

Saudi-American Forum



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In the Eye of Yet Another Storm: US-Saudi Relations and the Iraqi Campaign

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Executive Summary

The profound challenges to US-Saudi Arab relations engendered by the horrors of September 11th, 2001 have been amplified by the Bush Administration's policy on Iraq. Historically, this relationship has been highly effective founded on a mutual appreciation of strategic interdependencies and maintained by each country's political and business elites. But the shocks of 9/11 and the Iraqi invasion on, respectively, the US and Saudi populaces has interjected US and Saudi public opinion powerfully into the relationship's calculus. The uninformed and inaccurate picture painted of the Kingdom by the US media has produced fundamental misunderstandings, not the reverse, creating an environment of distrust. In the current context, when these two societies manifest such antipathy towards the other, there is the unwelcome and unnerving prospect that the shared strategic vision will prove insufficient to maintain the heretofore close and beneficial ties. If an emerging political aphasia, induced in no small part by US policy, does indeed trump the strategic understanding, then one of the key objectives of Usama bin Laden will have been achieved. In addition to potentially undermining US-Saudi ties, US policy towards the region is marked by a painful irony: unilateral acts coupled to democratic rhetoric underpin the widely held view in the Kingdom that the US will say one thing, and do another. That inconsistency resonates throughout the Gulf and it too can only aid and abet America's enemies.

Verily he is in danger who is satisfied with his own viewⁱ

Introduction

In the wake of the Iraqi invasion, the regional state that may experience the most dramatic realignment in relations is the one that has been most closely and continuously allied with the United States, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is reasonable to ask, of course, whether matters have not moved inexorably in that direction in the wake of the September 11 attacks and the resulting assessment of Saudi Arabia in the American mainstream media that, in general, has been overly negative, too often uninformed and, at times, seemingly provided with malicious intent. Much of this commentary questioned the Kingdom's value as an ally, indeed whether it was an ally at all, and explicitly called for a reassessment of the relationship. A prevalent, near dominant, view has been established in public commentary that the Kingdom, rather than being

an effective partner in terror's eradication, has contributed directly or indirectly to terror's existence.

Nonetheless, the Bush Administration has acted, in the wake of the September's horrors and in the face of this media critique, to underline the importance, in general, of US-Saudi ties and highlight, in particular, its overall assistance in contending with the trans-national threat represented by al Qa'idah and Islamist terror. Iraq, to the surprise of many, was identified as the most pressing regional target in addressing terror. Yet, with no little irony, the Bush Administration's public articulation of its policy on Iraq compromises the divergent approaches towards these two countries and, in so doing, may serve to reinforce the US media's conception of the Kingdom.

President Bush has proffered the American public an intoxicating mixture of fantasy and fear to promote the Iraqi campaign. The fantasy that legitimated the invasion is the wholesale transformation of Iraqi politics into a democracy. At the same time, continual reference to an understandable fear of political terror manifested so horribly on September 11, 2001 propelled the insistence for war. In the world according to President Bush, it is the spread of democracy through force of arms that alone provides the potent policy that will eradicate terror and ensure US security. While the physically devastating consequences of the Iraqi campaign have unquestionably amplified the already tense US relationship with the Kingdom, inflaming anti-American attitudes among Saudi Arabs, it is this logic that arguably is the most threatening to US-Saudi ties. With the Bush Administration trumpeting success in Iraq, an overarching concern for the Kingdom now must be how it 'fits' in a regional order 'inspired' by American power.

What Can We Be Thinking?

The American public is very much caught between an Administration position that continues to acknowledge the strategic value to close and positive ties to the Kingdom, on the one hand, and the swirl of overwhelmingly negative media reports, conjecture and editorializing that can be so powerful in framing the debate about the Kingdom, on the other. The Saudi government's anxieties at the nature, and oftentimes ferocity, of the assessment of the Kingdom prompted it to enter the public fray in a concerted manner in 2002. But the Saudi effort to influence general opinion is likely to have enjoyed only limited impact in resolving a very contentious debate in its favor. One problem with the Saudi demarche was its reliance on public relations firms.

It is arguably the case that the discussion of the Kingdom in the media reveals as much about the US public's own deeply seated attitudes and anxieties, and the manner by which public perceptions are constructed in the US' political system, than it reveals the Kingdom's realities. With little risk of exaggeration, the Kingdom remains an unknown, enigmatic place to the vast majority of Americans, and the socio-economic, political and cultural issues that are relevant to any informed discussion on terrorism notoriously complex. Grappling with such issues is by definition problematic and opens the American public to the strong possibility of acquiescing to a biased deciphering of the Kingdom.

Polling of American attitudes on the Kingdom taken in the first couple of months after 9/11 are seemingly inconsistent and appear to be subject to pronounced swings indicating, perhaps, the

tremendous initial uncertainty among the public about the reasons behind the event. But as 2002 progressed, there was a pronounced movement towards a much more negative reading of the country indicating that the media barrage against the Kingdom - embracing much speculation and innuendo - was having an effect.ⁱⁱ

While the results of any of the above polls should be greeted with a high degree of caution, they do strongly suggest that public opinion on the Kingdom can and was being molded by the media. With that in mind, the danger of a media ill-equipped to aid the public in competently addressing a topic of fundamental national concern cannot be overstated.

The Limits of Public Knowledge

Despite America's long history of commercial and political engagement with Saudi Arabia, the US public is not to any notable degree familiar with the country. Although work by Zogby International has shown, interestingly, that American and Saudi nationals rank 'value categories', comprising such matters as the importance of family and education, very similarly, it remains all too easy for each to consider the other as inherently different.

The media reporting on the Kingdom is often of limited or dubious quality offered to an American public who are not, in general, well equipped to filter the information. Nor, of course, can one exclude the overall political context from influencing the nature of the information available in the media. The Bush Administration has not done itself any favors in trying to quell the media's attacks on Saudi Arabia, and minimize the resultant impact on US opinion, by its insistence in this *war on terror* countries are either *with us or against us*. This stance does little at all to invite an approach to understanding the Kingdom and interpreting its policy positions that is sensitive to complexities.

It is also very important to understand how the shock of 9/11 has conditioned the US public's perception of the outside world and their receptiveness to information on the conduct of US foreign policy. It has become a truism within the United States that 9/11 changed the world. While such hyperbole accurately captures the wrenching emotional impact of the horrors of that day, it overlooks the fact that such terrorism was long in gestation, conceived out of a commingling of persistent realities and a perception of the world profoundly influenced by a radical Islamic ideology that draws on deep roots. Although the world did not change with 9/11, America's understanding of it did.

The merciless slaughter of so many Americans in that terrorist attack is understood among the US public, and rightly so, as totally unjustified. But this posture has tended to undercut a willingness among the general public to consider whether and to what degree US policy may have been a factor in framing the perpetrators' vision of the world and catalyzing their act. The distinction between understanding and justifying was lost in the revulsion; for most Americans, to look for answers in what the US may have done is to tread precariously close to somehow legitimizing the horror that took the lives of the innocent. The widely held refusal to countenance the idea that the US may in any way have contributed to 9/11 was evident in New York City's rejection of a sizable donation by the Saudi prince and financial entrepreneur Waleed bin Talal bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud for the rebuilding of the city. The prince was rebuffed

for, in offering these funds, he made reference to the immense difficulties that have long afflicted the Middle East and the importance of the US role in resolving them.

Out of 9/11 came a distinct predilection to locate the genesis of the attack exclusively in what the US is conceived to be - inherently good possessing a strong and desirable society - not in what we do. In an important way, the death of innocents does appear to have had the effect of 'sanctifying' in the US public's eyes America's role abroad. It has become something approaching an article of faith that the essence of the problem with our disruptive and dangerous encounter with the Middle East must reside in the failing of others. Without a doubt, the US media's take on the Kingdom outlined below both reflects and reinforces this predisposition. It can therefore readily have the effect of aiding any policy that intends to reshape the US' historic approach to the Kingdom.

The Media and The Message

The overwhelming, somewhat hysteric, impression conveyed by a review of US media coverage of the Kingdom since 9/11 is of a dysfunctional state struggling to govern a society riven by economic difficulties, demographic challenges, and social contradictions. The conclusion, either implied or explicit, is that the political order is on the verge of collapse, unable to offer viable solutions to the complex of problems, desperately embracing short term, tactical and untenable adjustments to retain its hold on power, inattentive to the long-term, destabilizing ramifications. The very nature of the political order compromises its ability to act: it is taken to be inherently corrupt, egregiously repressive, and inextricably linked to a narrow, reactionary and violent-prone understanding of Islam. Accordingly, the Saudi government is experiencing a tremendous and unavoidable build-up of societal pressures and, in order to preclude a domestic eruption of anomie, the government has taken to 'exporting' and 'buying off' their key problem - marginalized individuals like Usama bin Laden imbued with an intolerant ideology - so that the havoc they wreck will occur outside of the Kingdom. Saudi Arabia is, in essence, understood as the Taliban with oil, backward, despotic and promoting terror.ⁱⁱⁱ

This overall approach may vary in degree depending on the media outlet, but it varies little in substance.^{iv} Reading the media, one could easily conclude that the Kingdom is a failed state whose foreign policy is that of a 'rogue,' a polity that acts against the interests of the US and of international order. The Kingdom's attitude towards its relationship with the US is perceived as grounded in hypocrisy: enjoying, indeed entreating, US military support in the region while secretly conspiring with the US' terrorist enemies. (There is no little irony, of course, in the fact that the Kingdom stands accused of hypocrisy by both UBL and the US media.) The inescapable conclusion is that the sooner the US revamps its relations with the Kingdom, the better.

There is little debate within the media about this understanding of the Kingdom; the view has become almost doctrinaire. Obviously, the uncontested repetition of a view can promote its acceptance and credibility among the US public. Why the view resonates and avoids significant challenge is almost certainly due in part to factors that have nothing to do with its intrinsic soundness. The current impulse to think poorly of the Kingdom is, of course, very much a function of 9/11; with fifteen of the nineteen hijackers identified as Saudi nationals, the whole country suffers with guilt by association. It is accepted, *a priori*, that something must be rotten in

the Kingdom. The dominance of this view also suggests that a media without a well-grounded familiarity with something as complex and enigmatic as the Kingdom can be held hostage to 'insights' and 'analyses' proffered by commentators and organizations that have a particular policy agenda to peddle.

It is worth recognizing that some of the most extreme critiques on the Kingdom are carried by publications (*The Wall Street Journal*, *The Weekly Standard*, the *National Review*) that are closely associated with *neo-conservative* thinking on foreign policy. (The most scurrilous assessment of the Kingdom was given to a quasi-governmental agency, The Defense Policy Review Board, a bastion of the neo-conservative approach to policy.) It is also possible that an inclination to question the inherent viability of the Kingdom emanates from generalized unwillingness within the US to accept on its own terms a political structure that is monarchical, legitimized by religion and enforces social and legal strictures that strike many in the US as simply unfair or, indeed, grotesque.

But the problems with this pervasive assessment go well beyond such *ad hominem* issues. First and foremost it is untenable because it imposes a false correspondence between the perpetrators of 9/11 and the Kingdom. The ideology that drives al Qa'idah's operations is decidedly not that of the Kingdom. Equally, their objectives differ dramatically: the Kingdom has historically demonstrated a commitment to stability and order in the international system while al Qa'idah has manifestly not. Some would argue that it is precisely the stability of the Kingdom's status quo that is at issue: its autocratic nature calls forth rebellion. But the indigenous political challenges to the political order are not, it seems, directed essentially against the political structure and the House of Saud's dominance but overarching public concern with two areas, one internal the other external: the equitable distribution of social benefits through the government; and the government's association with US foreign policy goals that are seen as unjust. It appears to be a widely shared view among Saudi nationals that the country's political coherence is a positive consequence of Al Saud rule and such rule can indeed act for the Kingdom's benefit if exercised properly.

With that latter point in mind, the charge of 'corruption' presents itself as a serious issue, particularly within an economy that contends with a real growth rate that is insufficient to accommodate substantial demographic pressure. But it is important to separate issues of 'corruption' from that of 'patronage.' In the Kingdom's economy the circulation of oil rents is a central economic function. The same type of activity can have widely differing effects and will be perceived, therefore in diametrically opposed ways: 'patronage' is a beneficial distribution of the rents to the wider society ensuring order and stability; 'corruption' occurs when the rents serve no broad social purpose and their distribution is primarily subverted to the end of personal aggrandizement. Clearly, a rentier economy and a hierarchical political order can too readily enable if not promote 'corruption.' Within the Kingdom there can be no doubt that national income has been diverted for 'corrupt' purposes undercutting broad economic objectives and jeopardizing the perception of the political order's integrity. What is equally important to note, however, is that senior members of the House, and Crown Prince Abdullah stands out in this regard, recognize the importance of the issue, and are struggling with the problem of identifying and eliminating financial flows that do not advance social goals. The point to stress is that the system itself should not be dismissed or condemned outright due to problems, even if persistent.^v

The media makes a great deal out of what it regards as the Kingdom's 'double game,'^{vi} seeing this as a defining characteristic of the country's relationship with the US. But what has too readily been promoted as a 'double game' would be more appropriately approached as a manifestation of the Kingdom's 'double bind.' The founder of the modern Saudi state, Ibn Saud, pursued a two-pronged approach in reestablishing his House's preeminence: defending an extremely literalist and purist understanding of the Islamic revelation that arose in Najd in the 18th century - an objective that legitimized his House's claim to power - while pursuing pragmatic and beneficial relations with external powers and their material strengths - an objective that strengthened his hand against internal opponents. His guiding principle, as he was wont to say, was "our Faith and your Iron."^{vii} The oil industry was the ideal source of revenue for this goal; it was an economic pursuit that produced sizable revenues for his polity without demanding any dramatic socio-economic changes to the indigenous way of life and minimized broad based or intrusive contact of his people with the outside world. Wealth came directly to the Privy Purse - enabling his state to exert considerable economic control along with his political domination - and 'contamination' with the external world was limited.

Ibn Saud positioned his House to be the interface between the Kingdom and the world; protecting the authenticity of the Faith while working to limit contact with the outside world and, when necessary, moderating any resultant resistance.^{viii} Dealing with the two 'worlds' in separate fashion was an effective tactic when the social realities of the Peninsula remained for the most part insulated from external factors. But with virtually every passing year since Ibn Saud's death 50 years ago, the tactic confronted increasing challenge. The close and mutually reinforcing connection between the traditional Faith, as expressed by the senior Islamic authorities in the Kingdom, and Power, as applied by the senior members of the House, may have the appearance today of one compromising the other. The demands of Power as understood by the House is seen by some as negating a commitment to the Faith, while Faith's historic allegiance to Power as understood by the traditional 'ulama is seen by others as rendering the Faith suspect. And it is in that divide within the Kingdom between Faith and Power, that Usama bin Laden (UBL) and Al Qa'idah seek to operate.

The media, with their attention riveted on the appearance of a 'double game', presume that it is the essence of Saudi governance and conclude that the 'center cannot hold.' If such a tactic were indeed the guiding principle of the Kingdom's rule, such a conclusion might be justified. But the critical test for the Kingdom is not attempting, as in Ibn Saud's day, to preserve a divide between Saudi society and the world at large, but forging a balance within society that enables progress, yet remains committed to authentic tradition and social justice. There are enormous problems with 'striking a balance' but there can be no doubt that the Ruling House is attentive to the need and assiduous in its pursuit.

There is a great deal of confusion, indeed a rush to judgment, in the media's efforts to deconstruct the phenomena of UBL and al Qa'idah, and demonstrate the nature of its ties to the Kingdom. The assessments have been overly preoccupied with what one might term surface characteristics - UBL's familiar links to the Kingdom and the rhetoric of his political ideology that employs the terminology of fundamentalist Islam - to force a close correspondence between his outlook and that of the Kingdom, between his objectives and the Kingdom's policies. But

insisting that UBL's radical Islamist creed is little more than the Kingdom's Islamic dispensation run amuck, and the Kingdom is little more than a 'rogue' state pursuing policies that parallel al Qaeda while duplicitously acting as if it is an ally to the US ally, is fundamentally flawed. To push for a correspondence is to overlook the deep ideological divide between Faith as Power as practiced by UBL and Faith as Power as expressed in the Kingdom. Indeed, the contest between the Kingdom's rule and al Qaeda's aspirations reflects a broader struggle within contemporary Islam, a struggle driven by myriad efforts to ensure Islam's relevance in the contemporary world.

UBL has not 'captured' nor 'perverted' the traditional Islam of the Kingdom with its stress on piety, obedience and a wariness of the outside world. The ideologues of al Qaeda are articulating a new, 'thoroughly modern Islam,'^{ix} drawing on a current of thought and a range of thinkers who are decisively not from the Peninsula, and recruiting from countries across the world. Al Qaeda promotes an Islam that proffers violent action to engender a transnational structure, a revitalized 'Ummah for the contemporary world. UBL directly challenges the role of the Saudi 'ulama, undermining their hold on and responsibility for the diffusion of religious knowledge throughout Saudi society. When UBL, whose educational background is strictly secular, issues a fatwa, a religiously sanctioned directive, he is usurping the authority and responsibility of the trained and acknowledged religious scholar. UBL is not acting to reinforce the hold of the Saudi 'ulama, he is acting to marginalize them and in so doing upend the Kingdom's 'social contract.' UBL's skillful use of a radicalized Islamic vernacular is not a sign of similarity but a trenchant effort to hoist the Al Saud and the Kingdom's ulama on their own petard. And there can be little doubt that his projection of al Qaeda as a vessel for an aggressive Islam that is vibrant rather than moribund, that is active rather than passive does have allure.

Media observers who presuppose that the Al Saud's strong support for Islam within the institutions of the Kingdom demonstrates an acceptance and support of al Qaeda tenets is, therefore, to miss the point entirely. The Al Saud's efforts to enculturate the Kingdom's youth through Islamic instruction is an effort to instill an understanding of the Faith that would preclude their allegiance to UBL, not promote it. Equally, the State's financial support during the 80s and early 90s to support the anti-Soviet struggle in Afghanistan and the ultimate inheritors of that contest, the Taliban, was not an attempt to foster a radicalized Islam but was, fundamentally an effort to both extend Saudi influence into a region of critical importance and to stabilize the country after the ejection of Soviet influence.

Media coverage also implies, again reflecting their preoccupation with the notion of a 'double game', that the Al Saud and the Kingdom's 'ulama are today uncomfortably bound together in their historic pact. While the media accurately interprets this pact as a necessary component to each one's continuing social relevance it is wrong in assuming that the pact is, at the same time, a 'zero sum' contest between their respective authorities. A whole host of confusions flow from this perspective. The media sees a regime that will seek to defuse any socio-political challenges by 'bartering away' areas of social control to a clerical class who have no interest in 'rational' solutions. The coherence of the relationship between Faith and Power is presumed to be little more than a function of a reactionary group extorting a fee for their obedience, a 'cost' that will only generate the conditions for a further round of 'extortion.' It is to assume that the senior members of the Ruling House are not only short sighted in the extreme but irrational themselves, engaging willingly in a project that can only accelerate their own demise. It is also to assume

that the younger more critical 'ulama do not have a vested interest in the maintenance of the Kingdom's social and political order, and are not committed to resolving economic and social challenges. Ultimately it is to assume that the logic of the Kingdom's social contract is diametrically opposed to the establishment of a positive and stable balance between the dictates of governance rule and Islamic precepts.

However, this caricature of a Kingdom under the sway of irrational rulers and reactionary clerics is not only a gross distortion but markedly false. This is not to ignore the fact that past policies may have gone astray. The much discussed educational system, with a curriculum that gives great stress on Islamic studies, complicates the Kingdom's ability to grapple with the economic challenges just as it guarantees that Islam will provide the terms of reference for the expression of dissatisfaction. And the often touted monies sent to Afghanistan did generate an unexpected 'blowback' in the shape of an aggressive political Islam more than willing to bite the hand that fed it. But the unanticipated results of policies, both internal and external, should not be used to misconstrue the goals of those policies themselves.^x

Nor is it fair to say, as the media insists, that such difficulties prove conclusively that the system is dysfunctional, that a balance cannot be constructed. Practitioners on both sides of the Saudi equation, those of Faith and those of Power, do seem to share a perception of the destabilizing potential of contemporary challenges. And both appear willing to work to find a balance. There can be little doubt that the Kingdom's *de facto* ruler, Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, is attentive to the myriad pressures that characterize the society and is trying to articulate a 'reformist' platform to assuage and resolve them. And the more critical elements among the 'ulama are recognized by the Al Saud as a vital component in articulating sound policies. It suggests that the House understands that the criticism brought by such critical 'ulama is not done to target the order itself but certain failings that attend it. It is also evidence that they are not in thrall to UBL's violent agenda. In fact, one could argue with justification that these younger 'ulama through their criticism are performing their historically mandated role of insuring that the House's monopoly on power is not abused. Equally, they perform a critical service by providing a mechanism by which such dissent may be highlighted and addressed.

The Kingdom has weathered a great many crises and is still standing. There is unquestionable resilience to the historic pact between Faith and Power. This is not to say that the Kingdom can be passive and static, clearly it cannot. But to assume that the Kingdom is on a downward spiral to a totally reactionary future, unable to effectively and peacefully engage the world is to misstate the problem and misdirect US policy. But if a balance is to be achieved, a minimum of two things is necessary. First, the US must abjure any overt pressure to impose reforms inattentive to the social context and couched in derogatory, dismissive and ill-informed language. The Kingdom must be understood as a partner -- different, true but no less legitimate for that -- to US policy. Second, the Kingdom needs regional stability as it works to resolve domestic issues. The military campaign in Iraq and the media campaign in the US offer neither.

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^[i] “*qad khatara man istaghna bi ra’iyihī*” Inscribed on a 10th century plate from Khorasan.

^[ii] Zogby International, polling 1,004 individuals on 1 October 2001 and then again on 1 December, saw a

'favorability' rating towards the Kingdom decline from 49% of those polled in October to 24% in the second. This drop in attitude is even more dramatic when viewed against a 56% 'favorability' rating in a poll taken the previous January. These findings ran parallel to a poll conducted in early November 2001 by Princeton Survey Research Associates for Newsweek Magazine. In that poll, 64% of the 1,001 adults surveyed did not believe that the Kingdom was offering sufficient assistance to the United States in defeating terrorism, with over 83% acknowledging that the US bring more pressure to bear on the Saudi state to elicit greater levels of assistance. Yet a CBS/New York Times poll conducted with 1,024 adults at the end of October 2001 indicated that 59% had quite positive attitudes to the Kingdom, considering it either 'friendly but not an ally' or 'an ally.' And an ABC News/Washington Post poll at the end of January 2002 involving 1,507 adults conducted by TNS Intersearch, produced quite similar results, finding that 64% of the respondents viewed the Kingdom as falling into either the 'friendly' or 'ally' categories. Finally, two polls were taken in May and August of 2002 by the firm Fabrizio McLaughlin.^{1[1]} The earlier poll showed that out of the 1,200 adults, 32% had a positive opinion towards the Kingdom while 50% had a negative one. The second poll, involving 1,000 people, indicated a pronounced slippage in favorable attitudes towards the Kingdom with only 23% declaring a positive opinion and 63% holding a negative view. What is also striking in these two polls is the percentage with no pronounced view either way. In the May poll, this stood at 17%, a level that increased to 23% in the August poll. Bearing in mind that these latter two polls had an error of $\pm 3\%$, one encounters a random sampling wherein between one fifth and one quarter are undecided. Lastly there was a poll conducted by Intersearch on behalf of ABC News taken almost exactly a year after 9/11 (September 5-8, 2002) 1,011 adults demonstrating that 81% did not believe the Kingdom was doing enough in the 'war on terrorism.'

^{1[iii]} See Robert Baer's lead article in the May 2003 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Fall of the House of Saud* for an innuendo-ridden example of this take on the Kingdom.

^{1[iv]} Complimenting the media's mantra are a spate of recently published books, Stephen Schwartz' *The Two Faces of Islam: The House of Sa'ud From Tradition to Terror* and Dore Gold's *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism* that harken back to an earlier jeremiad published in 1994 by Said K. Aburish entitled *The Rise, Corruption and Coming Fall of the House of Saud*.

^{1[v]} An analogy with the widespread and deeply ingrained corporate practice of falsifying company accounts within the US' market driven economy presents itself. This corruption demands remedy but uprooting the US' business structure is not an appropriate response.

^{1[vi]} See Jonathan Alter's 13 January 2003 Newsweek piece, *The End of the Double Game*.

^{1[vii]} See William A. Eddy's *King Ibn Saud: Our Faith and Your Iron*, MEJ, Summer 1963, pp. 257-263.

^{1[viii]} See Dr. G. S. Rentz' essay, *Wahhabism and Saudi Arabia* in *The Arabian Peninsula: Society and Politics*, ed. Derek Hopwood (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1972)

^{1[ix]} See Charles Kurzman's feature article in the Fall/Winter 2002 issue of *Contexts* entitled *Bin Laden and other thoroughly modern muslims*, pp. 13-20.

^{1[x]} The ease by which analysts can slide from highlighting the dangers in the Kingdom's failed policy initiatives to inferring an intentional complicity on the Kingdom's part in al Qa'idah's establishment may be found in an interview conducted by Frontline with Dr. Vasi Nasr in October 2001.

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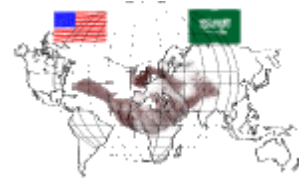
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ABOUT THE SAUDI-AMERICAN FORUM

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The Forum is a resource for Americans who value the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia and who want to act in response to erroneous and misleading depictions of the relationship in the media and elsewhere. The Forum is a vehicle for stakeholders in the Saudi-U.S. relationship to contribute their experiences and their ideas and opinions on the issues of the day.

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