war ensued, with Imam Yahya now supporting Ali because of the former's fear that Ibn Saud was encroaching on territories he considered his own. Ibn Saud's power carried the day, the Hassan al-Idrissi was established as the ruler of a truncated Asir.⁴¹

In so doing, he was forced to accept what amounted to a Saudi protectorate over his territories, Ibn Saud guaranteed him his throne, his then current frontiers, and full powers of internal administration (but not foreign policy); what remained of the al-Idrissi's lands was to be annexed to Ibn Saud's domains upon Hassan's death. This agreement was formalized in the treaty of Mecca signed on 21st October 1926, between Ibn Saud and Hassan al-Idrissi.⁴²

However, Imam Yahya was dissatisfied and unhappy because Asir was under the Saudi administration. Imam Yahya was looking forward to acquiring the whole of Asir in order to unite all parts of Yemen. Ibn Saud read through Imam Yahya's mind and thoughts; he then prepared a very skilful move to test the capabilities of Imam Yahya and to know his extent and intentions.

- A. To sign a common defence and security treaty, in order to protect the Arabian Peninsula.

- B. To define the borders between the two countries.
- C. To organize their political relations according to international law.⁴³

Of course Imam Yahya could not reject the proposal or refuse to enter into negotiations to achieve these objectives, although he was hesitant to enter the negotiations, in addition to his disbelief in the proposal. Then Ibn Saud realized that it was convenient to send a delegation to Sanaa for reaching an agreement or treaty.⁴⁴

The first Saudi delegation arrived in Sanaa on 20th May 1928. Negotiations started between both sides, without reaching any results because of the wide disagreement between them. However, Ibn Saud sent a second delegation to Sanaa on 10th June 1928, hoping that this delegation would be more successful than the previous one, but it did not accomplish anything either.⁴⁵

Saudi relations with North Yemen became somewhat strained as a result. Ibn Saud assured Imam Yahya that he had no intention of recovering the territories lost by the al-Idrissi before the date establishing his protectorate. This mollified Yahya to some degree. Nevertheless, the Imam believed that large portions of territory rightfully belonging to him were included in Asir. He sent out

troops occasionally to occupy small villages and valleys on the border between the two countries, causing Ibn Saud to distrust his intentions.⁴⁶

In order to strengthen his legal claim to Asir, Ibn Saud forced Hassan al-Idrissi to sign a new treaty with him in October, 1930.⁴⁷ The al-Idrissi was left with nothing except the purely nominal title of sovereign, all of his prerogatives having been taken over by Ibn Saud. Hassan, as might be expected, began to plot revenge against Ibn Saud.⁴⁸

On 12th December 1930, Imam Yahya's troops advanced at the Al-Arou mountain and took some Saudi hostages, and they ordered all chiefs of the tribes to unite with Yemen.⁴⁹ Ibn Saud telegraphed Imam Yahya asking him to halt these actions.

Negotiations by telegraph took place between the Saudi and Yemeni officials and ended with an agreement to hold a conference to be attended by delegates from both sides.⁵⁰ The Conference was held on 12th May 1931, and ended without any agreement being reached.⁵¹

Imam Yahya telegraphed Ibn Saud asking him to give his personal judgement in a condition that would be acceptable by all parties. Ibn Saud replied that he would give up the al-Arou mountain, and asked him to order his delegate to meet with the Saudi delegate to set up a draft agreement between their governments on 23rd December

1931.⁵²

Saudi-Yemeni relations improved to some extent after signing the agreement. Ibn Saud realized that it was possible to discuss a project of common defence treaty between the two governments "to cooperate in order to strengthen the powers of Arab and Islam".⁵³

Before opening the negotiations between the Saudi and Yemeni governments, Hassan al-Idrissi co-operated with Abdullah, the Hashimite King of Transjordan (later Jordan), the historic enemy of Ibn Saud and Imam Yahya of Yemen, together they were to make a two-pronged attack on the Hijaz from the north and south, driving out Ibn Saud.⁵⁴ During the summer of 1932, the attack from the north was begun under the leadership of Ibn Rafadeh, Chief of Billy tribe. The attack was repelled and the tribesmen driven back into Transjordan. Hassan al-Idrissi did not make his move until November. Wahhabi' reinforcements rushed into Asir, and Hassan was completely defeated, the Saudi troops occupied Sabya, and Hassan fled to Yemen.⁵⁵

However, Ibn Saud sent a letter to Imam Yahya on 15th August 1933, he said :

"I am sure that you know about the abrasive conspiracy that had been agitated against Islam and the Arabs in the Saudi northern region around Agaba. Their only intention was to disturb peace within the country of God and to open the way to non-Muslims in order to achieve their vicious purposes from Islam and Muslims.

I plead to you to respect the treaty that had been signed between our countries, and arrest all of the conspirators in your country".⁵⁶

Imam Yahya replied to Ibn Saud that he denied any involvement with Hassan al-Idrissi and King Abdullah against his country.⁵⁷

However, the Imam intervened with Ibn Saud for Hassan al-Idrissi, and a conference on the matter was held in Maydi in March 1933, Imam Yahya ordered his troops into Asir and the Oasis of Najran, the ownership of which was also disputed between Ibn Saud and Yemen.⁵⁸

Imam Yahya was evidently not interested in any negotiated settlement at the time, for he arrested Ibn Saud's emissaries and held them as hostages. Hostilities between the two sides began about the middle

of November 1933, the fighting was not, however, pursued with much vigour by either army at first, and it was interrupted frequently for further fruitless discussions. On 17th February 1934, representatives of Yemen and Saudi Arabia met in Abha. There the Saudis listed their conditions for peace. The Imam rejected them immediately and reiterated his claim to both the Oasis of Najran and Asir.⁵⁹

Ibn Saud finally decided that he had had enough of Yahya's procrastination and expansionist aims. In April 1934, Ibn Saud sent Yahya an ultimatum to comply with his demands, when the latter failed to answer, two Saudi columns led by Ibn Saud's sons, Saud and Faisal marched in.⁶⁰ Saud's army, starting from Najran and heading for Sanaa, made some progress before becoming bogged down in the mountains. Faisal's forces, however, moving along the coast, advanced rapidly after defeating Yahya's forces and reached the port of Hodeida, halfway down Yemen's Coast, within three weeks.⁶¹

By that time Yahya had sent appeals for help in every direction, some of which elicited prompt responses. The Italians, entrenched in Eritrea and Somalia since 1885 and fearing eventual Saudi control of Bab al-Mandeb, sent two destroyers to Hodeida and landed a company of marines.⁶² Two days later the British sent their own naval units to balance the Italians and to try to keep Ibn Saud from becoming their neighbour at the Aden Protectorate.⁶³

Both powers demanded that Ibn Saud halt his forces and enter into negotiations, and Arab leaders chimed in with a call to end the fighting among Arabs and an offer to mediate the dispute.⁶⁴ Ibn Saud yielded and negotiations took place under the supervision of a conciliation commission composed of Egyptians and Syrians.⁶⁵ The resulting "Treaty of Muslim Friendship and Arab Fraternity" was concluded on 20th May 1934, between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, under the watchful eye of a conciliation committee of representatives from other Arab States.⁶⁶ The treaty was called the Treaty of Taif. According to its terms, the disputed areas of Najran and Asir were to become fully incorporated sections of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, and Ibn Saud was to withdraw his forces from Yemen and payment was to be made to him of reparations of 100,000 sterling in gold.⁶⁷

Although Ibn Saud's moderation was doubtless due in this instance to foreign pressure, Imam Yahya attributed it to the Ibn Saud's magnanimity and good will. In assuming this, he had the precedent of Ibn Saud's genuine disinterest and eminently fair decision concerning a minor border dispute to two years earlier.⁶⁸

The tension which existed in Saudi-Yemeni relations subsided with the conclusion of the 1934 Treaty of Taif and set the stage for good future relations.⁶⁹

In addition to the Treaty of Taif, several other factors contributed

to the development of good relations between the two countries during this period. First, although Imam Yahya had established a state designed to uphold traditional values, he was backed as its ruler by a nascent central government. He therefore had a good deal of incentive to settle his disputes with his neighbours in order to give him the freedom he needed to attend to internal matters of state.⁷⁰ Second, Ibn Saud had a good deal of incentive to settle his disputes as well. Having recently established the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, he was anxious to secure its borders and establish friendly relations with his neighbours.⁷¹ As in the case of Imam Yahya, such freedom from outside concerns would enable the newly established ruler to devote himself to governing his people and attending to affairs of state. Third, from a practical standpoint, Imam Yahya had every tangible reason for wanting to maintain good relations with Saudi Arabia because he recognized Ibn Saud's military superiority.⁷²

The 1934 war taught Imam Yahya to respect the strength of his northern neighbour, and made him a friend of Ibn Saud for life. The relations between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen were probably the best in the Arab Middle East.⁷³

The improved relations between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen in the post-1934 period were strong enough to survive a number of potential political crises, including an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate

Ibn Saud himself. If there had been less trust between Ibn Saud and Imam Yahya, the fact that two of the would-be assassins were members of the Yemeni army, might have resulted in the levelling of charges of government complicity before an investigation of the facts could take place.⁷⁴

In 1935, Ibn Saud and Crown Prince Saud were in Mecca for the Hajj (Pilgrimage). Both were performing the Tawaf, the ritual circumambulation of the Kaaba in the centre of the Holy Mosque in Mecca. Suddenly three youthful Yemeni fanatics, who had managed to push their way through the throng, leapt forward to attack Ibn Saud and his son Crown Prince Saud with daggers. Two of the attackers were killed during the ensuing struggle with Ibn Saud's bodyguards, a third died of his injuries an hour later. Before the third attacker died, however, he admitted to Saudi authorities that he and his two accomplices had intended to kill both Ibn Saud and the Crown Prince.⁷⁵

The investigation further disclosed that not only had there been no organized plot, but there had been no awareness of it of any kind on the part of the Imam's government, notwithstanding the fact that two of the attackers were members of the Yemeni armed forces. Imam Yahya immediately disclaimed any involvement, and indeed was one of the first to send a message to Ibn Saud deploring the assassination attempt and expressing his thanks and relief that Ibn Saud and the

Crown Prince were safe.⁷⁶

On 2nd April 1936, Yemen joined in a regional pact directed against Zionism in Palestine with Saudi Arabia and Iraq. This pact merits special note because it was unique in several respects : it was signed by the only states in the Arab world to have achieved their independence at that time; it covered manifold aspects of relations among the three countries, including criminal laws, political and economic matters, territorial conflicts, religions and cultural matters and military co-operation; and it included a forward-looking provision which permitted any Arab state gaining its independence in the future to become a party to the pact.⁷⁷

On 17th February 1948, Imam Yahya was assassinated outside Sanaa in a coup d'etat. Abdullah al-Wazir proclaimed himself the new Imam of the Yemen.⁷⁸ He asked Ibn Saud to recognize him as the legitimate ruler of Yemen. In keeping with his policies, which were aimed at stabilizing the Arabian Peninsula while repudiating violence and upholding agreements, Ibn Saud was horrified at the murder of a fellow monarch and the takeover and eschewed Abdullah al-Wazir's request for recognition. Yahya's son Ahmad, with Saudi support, swept out of the northern mountains, deposed al-Wazir and sacked Sanaa. As a sign of appreciation for Ibn Saud's support, Imam Ahmed thereafter aligned himself politically with Saudi Arabia in foreign policy matters.⁷⁹

It should be noted that the 1948 coup in Yemen, the first to take place in the Arab world after the Second World War, failed largely because of the revulsion caused by the murder of Yahya and the general sympathy with Ahmed.

However, Imam Ahmed continued to support the foreign policy initiatives of Saudi Arabia until Ibn Saud's death in 1953.⁸⁰ Unlike the 1948 coup d'etat, the 1955 coup attempt was largely a family affair. Rather than replace the Imamate system, the plotters sought to have Ahmed, the ruling Imam, step down in favour of his brother Abdullah.⁸¹ Imam Ahmad's son Crown Prince Mohammad al-Badr, sent a delegation to Saudi Arabia requesting military assistance in his attempt to unseat Abdullah. King Saud quickly agreed to help al-Badr, but before the Saudi monarch was able to carry out his promise, Imam Ahmad himself had regained his throne.⁸²

Saudi-Yemeni relations continued to improve during 1956 and 1957. Imam Ahmad travelled to Saudi Arabia in April 1956 for the first time, the first Yemeni Imam to visit the Saudi Kingdom, and be met by King Saud in Jeddah.⁸³ On the following day, they were joined by President Nasser of Egypt, and the three leaders then signed the Jeddah Military Pact.⁸⁴ Saudi Arabia and Yemen supported Arab causes, such as the Palestinian question, and condemned the 1956 tripartite attack on Egypt.⁸⁵

In 1956, Saudi Arabia's first ambassador to Yemen presented his credentials to Imam Ahmad.⁸⁶ Prior to that time, the two countries had conducted their relations through the exchange of ad hoc and temporary task/oriented missions on an issue-to-issue basis.

Although the divergent interests of Yemen and Saudi Arabia led Imam Ahmad to pursue an independent foreign policy line, the cordial relations between the two countries continued as before. These divergent interests were exemplified by Yemen's joining the 1958 union between Egypt and Syria, an action that Saudi Arabia did not support.⁸⁷ The Imam's new foreign policy direction, while not totally at odds with Saudi Arabia's, used previously untried channels to put an end to Yemen's isolationist stance and secure its interests in the world arena. In pursuit of these objectives, Imam Ahmad achieved a rapprochement with the Soviet Union and its allies, recognized the People's Republic of China and sought close ties with Nasser's Egypt.⁸⁸ Despite these moves, Saudi Arabia continued to co-ordinate itself politically with Yemen and to support the Imamate as the legitimate source of power in that country.⁸⁹

Imam Ahmad died in bed of natural causes on 19th September 1962. King Saud sent his brother Prince Fahd, then minister of education (the present King of Saudi Arabia), to head the Saudi delegation to North Yemen. This delegation, sent both to console the Hamid al-Din family of Yemen and to congratulate the new Imam, Ahmad's son

Mohammad al-Badr, represented direct Saudi recognition of the legitimacy of Imamate rule in Yemen. It was also intended as a statement of Saudi Arabia's continuing commitment to its agreements with Yemen, particularly the 1934 Taif Treaty and the 1956 Jeddah Military Pact.⁹⁰

The rule of Imam Mohammad al-Badr, lasted only eight days. On 26th September 1962, revolutionary tanks in Sanaa opened fire on al-Badr's palace.⁹¹ The revolutionaries seized Radio Sanaa and proclaimed a republic. Led by Colonel Abdullah al-Sallal, the insurgents began to systematically liquidate the ruling elements of the old regime, in particular the Sayyids.⁹²

On 29th September 1962, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) declared that it would respect the commitments and agreements which the defunct regime had concluded with other states, unless they were inconsistent with the country's independence and freedom.⁹³

When the Yemeni revolution took place, Saudi Crown Prince Faisal was attending the Annual Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly.⁹⁴ When asked about the Yemeni "domestic affair" he said Saudi had nothing to do with it.⁹⁵

Despite Saudi Arabia's initial neutrality vis-a-vis the revolution in North Yemen, the new republican regime in Sanaa, relying largely

on Egyptian military support, began to express hostile attitudes towards Saudi Arabia.⁹⁶ Instead of encouraging Saudi neutrality, let alone seeking its backing and support, Yemen Arab Republic President Abdullah al-Sallal launched a hostile campaign against Saudi Arabia. To wit, in October 1962, al-Sallal publicly announced his intention to extend a "republican form of government" to the entire Arabian Peninsula.⁹⁷

Moreover, on 5th October 1962, Abd al-Rhman al-Baydani, Deputy Prime Minister of the YAR, called the Saudi Charge d'affaires in Sanaa and instructed him to leave the country.⁹⁸ In the meantime, he ordered the closure of the Yemeni Legation in Saudi Arabia. In a speech on 6th October 1962, al-Baydani clearly expressed his antagonistic attitude:

We have taken all measures to move the battle to the Saudi territory and to Riyadh itself, if necessary. This is not for local consumption or propaganda. In the name of the government of the Yemen Arab Republic and in the name of the Yemeni people, I declare the acceptance of the Saudi challenge. We shall wait for it to begin.⁹⁹

Prince Hassan, Imam Mohammad al-Badr's uncle arrived in Jeddah on 30th September 1962, from New York, and proclaimed himself as the

new Imam of Yemen, and called for support.¹⁰⁰ Saudi acceptance of his presence showed that he had their backing and this took the practical form of gifts of arms and money. By 8th October 1962, a royalist radio station was operating from Saudi territory and three days later came the first report of arms reaching royalist tribesmen through the Sharif of Bayhan who, according to al-Sallal, received five million shillings from Riyadh for the purpose of fighting the new republican regime.¹⁰¹

On 10th October 1962, Imam Mohammad al-Badr, who was believed dead by the republican regime in Sanaa, appeared and announced his plans to counter the republican regime in Sanaa and regain his throne. Consequently, Prince Hassan renounced his claim to the Imamate and joined his efforts with Imam al-Badr, who proceeded to the Yemeni-Saudi border and sent a message to King Saud asking for more assistance.¹⁰²

However, on 27th November 1962, Faisal rejected President Kennedy's proposal to cease all assistance to the royalist forces. According to sources close to Faisal, the reason for this rejection were (1) that Saudi Arabia considered the Imam and his government the legal rulers of Yemen; (2) that a majority of the Yemeni people still supported the Imam and his government; and (3) that it was likely, indeed probable, that the Imam and his royalists would be able to defeat the republican forces before the end of 1962.¹⁰³

On 29th November 1962, President al-Sallal had publicly threatened to march his forces into Saudi Arabia as well as to recover Jizan, Najran and the province of Asir in the south western part of Saudi Arabia as it belonged to Yemen and should be returned to Yemen proper.¹⁰⁴ Also, al-Sallal asked a prominent Saudi Arabian refugee to form a government in exile.¹⁰⁵

Riyadh refused to recognize the republican regime in Sanaa.¹⁰⁶ And Faisal dropped six ministers who had suggested that the al-Sallal regime should be recognized.¹⁰⁷ However, on 20th December 1962, Radio Sanaa announced that the Yemeni republic possessed modern rockets with it intended to use against the royal palaces of Saudi Arabia, and indicated that Egyptian assurance of continued support had buoyed the confidence of the al-Sallal regime.¹⁰⁸

The Saudi Arabian role in the Yemen conflict came as a result of the establishment of a republican regime in Sanaa and as a consequence of Egyptian intervention.¹⁰⁹ Saudi involvement was essentially defensive and conservative.¹¹⁰ The Saudi government adopted a three-pronged policy intended to ensure its security from the potentially dangerous events in North Yemen : to have the United States formally declare its support of Saudi integrity, to develop the capability of the Yemeni royalist forces so that the royalists would be able to keep both the United Arab Republic (UAR) and Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) forces engaged in Yemen and away from Saudi

territory, and to remove the threat of YAR forces from the Arabian Peninsula. The interests of the royalists were consistently subordinated to the third objective.¹¹¹

It was estimated that until March 1963, the royalists had received about \$15 million in aid from Saudi Arabia.¹¹² However, on 2nd April 1965, ex-King Saud visited the Yemen himself, accompanied by the Egyptian Vice President Amer. He was welcomed by the YAR President al-Sallal, who greeted him as the legal King of Saudi Arabia. Saud replied that he recognized the Yemeni Republican Government on behalf of his subjects, and at a mass meeting on 24th April, he expressed hopes for a republican victory. Saudi, who presented \$1 million to the republican government, said that he had left his country to avoid bloodshed, but that the continued presence of British and American mercenaries was forcing him to reconsider the situation.¹¹³

Throughout the Yemen crisis, Saudi Arabia insisted on implementing the principle of "self determination" by the Yemeni people. When King Faisal was interviewed by Salim Habaji, the al-Hayat correspondent from Beirut, regarding the settlement for Yemen in November 1964, the following exchange occurred:

Habaji : And what if you were asked to put forward
a basis for a settlement?

Faisal : I would say exactly the same thing, namely, that the Yemeni people alone have the right to determine their destiny and choose the type of government and rulers they want.¹¹⁴

When Egypt withdrew from North Yemen in 1967,¹¹⁵ Saudi Arabia lost interest in the Yemeni royalists. They had supported the royalists in opposition to the Egyptian presence and in opposition to the radicalism of the republican regime under al-Sallal. When, however, the Egyptian forces were withdrawn and al-Sallal was overthrown on 5th November 1967, while on a visit to the Soviet Union, a new, moderate government emerged under the leadership of Quadi Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani.¹¹⁶ Unlike al-Sallal, the new Yemeni leadership was willing to accept the terms of the Khartoum agreement between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The new YAR leadership also accepted, under the banner of "national reconciliation", the participation of some Yemeni royalists in the republican government.¹¹⁷

Hope of ending the civil war was destroyed on 10th January 1968, when the royalists launched an all out assault on Sanaa which nearly succeeded. The republicans rallied their forces with the assistance of the Soviet Union, which succeeded in lifting the siege, although the main Sanaa-Taez road remained cut off by the royalists.¹¹⁸ King Faisal resumed aid to the royalists in a reaction to the intervention of the Soviet Union but he realised that to continue it

would accentuate the republican's dependence upon them.¹¹⁹ However, Saudi support of the royalists in 1968 and 1969 was rather small in comparison with the days when Egypt had had its forces in North Yemen.

On 13th February 1969, Saudi Arabia had worked to bring an end to the moderate al-Iryani government to restore the Imamate because it symbolized the new ideology-modernity, Arab unity, and social progress. However, when it became evident that the al-Iryani government had no formulated ideology Saudi objectives were altered.¹²⁰ On 25th November 1969, Saudi opposition to the republic was shelved in favour of sustaining a weak republican government in Sanaa. Such a policy aimed at fostering the historical animosity between the tribes and the central government by carefully keeping the two parties equal in strength. Saudi funds were made available to both the republican government and to the tribes. Each faction, therefore, became dependent upon Saudi money for its existence.¹²¹

The establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was viewed by Saudi Arabia as the creation of a communist regime. The formation of a communist state in the Arabian Peninsula could not be tolerated by traditionalist Saudi Arabia.¹²² It became imperative to the Saudi government to improve its relationship with the republican regime in Sanaa in order to develop unity of action in opposing the PDRY regime in the south. The

Saudis feared that continual opposition to the republicans in Sanaa might influence the North Yemeni regime to move closer to the south in an attempt to form a unified front hostile to the Saudi government.¹²³

Thus, in early 1970, King Faisal met with representatives of the Yemeni royalists and encouraged them to negotiate with the republican prime minister Mushin al-Iayni, to discuss a reconciliation government.¹²⁴ The "Islamic Conference" of foreign ministers which met in Jeddah during 23rd to 26th March 1970, and was attended by a Yemeni republican delegation led by the prime minister, provided the opportunity for such a meeting.¹²⁵ After the conference ended, both republican and royalist Yemeni factions began their negotiations with Saudi Arabia, which served as host as well as an observer.

However, reconciliation depended upon the satisfactory resolution of two specific issues, namely, the future of Yemen and the role of the royal family. The republicans insisted on a Jumhuriya (republic), while the royalists pressed for the designation of Dawla (state). The issue was resolved with the Saudi concurrence, when the Yemeni royalists accepted President Nasser's appeal to retain the name of the republic. The second issue was resolved when the Imam Mohammad al-Badr granted his permission to his royalists to make their own decisions. He also absolved them of their allegiance to him. Al-

Badr then left Jeddah for exile in Britain.¹²⁶

In May 1970, agreement reached between the republicans and the royalists stressed the principle of national unity.¹²⁷ According to the agreement, on 23rd May 1970, in the first Saudi aircraft to reach Sanaa since the 1962 revolution, there returned a large group of royalists headed by Ahmad al-Shami, who served as a foreign minister in the royalists' government in exile. He was made a member of the Republican Council, while some of his colleagues joined the Cabinet.¹²⁸

The May 1970 agreement was preceded by Saudi recognition of the Yemeni republican regime on 8th April 1970, which demonstrated to both sides the Saudi position in favour of the reconciliation.¹²⁹ In July 1970, diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Yemen Arab Republic were restored.¹³⁰ Thus, the reconciliation agreement reached by the republicans and royalists, and the Saudi recognition of the republican regime in Sanaa ended eight years (1962-1970) of bloody civil war in North Yemen.¹³¹

However, Saudi involvement in North Yemen was an attempt to reinstate the ancient regime by massive doses of financial and military assistance. As such, the Saudi role must be considered as intervention. It is true that the Saudi regime did not send

military personnel into Yemen, but it did allow the royalists to use its territory as a sanctuary. Saudi help to the royalists was undertaken not only to influence political and military events in Yemen, but also to give the royalists credence in international affairs. But when the royalists cause became less credible, the Saudi shelved their commitment to the royalists for the sake of political rapprochement with the republican regime in Sanaa.¹³²

During the Civil War in North Yemen, Saudi policy had been conducted by Prince Sultan, minister of defence and aviation. Bypassing the Yemeni royalists, the Saudis frequently dealt directly with the Shaiks of the northern Yemeni tribes and paid them subsidies. These operations continued after the Yemeni national reconciliation and the resumption of Saudi relations with the Sanaa government, Shaikh Abdullah al-Ahmar and other influential chiefs being recruited to the lists of Saudi clients. At the same time, the Saudi government extended a modest amount of budget support to the YAR. This dual Saudi leverage was applied to encourage conservative, if not reactionary, politics on the part of the Yemeni government, to thwart the efforts of President Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani and other moderates to forge a national consensus by accommodation with leftist elements, and to prevent the relaxation of YAR opposition to the radical regime in South Yemen.¹³³

Having failed to overthrow the Marxist regime in the south, the

Saudi leaders had no choice but to bolster the regime in North Yemen against its southern neighbour. But the Saudis, fearing for their own security, have been reluctant to make North Yemen too strong. A strong regime in Sanaa might also become too independent, something which is likely to be at odds with Saudi policies elsewhere in the peninsula and beyond. Therefore, in order to keep North Yemen in line with Saudi Arabia's security requirement, the Saudi leaders combined their policy of strengthening the YAR regime with a policy of making it financially dependent on Riyadh. That course allowed them to apply political and military pressure on Sanaa, thus interfering in Yemen affairs.¹³⁴

In July 1970, the Saudis made their first grant of \$20 million and the two countries exchanged ambassadors.¹³⁵ Throughout 1971 and 1972 King Faisal continued his policy of making Sanaa increasingly dependent upon Saudi financial aid. In March 1971 there was a large consignment of military equipment and school buses, in April a printing press and in October two aircraft, these were followed the next year by \$1 million for hospital supplies and money to pay the salaries of 250 teachers. The tribal chiefs, without whose support the YAR could not survive, were given Saudi subsidies and there was a general belief that many of the leading ministers accepted bribes and that senior officers also received their shares.¹³⁶

In return, King Faisal demanded that a blind eye be turned to his

building up on North Yemen soil an "Army of National Unity" from amongst the numerous refugees who had fled from the south, who were maintained in camps awaiting his signal to move across the frontier.¹³⁷

An important part of the Saudi design to ensure the safety of the Kingdom's southern border is the goal of supplanting a long-established arms supply relationship between the YAR and the Soviet Union.¹³⁸ In 1972 a rift developed in YAR-Soviet relations because the Soviets dramatically increased quantitatively and upgraded qualitatively their arms supplies to South Yemen while reducing their military aid to North Yemen.¹³⁹ This provided the Saudis with an opportunity to prod Sanaa to switch to the West for arms. But because the Saudis are never sure how strong they want the YAR to be, it took them three years to make up their minds, and it was probably President Ibrahim al-Hamdi who forced their hands when he turned to the United States and France for an arms deal.¹⁴⁰

The failure of the Presidency Council led by the moderate Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani to cope with the country's political and economic difficulties led to a military coup in June 1974 headed by Colonel Ibrahim al-Hamdi.¹⁴¹ He seemed to be a strong, able, and popular man, capable of playing the roles of unifier of the YAR and balance of PDRY.¹⁴² After an initially disturbing start from the Saudi point of view, al-Hamdi corrected course in November 1974 by

reconvening the Consultative Assembly, in which their client tribes had a dominant voice.¹⁴³ In January 1975 al-Hamdi went further in appeasing Saudi sensibilities by dropping Prime Minister Mohasen al-Aini, who, as signer of the 1972 unity agreement with PDRY, was strongly disliked by Riyadh.¹⁴⁴ In Al-Aini's place al-Hamdi appointed Abd al-Aziz Abd al-Ghani, a pro-Saudi government.¹⁴⁵

Not surprisingly, President al-Hamdi's first trip abroad was to Saudi Arabia in July 1975, little more than three weeks after he assumed power. The primacy of relations with the Saudis was further underlined with Shaykh al-Ahmar led a delegation on an official visit to the Kingdom in August 1974. President al-Hamdi visited Saudi Arabia three times in 1975, in part no doubt to reassure the Saudi leaders that his actions against their tribal clients were not a prelude to a radical re-structuring of Yemeni politics¹⁴⁶ and in part to urge them to end their subsidies and other support to the tribalists and to fund the purchase of arms from the United States for the YAR armed forces.¹⁴⁷

In January 1975, al-Hamdi said YAR relations with Saudi Arabia were "at their zenith" and he won Saudi approval by setting up an office for Islamic Guidance with the brief of protecting the country against "imported ideologies which oppose Islamic teaching and traditions".¹⁴⁸ On 28th May 1975, one of the dismissed officers, Lt. Colonel Mujahed Abu Shawarib, tried to raise a tribal rebellion

in the northern areas but was put down. The Saudis were thus allowing al-Hamdi to use his developing connection with them to curtail the power of the tribes.¹⁴⁹

In August 1975, Riyadh promised the YAR \$100 million in budget support and \$360 million in development aid. Al-Hamdi announced that relations with the Soviet Union were "frozen".¹⁵⁰ He thus continued to use Riyadh support to weaken the tribes and to satisfy the nationalists in the YAR, and at the same time tried to balance his developing relationship with Saudi Arabia with the move to appease PDRY and to keep an opening to Moscow.¹⁵¹

In 1977 the Deputy Chairman of the Saudi development fund said that YAR "tops the most favoured countries list"¹⁵² and on 25th December 1975, a joint commission for economic co-operation was established, due to meet every six months in the alternate capitals with senior ministers presiding over discussions of foreign policy, education, information and agricultural matters. The first session produced \$373 million in aid, mostly for roads linking the two countries which also of course had strategic importance. There was also 50,000 tons of petroleum and \$180 million for a refinery.¹⁵³

Hand-in-hand with their financial assistance to the government in Sanaa, the Saudis have also continued over the years to subsidise the tribes, to an extent perhaps equivalent to the amount of funding

provided to the YAR government. These subsidies are viewed by Saudi officials as an essential effort to establish "a buffer zone of Saudi influence against some future central government in YAR which may seek to adopt anti-Saudi policies". The Saudi leadership believes that, so far, the power of the tribes as a counterforce to the central government has served them well and, accordingly, Riyadh will most probably maintain this policy, at least in the short term. Whether the Saudis may be overestimating the power of some of these tribes in relationship to the central government and the extent of the Saudis' influence over them is difficult to say.¹⁵⁴

However, it would seem on the whole that Saudi Arabia, through her two tier policy of making YAR financially dependent on her, has strengthened her influence in YAR affairs. Indeed, several analysts see the Saudis as having been responsible for the overthrow of several YAR leaders who became too independent or more closer to PDRY, for example, the removal of Abd al-Rahman al-Iryani from the presidency in 1974, and the dismissal of Muhsin al-Aini from the premiership in 1975.¹⁵⁵

The drama of higher diplomacy and international politics after 1975 served as a backdrop against which the YAR and Saudi Arabia dealt more routinely with matters that recurrently concerned and sometime divided them. On 11th April 1976, Saudi defence minister Prince Sultan, the prince in charge of Yemeni affairs, visited Sanaa and agreed to increase aid to the YAR.¹⁵⁶

In April 1976 President Ford announced that he would provide £140 million worth of weapons,¹⁵⁷ which had been paid for by Saudi Arabia. The American deal, however, was envisaged as the first 3-5 years of a more comprehensive 10-year modernization plan for the YAR armed forces. It was also hoped that once this modernization plan was completed, the re-equipped YAR armed forces would be modelled on the Saudi force structure in equipment and training. Once the implementation of the modernization plan began, however, the Saudis showed their ambivalence about strengthening the armed forces of their more populous neighbour to the south. First, they delayed making a firm commitment on which arms would be purchased, secondly, equipment had to be delivered through the Saudi military mission in Sanaa which phased the release of equipment to the Yemenis only after the Saudis were "satisfied that training and re-organisation schedules had been met", and thirdly, the Saudis insisted on administering the training of the YAR armed personnel.¹⁵⁸

In this way the Saudi authorities were able to exclude from training the YAR officers who had previously received training in the Soviet Union. It should be mentioned here that YAR policy has been to exclude Soviet trained personnel from important positions. In short, the whole experience was very frustrating to both Yemenis and the Americans and no doubt the former resented the Saudis' heavy

handedness throughout the whole affair.¹⁵⁹

For most of the remainder of 1976, Saudi relations with the YAR seemed to be on course even as al-Hamdi continued to tighten his hold on the country. In August 1976, the Saudi development fund gave the YAR \$86 million in loans and aid, and in October al-Hamdi paid a five day visit to Saudi Arabia. Toward the end of the year, however, al-Hamdi began to display a measure of independence in foreign policy that later taxed the limits of Saudi tolerance.¹⁶⁰

Throughout 1977, al-Hamdi used the thinly veiled threat of closer ties, if not unification, with PDRY to get the Saudis to do certain things and to refrain from doing others; for example, to maintain generous levels of aid to the government in Sanaa and to cut back support for the tribes.¹⁶¹ On 22nd March 1977, al-Hamdi convened a Summit Conference on Red Sea Security at Taiz, which was attended by the heads of state of PDRY, Somalia, and the Sudan in addition to himself.¹⁶² The Conference produced no practical results, but al-Hamdi's initiative produced mixed feelings among the Saudi leaders. In an interview given to al-Siyasah the following month, Crown Prince Fahd said that Saudi Arabia did not take part in the Conference because "we were not informed on this subject in advance" and because "we believe" that the objectives sought "on such sensitive subjects" and the balance of political gains and complications that might result from them needed to be discussed

"objectively and scientifically", implying that Saudi Arabia had done that but the participants in the Conference had not.¹⁶³

President al-Hamdi used his Red Sea initiative during the same period to give the YAR some leverage in its unequal relationship with Saudi Arabia. The Red Sea, a vital international waterway, albeit less so than prior to the closing of the Suez Canal in 1967, became the focus of renewed attention because of political changes triggered by the revolution in Ethiopia in 1974.¹⁶⁴

In May 1977 fights erupted between the northern tribes and the government's forces', Riyadh sought to mediate.¹⁶⁵ Al-Hamdi went to Riyadh on 23rd May 1977, his prime minister Abd al-Ghani in early June, and al-Hamdi again at the beginning of July. During the mediation process, tribal fighters estimated to number 40,000 occupied the towns of Khamir and S'ada and the surrounding area.¹⁶⁶ Saudi mediation achieved nothing.

Al-Hamdi continued to urge the Saudis to end their direct subsidies to the tribes and to channel aid for them through the central government.¹⁶⁷ In 1977, the Saudi leaders privately expressing alarm over al-Hamdi's stubbornness and impetuosity, concerns probably heightened by al-Hamdi's requests that they get Shaykh al-Ahmar out of the YAR so that his government might deal more freely with some of the more troublesome tribalists. Good feelings

generated by the conclusion of the triangular arms deals notwithstanding, the YAR was complaining to the United States by early 1977 that Saudi Arabia was delaying the delivery of arms under the agreement and was refusing to consider promptly requests for additional arms.¹⁶⁸ Nevertheless, the Saudi-supervised delivery of U.S. arms did begin and by the fall of 1977 was moving along in a manner more or less to the satisfaction of the three parties. The Yemenis continued to complain in private over Saudi foot-dragging on their request for more impressive additions to their arsenal. A joke circulating in Sanaa at the time had the Saudi's agreeing to the sale of tanks to the YAR only upon the intervention of a tank that could drive and shoot south but not north.¹⁶⁹

The Saudi-Yemeni Joint Co-ordinating Council met in 1977 in Sanaa, to which Saudi defence minister Sultan led a big ministerial delegation and on each occasion Saudi Arabia committed itself to a high level of budget subsidies and development aid.¹⁷⁰ On 20th October 1977, the YAR announced its five year plan, it relied heavily upon a Saudi promise of \$571 million spread over the period.¹⁷¹ However annoyed or dissatisfied the Saudi leaders may have been with al-Hamdi, they apparently concluded that it was not in their interest to cut their aid and to lessen whatever leverage they had over him and his government. On their part, al-Hamdi and his colleagues acted with some restraint, but were not yet

prepared to bite the hand that fed them.¹⁷²

On the 11th October 1977, President al-Hamdi and his soldier brother, Abdullah, were shot dead and left in a private house on the outskirts of Sanaa. The killers were not apprehended, and this act marked a turning point in the affairs of the YAR and its neighbours.¹⁷³

A statement by the Saudi government issued on 11th October, condemned the assassination¹⁷⁴ and called upon the Yemeni people to rally around their new leadership. Al-Hamdi's short lived successor, Colonel Ahmed al-Ghashmi, followed a strong pro-Saudi orientation and which the Saudis reciprocated with all out support for him helped to establish and perpetuate that nation.¹⁷⁵

On 15th October 1977, Saudi deputy minister of defence Prince Turki appeared unannounced in Sanaa to see the new President al-Ghashmi, and handed him a letter from King Khalid. On 24th December of that year the Saudis committed \$570 million toward the YAR's \$3.5 billion five-year development plan, which had started in 1967.¹⁷⁶

As al-Ghashmi had been reputed to be the Saudis' man in the al-Hamdi government, relations between the client YAR and its Saudi patron were not regarded at the outset as problematic. In fact, the al-

Ghashmi government was caught by nationalist sentiments and other political considerations squarely between the PDRY and Saudi Arabia. The new and very suspect government in Sanaa had to convince the radicals in Aden and their North Yemeni comrades that it was not about to hand the YAR over to the tribalists and Saudi Arabia¹⁷⁷ and at the same time that it had to convince the Saudis that it intended to accommodate the tribalists and to be more responsive than al-Hamdi had been to Saudi security and strategic concerns. Although more patient with al-Ghashmi than with al-Hamdi, the Saudis quickly came to question the new head of state's loyalty and competence. Indeed, they were beginning to have second thoughts by the spring of 1978 as to whether the cure of al-Ghashmi was better than the disease of al-Hamdi.¹⁷⁸

However, on 22nd January 1978, Saudi Arabia gave the YAR \$400 million aid for development.¹⁷⁹ And a high-ranking Saudi delegation had spent four days in Sanaa from the tenth to the thirteenth of February 1978, amid speculation that a Saudi-YAR defence pact was to be concluded soon.¹⁸⁰ In 1978 it was calculated that one million Yemeni citizens worked in Saudi Arabia, and sent home more than \$1,5000 million. The greatest part of the country's foreign exchange.¹⁸¹

The al-Ghashmi interlude ended only eight months after it began with the bang of a bomb that killed President al-Ghashmi in his office on

24th June 1978.¹⁸² Killed with him was a man who only moments before had arrived with a briefcase, a man assumed at the time to be personal emissary of the PDRY head of state, Chairman Salim Rubaya Ali. Apparently, unbeknown to the emissary, the briefcase he carried was booby-trapped.¹⁸³ Again a statement by the Saudi government issued that day condemned the killing and held the PDRY responsible.¹⁸⁴ On 15th July, less than a month after the assassination, Lieutenant Colonel Ali Abdullah Salih was elected President and Commander in Chief by the People's Constituent Assembly.¹⁸⁵

However, the Saudi government welcomed the election of Abdullah Salih as the YAR President and hoped that the government of the new President would continue the good relations that existed between the two countries.¹⁸⁶

Many observers in late 1978 thought that President Salih's background and connections made him a natural ally of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the coup attempt in October 1978 convinced many that the vulnerable Salih, if he were to survive, had no place to go other than deeper into the arms of the Saudis.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, Salih appointed Abdullah al-Asnaj long time adviser to Yemeni Presidents, close friend of the Saudis, and bitter enemy of the Marxist rulers of his native PDRY, foreign minister. Mohammad Khamis, another Yemeni with strong Saudi ties, remained head of the powerful and feared Central Organization of National Security, a post he had held

under three Presidents since 1975.¹⁸⁸

In September 1978, the Carter administration followed its predecessor's policy towards YAR and approved an additional arms sale of approximately \$400 million, which was also financed by Saudi Arabia.¹⁸⁹ The first consignment of this equipment had to be rushed to the YAR when the war of February 1979 broke out between the two Yemens.¹⁹⁰ During the fighting of February, while the troops of YAR were reeling backwards, the Saudis, despite their previous promises of support and their mobilization, provided the YAR with no effective assistance. It was left to Syria and Iraq to save the YAR from utter rout by bringing pressure to bear on the PDRY.¹⁹¹ President Salih resented this lack of help on the part of the Saudis and wished to lessen his dependence upon Saudi Arabia by acquiring more friends.

The first phase, lasting from March 1979 until the end of the year, was characterized by mounting strain between Saudi Arabia and the YAR.¹⁹² In the summer of 1979 there were accounts of clashes between Saudi and Yemeni forces and in November the National Democratic Front (NDF) radio reported encroachments in the neighbourhood of Sada and in the Jauf. Salih said in February that relations between the two countries were "excellent and ideal", but in March there were stories of further fighting. It was said that 200 Yemeni soldiers had been killed, and while this figure is

probably a substantial exaggeration, it did show that there must have been some trouble in the area.¹⁹³

The further strain between Saudi Arabia and the YAR was triggered by a familiar mechanism. President Salih agreed to a union with the PDRY, and tried to reach an accommodation with the radical, anti-Saudi NDF.¹⁹⁴ The Saudis, resenting Salih's attempt to conciliate their enemies so soon after they had helped him in the war against the PDRY and NDF, and fearing the assertion of central government control over the northern tribes, their ultimate source of leverage over Yemeni affairs, sought to constrain his power.¹⁹⁵

The Saudis therefore restricted the supply of American arms to the YAR that they had paid for in September 1978.¹⁹⁶ The Saudis were again ambivalent about building up the YAR military capacity, reverted to delaying tactics, and withheld the delivery of the military equipment.

The Saudis heavy-handed dealings with the YAR during the crisis period were almost as damaging and humiliating to President Salih as the army's poor showing in the fight with the PDRY. Under strong domestic political pressure, Salih needed to shore up his position quickly with the military and with other nationalistic elements in the country. The surest way to do this was to stand up to the

Saudis by turning to the Soviet Union for arms, even if this cost him the support of some tribal leaders and conservatives.¹⁹⁷

Therefore, Salih renewed his country's long-standing military relationship with the Soviets. Moscow's response was equally swift and generous, as indicated by the large amount of arms provided to the YAR since then. Between 1979 and 1981 alone, the Soviet Union provided the YAR on easy credit terms with some \$600 million worth of major military equipment. Moreover, YAR leaders have always felt that, while the Soviet Union has provided considerable military assistance, it has not tried to dominate their country. They also view YAR relations with the USSR as a counterbalance to Saudi influence in their country.¹⁹⁸

On 21st June 1979, relations between Saudi Arabia and the YAR became so frigid that the Saudis suspended all economic aid to bring Salih's government to heel.¹⁹⁹ However, many Yemenis were angered by Saudi Arabia's deep involvement in the tribally-based "Islamic Front", regarding it as another instance of Saudi meddling in Yemeni affairs.²⁰⁰

President Salih dismissed his Chief of Security on 5th January 1980, who for years had earned Saudi approval by his activities in this important post, and this seemed a further move to the left.²⁰¹ A few months later he increased Saudi displeasure by flirting with the

so-called Steadfastness Front, the grouping of Arab states that were most pro-Soviet Union and anti-United States.²⁰²

On 12th January 1980, the Yemeni Prime Minister headed a delegation to Riyadh that unsuccessfully tried to persuade the Saudis to restore their financial aid. According to press reports, the Saudis demanded that the YAR break its military relations with the Soviet Union, ease out the Soviet experts, and denounce the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In an interview in al-Watan al-Arabi of 18th January 1980, Crown Prince Fahd declared that co-operation between the YAR and the USSR had been blown up out of all proportion and asserted that Saudi Arabia and the YAR enjoyed "complete understanding on all matters of common interests".²⁰³

However, the Saudis reached an understanding with President Salih on 18th March 1980, that ended the confrontation with him and led to the resumption of Saudi financial assistance to the YAR.²⁰⁴

According to Saudi sources, the YAR agreed to remove the Soviet advisers, and to renounce the plans to bring the NDF into the government. While Saudi Arabia agreed to provide substitute advisers and instructors to train the Yemeni army in the use of the Soviet weapons, and to resume the supply of American weapons under Saudi auspices. YAR sources claimed that the understanding involved only acceptance of the "principle" of phasing out Soviet advisers,

and reassurance by the YAR that it was not drifting away from non-alignment toward a Soviet orientated alliance with PDRY.²⁰⁵

The Saudis sent their minister of defence to Sanaa on 13th May 1980, to follow up on the 18th March understanding with YAR.²⁰⁶ Salih saw that he could not afford to push matters too far and on 21st August 1980, he went to Riyadh. Both Salih and the Saudis claimed to have achieved "full understanding on all matters" concerning their countries.²⁰⁷ On 15th November 1980, unlike the Steadfastness Front, Salih did not boycott the Arab Summit in Amman and his newly appointed Prime Minister Abd al-Karim al-iryani, was regarded as pro-Saudi.²⁰⁸

However, on 25th March 1981, there were further accounts of frontier clashes between Saudi Arabia and the YAR, in which it was said that over a score of soldiers had been killed. But both sides denied that there had been any incidents. The Saudi Minister of Interior Prince Nayf said that relations were "above suspicion". On 15th April 1980, the Saudi-Yemeni Co-ordination Committee resumed its meetings in a reported atmosphere of "great fraternity", denounced any interference in the affairs of the Arabian Peninsula by external forces and ended with promises of considerable Saudi aid for development.²⁰⁹

The keystone of the Salih government's development diplomacy was continued generous project funding as well as budgetary support from Saudi Arabia, the YAR's biggest and only irreplaceable benefactor. The securing of this kind of Saudi commitment that would reassure lesser donors required that the Salih regime mend relations frayed over the previous two years, and this crucial task was also begun before the end of 1981. President Salih headed a large delegation to Saudi Arabia in early November, the YAR foreign minister was there for talks in the middle of the month, as was chief of staff in December.²¹⁰

In early 1982, the YAR made the point of publicly announcing that Prince Sultan, the Saudi defence minister, long responsible for Yemeni affairs, had been personally invited to the development conference in early March, President Salih paid another visit to Saudi Arabia. On 7th April 1982, ten days before the scheduled opening of the conference, Prince Sultan led a large ministerial delegation to Sanaa. Statements after the visit indicated that the Saudis were prepared to support the second five-year plan at a high level of funding. The keystone of the YAR's development diplomacy in place.²¹¹

V Conclusion

The Wahhabi State established by Ibn Saud in 1926 had laid claim to the whole peninsula and had always tried to intervene in other states, except where blocked by their main rivals, the British. In 1934 the Saudis had defeated the Imam of the Yemen in a full-scale war in which they had laid the basis for deep resentment by annexing the three provinces. In the internal North Yemeni crises of 1948 and 1955 the Saudis had intervened to save the Hamid al-Din family from domestic threats.

When the September 1962 revolution occurred in North Yemen it did not take long for the Saudis to reactivate their interventionist campaign, and throughout the civil war they provided the main logistical, financial and material support to the Imam's royalists. This Saudi support was not based on any specific love for the Imam, but rather on a fear of the threat that the YAR posed to stability inside Saudi Arabia. Hence in 1970, when it was clear that a subsidized republic could be no threat, the Saudis abandoned the Imam and his family.²¹²

Saudi support of the Hamid al-Din during the Yemeni civil war aroused mistrust and resentment on both sides which survived the peace and created residual tension in Saudi dealings with Yemen after the war. Although Saudi Arabia provided an annual

contribution to the YAR budget, it was made painfully clear that this money might be withheld if Yemeni policies displeased the donor. Successive governments under al-Iryani's presidency were careful to avoid serious provocation, but none succeeded in reaching a cordial, frank basis of Yemeni-Saudi co-operation. The Saudi practice of paying Yemenis to press its views on the government was a continuing irritant.²¹³

To allay Saudi fears YAR leaders have found it necessary every time there is a change in leadership in Sanaa - to rush to Riyadh and reaffirm the continuation of "eternal" and "historical" relations between the two countries that are based on "good neighbourliness and blood ties". These are code-words that reassure the Saudis that the YAR will continue to respect the 1934 Taif treaty. Moreover, in 1974 Saudi Arabia obliged the Yemeni Prime Minister Abd al-Rahman al-Hajri to sign an agreement renewing the 1934 treaty but this agreement was never ratified because of the strong opposition it engendered from all political strata in North Yemen.²¹⁴

Yemen Arab Republic is of major importance to Saudi Arabia and indeed to the entire Arabian Peninsula. Maintaining peace, stability and deterring Soviet influence in North Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula has been and will remain a preeminent Saudi priority. In the meantime, Saudi policy has aimed at narrowing the gap of mutual understanding between itself and North Yemen through

pragmatic political policies and generous foreign aid programs.²¹⁵

Saudi Arabia's foreign policy has been highly consistent, the hallmark of North Yemen's foreign policy has been its gross inconsistency. Frequent and often violent government changes in North Yemen have left the country without a well-known and well-defined foreign policy.²¹⁶ At the same time, North Yemen's attempt to play East against West has created difficulties in its relations with Saudi Arabia.

Since YAR remains vulnerable to external political, economic, and ideological pressures because of its economic and social needs, Saudi Arabia would likely welcome increased Yemeni dependence on Saudi financial and developmental aid. Such increased Saudi dependence would replace aid coming from ideological oriented countries, such as the Soviet Union and Red China. Such a development would be a major victory for Saudi regional strategy and would enhance the Saudi led Arab moderation throughout the Arab world. In sum, North Yemen fits deeply and strongly into Saudi regional strategy and is highly regarded by Saudi decision-makers.

YAR fits into Saudi Arabia's Islamic strategy because it embodies an Islamic state by virtue of its culture, traditions and population. As such, Saudi Arabia considers North Yemen to be an important component of its strategy and a country which should act as a good

Islamic role model for the rest of the world. In this respect, Saudi Arabia has not been disappointed in North Yemen. Islamic law and Islamic judiciary systems are preserved by North Yemen, as is Islamic education. These undertakings by North Yemen are made easier because, as a Muslim country, North Yemen has received Saudi financial aid allocated to Islamic nations. Thus, by actively promoting Islamic values, North Yemen has made an important contribution to advancing Saudi policies in the Islamic world. Saudi Arabia, in turn, appreciates the value of North Yemen support and hopes for its continued implementation.

Footnotes

- 1 Fouad al-Farsy, Saudi Arabia : A Case Study in Development, London: Stacey International, 1980, p. 91.
- 2 William B. Quandt, Saudi Arabia in the 1980's : Foreign Policy, Security and Oil, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1981, p. 10.
- 3 There are approximately 500,000 North Yemenis working in Saudi Arabia and about 150,000 in various other Arab Gulf States.
- 4 See Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Yemens, first ed., Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, p. 164.
- 5 Peter Mansfield, The Middle East : A Political and Economic Survey, Fifth ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980, p. 132.
- 6 Ibid., p. 133.
- 7 For more information, see Tareq Y. Ismael, Government and Politics of the Contemporary Middle East, Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1970, pp. 381-382, and Mohamuad Kamal, Al-Yemen Shamallh Wa Jnobah, [Al-Yemen North and South], Beirut: Dar al-Ilm Lil-Maliyin, 1986, pp. 24-30.

- 8 See David McClintock, The Yemen Arab Republic, in The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa, David E. Long and Bernard Reich eds., Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press 1980, pp. 168-169, and also see S. H. Amin, Law and Justice in Contemporary Yemen: People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Yemen Arab Republic, Glasgow: Royston Ltd., 1987, pp. 49-50.
- 9 Peter Mansfield, The Middle East : A Political and Economic Survey, Fifth ed., p. 134.
- 10 See George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, Fourth ed., Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1980, p. 613.
- 11 Tareq Y. Ismael, Government and Politics of the Contemporary Middle East, p. 389.
- 12 During 1907 and 1908, Mohammad Ali al-Idrissi of Asir revolted against the Turkish nominal authority and established the Idrissi Dynasty of Asir.
- 13 For further information, see Sir R. Vansittart (for the Secretary of State) to Sir R. Graham (Rome), Foreign Office, 24th July 1933. No. 181, K. Bourne and D. C. Watt (eds.), British Documents on Foreign Affairs : Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part II, Series B. Vol. 9, (R. Bidwell ed.), Doc. 7,

pp. 42-43; and also see Sir John Simon to Mr. Calvert (Jeddah), Foreign Office, 27th July 1933. No. 196, British Documents on Foreign Affairs : Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part II, Ibid., Doc. 9, pp. 43-46.

- 14 For more information concerning the situation in Asir during 1925 and 1926 and the internal struggle for power, see Armstrong, H.C. Lord of Arabia, Beirut: St. Paul's Press, 1964, p. 203. See also Amin Said, Al-Yemen : A Political History, Vol. 2, Cairo: Dar Ahiya al-Kutub al-Arabiyyah, 1959, pp. 180-190. And Toynbee, Arnold, Survey of International Affairs, Vol. 1, London: Oxford University Press, 1927, pp. 321-323.
- 15 See Yahya Khalil, Tarikh al-Mamlakah al-Arabiyyah al-Saudiyyah, al-Mady wa al-Hader, [History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia : Past and Present], Beirut: Dar Maktubt al-Hayah, Vol. 2, 1970, pp. 189-193.
- 16 For the original Arabic text of the Mecca Agreement of 1926 see Majmuat al-Muahadat, Vol. 1, pp. 23-24. The English translation is found in J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East : A Documentary Record 1914-1956, Vol. 2, Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand and Co. Inc., 1956, pp. 148-149; and also found in K. Bourne and D. C. Watt (eds.), British Documents on Foreign Affairs : Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print, Part II, Series B, Vol. 5, (R. Bidwell ed.), Doc. 304, [E392/22/91], pp. 266-267.

- 17 In addition to the surrendering of its external affairs to Saudi Arabia, the Asiri Consultative Assembly decided in March 1932 to relinquish the administration of the country in favour of Saudi Arabia. See al-Rashid, Ibrahim (ed.), Documents on the History of Saudi Arabia, Vol. 3, Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1976, pp. 162-163.
- 18 For further details concerning the Saudi mission to Imam Yahya and the Yemeni stands concerning Asir and the Saudi-Asiri Treaty see Amin Said, Al-Yemen : A Political History, pp. 79-81.
- 19 See al-Rashid, Ibrahim (ed.), Documents on the History of Saudi Arabia, Vol. 3, pp. 159-160.
- 20 Various interpretations have been offered to explain the Asiri revolt. The most commonly cited are :
 1. The cessation of the Saudi's financial aid to Amir Hassan for a period of six months.
 2. The personal animosity that arose between Hassan al-Idrissis and the Saudi governor of Asir.
 3. The dissatisfaction of the Idrissis over the annexation of Asir by Saudi Arabia. [This interpretation is erroneous because the incorporation of Asir into Saudi Arabia did not take place until after the Asiri revolt in 1932.]

The combined effect of the first two factors may have had an effect on the Asiri uprising. Some other external factors, however, may have had a more profound and important impact. Among the most important external factors (which could be the subject of a separate study) we may enumerate the following :

1. The Italian government's interest in extending its influence to the Red Sea area during the early 1920's and Mussolini's efforts and policies aimed at raising his country's status to that of a major power.
2. The Italian-Yemeni connection and the two countries' mutual interests as reflected in the 1926 Italian-Yemeni Treaty of Amity and Commerce and the 1927 "Secret Agreement". The agreement dealt mainly with supply of Italian armaments and munitions to Imam Yahya to enable him to implement his territorial expansionist ambitions in Asir and to face the Saudi challenge there while Asir was a Saudi protectorate.
3. The refusal of Saudi Arabia to grant oil concessions to Italy on Farsan Island (at the time of the Italian request Farsan was a part of the Idrissi territories), and to build a military base there. As a means to pressure Saudi Arabia, Italy encouraged the revolt and supplied the Idrissis with arms and munitions.

For further information concerning the various interpretations, see

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- 209 Ibid., and Middle East Economic Digest (MEED), 15th April, 1981, and Al-Majalh, 23rd April 1981, (Jeddah).
- 210 See Robert D. Burrowes, The Yemen Arab Republic : The Politics of Development 1962-1986, p. 122.

- 211 Ibid., and also for more information, see Al-Jmohoryyah al-Arabiyyal al-Yamanyyah, Al-Moutamar al-Am : Mafahyim Min al-Mytaq al-Watani, [The Yemen Arab Republic : The National Communique], Sanaa, 1984.
- 212 For more information, see George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, 4th ed., pp. 614-615, and Fred Halliday, Arabia Without Sultans, p. 138.
- 213 See Robert W. Stookey, Yemen : The Politics of the Yemen Arab Republic, p. 276.
- 214 M. S. El Azhary, Aspects of North Yemens Relations with Saudi Arabia in Contemporary Yemen : Politics and Historical Background, B. R. Pridham (ed.), p. 196, and The Middle East, January 1981.
- 215 See Margarita Dobert, "Development of Aid Programs to Yemen", American-Arab Affairs, No. 8, Spring 1984, p. 115.
- 216 For more information, see Robert W. Stookey, Yemen : The Politics of the Yemen Arab Republic, pp. 275-276.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SAUDI ARABIA AND THE ARAB LEAGUE

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I History of the Arab League

The following is an account of the historical development of the Arab League. It includes brief outlines of the "Fertile Crescent Scheme" and the "Greater Syria Plan", both of which preceded the establishment of the Arab League. The League's creation, including the roles of Egypt and Great Britain, is described, as are its structure and organization, and its relations with the United States.

Proposals for Arab Unity

In the years before the 1945 formation of the Arab League, a number of proposals for Arab unity were put forward by various interested parties.¹ However, a brief history of these plans clarifies their importance relative to one another and to the form of the Arab League when it was adopted.

As early as World War I, Great Britain made promises of independence and unity for the Arabs, but these promises proved false. Over two decades later, on 29th May 1941, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Anthony Eden, gave his "Mansion House" speech, declaring his support for the establishment of an Arab union. Eden repeated his support for an Arab union in a statement made public on 24th February, 1943.

Eden's announcement was well received later on by the Arabs, who quickly acted upon it. Nuri al-Said, Prime Minister of Iraq, and Emir Abdullah of Transjordan were the first Arab rulers to propose schemes for Arab unity. Both projects failed. Their failure was largely due to strong opposition from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria. The "Fertile Crescent Scheme" did provide a basis upon which the Arab League was finally established in 1945, but the League was "not as Nuri al-Said had at first envisioned it, but (was formed) on a more general and looser pattern, and with Egypt taking the lead."²

In August 1943, Mustafa Nahhas, Prime Minister of Egypt, invited all Arab countries to participate in a general Arab Conference in Cairo. The purpose of such a meeting was to be a discussion of the future union of Arab states. The conference took place in Alexandria during the Autumn of 1944. It was attended by the Prime Ministers of Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Transjordan; representatives of the Palestinians, Saudi Arabia and Yemen also were present. Nahhas met separately with each delegation to discuss Arab unity and close co-operation between the Arab states. This unity and co-operation among the Arab people was intended to extend to economic, political, cultural and social affairs.³

The idea of an Arab federation with a central government was rejected by all participants except Syria.⁴ That nation alone expressed interest in a central government, claiming willingness to

surrender her independence and sovereignty for the achievements of an Arab federation. Sentiments for a united Arab state ran high among Syrians, who typically regarded Al-Sham (Damascus) as the centre of the Arab nations. The Syrian delegate quoted President Shukri al-Quwatli's statement that "Syria will refuse to have raised in her sky any flag higher than her own, save that of an Arab union".⁵

The other Arab states raised a variety of objections. Lebanon was concerned about her independence and her religious minorities. Due to lack of support by her politicians and intellectuals, Egypt had ruled out any practical consideration of unity with other Arab states. King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia favoured economic co-operation with full sovereignty retained by each member state. Most of the Arab countries participating in the conference were not fully independent, but still under the control and influence of France and Britain; those which were independent refused to sacrifice their recently achieved sovereignty. The Arab delegates, in any case, were able to agree upon one specific plan for political organization.⁶

The Preparatory Committee on Arab Unity concluded its discussion, and on 7th October, the Alexandria Protocol was signed. This document provided for the creation of a League of Arab States which was to consist of all independent Arab countries.

The Preparatory Committee met again on 17th March 1945, and three days later the meeting was transformed into a general Arab Conference. The delegates discussed the use of co-ordination in functional programmes as an alternative to a federal union. They expressed approval of co-operation in matters of economics, cultural and social affairs as a substitute for the political unity which had been rejected. Some of the delegates expressed their belief that such co-operation, in fact, would lead eventually to political unification. On 22nd March, in Cairo, the Pact of the League of Arabs States was signed. Signatories were Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Transjordan followed by Saudi Arabia and Yemen. ⁷

The Fertile Crescent Scheme

Prime Minister Nuri al-Said of Iraq spelled out the first Arab plan for unity in his Bule Book, which consisted of a note on "Arab Independence and unity".⁸ He outlined his proposal for a "Fertile Crescent Scheme", and presented it in 1943 to Richard Casey, Britain's Minister of State in Cairo. He proposed the following :

1. ... An Arab League to be formed, Iraq and Syria to join at once, the other Arab states to join if and when they desired;

2. The Arab League to have a permanent Council nominated by the member states and presided over by one of the rulers of states, to be chosen in a manner acceptable to the states concerned;

3. The Arab Council to be responsible for :
 - a. defence,
 - b. foreign affairs,
 - c. currency,
 - d. communication,
 - e. customs,
 - f. protection of minority rights⁹

However, both Saudi Arabia and Egypt were excluded from planning and initial implementation of the scheme, and their strong opposition caused it to fail.

The Greater Syria Plan

Emir Abdullah of Transjordan had long advocated the unity of Bilad al-Sham (Greater Syria), calling for the reunification of Lebanon, Transjordan, Palestine and Syria under his leadership. At the same time, the Prime Minister of Syria, Nazim al-Qudsi, declared that Syria intended to maintain her independence and her republican

regime and was not in favour of unification with Transjordan under the Hashimite family. Both Saudi Arabia and Egypt were (and are) strongly opposed to any territorial expansion by the Hashimites, and Lebanon opposed the plan, as well.¹⁰ The British government announced that it had no interest in the Greater Syria Project, considering the subject to be one which concerned only the people in the area. Britain's Minister of State for the Middle East, Oliver Lyttleton, travelled to Amman to advise Emir Abdullah that the Greater Syria Project should be postponed until after World War II had ended. After encountering such widespread opposition, including that from Shukkri al-Quwatli's National Bloc of Syria, the "Greater Syria Plan" failed.

Egypt's Role in Establishing the Arab League

Egypt played an important role in the planning and creation of the Arab League primarily because of her large population and strategic location. Egypt was the most formidable country in the Middle East economically and culturally, and her political leadership was respected by the entire Arab world.¹¹ It is important to note that the Arab League in its 1945 form was a creation essentially superimposed by Egypt upon Nuri al-Said's project, proposed two years earlier, for a union of Iraq and the Arab states.¹²

The League of Arab States was dominated by Egypt from the time of

its establishment in 1945. The first three Secretaries-General were Egyptians : Abdel-Rahman Azzam (1945-1952), Abdel Khaliq Hassouna (1952-1972), and Mohamoud Rid (1972-1979). The Secretary-General, Azzam, regarded Egypt as the League's natural leader, and indeed, without Egypt's money, the League could scarcely have survived.¹³ Totten Anderson wrote about Egypt's hegemony in the League of Arab States, as follows :

From the moment that Iraq lost the initiative to Egypt in the formation of the League, Egypt has appreciated the power potential of the "regional arrangement" as an instrument of national policy. Headquarters for the League were established in Cairo, Azzam Pasha of Egypt has been the perennial Secretary-General, and Egypt has supplied the largest single share of the budget.

It is understandable that this development should occur since Egyptian nationalism began at the dawn of the nineteenth century under the leadership of Mohammad Ali, and the process of Westernization was well established long before the other Arab states gained independent status.¹⁴

After the establishment of the Arab League in 1945, Egypt remained

the dominant force and the most influential member state in the League. She was the leader in negotiating a security pact among the Arab states signed in February 1951.¹⁵ Egypt's influence was decisive in transforming the original Alexandria Protocol into the League.¹⁶

Thus,

The Protocol, which was intended to be the instrument to encourage and help the growing-together of Arab states, had been transformed into a concrete frame which congealed each Arab state within its petty frontiers.¹⁷

Egypt also played a major role in the Conference on International Organization in San Francisco. Abdul Hamid Badawi, who headed the Egyptian delegation to that Conference, made an important contribution by defining the functions of regional organizations. Table 1 shows member states' share of the budget of the Arab League from 1945-1964. Table 2 shows their shares in 1978.

On more than once occasion, Egypt threatened to dissolve the Arab League. Mohammad Heikal, former editor of the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram, wrote, "If the Arab League were to be used to paralyse our movement, we should even be prepared to freeze the operation of that body".¹⁸

In general, however, Egypt's financial contributions to the League tended to be decreased following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Regarding the decreasing role of Egypt since that time, Sirag Zamzami has written,

Up to the 1967 war it seemed that the progressive revolutionary Arab Countries had the upper hand in the Middle East in general and in the Arab League in particular. But then the sweeping Israeli victory did not only shock the leaders of these progressive revolutionary countries. It has left the Arab world greatly disorientated. In addition, the leadership of the Arab world appeared to be non-existent.¹⁹

Table 1

Member Shares of Arab League Budget (Per Cent)

<u>Country</u>	<u>Date Ratio Established</u>				
	1945	1953	1958	1960	1964
Algeria	-	-	-	-	-
UAR (Egypt)	42.00	40.00	50.29	39.56	23.73
Iraq	20.00	17.00	15.98	12.57	10.44
Jordan	3.00	3.00	2.82	2.22	1.93
Kuwait	-	-	-	-	14.00
Lebanon	6.00	6.00	5.64	4.43	3.85
Libya	-	2.00	1.88	1.48	1.50
Morocco	-	-	-	15.73	10.68
Saudi Arabia	7.00	15.50	14.47	11.46	19.97
Sudan	-	-	6.00	4.72	4.11
Syria	16.00	13.50	*	*	7.69
Tunisia	-	-	-	5.61	4.67
Yemen	6.00	3.00	2.82	2.22	0.93
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

* After union with Egypt, Syria's share was included under NAR

Source of data : Robert W. MacDonald, The League of Arab States: A Study in the Dynamics of Regional Organization, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965, p. 142.

Table 2

Member Shares of Arab League Budget (Per Cent)

Country	1978
Algeria	5.88
Bahrain	1.00
Egypt	13.70
Iraq	9.79
Jordan	1.27
Kuwait	13.70
Lebanon	2.45
Libya	10.77
Mauritanian	1.00
Morocco	6.27
Omam	1.00
Qatar	3.92
Saudi Arabia	11.26
Somalia	1.00
Sudan	3.72
Syria	2.45
UAE	5.88
Yemen	1.00
Yemen Democratic	1.00

Source of data : A. H. Muwafi, "Work Dynamics in the Secretariat-General for the Arab League", League of Arab States : Reality and Aspirations Symposium, (in Arabic), Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1983, p. 612.

Britain's Role in Establishment of the Arab League

Britain supported the formation of the Arab League. It was "the culmination of more than four years of effort which had been encouraged by Anthony Eden",²⁰ including his urgings contained in the 29th May 1941 "Mansion House" speech. In that speech, given the day before Rashid Ali al-Kailani's revolt against Britain in Iraq was aborted, Eden said,

... It seems to me both natural and right that the cultural and economic ties between the Arab countries and the political ties, too, should be strengthened. His Majesty's government for their part will give their full support to any scheme that commands general approval.²¹

However, the Arab League was essentially an Arab organization and not a British creation despite Great Britain's encouragement and help in its establishment during the World War II period.²² In an address at the Sorbonne in May 1947, Lord Altrincham, then British Minister of State in the Middle East, said,

The Arab League was encouraged by Britain ... it was an autonomous power created by the Arabs themselves and represented their unanimous resolve to act,

independently in world affairs.²³

In addition, it should be noted that Anthony Eden's support for Arab unity was in the nature of fence-mending. Great Britain had made a promise of Arab independence and unity to Sherif Hussein during World War I, and had broken that promise in two ways. First, Britain's commitments to the Arabs during the century's second decade were superseded by secret agreements with France to share hegemony in the Middle East under the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 6th May 1916. Second, and perhaps of greater significance to future developments, the British issued the Balfour Declaration of 2nd November 1917, in effect promising the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine. British High Commissioner for Egypt, General Henry McMahon, in correspondence with Sherif Hussein dated as early as October 1915, had made the British promises to the Arabs, but a new mandatory system of government was instituted in 1920, and introduced into the northern Arab territories of Iraq, Transjordan, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon after World War I.²⁴

Britain's primary motivation in finally promoting the creation of the Arab League undoubtedly was based on her intent to preempt French influence in the Middle East following World War II. According to J. S. Raleigh, Britain's chief considerations in supporting the League were :

1. The quest for stability and peace in the Middle East, especially in the war, and the belief that a strong regional organization would be the best means of achieving such stability;
2. The assumption that if Britain gave full support to the Arab national aspirations, a firm Anglo-Arab alliance could be established, Arab gratitude and friendship secured, and British positions in the Arab east safeguarded;
3. The conception that defence pacts and arrangements, as well as the maintenance of bases, privileges etc., could be more easily obtained from a regional body than from the individual states concerned;
4. Unification of Arab states under British influence as a tactical move designed (along with other measures) to force the French out of the Levant;
5. Administrative convenience in handling the wartime supply situation in the Middle East²⁵

History has recorded the results of Britain's inconstancy in her Middle East policy during the first half of the century. Great Britain is to blame for what has occurred in Palestine, and is responsible for many of the continuing crises in the Middle East. The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the Mandatory System in 1920 and many other factors delayed independence and unity in Arab countries for decades. Anthony Eden's 1941 declaration of support for the establishment of an Arab union was an attempt to regain the Arab friendship Britain had lost through her earlier betrayals.

But in recent years yet another issue arose when an Arab League delegation, comprised of seven Arab heads of states, representing the Fez Summit Conference tried to visit British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. She refused to meet the delegation.²⁶ Ambassador Clovis Maksoud referred to the differences between the Arab countries and the British government when he said,

There is quite a bit of residual goodwill between Britain and the Arab countries which perhaps explains why our disillusionment has been accentuated by the ... unnecessary conditions surrounding the visit of the Arab League delegation (to Margaret Thatcher) I do not think that her policy and the conditions that

were involved in receiving the Arab League delegation indicate a measure of uncharacteristic insensitivity on the part of Britain.²⁷

Structure and Organization of the Arab League

The pact of 1945 established the goals and basic structure of the Arab League are to strengthen relations among the Arab states, to protect their independence and sovereignty, to consider a general way the interests and welfare of the Arab people, and to realize close co-operation among the participant states in economic, financial, cultural and social matters. The main organs of the League are the Council, the permanent committees and the permanent Secretariat-General.

The Council is composed of representatives from the member states, each state having one vote (Article 3). Chairmanship of the Council at ordinary session rotates among state representatives alphabetically. The main functions of the Council are to strengthen relations between members, to settle disputes between members or between members and non-members, to formulate the general policy of the League, to ensure the execution of agreements concluded between the participant states, and to review the financial and administrative affairs of the League.

The permanent committees were created in accordance with Article 4 of the Pact to assist the Council in the functional matters mentioned in Article 2. There are ten permanent committees: political, information, economic, social, cultural affairs, legal, communications, administrative and financial affairs, health, and petroleum experts. These committees are composed of representatives of member states. Each state is represented on each committee, by one or more representatives but with only one vote. Decisions and resolutions of these committees are made by a simple majority. Committee chairmen are appointed by the Council for a term of two years. Within their jurisdictions, the functions of the committees are to lay down the foundations for technical co-operation among members, and to submit recommendations to the Council for its consideration and approval.²⁸

The permanent Secretariat consists of a Secretary-General, assistant secretaries, and "an appropriate number of officials" (Article 12). The Secretary-General occupies the top position in the Arab League, and his appointment by the League's Council requires a two-thirds majority vote by the member states. He is responsible for preparing the draft of the budget (Article 13), inviting the Council for meetings (Article 15), and keeping copies of every treaty concluded, or to be concluded in the future, between the members or between a member and a third party (Article 17). He is also responsible before the Council for supervising the implementation of

resolutions, and for reviewing the administrative and financial affairs of the League.

The pact governs and regulates relations between members. Article 8 says,

Each member state shall respect the systems of government established in the other member states and regard them as exclusive concerns of those states. Each shall pledge to abstain from any action calculated to change established systems of government.

While the above forbids interference in the domestic affairs of other member states, the pact permits, in Article 9, "closer cooperation and stronger bonds" between participant states without prejudice to the status of other members. Any member may withdraw upon one year's notice before such withdrawal is to take place, and any country not approving an amendment may withdraw from the League when that amendment becomes effective.²⁹ Article 9 of the pact also provides that,

Treaties and agreement already concluded or to be concluded in the future between a member state and another state shall not be binding or restrictive

upon other members.

At the present time, the Arab League has twenty-two member states.³⁰ (see Appendix 5). Egypt was suspended from the Arab League Council in March 1979 "Because it violated the Charter of the Arab League by signing a separate peace treaty with Israel".³¹ The decision to exclude Egypt from League membership was based on a resolution adopted by the Council in 1950:

No member state may negotiate or actually conclude a separate peace treaty or any other political, military or economic agreement with Israel. Any state which does negotiate may be considered to have withdrawn from the Arab League according to Article 18 of the League Pact.

Shortly thereafter, the Council approved the following measures to be taken by the League in case of violation by any member state:

1. Political and diplomatic relations with that state would be severed;
2. Frontiers between it and other Arab States would be closed, and economic, commercial and financial relations would be suspended;

3. Financial or commercial contact, whether direct or indirect, with its nationals would be prohibited. Member states should offer mutual assistance to enforce the above provisions.³²

The League's Council convened in extraordinary session in Baghdad on 31st March 1979.³³ Egypt had broken ranks with the other Arab states when President Sadat negotiated and later signed a separate treaty with Israel.³⁴ As a result, the Council decided, first, to relocate the Arab League headquarters temporarily in Tunisia, and second, to drop Egypt's membership from the League.³⁵

The Council's decision to expel Egypt was the first expulsion in League history, since 1950 attempts to expel Jordan had failed. Relocation of the League's headquarters to Tunisia was an answer for those members who had claimed that Egypt dominated the League when it was headquartered in Cairo. These states had reacted to Egypt's domination by temporarily pulling out of the League, preferring to refer their disputes to other organizations because of that domination or because Egypt was a party to the disputes.³⁶

The Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel added a new dimension to the long list of regional and international problems and disputes which the League faced and with which it had to deal.

They remained on the Arab League agenda and were transferred with it to the new location. All Arab countries, as well as the League itself, rejected the Camp David Accords. They embodied a new challenge to Arab unity and even to the League's existence, as such, they have required a lot of time and attention from League members as they try to face new relations and requisite changes.

The decision to relocate Arab League headquarters resulted in the election of a new Secretary-General, passage of an amendment to the Pact, and a confrontation with new challenges. Especially in the beginning, there were administrative, financial and recognition difficulties. Administrative difficulties arose when some of the qualified Egyptian staff members had to choose between loyalty to the organization and to their home state. Some remained in Cairo rather than join the move to Tunisia. Documents, transcripts and libraries remained at the old headquarters, as well. Egypt confiscated the League's budget, resulting in financial problems. Recognition difficulties were posed by regional and international organizations, European countries, and the United States.³⁷

The League succeeded in overcoming their administrative and financial problems when a new staff was selected and members replaced the necessary money and some of the documents. European countries and the United States took some time to restore relations with the League in its new location in Tunisia. The problems with

the libraries, archives and documents never were solved because Egypt held on to whatever remained in Cairo.

Article 10 of the Pact had stipulated that the League headquarters were to be located in Cairo. The decision to relocate, therefore, was a choice between legality and national interest; the League chose the second alternative. In the future, it is necessary for the League to avoid any mention of the seat of the Arab League administration when the Pact is amended.³⁸

There were advantages and disadvantages in the move away from Egypt. The League succeeded in amending the Pact (a process which was begun in Cairo), and achieved an economic strategy at the Amman Summit. Both are now waiting to be ratified. The move also eliminated complaints of League domination by a large state, which had been an obstacle to the organizations' maturation. However, a new Tunisian Secretary-General was elected, repeating the old story in which the host country provided leadership. A question arises regarding what may happen if the League should move its headquarters to a third location.

In Egypt, the League had had access to all facilities there : publishing companies, libraries and the advice of the staffs of five universities in Cairo. However, a return to Cairo would not be desirable. First, the reason for the decision to relocate still

exists : Egypt's treaty with Israel is still effective. Second, the League is composed of all independent Arab countries; it was created as a reaction to Arab demands for unity and exists to protect the interests of all Arab peoples. In the interests of Egypt herself and of other Arab countries, Egypt must rejoin the Arab ranks directly, rather than continuing her present practice of dealing with the region through the small countries of Oman and Jordan. At the same time, Arab countries must help Egypt to pull out of her political, economic and social difficulties. While there is no reason to move the League's headquarters again from Tunisia, it is advisable to move the specialized agencies and distribute them among all Arab capitals.

Arab League Relations with the United Nations

Arab delegations at the United Nations Conference on International Organizations, held on 25th April 1945, in San Francisco, supported regional arrangements and asked for U.N. recognition of the Arab League or, at least inclusion in the text of the United Nations Charter. Very shortly before this meeting, the Arab Pact had been adopted with Article 3 stating that the League would incorporate international organizations in the future "to guarantee peace and security and regulate economic and social relations". When the Pact was signed, a policy of co-operation between the Arab League and the United Nations and its specialized agencies was created. The Arab

delegations were the most cohesive group in the United Nations during its early years, joining with delegations from Asia and Africa "to speed up the process of disimperialism".³⁹ That process was "accelerated under U.N. auspices or was spurred on by its actions".⁴⁰

The Arab Pact was registered in the Secretariat of the United Nations, which formally recognized the Arab League as a regional association.⁴¹ This procedure was in accordance with the Dumbarton Oaks proposals which had given status to regional organizations. On 1st April 1950, acting on the recommendation of its political committee, the Council of the Arab League decided to consider the League "a regional organization within the meaning of chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter".⁴²

Another development, in December 1960, created further ties between the United Nations and the Arab League. The U.N. Secretary-General forwarded a memo to the League's Secretary-General referring to "mutual consultation, joint action, exchange of information and documentation, exchange of representation and other arrangements for liaison".⁴³ The League also signed agreements of co-operation with many of the U.N.'s specialized agencies. One of the results of co-operation between the two organizations has been "the introduction of Arabic as an official language of the United Nations and a number of its specialized agencies".⁴⁴

More recently, on 16th November 1982, the U.N. General Assembly endorsed by consensus resolution an Arab proposal to expand co-operation between the United Nations and the League of Arab states.⁴⁵ The General Assembly recommended that this resolution be the foundation for consultation to decide whether specific issues should be dealt with at the bilateral or multilateral level.⁴⁶ The League's invitation for a meeting at its Tunis headquarters with U.N. representatives was welcomed by the General Assembly. The United Nations Secretary-General was asked by the Assembly to do his best to organize the meeting, and he prepared a report identifying the following potential areas for enhanced co-operation :

Political and social matters, economic matters, technical co-operation, food and agriculture, industrial development, information and communications, disaster relief, refugees, population activities, labour, education, science and culture, health, patents and copyrights, posts, legal matters, oil and energy, narcotics, maritime transport and organizational matters.⁴⁷

A number of the suggestions made in these areas, the report concluded, could best be pursued within the framework of agreements between the United Nations and the League of Arab States.

Conclusion

The Arab League was created after the Second World War in response to demands and pressure from the Arab people to achieve their goals of independence and unity. It grew out of Nuri al-Said's "Fertile Crescent Scheme", but was adopted considerably from that original idea. The Prime Minister of Egypt, Mustafa al-Nahhas, took the initiative to invite the Arab countries to attend a general conference in Cairo and discuss Arab unity. The Arab delegates rejected federation and central government, but agreed upon cooperation and co-ordination of their sovereign states. Many believed that such an arrangement would lead to a stronger relationship and eventual unity, but unity was also rejected later by all of the delegations. With respect to creation of a united Arab nation, the Arab League was born a weak arrangement. Therefore, proponents of such a federation have been disappointed in expecting the League to become a first step on the road to unification.

II The Internal Activities of the Arab League

There are four primary areas in which the Arab League interrelates with its member nations. The League takes an active role in attempting to settle inter-Arab disputes, seeks full independence for all member states, works for the establishment of Arab unity and promotes collective security arrangements in the Arab world. The following is an evaluation of the League's activities in the settlement of inter-Arab disputes.

Settlement of Inter-Arab Disputes

The part played by the Arab League in settling members disputes has differed over time and from one conflict to another. Factors determining its role in such regional conflicts include the nature of the disagreement, the number of countries and types of government involved, and whether or not the parties to a dispute are all League members, since additional factors must be considered if the conflict involves a super power. History has recorded the League's involvement in settling civil disputes (Yemen 1962; Jordan 1970; Lebanon 1975 - present), border conflicts (Sudan-Egypt 1958; Algeria-Morocco 1963), disputes between members and non-members (Tunisia-France 1961; Arabs-Israel 1948 - present), and disputes which evolved into all-out war (or threatened to do so) between Arab League member states or between members and non-members.

The League has experienced varying degrees of success in its endeavours to settle conflicts. Numerous disputes have been ignored completely by the League in the belief that they were not a threat to stability in the region. In some cases, members simply have not brought some of their problems to the League for action. In attempting to deal with some disputes the League has made no progress, in others it achieved limited success, and in still others it was wholly successful.⁴⁸

Sudan, Lebanon, Jordan and Morocco, all members states chose to approach another organization for peaceful settlement of their conflicts without making a prior appeal to the League. This situation arose because of a general lack of trust in the effectiveness of the League's good offices. Members also feared Egypt's domination of the Arab organization, especially if Egypt was party to a conflict. Jordan and Lebanon submitted a complaint to the United Nations in 1958, accusing Egypt of interfering with their domestic affairs. Sudan asked the U.N. to settle her border dispute with Egypt that same year. During the 1963 conflict between Algeria and Morocco, the latter preferred to settle her border dispute with help from the Organization of African Unity.⁴⁹

Only Articles 5, 6 and 19 of the Arab Pact contain provisions dealing with the settlement of disputes. Article 5 stipulates that resorting to force to settle inter-Arab disputes is prohibited.

Under this Article, if a dispute does not affect a country's "independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity" and if the parties entrust the Council with settlement, they must abide by the Council's decision. One of the main functions of the Council is to mediate conflicts in order to avoid war between the parties involved, and the Council's goal in mediation is to conciliate. Council decisions in arbitration and mediation are taken by a simple majority vote, which is binding only on those members which choose to accept it (Article 7). Article 6 provides that "in case of aggression or threat of aggression by one state against a member state ... the Council shall by unanimous decision determine the measures necessary to repulse the aggression". Unanimous decisions of the Council are binding upon all members. The Pact anticipates, in Article 19, the founding of an Arab Court of Justice which, up to now, has failed to materialize.

In settling inter-Arab disputes the Council has used all known, traditional techniques including mediation, conciliation, good offices and formation of a ad hoc committees, fact-finding committees and special committees to investigate and follow the conflicts and report to the League.⁵⁰ In dealing with disputes between members and non-members, the League in most cases act to support and defend its members rather than to mediate. Obvious examples of the League's bellicose stance before non-member states are the disputes of 1945 between Syria-Lebanon and France, the Arab-

Israeli conflicts (1948 to present) and the Tunisia-France dispute of 1961. The actions taken by the League in this context are those of a regional organization opposed to a non-member state, rather than those of an organ of conflict settlement.⁵¹

Other roles that the Arab League has played in the ever-increasing number of disputes in the Middle East since 1945 include modifying conflicts, preventing hostilities and terminating war and threats of war. In addition to the traditional arsenal of diplomatic techniques, the League has also learned to count on the services of its Secretary-General. Such efforts notwithstanding, a check of the Arab League's results at the end of four decades reveals more failures than successes in settling conflicts. For example, the organization was unable to put an end to the civil war in Yemen in 1948, to settle the border dispute between Sudan and Egypt in 1958 or to affect the civil war in Jordan in 1970; it failed to promote agreement in the dispute among Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania in 1979, or to settle the current crises in Lebanon.

However, the League can take credit for having settled some disputes. In the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait in 1961, a peace-keeping force was created by the League and sent to Kuwait. A second case, in North and South Yemen in 1979, was resolved when the League formed a Committee to negotiate the dispute. The Committee was comprised of foreign ministers of seven Arab countries plus the

Secretary-General, with a military unit that watched the borders for withdrawal of forces and supervised the activities on both boundaries. The League was thus effective in promoting agreement between the two sister states. Conflicts between Algeria and Morocco (1963) and in North Yemen (1962) also were settled, although fighting re-erupted in the latter country until the dispute was ended permanently through the Khartoum Conference of 1967.⁵² The success in these later cases, however, cannot be attributed to the Arab League directly. Credit goes to the Arab Summit Conference of 1964, in which heads of state convened in Cairo under the auspices of the Arab League. The conference was called to discuss the Israeli intent to divert the waters of the River Jordan.⁵³ It also should be noted that conflicts between Lebanon and the United Arab Republic (1958), Syria and United Arab Republic (1961-62), and Iraq and Kuwait (1961) were finally resolved only when new regimes came to power in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, respectively.⁵⁴

An analysis of the League's failure, in most cases, to manage disputes reveals three main causes. First, the Pact itself, as well as the structure and organization of the League, contains significant weaknesses in this area. Second, the very nature of "inter-Arab relations has been one of highly complex antagonisms". Third, ever-increasing intervention by outside powers has made regional conflicts almost impervious to attempts at settlement in some cases.

The Arab League does not have effective organizational machinery with detailed, institutionalized, adequate procedures to settle disputes. It lacks and needs a peace-keeping force and a Court of Justice to settle legal questions. The Pact gives responsibility and authority for the settling of disputes to the Council, in addition to the traditional functions assigned to it in the articles.⁵⁵ However, the Council is prevented from performing its task of dispute settlement by a series of emasculating restrictions and limitations : it is allowed to address disputes that might lead to war, but may not deal with other conflicts; it must steer clear of disputes involving "independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity" of member states; and members of the League are not obliged to be a party to arbitration, nor are they required to enforce the Council's decision. Although the Pact calls for mediation and voluntary arbitration, other methods have been used which are not indicated, resulting in further difficulties.⁵⁶ The Council meets in ordinary session twice a year, and in extraordinary session only upon a call from two members. There is no other provision for meeting without such a call. The United Nations, by contrast, is much more quick to meet.⁵⁷

The League's ability to settle disputes also is diminished by the nature of "inter-Arab relations". Throughout its history the League has been a focus for member conflict, exacerbated by disparate interests of the leaders. Ideology and/or rivalry among members

over the leadership of the region are often causes of these conflicts, which may become political even though they involve minor, non-political issues". Political warfare between Arab leaders can lead to vituperation in the press, recrimination, sealed borders, banned trade and travel, threats of war and even war itself. Victims of wars between Arab League members outnumber all those of the wars with Israel and are exceeded only by the numbers in the Iran-Iraq war. "Inter-Arab relations are characterized by mistrust, suspicion, division and conflicts all the time, everywhere". It therefore is no surprise that members mistrust the Arab League. Mark Zacher put it rightly : "More than any other region, the Arab world has been characterized by shifting patterns of dissention and competition".⁵⁸ Division and tension among members can be expected to continue over such issues as the Arab-Israeli conflict, economic interests, regional and sub-regional rivalries, relations with Europe and the super powers, and relations between Iran and the Arab countries in the Arabian Gulf.⁵⁹

A third factor that hinders the Arab League in achieving settlement of disputes is the involvement of outside powers. The deployment of American and European forces in Lebanon (25th-27th September 1982) complicated the situation, made them parties to the conflict, and was resented by the population. During the same year Israel invaded Lebanon and to this day still occupies a large territory there. The League formed a peace-keeping force and deployed it in Lebanon, as

it had during the 1961 Kuwait-Iraq dispute, but was unable to enjoy the same success because of the many parties involved.

The Arab League's system for settling disputes is inadequate because the organization lacks the special machinery for the task and the diplomatic, military and legal experts to guide it. In short, the Pact of the Arab League was signed in a bygone era, and has not grown to fit contemporary local and international developments. When the Pact was signed in the 1940's, conditions in the region were not directly influenced by the two major world powers; the Arab Magrib had not joined the League; Arab oil was not exploited commercially on a large scale; Israel had not been founded; and the majority of Arab states were de jure dependent. Other changes since the 1940's include a sharp decline in Britain's and France's roles in the region; enhanced roles for the United States and Soviet Union; de facto independence of all Arab countries except Palestine; increased League membership; discovery of oil in additional parts of the region, which has been widely exploited; acquisition of wealth and affluence by oil-producing Arab nations; the creation of new international organizations; altered Arab government's and new leadership; the founding of Israel; and increased regional tensions.⁶⁰

The Arab League lacks effective organizational machinery and institutionalized procedures for settlement of disputes primarily

because the framers of the Pact believed wars would be rare among Arab countries. They believed in an inevitable harmony among members belonging to one people and sharing the special characteristics of common language, culture, history and geographical proximity.⁶¹ Another reason for the oversights is that the Arab League is the first such organization in the Arab world. The United Nations, the American States and the Organization of African Unity all had precedent institutions to serve as a model and teacher.⁶²

After four decades of activity, however, there is no excuse for failing to amend the Pact. The absence of an adequate system for settling disputes makes such amendment urgent. Committees have been formed to discuss such an amendment, and agreed that all necessary provisions should be made to bring the Pact into alignment with charters of similar organizations. Approval by member heads of state is required to effectuate such changes. Unfortunately, work on such an amendment has been shelved.

The Arab League, like most other regional and international organizations, has failed more than one test of its ability to settle disputes. In discussing the organization's weakness, Hass, Butterworth and Nye wrote,

... These organizations are little more than governments

linked in permanent conclave. They have no power and personality beyond the collective will of governments and no capacity to grow apart from the ability of governments to learn. ⁶³

Conclusion

The Arab League has ranged all the way from great success to total failure in the four primary areas of its internal activities. The organization has attempted to settle disputes among members by offering its good offices to disputants or by involving its Secretary-General in settling conflicts. Its role has been to modify conflict and encourage negotiation, preventing the outbreak of war in some cases. Its attempts have not all been in vain, but it has shown itself weak in many areas. The League's activities in achieving independence for Arab states from European occupation have been cohesive and decisive whenever it provided aspirations to independence with financial, political and military assistance. The failures have occurred in the remaining two fields of endeavour. Withal, the League is considered to be neither a dynamic machine of Arab unity nor a co-ordinator of Arab collective security. The "doctrine of ramification" proved effective in the achievement of independence to a number of Arab states and not effective in the other two internal activities of the League : unity and collective security.

III Saudi Arabia and the Arab League

The formation of the Arab League in 1945, partly as a result of British exertions, had created an arena for inter-Arab politics, and Ibn Saud manoeuvred within and without it to check Hashemite designs.⁶⁴ However, Saudi Arabia participated in the first Arab League Summit held in Anshas (Cairo), in May 1946, to discuss the Zionist threat in Palestine.⁶⁵

On 12th December, the Arab League Council was due to meet to react to the United Nations resolution to partition Palestine, adopted on 29th November 1947.⁶⁶ Well before the meeting there was talk that the Arab League Council might consider a resolution calling for cancellation of American and British oil concessions in member countries (at that time, Saudi Arabia) because of their connection with the U.N. resolution. On 3rd December, Ibn Saud received the American Minister in Jeddah to express his view of the situation and to make a general request for American political and military aid. He told the minister that the talk about cancelling the concessions was an example of the increased pressure being put on him by the Arab League States in order to harm his relations with the United States.⁶⁷

Ibn Saud indicated agreement with the Arab League States regarding the dispute with Zionism but said that he wanted to make "a

distinction between such an attitude and the attempts being made by my antagonists in the Arab world to draw me into direct conflict politically or economically with the United States". He was prepared to oppose the pressure being put on him by the Arab League States, but for him the "crucial question" was to know "whether and to what extent I can count upon United States aid in enabling me to resist any incursion from the Arab League States which may be the result of my failure to yield to the pressure".⁶⁸

The Arab League Force in Kuwait was established in 1961, in response to Iraqi threats to annex the newly-independent territory of Kuwait.⁶⁹ On 20th July 1961, the Council adopted a resolution admitting Kuwait as a member of the Arab League.⁷⁰

Following the adoption of the Council resolution of 20th July, the Secretary-General issued invitations to League members to participate in the proposed Arab League Force.⁷¹ Libya and the Lebanon declined to contribute contingents. However, units were eventually drawn from the United Arab Republic, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Jordan. In all, the Force comprised some 3300 troops, of which the largest contingents (1200 men apiece) were sent by the United Arab Republic and by Saudi Arabia. A Saudi officer, Major-General Abdullah Al-Isa, was appointed commander of the Arab League Force.⁷²

An Arab League "Arab Brotherhood Mission", the first of its kind, led by Abdel Khaliq Hassouna, Secretary-General of the Arab League, and was composed of two Saudi members of the League toured the lower Arabian Gulf states in October 1964, holding talks with Shaikhs on the political development of the region and on the assistance in economic, social and educational fields which the Arab League could provide.⁷³

Prince Faisal, then Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, supported Egypt in the Arab League Conference on 5th February 1955, against Iraq and the Baghdad Pact.⁷⁴

However, from the beginning of the Yemeni conflict,⁷⁵ the Arab League was unable to play any constructive role to settle the war peacefully. Egypt, after what happened to it at Shtaura, could not effectively utilize the League to serve its interests in the Yemeni case. Contrary to what happened in the Iraqi case, for example, Egypt's major opponent in this conflict was Saudi Arabia, which had its own supporters in the Arab League. Thus Egypt was determined, at first, to achieve its objective in Yemen, namely to secure a pro-Cairo republican regime in Sanaa, without having to go to the Arab League, the latter had to be involved in the presentation.⁷⁶

Saudi Arabia strongly opposed the Yemeni republican regime request for a meeting of the Arab League Council to consider the situation

in Yemen. Egypt viewed the republicans as the legitimate authority in Yemen and therefore, felt that the League should ignore the royalists and respond only to the republicans.⁷⁷

In March 1963 the majority of the Arab League member states recognized the republicans in Sanaa.⁷⁸ Thus, with the new strongly pro-Nasser alliance in the Arab League, the League Council, despite strong Saudi opposition, decided to recognize the republican regime in Sanaa as the legitimate government of Yemen and admit it as the representative of Yemen in the Arab League.⁷⁹

The republican regime in Yemen appealed to the Arab League to attempt to put an end to the dispute between Yemen and Saudi Arabia.⁸⁰ On 16th September 1963, the political committee responded to the republic of Yemen's appeal by sending a recommendation to the Council which was adopted as a resolution during the Council's 40th ordinary session on 19th September. Shaped by Egypt, the resolution was biased in favour of the Yemeni republic; it called on all member states to support the Yemeni request for the restoration of normal relations between the Arab states and for the promotion of peace and stability in Yemen. The Council also called on Abdel Khaliq Hassouna, the League's Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Council, to initiate contacts with the party concerned in order to achieve these objectives. Again Saudi Arabia abstained from voting. In effect, the Saudi's disagreed with the Council's initiative, but

the resolution of the Council was adopted anyway. Soon afterwards Hassouna and other League officials held a series of consultations in Cairo at which a peace mission was formed to visit the parties concerned in order to attempt to end the Yemeni conflict.⁸¹

On 25th September 1963 the Arab League mission, headed by Hassouna, arrived in Taif (Saudi Arabia), where it held meetings with Prince Faisal.⁸² The Secretary-General and other members of the mission detailed to Faisal the events of the Council meeting of 19th September in which the Yemeni republican's delegate called for peace and aid for his country and expressed his hope that normal relations would be established between the Republic of Yemen and its neighbours. The mission expressed the League's hope that the Saudi government would recognize the importance of the restoration of peace and stability in Yemen. The Secretary-General reported that "we [the Arab League mission] expressed our hope that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would do its utmost to eliminate the tension along the borders". In other words, the League wanted the Saudis to change their view of the Sanaa regime and recognize the republican system there.⁸³

At the end of the League mission's visit, the Saudi government issued an official communique in which it welcomed all attempts undertaken to promote Arab solidarity and resume normal relations between the sister Arab states.⁸⁴ The Saudi communique emphasized

the Saudi government's eagerness to co-operate towards the realization of that end and its hope that the League mission find in the responses of the other parties concerned that which would facilitate the realization of the interests of the Yemeni people.⁸⁵

On 7th October 1963, the Arab League mission arrived in Yemen.⁸⁶ The mission told President Abdullah al-Sallal of the good news it brought from Taif. The Yemeni republicans expressed their gratitude and satisfaction over the League Council efforts.⁸⁷ After visiting Saudi Arabia and Yemen, the League mission returned to Cairo where it reported its findings to Egyptian officials, including the foreign minister. The latter informed Hassouna and other members of the League mission that his government had in fact gradually withdrawn some of its forces from Yemen as the "Disengagement Agreement" required. By and large, however, the League mission proved to be important, since it did not put an end to the Yemeni conflict.⁸⁸

Despite the fact that articles of the League's Pact states, in part, that the League Council shall mediate in all differences which threaten to lead to war between two member states ... with a view to bringing about their reconciliation, "the Arab League could not do much about the fighting in Yemen, even if it wanted to". It was clear that a threat of war between Saudi Arabi and Egypt existed from September 1962 until May 1967 because of Yemen. However, the

Arab League, due to the machinations of the parties involved in the conflict, was left on the sideline.⁸⁹

In short, after Nasser's military failure in Yemen, he attempted to utilize the Arab League and, later, its Summit Conferences, to help in extricating himself from the war in Yemen. But this failed simply because of Saudi perseverance in and out of the Arab League in opposing Nasser's Yemeni objectives. The Saudis ultimately succeeded in resisting the League's efforts to settle the dispute.

A commentary on the Arab League Council session which ended in Cairo on 12th September 1966, stated that the League was meeting at a difficult time in inter-Arab relations. "These difficulties are rooted in the alliance between the reactionary forces in the Arab countries (particularly Saudi Arabia) and international imperialism, which has intensified its subversive activities in the Arab world, especially against the countries carrying out far-reaching social and economic reforms". The communique issued at the close of the session was said to be "essentially couched in anti-imperialist terms"; it reflected the alignment of forces in the Arab world. "Power is in the hands of the revolutionary-democratic elements who want their countries to take the non-capitalist path of development. The reactionaries are forced by circumstances to strike from behind the corner, to indulge in backstage diplomatic activity to plot and intrigue".⁹⁰ These remarks referred particularly to King Faisal of

Saudi Arabia and to his plans to establish "the so-called Islamic Pact".⁹¹

Initially, it was thought that the admission of a new State required the unanimous approval of the League members. However, this principle has been gradually relaxed. In 1967, Saudi Arabia abstained in the vote to admit South Yemen.⁹² In 1971, two member States, Saudi Arabia and North Yemen, opposed the admission of Oman, and Saudi Arabia abstained in the vote on the admission of the United Arab Emirates. Nevertheless, all of these States secured admission to the Arab League.⁹³

During the first stage of Lebanese civil strife in 1975, Saudi Arabia played an excellent role in the Arab League to create an Arab League force dominated by the Syrians to keep peace in Lebanon. Thus providing de facto legitimization for Syrian intervention.⁹⁴

However, Saudi Arabia participated in the Arab League Force in Lebanon.⁹⁵ The League Force was originally designated as a "Symbolic Arab Security Force". In accordance with a resolution adopted by the League Council on 9th June 1976, the Force was empowered to "maintain security and stability in Lebanon".⁹⁶ The resolution stated that the Force "should start to perform its task immediately replacing the Syrian forces".⁹⁷

When the agreement was reached at the Cairo Summit Conference in October 1976, that the "special fund" for the initial six-month period should be set at \$90 million, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia undertook to provide 20% each of this sum, while the United Arab Emirates and Qatar agreed to contribute 15% and 10%, respectively.⁹⁸ It was envisaged that the remainder would be paid by other members of the League. However, as no other State volunteered funds for the upkeep of the Arab Deterrent Force, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have contributed the balance.⁹⁹

When the South Yemenis increased their disruptive activities, which culminated in the June 1978 assassination of the pro-Riyadh President al-Ghashmi.¹⁰⁰ In retaliation, the Saudis became the prime movers in the Arab League's unprecedented decision to impose sanctions, including suspension of financial and technical assistance, against a member country, South Yemen.¹⁰¹

Notwithstanding Riyadh's skilful diplomatic manoeuvres in the Arab League, the South Yemen affair must rank as one of Saudi Arabia's less successful attempts to exercise influence over other regional actors.¹⁰² Similar set-backs occurred in the case of Syria, which continued its onslaught against the Lebanese Muslims in 1976 despite the withdrawal of Saudi aid, and in the case of Algeria, which refused to halt its support for the Polisario guerrillas in the Western Sahara despite a promise of massive Saudi aid. From these

failures, the Saudis learned that there are limits to the effectiveness of financial aid as an instrument of foreign policy inside the Arab League and in dealing with the Arab countries.¹⁰³ Saudi aid to Arab League countries, 1974-1980, Table 3.

However, the decisions made in Baghdad on 31st March 1979, by 19 members of the Arab League appeared to be a victory for the radicals led by Iraq,¹⁰⁴ which demanded a "total rupture" with Egypt for signing a peace treaty with Israel, over Saudi Arabia's bloc of moderates, which favoured partial sanctions.¹⁰⁵

Table 3

Saudi Aid to Arab League Countries 1974-1980

Country/Year	Loans and Grants (millions U.S.\$)	Purpose
Algeria 1980	15.00	Aid to earthquake victims
Egypt 1974	100.00	Rebuilding of Suez Canal towns damaged during October 1973 war
1975	300.00	Rebuilding of Suez Canal areas
1976	7.70	Construction of Islamic University in Assuit
	800.00	To assist Egyptian economy
Jordan 1976	215.00	Finance five-year plan
1980	10.00	Flood and heavy snow-damage repair
Lebanon 1980	38.10	First instalment of \$114.3 million annual contribution to five-year, \$2 billion Arab aid program agreed upon at the November 1979 Tunis Summit
Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen)	82.00	Budget support
1975	30.00	Electricity projects
	146.00	Road construction
	15.00	Grain mills and silos
	13.70	Drilling of artesian wells
	4.30	Flood aid
1977	101.60	Budget support
1978	101.60	Budget support
1979	101.60	Budget support
	4.80	Compensation for higher prices paid for imports of Saudi oil
Oman 1975	100.00	Development projects program upon at the November 1979 Tunis Summit

Table 3 (Cont'd)

Country/Year	Loans and Grants (millions U.S.\$)	Purpose
Somalia		
1975	11.50	Famine and drought assistance
1979	20.00	Grant
1980	10.00	Budget support
People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen)	100.00	Development assistance
1976		
Sudan		
1974	200.00	Development assistance
1978	2.90	Flood relief
1980	11.00	Exploration for minerals (zinc, silver, copper, gold and chromium)
Syria		
1975	200.00	For weapon purchases
	219.90	For various development projects
1977	50.00	Economic assistance
Tunisia		
1979	7.00	Expenses of Arab Summit Conference
	7.00	Expenses of Arab Summit Conference
Djibouti		
1973	10.00	Economic assistance

Source : Middle East Economic Survey, 1970-1980, as cited in Ragaai El-Mallakh, Saudi Arabia: Rush to Development (London: Croom Helm, 1982, p. 379.

The Arab League Summit met at Fez, Morocco on 5th July 1981, to consider a Saudi plan for peace with States that were whispered to include Israel, broke up after four hours.¹⁰⁶ The P.L.O. gagged on the idea, and shot it down. One war later, the Conference re-convened and, in four days, gave the Saudis the benefit of Israel's victory. The routed P.L.O. was persuaded to endorse U.N. "guarantees [of] peace among all States". Diplomats perceive this as progress. If it is, the peace is dangerously slow.¹⁰⁷

The result of the Summit meeting of the League in Fez, proved that Saudi Arabia cannot mobilise, let alone speak for, the Arab world.¹⁰⁸ It might be able to do so if it could demonstrate a scintilla of influence which the United States : the fact that it lacks even that was dramatically demonstrated, even before the heads of State arrived.¹⁰⁹

However, the League Summit appointed Saudi Arabia and Jordan to make contacts specifically with the United States and other permanent members of the Security Council, the Soviet Union, France, Britain and China to explore the possible ties of a Middle East settlement.¹¹⁰

President Hafez al-Assad of Syria and the kings of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Morocco met privately on 5th September 1982, to discuss President Reagan's Middle East plan and a possible joint Arab peace

proposal, Arab League source said.¹¹¹

Mr. Reagan's plan is not on the formal agenda of the Arab League Conference, but it is expected to be a major subject of discussion despite Israel's dismissal of the initiative.¹¹²

The Arab League Conference requested Saudi Arabia' foreign minister Prince Saud to take part in an Arab League delegation visited the United States on 21st October 1982.¹¹³ The purpose of the delegation's visit to Washington is to exchange views on how best to restore momentum to the Middle East peace negotiations. The delegation will present the views of the Arab League. The United States will present its own views based on the President's initiative.¹¹⁴

The delegation will be expected to seek clarification on the President's proposal and the United States will seek clarification on the Arab League Session. It will not be a negotiating session, aimed at reconciling differences between the two, but rather an exchange of views.¹¹⁵

Saudi Arabi showed unity in the Arab League about the war in which Arab Iraq confronts non-Arab Iran across the Arabian Gulf.¹¹⁶ But the leaders of 21 members of the Arab League are collectively better at gestures than policies. Their foreign ministers, at two

successive meetings in Tunis (the headquarters of the Arab League), have failed to agree on what to do about the war.¹¹⁷

The Arab League Summit in Amman on 8th November 1987, was intended to be a single-issue Conference on the war.¹¹⁸ But Syria, Iran's one fairly steadfast Arab ally, realised it would be in the dock if the war were the only issue on the agenda. On the advice of that veteran realist, and their host King Hussein of Jordan, the other people going to Amman have agreed that the usual litany of Arab laments, including, of course, the Israel issue, will be talked through once again.¹¹⁹

However, the Saudis got at least verbal unity behind their protests about the Mecca riots in July 1987.¹²⁰

Conclusion

Saudi Arabia is a founder member of the Arab League. Ibn Saud manoeuvred within the League to check his historical enemy, the Hashemite family. He did not agree with the Arab League's policies at that time, but he had no choice but to get along with them.

However, the major event for Saudi Arabia in the Arab League since its creation in 1945, was her large participation in the League's force to protect Kuwait from Iraq in 1961.

Saudi Arabia refused to accept any effort by the Arab League to settle the conflict in North Yemen, because King Faisal claimed that the Arab League is under the influence of Egypt his opponent in the conflict, and many members of the League disagreed with Faisal policies in North Yemen.

In 1975, Saudi Arabia played a good role in the Arab League to create an Arab League force to keep peace in Lebanon, and Riyadh paid most of the fund for the force.

The Saudis failures, in the cases of the South Yemen, Syria and Algeria, Riyadh learned that there are limits to the effectiveness of financial aid as an instrument of foreign policy inside the Arab League and in dealing with the Arab countries.

Saudi Arabia and its moderates bloc tried very hard inside the League to save Egypt from expulsion from the Arab League after signing a peace treaty with Israel in 1979, but Riyadh "failed". This proved that Saudi Arabia had no influence in the League's policies, and her foreign policy inside the Arab League is very weak.

IV Appendices

Appendix I

Text of the Alexandria Protocol, 7th October 1944.

The undersigned, chiefs and members of the Arab delegations at the Preliminary Committee of the General Arab Conference:

Anxious to strengthen and consolidate the ties which bind all Arab countries to direct them towards the welfare of the Arab World, to improve its conditions, insure its future, and realize its hopes and aspirations,

And in response to Arab public opinion in all Arab countries, have met at Alexandria from Shawwal 8, 1363 (25th September 1944) to Shawwal 20, 1363 (7th October 1944) in the form of a Preliminary Committee of the General Arab Conference, and have agreed as follows:

1. League of Arab States

A League will be formed of the independent Arab States which consent to join the League. It will have a council which will be known as the Council of the League of Arab States in which all participating states will be represented on an equal footing.

The object of the League will be to control the execution of the agreements which the above states will conclude; to hold periodic meetings which will strengthen the relations between the states; to co-ordinate their political plans so as to insure their co-operation, and protect their independence and sovereignty against every aggression by suitable means; and to supervise in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries.

The decisions of the Council will be binding on those who have accepted them except in cases where a disagreement arises between two member states of the League in which case the two parties shall refer their dispute to the Council for solution. In this case the decision of the Council of the League will be binding.

In no case will resort to force to settle a dispute between any two member states of the League be allowed. But every state shall be free to conclude with any other member state of the League, or other powers, special agreements which do not contradict the text or spirit of the present dispositions.

In no case will the adoption of a foreign policy which may be prejudicial to the policy of the League or an individual member state be allowed.

The Council will intervene in every dispute which may lead to war between a member state of the League and any other member state or power, so as to reconcile them.

A subcommittee will be formed of the members of the Preliminary¹ Committee to prepare a draft of the statutes of the Council of the League and to examine the political questions which may be the object of agreement among Arab states.

¹The word "Preparatory" has been used since it is a more accurate translation of the Arabic word "Tahdiriya" than "Preliminary". The word "subcommittee" has been replaced by "Subsidiary Committee" which has been used in some books on the subject.

2. Co-operation in economic, cultural, social, and other matters.
 - A. The Arab states represented on the Preliminary Committee shall closely co-operate in the following matters:
 - 1) Economic and financial matters, i.e. commercial exchange, customs, currency, agriculture, and industry.

- 2) Communications, i.e. railways, roads, aviation, navigation, posts and telegraphs.
- 3) Cultural matters.
- 4) Questions of nationality, passports, visas, execution of judgements, extradition of criminals, etc.
- 5) Social questions.
- 6) Questions of public health.

- B. A subcommittee of experts for each of the above subjects will be formed in which the states which have participated in the Preliminary Committee will be represented. This subcommittee will prepare draft regulations for co-operation in the above matters, describing the extent and means of that collaboration.
- C. A committee for co-ordination and editing will be formed whose object will be to control the work of the other subcommittees, to co-ordinate that part of the work which is accomplished, and to prepare drafts of agreements which will be submitted to the various governments.
- D. When all the subcommittees have accomplished their work the Preliminary Committee will meet to examine the work

of the subcommittees as a preliminary step towards the holding of the General Arab Conference.

3. Consolidation of these ties in the future.

While expressing its satisfaction at a happy step, the Committee hopes that Arab states will be able in the future to consolidate that step by other steps, especially if post-war world events should result in institutions which will bind various powers more closely together.

4. A Special Resolution Concerning Lebanon.

The Arab States represented on the Preliminary Committee emphasize their respect of the independence and sovereignty of Lebanon within its present frontiers, which the governments of the above states have already recognized in consequence of Lebanon's adoption of an independent policy, which the Government of that country announced in its programme of 7th October 1943, unanimously approved by the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies

5. A Special Resolution Concerning Palestine.

A) The Committee is of the opinion that Palestine constitutes an important part of the Arab world and that the rights of the Arabs in Palestine cannot be touched without prejudice to peace and stability in the Arab world.

The Committee also is of the opinion that the pledges binding the British Government and providing for the cessation of Jewish immigration, the preservation of Arab lands, and the achievement of independence for Palestine are permanent Arab rights whose prompt implementation would constitute a step towards the desired goal and towards the stabilization of peace and security.

The Committee declares its support of the cause of the Arabs of Palestine and its willingness to work for the achievement of their legitimate aims and the safeguarding of their just rights.

The Committee also declares that it is second to none in regretting the woes which have been

inflicted upon the Jews of Europe by European dictatorial states. But the question of these Jews should not be confused with Zionism, for there can be no greater injustice and aggression than solving the problem of the Jews of Europe by another injustice, i.e. by inflicting injustice on the Arabs of Palestine of various religions and denominations.

- B. The Special Proposal concerning the participation of the Arab Governments and peoples in the Arab National Fund to safeguard the lands of the Arabs of Palestine shall be referred to the Committee of Financial and Economic Affairs to examine it from all angles and to submit the result of that examination to the Preliminary Committee at its next meeting.

In faith of which this protocol has been signed at Faruq I University at Alexandria on Saturday, Shawwal 20, 1363 (7th October 1944).

Source: The Arab World [Arab Information Centre, New York] V, April 1959, pp. 15-16, and Muhammad Khalil, The Arab States and the Arab League; A Documentary Record Vol 1, Beirut: Khayats 1962, pp 119-120

Appendix 2

Text of a letter from Sheikh Yusuf Yassin to Ahmed Pasha signifying his Government's approval of the Alexandria Protocol and stating their views on Arab co-operation.

19 Muharram 1363

(3 January 1945)

To His Excellency Dr. Ahmed Maher Pasha, the Prime Minister of Egypt and the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the General Arab Congress,

Greetings,

Your Excellency knows that during the last meeting of the preparatory Committee in Alexandria in which I represented the Saudi Arabian Government, I did not put my signature on the Protocol then signed by the representatives of the Syrian, Lebanese, Iraqi, Transjordan, and Egyptian Governments pending its review by the Saudi Arabian Government.

The Government of Saudi Arabia are desirous and anxious for the achievement of the unity of the Arab ranks. They would like this to be based on sound principles conducive to the realization of the Arab hopes pinned on the meeting of the Congress. The Saudi Arabian Government maintain that the adoption of the following principles

would serve the common objective and realize the aspirations of the Arab nation:

1. The conclusion of an alliance between the Arab States designed to promote their co-operation and to provide for mutual assistance for the security of each and all of them; and to guarantee good-neighbourliness among them. A significant step in that direction had already been taken by the Kingdoms of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Yemen.
2. The freedom of each Arab State to conclude with any other Arab State whatever agreements might be designed to insure her security. Such agreements should not be detrimental to any other Arab State and should foster good-neighbourliness and fraternal co-operation.
3. Arab solidarity and alliance should be devoid of any aggressive designs towards any nation, state, or group of states. It should be aimed only at self-defence, the maintenance of peace, and the promotion of justice and freedom for all.
4. The prohibition of war between the Arab States. In case a disagreement arises between two Arab States over a new issue, or the failure of one party to honour its obligations towards

any other government which is a member in the alliance, attempts should be made to settle it through conciliation, mediation, or arbitration on just and equitable fraternal bases. Should either party decline to accept arbitration, or to abide by any award given, the other Arab States should advise and call upon him to admit what is right. Should that party become intransigent and resort to aggression, they may, after consultation with each other, decide on such action as would stop aggression and establish justice and equity in the Arab arena.

5. In order to avoid problems among the Arab States, it should be made clear from the start that the republican regimes in Syria and Lebanon shall be maintained, and the complete independence of the two states accepted by all.

6. The efforts aimed at the unification of culture and legislation between two Arab States and between them and the rest of the Arab countries have much to commend them. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia represents, however, a special case in view of her circumstances and the presence of the Holy Shrines in her territory. Saudi Arabia will, therefore, refrain from adopting any principle in education or legislation which might contravene the tenets and rules of Islam.

7. The Arab States, as members of one nation with common interests, should co-operate in strengthening their economics and promoting their commercial relations. This should not, however, deprive any state of her freedom to exercise her full control over her financial and economic affairs in accordance with her special circumstances and interests.

These are the principles which, in the view of the Saudi Arabian Government, should form the basis for the unity of Arab ranks. To facilitate the achievement of this sublime objective, I, in my capacity as a representative of my government and a member of the Preparatory Committee, approve the Protocol signed in Alexandria on 20 Shawwal 1363 (7th October 1944).

Knowing Your Excellency's care for the interests of the Arab nation, I have no doubt that these principles will have your support within the committees in charge of studying this issue, which is of interest to all Arabs.

With all my respects to your Excellency.

(signed) Yusuf Yassin

Source: Ahmed M. Gomaa, The Foundation of the League of Arab States: Wartime Diplomacy and International Arab Politics 1941 to 1945, London, 1977, pp. 275-276.

Appendix 3

Text of the Draft Pact of the Arab League proposed by the Political Subsidiary Committee (14th February - 3rd March 1945).

Draft Pact for the League of Arab States.

In order to implement the Alexandria Protocol dated 20 Shawwal 1363 (7th October 1944) and signed by the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Yemen, which had provided for the consolidation of the close relations and the numerous ties binding the Arab countries and the direction of these relations towards the welfare of all the Arab countries, the improvement of their conditions, the improvement of their conditions, the insuring of their future, and the realization of their hopes and aspirations.

And in response to Arab public opinion in all the Arab countries, and on the basis of respect for the independence and sovereignty of the states participating in the League,

The Contracting States have agreed on the following:

Article 1 The League of Arab States is composed of the independent Arab States which have signed this Pact, and of the other independent Arab States which would wish to join the League by depositing an application in the Permanent Secretariat-General, and

which the Council of the League may decide to accept in its first meeting after the submission of the application.

Article 2 The League shall have a Council whose task will be to achieve the realization of its objectives. The Council shall be composed of the representatives of the Arab States participating in the League on an equal footing and with one vote for each State regardless of the number of her representatives.

Article 3 The Council shall supervise the execution of agreements which these (member) States may conclude; hold periodical meetings designed to consolidate their ties; co-ordinate, in so far as is possible, their political plans in order to achieve their co-operation and to protect their independence and sovereignty from every aggression by suitable means; and supervise in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries.

The Council shall also determine the means of co-operating with the international bodies which may be created in the future in order to guarantee security and peace, and to enhance social, economic, and other relations for the general good.

Article 4 The Arab States participating in the League shall co-operate closely, with due regard to the organization and circumstances of each State, on the following matters:

- a. Economic and financial affairs, including commercial relations, customs, currency, and questions of agriculture and industry.
- b. Communication; this includes railroads, roads, aviation, navigation, telegraphs, and posts.
- c. Cultural affairs.
- d. Nationality, passports, visas, execution of judgements, and extradition of criminals.
- e. Social affairs.
- f. Health matters.

Article 5 For each of the matters listed in previous articles, there shall be set up a special committee composed of representatives of the member states of the League. These committees shall lay down the principles, and define the scope of co-operation. These shall be formulated in draft agreements, to be presented to the Council.

(The League) may co-operate in cultural, social, health, and other matters with the representatives of the local governments, or

bodies, or local elements, in all Arab countries. The Council shall determine the way by which these government, bodies, or elements shall be represented in the above-mentioned committees in order to realize thereby the national objectives included in the Preamble of this Pact.

Article 6 The permanent seat of the League of Arab States shall be established in Cairo. The Council may convene at any other place it may designate.

Article 7 The Council of the League shall convene in ordinary session twice a year, in March and in October. It shall convene in extraordinary session whenever the need arises, at the request of two member states of the League.

Article 8 The League shall have a permanent Secretariat-General, which shall consist of a Secretary-General, Assistant Secretaries, and an appropriate number of officials.

The Council of the League shall appoint the Secretary-General by a two-thirds majority vote. The Secretary-General shall be, at the same time, the Secretary of the Council.

The Annex names the first Secretary-General of the League. The Secretary-General shall, with the approval of the Council, appoint

the Assistant Secretaries and the necessary officials for the functioning of the League. The Council of the League shall establish an internal regulation for the functions of the Secretariat-General and matters related to the staff.

Article 9 The Secretary-General shall prepare the draft of the budget of the League and shall submit it to the Council for approval before the beginning of each fiscal year. The Council shall determine the share of each state in the expenses, and may reconsider the apportionment of expenses whenever necessary.

Article 10 The members of the Council of the League, as well as the members of the Committees, and the officials specified in the internal regulation, shall enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunity when engaged in the exercise of their functions. The Secretary-General shall have the rank of Ambassador and the Assistant Secretaries that of Ministers Plenipotentiary.

Buildings and other premises occupied by the organs of the League shall be inviolable.

Article 11 The first meeting of the Council shall be convened at the invitation of the head of the Egyptian Government. Thereafter, it shall be convened at the invitation of the Secretary-General. The representatives of the member states of the League shall in turn

assume the presidency of the Council at each of its ordinary sessions.

Article 12 In case of aggression, or threat of aggression, by a state against a member state of the League, the state which has been attacked or threatened with aggression alone may demand the immediate convocation of the Council. The Council shall, by unanimous decision, determine the measures necessary to repulse the aggression. If the aggressor is a member state, her vote shall not be counted in determining unanimity.

If, as a result of the attack, the government of the state attacked finds herself unable to communicate with the Council, the state's representative in the Council shall request the convocation of the Council for the purpose indicated in the foregoing paragraph. Should this representative be unable to communicate with the Council, any member state of the League shall have the right to request the convocation of the Council.

Article 13 Any resort to force in order to resolve disputes arising between two or more member states of the League is prohibited. If there should arise among them a difference which is referred by the disputants to the Council for settlement, the decision of the Council shall then be enforceable and obligatory. Any disagreements related to the state's independence, sovereignty, and territorial

integrity shall not be subject to arbitration.

The Council shall mediate in all differences which may threaten to lead to war between two member states, or a member state and another state, in order to reconcile them (i.e. the parties).

Article 14 States of the League which may desire to establish closer co-operation and stronger bonds than are provided by this Pact may conclude agreements to serve that end.

Treaties and agreements already concluded, or to be concluded in the future, between a member state and another state shall not be binding or restrictive upon other members.

Article 15 Each member state shall respect the systems of government established in the other member states of the League and regard them as the exclusive rights of those states. Each shall pledge to abstain from any action calculated to change established systems (of government).

Article 16 If a member state considers it in her interest to withdraw from the League, she shall have the right to do so provided she notifies the Council of the League of her intention to withdraw one year before such withdrawal is to go into effect. The Council of the League may consider any state which has failed to fulfil her

obligations under this Pact as having become separated from the League, this is to go into effect upon a unanimous decision of the (member) state, not counting the state concerned.

Article 17 Each member state shall deposit with the Secretariat-General one copy of every treaty or agreement concluded, or to be concluded, between herself and another member state, or a third state.

Article 18 Except in cases specifically mentioned in this Pact, a unanimous decision by the Council shall be binding on all member states. Its execution shall, however, take place in each state in accordance with her basic laws. Any majority decision by the Council shall be binding on those who have accepted it, and shall be implemented in each state in the manner stated above.

A majority vote by the Council shall, however, be sufficient for decisions on the following matters:

- a. Matters related to personnel.
- b. Adoption of the budget of the League.
- c. Establishment of the internal regulation for the Council, the Committees, and the Secretariat-General.
- d. Decisions to adjourn the sessions.

Article 19 This Pact may be amended with the consent of two-thirds of the states of the League. A state which does not accept such an amendment may withdraw as soon as the amendment comes into effect, without being bound by the provisions of Article 16 of this Pact.

Article 20 This Pact and its annexes shall be ratified according to the basic laws of the contracting states and of the states whose application to join will be accepted by the Council.

The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretariat-General of the Council, and the Pact shall be operative as regards each ratifying state fifteen days after the Secretary-General has received the instructions of ratification from four states.

Article 21 This Pact has been drawn up in Cairo in the Arabic language on _____, in one copy which shall be deposited in the safe keeping of the Secretariat-General of the Council. An identical copy shall be delivered to each state of the League.

Article 22 Until the Secretariat-General of the League has been established, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Egyptian Government shall perform the functions referred to in Article 20 and 21.

Annex I

Resolution Regarding Palestine

Considering the provisions of the Alexandria Protocol with regard to the special position of Palestine in the relation of her cause to peace and stability in the Arab world,

And since Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, included in the Treaty of Versailles of 1919, has recognised the independence of the Arab countries which ceased to be under the (sovereignty of the) Ottoman State. And since Palestine is one of these countries whose independence was recognized in the above-mentioned Covenant, which gives her a legitimate right to independence. And since the Preparatory Committee resolved unanimously on 1st October 1944 to allow a representative of the Palestine Arabs to participate in its meetings and functions, the Subsidiary Committee has therefore decided to ask the Preparatory Committee to recognize the right of Palestine to participate in the League of Independent Arab States on an equal footing with the founding (States).

Since Palestine has been unable so far, for compelling reasons, to exercise its recognized right to independence, and since the recognition of this right is still valid from the legal point of view and has not been changed in any way, the Committee therefore

suggests that the Council of the League should take charge of the selection of an Arab representative from Palestine to represent that state in the Council of the League until that country can achieve its independence.

Annex 2

Resolution Regarding the Arab Countries

Since the Alexandria Protocol has stipulated that the functions of the League shall include the supervision, in a general way, of the affairs and the interests of the Arab countries, and since this objective can only be achieved through co-operation with all these countries in all matters with possible means; the Subsidiary Committee therefore conveys to the Preparatory Committee its suggestion that a special annex should be added to the Pact of the League including the basis of this co-operation and enabling the Council to discharge its above-mentioned function.

Source: Ahmed M. Goma, The Foundation of the League of Arab States: Wartime Diplomacy and Inter-Arab Politics 1941 to 1945, London: Longman, 1977, pp. 289-293.

Appendix 4

Text of the Pact of the League of Arab States

His Excellency the President of the Syrian Republic;

His Royal Highness the Amir of Trans-Jordan;

His Majesty the King of Iraq;

His Majesty the King of Saudi Arabia;

His Excellency the President of the Lebanese Republic;

His Majesty the King of Egypt;

His Majesty the King of the Yemen.

Desirous of strengthening the close relations and numerous ties which link the Arab states;

And anxious to support and stabilize these ties upon a basis of respect for the independence and sovereignty of these states, and to direct their efforts towards the common good of all the Arab countries, the improvement of their status, the security of their future, the realization of their aspirations and hopes;

And responding to the wishes of Arab public opinion in all Arab lands;

Have agreed to conclude a Pact to that end and have appointed as

their representatives the persons whose names are listed hereinafter; who, after having exchanged their plenary powers which were found to be in good and due form, have agreed upon the following provision:

Article 1

The League of Arab States is composed of the independent Arab States which have signed this Pact.

Any independent Arab States has the right to become a member of the League. If it desires to do so, it shall submit a request which will be deposited with the Permanent Secretariat-General and submitted to the Council at the first meeting held after submission of the request.

Article 2

The League has as its purpose the strengthening of the relations between the member states; the co-ordination of their policies in order to achieve co-operation between them and to safeguard their independence and sovereignty; and a general concern with the affairs and interests of the Arab countries. It has also as its purpose the close co-operation of the member states, with due regard to the organization and circumstances of each state on the following

matters;

- A. Economic and financial affairs, including commercial relations, customs, currency, and questions of agriculture and industry.
- B. Communications; this includes railroads, aviation, navigation, telegraphs, and posts.
- C. Cultural affairs.
- D. Nationality, passports, visas, execution of judgements, and extradition of criminals.
- E. Social affairs.
- F. Health problems.

Article 3

The League shall possess a Council composed of the representatives of the member states of the League; each state shall have a single vote, irrespective of the number of its representatives.

It shall be the task of the Council to achieve the realization of the objectives of the League and to supervise the execution of agreements which the member states have concluded on the questions enumerated in the preceding article, or on any other questions.

It likewise shall be the Council's task to decide upon the means by

which the League is to co-operate with the international bodies to be created in the future in order to guarantee security and peace and regulate economic and social relations.

Article 4

For each of the question listed in Article 2 there shall be set up a special committee in which member states of the League shall be represented. These committees shall be charged with the task of laying down the principles and extent of co-operation. Such principles shall be formulated as draft agreements, to be presented to the Council for examination preparatory to their submission to the aforesaid states.

Representatives of the other Arab countries any take part in the work of the aforesaid committees. The Council shall determine the condition under which these representatives may be permitted to participate and the rules governing such representation.

Article 5

Any resort to force in order to resolve disputes arising between two or more member states of the League is prohibited. If there should arise among them a difference which does not concern a state's independence, sovereignty, or territorial integrity, and if the

parties to the dispute have recourse to the Council for the settlement of this difference, the decision of the Council shall then be enforceable and obligatory.

In such a case, the states between whom the difference has arisen shall not participate in the deliberations and decisions of the Council.

The Council shall mediate in all differences which threaten to lead to war between two member states, or a member state and a third state, with a view to bringing about their reconciliation.

Decisions of arbitration and mediation shall be taken by majority vote.

Article 6

In case of aggression or threat of aggression by one state against a member state, the state which has been attacked or threatened with aggression may demand the immediate convocation of the Council.

The Council shall be unanimous in determining the measures necessary to repulse the aggression. If the aggressor is a member state, his vote shall not be counted in determining unanimity.

If as a result of the attack, the government of the state attacked finds itself unable to communicate with the Council, that state's representative in the Council shall have the right to request the convocation of the Council for the purpose indicated in the foregoing paragraph. In the event that this representative is unable to communicate with the Council, any member state of the League shall have the right to request the convocation of the Council.

Article 7

Unanimous decisions of the Council shall be binding upon all member states of the League; majority decisions shall be binding only upon those states which have accepted them.

In either case the decisions of the Council shall be enforced in each member state according to its respective basic laws.

Article 8

Each member state shall respect the systems of government established in the other member states and regard them as the exclusive concerns of those states. Each shall pledge to abstain from any action calculated to change established systems of government.

Article 9

States of the League which desire to establish closer co-operation and stronger bonds than are provided by this Pact may conclude agreements to that end.

Treaties and agreements already concluded or to be concluded in the future between a member state and another state shall not be binding or restrictive upon other members.

Article 10

The permanent seat of the League of Arab States is established in Cairo. The Council may, however, assemble at any other place it may designate.

Article 11

The Council of the League shall convene in ordinary session twice a year, in March and in October. It shall convene in extraordinary session upon the request of two member states of the League whenever the need arises.

Article 12

The League shall have a permanent Secretariat-General , which shall consist of a Secretary-General, Assistant Secretaries, and an appropriate number of officials,

The Council of the League shall appoint the Secretary-General by a majority of two-thirds of the States of the League. The Secretary-General, with the approval of the Council, shall appoint the Assistant Secretaries and the principal officials of the League.

The Council of the League shall establish an administrative regulation for the functions of the Secretariat-General and matters relating to the staff.

The Secretary-General shall have the rank of Ambassador and the Assistant Secretaries that of Ministers Plenipotentiary.

The first Secretary-General of the League is named in an Annex to this Pact.

Article 13

The Secretary-General shall prepare the draft of the budget of the League and shall submit it to the Council for approval before the

beginning of each fiscal year.

The Council shall fix the share of the expenses to be borne by each state of the League. This share may be reconsidered if necessary.

Article 14

The members of the Council of the League as well as members of the committees and the officials who are to be designated in the administrative regulation shall enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunity when engaged in the exercise of their functions.

Article 15

The first meeting of the Council shall be convened at the invitation of the head of the Egyptian Government. Thereafter it shall be convened at the invitation of the Secretary-General.

The representatives of the member states of the League shall in turn assume the presidency of the Council at each of its ordinary sessions.

Article 16

Except in cases specifically indicated in this Pact, a majority vote

of the Council shall be sufficient to make enforceable decisions on the following matters:

- A. Matters relating to personnel.
- B. Adoption of the budget of the League.
- C. Establishment of the administrative regulations for the Council, the committees, and the Secretariat-General.
- D. Decisions to adjourn the sessions.

Article 17

Each member State of the League shall deposit with the Secretariat-General one copy of every treaty or agreement concluded or to be concluded in the future between itself and another member state of the League or a third state.

Article 18

If a member state contemplates withdrawal from the League, it shall inform the Council of its intentions one year before such withdrawal is to go into effect.

The Council of the League may consider any state which fails to fulfil its obligations under this Pact as having become separated from the League, this to go into effect upon a unanimous decision of

the states, not counting the state concerned.

Article 19

This Pact may be amended with the consent of two-thirds of the state belonging to the League, especially in order to make firmer and stronger the ties between the member states, to create an Arab Tribunal of Arbitration,* and to regulate the relations of the League with any international bodies to be created in the future to guarantee security and peace.

Final action on an amendment cannot be taken prior to the session following the session in which the motion was initiated.

If a state does not accept such an amendment it may withdraw at such time as the amendment goes into effect, without being bound by the provisions of the preceding article.

* The Arabic text is "Mahkamat' Adl 'Arabiya" meaning literally "An Arab Court of Justice".

Article 20

This Pact and its Annexes shall be ratified according to the basic laws in force among the High Contracting Parties.

The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretariat-General of the Council and the Pact shall become operative as regards each ratifying state fifteen days after the Secretary-General has received the instruments of ratification from four states.

This Pact has been drawn up in Cairo in the Arabic language on this 8th day of Rai' II, thirteen hundred and sixty-four (22nd March 1945), in one copy which shall be deposited in the safe keeping of the Secretariat-General.

An identical copy shall be delivered to each state of the League.

Here follow the signatures:

1. Annex Regarding Palestine

Since the termination of the last great war the rule of the Ottoman Empire over the Arab countries, among them Palestine, which had become detached from that Empire, has come to an end. She has come to be autonomous, not subordinate to any other state.

The Treaty of Lausanne proclaimed that her future was to be settled by the parties concerned.

However, even though she was as yet unable to control her own affairs, the Covenant of the League of Nations in 1919 made provision for a regime based upon recognition of her independence.

Her international existence and independence in the legal sense cannot, therefore, be questioned, any more than could be the independence of the other Arab countries.

Although the outward manifestations of this independence have remained obscured for reasons beyond her control, this should not be allowed to interfere with her participation in the work of the Council of the League.

The nations signatory of the Pact of the League are therefore of the opinion that, considering the special circumstances of Palestine, and until that country can effectively exercise its independence, the Council of the League should take charge of the selection of an Arab representative from Palestine to take part in its work.

2. Annex Regarding Co-operation With Countries Which Are Not Members of the Council of the League

Whereas the member states of the League will have to deal in

the Council as well as in the committees with matters which will benefit and affect the Arab World at large;

And whereas the Council has to take into account the aspirations of the Arab countries which are not members of the Council and has to worked towards their realization;

Now therefore, it particularly behoves the states signatory to the Pact of the Arab League to enjoin the Council of the League, when considering the admission of those countries to participation in the committees referred to in the Pact, that it should do its utmost to co-operate with them; and furthermore, that it should spare no effort to learn their needs and understand their aspirations and hopes; and that it should work thenceforth for their best interests and the safeguarding of their future with all the political means at its disposal.

3. Annex Regarding the Appointment of a Secretary-General of the League

The States Signatory to this Pact have agreed to appoint His Excellency Abd-al-Rahman' Azzam Bey to be Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.

This appointment is made for two years. The Council of the League shall hereafter determine the new regulations for the Secretariat-General.

Source: Hussein A. Hassouna, The League of Arab States and Regional Disputes : A Study of Middle East Conflicts, New York: Oceanan Publications Inc., Dobbs Ferry, 1975, pp. 403-409.

Appendix 5

Arab League Member States

Name of Member States	Date of Independence	Date of Joining League	Capital
Algeria	5 July 1962	16 August 1962	El-Djazair
Bahrain	1 September 1971	11 September 1971	Manama
Egypt*	28 February 1922	22 March 1945	Cairo
Iraq	15 October 1920	22 March 1945	Baghdad
Jibuti	27 June 1977	4 September 1977	Jibuti
Jordan	25 May 1946	22 March 1945	Amman
Kuwait	19 June 1961	20 July 1961	Kuwait
Lebanon	22 November 1946	22 March 1945	Beirut
Libya	24 December 1952	28 March 1953	Tripoli
Mauritania	28 November 1961	26 November 1973	Nouakchott
Morocco	18 November 1956	1 October 1958	Rabat
Oman	18 November 1970	29 September 1971	Muscat
Palestine	n/a	9 September 1976	Jerusalem
Qatar	1 September 1971	11 September 1971	Doha
Saudi Arabia	23 September 1932	22 March 1945	Riyadh

* Membership suspended on 31 March 1979.

n/a : not available.

Arab League Member States (Cont'd)

Name of Member States	Date of Independence	Date of Joining League	Capital
Somalia	1 September 1971	14 February 1974	Mogadishu
Sudan	1 January 1956	19 January 1956	Khartoum
Syria	17 April 1946	22 March 1945	Dmascus
Tunisia	20 March 1956	1 October 1958	Tunis
UAE	2 December 1971	6 December 1971	Abu Dhabi
Yemen AR	n/a	22 March 1945	Sanaa
Yemen PDR	30 November 1967	12 December 1967	Aden

n/a : not available.

Source: Arab British Commerce, (League of Arab States, Special Issue, March 1983), p. 11.

Footnotes

- 1 For more information about the Arab Unity, see Fayes A. Sayegh, Arab Unity : Hope and Fulfilment, New York, N.Y.: The Devin-Adair Company, 1958; and Edward Latham, Crisis in the Middle East, New York, N.Y.: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1952, pp. 154-160.
- 2 Cecil A. Hourani, "The Arab League in perspective", The Middle East Journal, 1, No. 2 (April 1947), p. 129. See also Sidney B. Fay, "Egypt and the Arab League," Current History, Vol. 13 (August 1947), pp. 82-87; and Anwar Chejne, "Egyptian Attitudes toward Pan-Arabism", Middle East Journal, Vol. II (Summer 1957), pp. 253-268.
- 3 See Ahmed M. Gomaa, The Foundation of the League of Arab States : Wartime Diplomacy and the Inter-Arab Politics, 1941-1945, London: Longman, 1977, pp. 165-167.
- 4 For more information about Ibn Saud and the consultations, see Ibid, pp. 172-179.
- 5 T. J. Anderson, "The Arab League", World Affairs Interpreter, 23, No. 3, (Autumn 1952), p. 245; and Majid Khadduri, "Towards and Arab Union : The League of Arab States", The American

Political Science Review, 40 (February 1946), p. 95.

- 6 Ahmed M. Gomaa, The Foundation of the League of Arab States :
Wartime Diplomacy and the Inter-Arab Politics, 1941-1945,
p.49.
- 7 The Conference was attended by : Mustafa Nahhas, Prime
Minister of Egypt; Nuri al-Said, Prime Minister of Iraq;
Tawfic Abul-Huda, Prime Minister of Transjordan; Riad al-Sulh,
Prime Minister of Lebanon; Saadallah Jabri, Prime Minister of
Syria; Yusef Yassin, representative of Saudi Arabia; Sayyid
Hussein Kibsi, representative of Yemen and Musa al-Alami,
representative of the Palestinians.
- 8 See Sidney Nettleton Fisher, The Middle East : A History,
London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1960, pp. 571-572.
- 9 Majid Khadduri, "The Arab League as a Regional Arrangement",
American Journal of International Law, 40 (1940), pp. 762-763;
and Ahmed M. Gomaa, The Foundation of the League of Arab
States : Wartime Diplomacy and the Inter-Arab Politics, 1941-
1945, pp. 69-70.
- 10 G. E. Kirk, "Cross-Currents within the Arab League : The
Greater Syria Plan", World Today, 4 (January 1948), pp. 15-

- 25; and Esmond Wright, "The Greater Syria Project in Arab Politics, World Affairs, 5 No. 3, (July 1951), p. 319.
- 11 Majid Khadduri, "The Arab League as a Regional Arrangement", American Journal of International Law, 40 (1946), p. 93.
- 12 G. E. Kirk, "Iraq, Egypt and the Arab League", The World Today, 11, No. 4 (April 1955), p. 146.
- 13 T. R. Little, The Arab League : A Reassessment, The Middle East Journal, 10 (Spring 1956), p. 145.
- 14 T. J. Anderson, "The Arab League", World Affairs Interpreter, p. 256.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 T. R. Little, "The Arab League : A Reassessment", The Middle East Journal, p. 140.
- 17 Ibid., p. 141.
- 18 Malcolm H. Kerr, The Arab Cold War, 1958-1964 : A Study of Ideology and Politics, London: Oxford University Press 1965, pp. 38-39.

- 19 See Sirag Zamzami, The Origins of the League of Arab States and its Activities within the Member States 1942-1970, Claremont, Col.: Claremont University Press, 1977, p. 358.
- 20 Roger Louis, The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951, Arab Nationalism, The United States, and Post War Imperialism London: Oxford University Press, 1984, pp. 128-146; See also "Britain and the Arab League", Nation, Vol. 164 (17th May, 1947), p. 600; Neville Barbour, "Britain and the Rise of Arab Nationalism", Fortnightly, Vol. 176 (July 1951), pp. 439-445; and Elie Kedourie, "Pan-Arabism and British Policy", Political Quarterly, Vol. 28 (April-June 1957), pp. 137-148.
- 21 Mohammad Abdul Aziz, "The Origin and Birth of the Arab League", Revue Egyptienne, November 1955, pp. 47-49; see also the Times (London: Mary 30, 1941), p.s.; and I. H. Baqai, "The Pan-Arab League", India Quarterly, Vol. 2, No. 2 (April-June 1946), p. 146.
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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the intent of this study to identify the factors which have weakened foreign policy decisions. The hypothesis has been proven in the following conclusions :

1. The foreign policy decision making process of Saudi Arabia is based on the need to keep the monarchy in power; retention of Islamic principles; the security of the Kingdom, and stability of the society.

On 17th February 1948, Imam Yahya was assassinated outside Sanaa in a Coup detat. Abdullah al-Wazir proclaimed himself the new Imam of the Yemen. He asked Ibn Saud to recognize him as the legitimate ruler of Yemen. In keeping with his foreign policy to keep the monarchy in power and the security of the Kingdom, Ibn Saud was horrified at the murder of a fellow monarch and the takeover and eschewed al-Wazir's request for recognition.

Saudi Arabia foreign policy has always been opposed to the establishment or growth of revolutionary socialism on the Arabian Peninsula, recognizing the danger that any such trend poses for its own autocratic and oppressive socio-political system. Consequently, her foreign policy always assumed the leading counter-revolutionary role in the area, supporting the royalists against the republicans in North Yemen (1962-

1970), the South Arabian League (SAL) against the National Liberation Front (NLF), and the Sultanate against the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf (PFLOAG) in Oman. Saudi foreign policy-makers has also actively campaigned against Yemen unity, fearing that a united Yemen would pose a serious national security threat to the Kingdom.

However, Saudi foreign policy-makers reacted to the Arab national ideology of both Nasserism and Ba'thism by emphasizing its foreignness to the Arab-Islamic tradition and by promoting even more ardently a pan-Islamic view of the world. In the heat of the confrontation between Nasserist pan-Arabism and Saudi pan-Islam in 1964, King Faisal called for an "Islamic Pact" and tried to use it against Nasser's pan-Arabism, Arab-socialism, and against any alien ideology to "Islam" in the Middle East. (See Chapters, Yemen Arab Republic, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Iraq and Egypt).

2. Foreign policy decisions made within this framework has necessitated decisions to be made on a crisis to crisis basis, foreign policy makers to be reactive rather than pro-active.

Despite their wealth the Saudis are not powerful. Aware of their own limitations and vulnerabilities, the Saudis always behave reactive and cautiously in foreign policy. They are not leaders, at best, they are consensus builders.

3. The foreign policy decisions are not consistent, but are made based on ideologies influenced by Islam.

In theory, Saudi Arabia's foreign policy is conceived in the minds of a group of men who subscribe to Islamic fundamental values and beliefs, as a simple but forceful ideology that has contributed most to Saudi perceptions of international relations and foreign policy priorities. From such an ideology has come the concept of a bi-polar world that adapts to the present international environment. In the classical Islamic version, the world is divided into the monotheists and atheists. It is easy enough to place communism in the latter category and the Muslim world and the West in the former of this paradigm. As protectors of Islam's two holiest places, Mecca and Medina, the Saudi leadership feels a special responsibility to maintain the religious as well as political integrity of the Muslim world and believe the West led by the United States has a similar responsibility to the political integrity of the entire "Free World". Thus, the Saudi government's staunch opposition to communism, internationally and regionally, has contributed to a foreign policy based on close co-operation with the U.S. and other Western powers and a refusal to open any serious dialogue with the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, or other Communist countries. Saudi Arabia has always believed that communism and other related ideologies (i.e. Socialism, Zionism) are inimical to Islam, a theme that ran through official speeches and pronouncements of the late King Faisal, the framer of Saudi foreign policy. (See Chapters United States and

Soviet Union).

4. Foreign policy decisions made within this framework have weakened the potential the Kingdom could have effected in relations with other countries.

In practice, however, there exists considerable speculation as to whether Islamic ideology per se constitutes the core of Saudi Arabia's national interests. At times the Saudi leadership makes the use of Islamic ideology merely to justify its policy or behaviour in familiar Islamic terms which is acceptable to the public. By using Islam in foreign policy weakened the potential the Kingdom could have effected in relations with Egypt, Iraq, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Arab League.

5. The development of a stronger foreign policy based on planning and on a global perspective could give the Kingdom more influence over the stability of the Middle East.

It has become increasingly reported that the gap between the Kingdom's official posture as an Islamic state, and daily reality as a capitalistic state, is causing social tensions. The problems of the Saudi foreign policy-maker in coping with change and managing national and international behaviour are serious and complex and cannot be solved in any simple way. To illustrate the regional problem for the Saudi policy-

maker, it would be appropriate to review the response to Prince Fahd's eight-point plan for the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict presented in Autumn 1981.

It must be noted that this plan deviated from the usual pattern of Saudi behaviour in inter-Arab affairs, which was to avoid clear-cut public identification with any country of camp, and to work toward mediation and consensus-building. It has been the only effective way the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been able to maintain its relationship with all Arab governments.

In the fall of 1981, the Kingdom departed from the diplomacy of consensus-building and submitted the Fahd plan to the eleventh Arab Summit. The plan divided the conference, not because of its content, but its planning and timing. In other words, Saudi foreign policy-makers failed to make a systematic study of the context of the conference, its timing, the objectives and the influence of supporters and critics. Its biggest failing was the lack of tailoring of Saudi Arabia's capabilities to its objectives. This failure meant that Saudi foreign policy-makers did not evaluate the chances of success or failure for the move, or did they decide whether and at for what time to submit the proposal. Obviously, the science of planning and managing of foreign policy was lacking.

This lack is significant because it reflects the problems of both the

Saudi State and its foreign policy, which are essentially problems of adaption to a new context at the levels of both social development and foreign policy. It is necessary for the Saudi State and Saudi foreign policy-makers to reflect on the overall changes, grasp the pace and direction, and adjust policy. It is through this political process of adaption that oil power could be transformed from cash to capabilities, and these capabilities could be used to plan and manage stronger foreign policy.

By tradition and history, the Saudis have not been well prepared to conduct the kind of complex foreign policy that is required today. A cautious, reactive, often secretive policy making process is ill adapted to the world of oil diplomacy, arms races, Arab organizations, Arab Israeli clashes, and superpowers rivalry.

Gradually, the Saudis have begun to develop a foreign policy bureaucracy, an intelligence service, an aid program, a military establishment and an oil policy. But crises still catch the regime poorly prepared. Military modernization has not produced much usable strength.

The future of Saudi Arabia depends on its relations with other nations. The Saudis are more qualified to deal with inter-Arab politics with other Islamic countries than they are with other nations, particularly the superpowers. The existing style of foreign policy making lacks flexibility, and has not prepared the nation to meet the many changes

taking place in the Middle East and the world. The style of making decisions often makes it difficult for other countries to work with the government, usually to the disadvantage of the Kingdom.

The position of Saudi Arabia differs from that of any other nation. It plays a multi-faceted role as leader in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, member of the United Nations, the Arab League, Gulf Co-operation Council, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, etc. The quantity of oil reserves makes it important to almost every industrialized and third world countries. In addition, because the holy cities of Mecca and Medina are within its borders, it has an obligation to protect these shrines, and promote the religion.

Geographically, the Kingdom borders on radial states such as Iraq, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and militant neighbours such as Iran and Israel. The history of continual unrest in the region is often flamed by the conflict between the two major sects of Islam, the Shi'ites and Sunnis. The people of Saudi Arabia are primarily of the Sunni sect, while the Shi'ites are the majority in countries such as Iran and Iraq. The major conflict that places Saudi Arabia in a very vulnerable position, is the fact that the holy shrines are within the Kingdom's borders, and there are those who believe these shrines should be controlled by the Shi'ites.

Another factor which has had a strong influence on Saudi Arabia's foreign

policy is the hostility toward communism. The Saudis see communism as being diametrically opposed to their way of life because it is a godless society. The Saudis have poured millions of dollars into countries to lessen the influence of communism in other Arab nations. Millions of dollars have also been given to Islamic countries for their development, based on Islamic principles.

The conclusion is that these factors all contribute to many potential problems for the government, today and in the future. For these reasons, the weaknesses in Saudi Arabian foreign policy could have far reaching effects, internally and externally. Internally, the regime in Saudi Arabia and the society are inseparable. This is not a new phenomena, but can be traced to ancient tribal times when the leader gave personal direction to the society, and the society was dependent upon him for survival. Today the population of the Kingdom is made up of many different tribal groups. Although tribal distinctions are less today than they were in the past, the culture is still strongly influenced by tribal relationships.

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