

ACPR POLICY PAPER

No. 168

**SAUDI ARABIA'S *JIHAD* IN THE MIDDLE EAST
AND THE WORLD**

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES AND
THOUGHTS FOR AMERICAN POLICY**

MORDECHAI NISAN

**THE ARIEL CENTER FOR POLICY RESEARCH
(ACPR)**

P.O.B. 830, Shaarei Tikva 44810 Israel
Tel: 972-3-906-3920 Fax: 972-3-906-3905
Email: ariel.center@gmail.com
Internet Website: www.acpr.org.il

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. Henri Daskal • Prof. Israel Hanukoglu • Mordechai Kreiner • Prof. Ezra Sohar

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

Eliyahu Aloni • Haim Haham, • Professor Tsvi Ophir • Col. Yoash Tsiddon-Chatto •
Prof. Shlomo Sharan • Prof. Eliav Shochetman • Dr. Moshe Yegar

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Prof. Moshe Arens, Israel • Prof. Yosef Ben-Shlomo, Israel •
Prof. Louis René Beres, USA • Yossef Bodansky, USA • Dr. David Bukay, Israel •
Prof. Paul Eidelberg, Israel • Dr. Raya Epstein, Israel • Michel Gurfinkiel, France •
Prof. Gustav Hendriksen, Sweden • Prof. Raphael Israeli, Israel •
Shmuel Katz, Israel • Dr. Netta Kohn Dor-Shav, Israel • Dr. Steven Plaut, Israel •
Yair Shamir, Israel • Yitzhak Shamir, Israel • Prof. Moshe Sharon, Israel •
Dr. Martin Sherman, Israel • Prof. William Van Cleave, USA • Mr. Dror Zoreff, USA

CHAIRMAN, SPECIAL PROJECTS

Yoram Ettinger

DIRECTOR

Arieh Stav

The **Ariel Center for Policy Research (ACPR)** is devoted to incisive research and discussion of political and strategic issues concerning Israel and the Jewish people.

ISBN 965 7165 70 9

Copyright © ACPR Publishers

April 2007 / Nisan 5767

Director of Publishing: Leah Kochanowitz

**SAUDI ARABIA'S *JIHAD* IN THE MIDDLE EAST
AND THE WORLD**

**IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES AND
THOUGHTS FOR AMERICAN POLICY**

MORDECHAI NISAN

Dr. **Mordechai Nisan** teaches Middle East Studies in the Rothberg International School at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Among his books: *The Conscience of Lebanon: A Political Biography of Etienne Sakr (Abu Arz)* [2003], *Minorities in the Middle East* [2002], *Identity and Civilization: Essays on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* [1999], and *Toward a New Israel: The Jewish State and the Arab Question* [1992].



The opinions expressed in the Policy Papers are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the **ACPR**.

Quotation of the material herein is permissible provided that the **ACPR** is credited as the source. The **ACPR** requests a copy of any such use.

Additional copies of this and previous studies are available from the **ACPR**'s office.

Foreword

Saudi Arabia – The Heart of Evil in the World

Saudi Arabia used the enormous flood of money from the export of oil to internationally promote its Wahhabi Islamic style throughout the world. Toward this purpose, it employed and utilized the Egyptian Muslim Brothers, with their diverse branches world-wide. They want to establish religious states in Arab and Muslim countries, infiltrating through their mosques, Qur`anic schools and libraries, and teach the people to return to a way of life and thought from 14 centuries ago, with women wearing the veil as a defiant symbol among Christian and Jewish populations.

It is unfortunate that the civilized world does not adopt a strong stand against Saudi Arabia, due to its need for Saudi oil exports that supply 15% of the world's daily needs. This sad state of affairs has made Saudi Arabia more aggressive in promoting its destructive goals, by imposing terror and carrying out attacks throughout the world – and even until now, more than five years after the September 11, 2001 assault and the mournful events in London, Madrid, Balsam, Moscow, Tunis, Turkey, Bali, Taba and Sharm el-Sheikh, Israel, and more.

Unless the entire civilized world takes account of this enduring and continuing danger to its liberty and peace, and unites in a resolute fashion against these criminal Saudis, then we are going to continue living for decades under their threat of terrorism – anywhere, everywhere, and anytime. The need for Saudi oil will still exist for another 20-30 years at least, until substitute energy supplies become available to cover expanding global needs with the massive expansion in the Far East economies, as well as in other countries.

Born in Egypt in 1920, I have witnessed during the long course of my life the planning and plotting of the Muslim Brotherhood to religiously dominate Egypt, whose danger has multiplied by close collaboration with Saudi Arabia from 1970, enjoying enormous financial resources and working under different names – Hamas, Fatah, Ansar al-Islam, etc.

Saudi Arabia has managed to bribe, not only the international media, but also prominent people in high positions affecting important security

decisions all over the world, in order to conceal their horrifying global threat. And I am sorry and sad to say, that I doubt there are tough and honest leaders in the Free World to take the necessary decisions and actions, to face this erupting volcano of the Wahhabi Islamic epidemic around the world.

Let us pray and hope for the wisdom of the leaders of the Free World.

*Adly A. Youssef,
The oldest Egyptian Copt living in the Diaspora
and head of the Copts-United*

Executive Summary

It is Saudi Arabia, more so than Iran or *al-Qai`dah*, which is the primary promoter of global *jihad* in our times.

Based on religion, petro-dollars, and a firm state apparatus, the Saudis enjoy international legitimacy to pursue their campaign rooted in the Wahhabi doctrine to Islamicize Egypt and Lebanon in the Middle East at the expense of their indigenous and ancient Christian communities. Israel, too, confronted by Palestinian warfare against the Jewish state's existence, is a target of relentless Saudi ambitions. Meanwhile, as the United States has engaged the Saudis in the "oil-for-weapons" equation for many decades, Riyadh pursues policies often inimical to American interests in the Middle East and beyond. For ultimately, considering the Saudi role as financial sponsor and religious inspiration, America itself is targeted by the Islamic *Dawah* to succumb to the global triumph of Islam in history. Thus, a revision of Washington's traditional policy toward Saudi Arabia is the urgent issue to be considered.

"9/11", in which 15 of the 19 terrorist operatives were Saudis, signaled the lethal reach of the Saudi Kingdom in piercing the heart of America.

SAUDI ARABIA'S *JIHAD* IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE WORLD

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THOUGHTS FOR AMERICAN POLICY

Mordechai Nisan

Introduction

Three contenders compete for the leadership of the Middle Eastern and global Islamic jihad campaign.

Iran, following the Islamic Revolution of 1979, adopted a strategy to export the Khomeini doctrine and spirit to Shiite population centers in the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Lebanon, and beyond. While pursuing its military and nuclear aspirations, Iran sets its regional political and religious sights toward the “Shiite Crescent” – linking it with Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, yet broadening its ambitions with support for Sunni allies, like the Palestinian Hamas. Iran, under the Ayatollah regime and President Ahmadinejad in Teheran, articulates global goals, specifically against the United States. But its specifically national Persian identity and Shiite religious coloration restrict its ostensible outreach and appeal, provoking Sunni Muslim and Arab hostility.

Al-Qai`dah, under the leadership of Osama bin-Laden, was politically conceived and incubated in the throes of the *jihad* against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s, then born in the 1990s. It set into motion a far-flung Islamic campaign against “apostate” Muslim regimes, the United States, and Israel. Its emblematic attack of 9/11 in New York and Washington highlighted *al-Qai`dah*'s determination and capabilities to strike at the American “Crusader” superpower on its national turf, while pursuing a global strategy covering the Middle East, Asia, the Caucasus, Europe, and Africa. Its methods of insurgency and terrorism, as in Iraq since 2003, are designed to bring about over time the renewal of the universal Sunni caliphate. As a result of the American military invasion in late 2001, *al-Qai`dah*'s base of operations in Afghanistan was largely eliminated, it is

threatened and targeted by intelligence, surveillance, and military agencies around the world, and has lost many of its operational leaders due to the decapitation strategy adopted by the United States. *Al-Qai`dah* functions now in a decentralized fashion, adjusting to new circumstances, but having failed to achieve many of its objectives.

That Saudi Arabia is both the historical sacred locus of *Islam* and the leading producer of *oil* is widely acknowledged: The religion's founding was in Arabia, it is the site of the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the object of the yearly *haj* pilgrimage; and also, possessing 25% of the world's proven oil reserves, the major producer and exporter of petroleum. It is, however, less known that Saudi Arabia is the political heart for inspiring, teaching and promoting, financing and organizing, global *jihād* to Islamize the entire Middle East and the world beyond. As an Arab country of the Sunni Muslim brand, Saudi Arabia exercises a normative sweep and universal pretensions denied Persian Shiite Iran. Overall, the three-pronged Saudi strategic combination of faith, money, and warfare constitutes a spiritual and material arsenal to overwhelm non-Muslim (and occasionally fellow-Muslim) adversaries near and far, as Islam successfully did historically in its formative period in the seventh-century and thereafter, sweeping out of Arabia and across continents – conquering, colonizing, and converting.

The world never recovered and has never been the same. In our evolving era and into the future, it is unlikely to survive the renewed assault today.

Saudi Arabia, engaging in state-sponsored terrorism for decades, enjoys an image of moderation and friendship in the West. Its sinister and elusive strategy of *jihād* has not tarnished its political legitimacy; it feigns cooperation while advancing its own long-term Islamic agenda. The Saudis can win because their victims are unaware that these Arabs are threatening and fighting them. Their limited conventional military capabilities, though expected to expand considerably in the years ahead, belie a bellicosity conducted by other means. Iran and *al-Qai`dah* are sworn enemies of the United States, while Saudi Arabia has been historically identified as a partner with Washington in the war against the global *jihād* – of which none other than Saudi Arabia itself is the primary leader.

The Wahhabi Islamic doctrine and ethos from the eighteenth-century, born in the Nejd desert near Riyadh in isolation from foreign or Western civilizing influences, underpins the Saudi regime and society. Wahhabism is

girded with cultic exclusivity and religious zealotry, a missionary impulse and militant fervor. There is a view of Wahhabism according to which it is actually an iconoclastic deviation from Islam and a denial of its basic Sunni principles. Since the founding of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the early 1930s, the state is purportedly guided by *shari`a* law and a moral canon of strict public conduct. Beheadings and floggings are normal punishments for Islamic offenders; the Committee to Prevent Vice and Promote Virtue prowls the streets, to assure that women are veiled and chaperoned, and that male and female youth do not hold hands. At the annual National Heritage Festival in Riyadh, as at amusement parks and recreational centers, families of men and women cannot attend together; a policy of gender segregation set separate visiting days for the two sexes. Christians residing in or visiting Saudi Arabia do not enjoy freedom of worship or the right to build a church, nor even security for their physical welfare or judicial protection.

These specific features of Saudi society assume far more rigorous significance considering the religious and educational themes that nurture this Wahhabi-guided realm. The *ulema* scholarly-legal authorities seek to assure that official Saudi behavior and policy accord with the strict ways of the *sunna* (tradition). In the mosques and universities of Mecca and Riyadh, Medina and Jeddah, Abha and Baraidi, throughout the realm, Saudi *salafism* (evoking the model of the pious leaders of early Islam) and *jihadism* (advocating holy war against infidels) constitute the thematic ingredients of the spiritual and political order of the day.¹ Indeed, one of the official goals of the Saudi educational curricula is in “preparing students, physically and mentally, for *jihad* for the sake of Allah”. Prominent sheikh scholars, like the Palestinian Abdullah Azzam who, at the end of the 1970s, taught at the Islamic University in Riyadh, and Abdul Aziz bin-Baz, the Saudi Grand Mufti until his death in 1999, explicitly preached the obligation of universal *jihad* for all Muslims, and hatred of Jews and Christians.² It was also the Saudi cleric Nasir bin-Hamid al-Fahd who provided theological justification for mass murder of “infidels”, assuming that non-conventional weapons were available for Islamic *jihad*.³ Being the most appropriate sanctuary and school for this creed, Saudi Arabia sports a national flag glittering with the essential Islamic statement of faith – “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Messenger” – alongside a drawn sword.

While ostensibly an insular society, Saudi Arabia has never been out of touch with the regional political environment. Republican Turkey's abolition

of the Caliphate in 1924 catalyzed Saudi ambitions to politically capture center-stage as the throbbing pulse of the Muslim world. In 1926 it hosted the Congress of the Islamic World; in 1962 it founded the Muslim World Congress; in 1969 it formed the Organization of Islamic Congress (OIC), which today numbers some 57 countries; thereafter the Muslim World League (MWL) (*Rabita*) – all to promote and finance Islamic Wahhabism around the world. One-time secretary-general of the MWL, Abdullah Naseef, once declared that: “*jihad* in Islam was instituted to further the cause of justice, dignity and *Qur`anic* law”.

This encoded message for the untrained observer is buoyed by a moral agenda and riveted to the practice of warfare.

Saudi Arabia and the Middle East

In Middle East politics, Saudi Arabia’s Islamic agenda replaced Egypt’s Arab nationalist doctrine under Gamal Abdul Nasser, who died in 1970. This ideological shift emerged especially in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur October War of 1973, when the oil-producing countries embargoed the United States and caused the price of oil for Western markets to sky-rocket. Ever since, the Saudis have become a strikingly dominant regional and international actor on the economic, political, and religious stages.

In 1974, King Feisal of Saudi Arabia convened an Islamic Summit in Lahore, leading to the adoption of secret decisions affirming that the Middle East will be Islamic, while the Christians of the Orient and the Jews of Israel will be eliminated.⁴ The first-line of regional attack was delineated, and three states in particular were primary candidates and targets for Islamic conquest. The complete Islamization of the entire Middle East, after the Muslims’ prophet Muhammad long ago Islamicized Arabia, awaits its historical consummation. Thereafter the wider world, already cringing and intimidated by Islam – recall the recent Dutch controversy concerning the cartoons of Muhammad and the Danish case of parliamentarian Ayyan Hirsi Ali – will be relatively easy prey for Allah’s warriors, preachers, and martyrs.

Egypt

Egypt’s Christian legacy, cultural vitality, and a certain liberal tradition have proven less than adequate to secure the country from an extreme Islamist

take-over. Indeed, this highly Islamic land, since the year 972 home to the Al-Azhar *madrassa*-university and a long line of Muslim rulers and regimes, radiates the religion as a political ethos. In 1928, while the British still ruled the country, the Muslim Brotherhood (*al-Ikhwan al-Muslimin*) was formed by Hasan al-Banna in Ismailiyya for the purpose of battling foreign influences on the native society. Its flag portrays two swords and the *Qur'an*, conveying the link between religion and warfare central to the Islamic heritage. Interestingly, it was during the days of the 1920s that the Bedouin *Ikhwan* movement in Arabia, known both for its slaughtering mania in Taif in 1924 against the Hashemites of the Hijaz, and for its missionary mission against backsliding Muslims in the desert as a whole, organized its collective life in settled communities in 1928-1929. The shared *Ikhwan* name for both the Saudi and Egyptian brotherhoods suggests a common Islamic religious front.

Saudi involvement in Egyptian affairs in general and in the religious domain specifically assumed a pattern of policy. Muhammad Rashid Rida (d. 1935), an influential Muslim *alim*, came from Syria to Cairo, influenced by Wahhabism and funded by the Saudis. Muslim Brotherhood members in Egypt, hounded by the Nasser regime from 1952 onward, were granted asylum in Saudi Arabia and became influential teachers in Saudi universities thereafter. In 1954, King Saud intervened in domestic Egyptian affairs on behalf of the imprisoned leader of the Brotherhood, Hasan al-Hudaybi.⁵ Fiercely anti-Western, Sayyid Qutb, the chief ideologue of the Brotherhood and editor of its magazine, led its "secret apparatus" at home, which was funded and armed by the Saudis. While Qutb's brother taught in Saudi Arabia, Sayyid himself was executed in Egypt in 1966 for his radical Islamic teachings. The 14th century Islamic doyen Ibn Taimiyya, who rejected the Islamic credentials of wayward Muslim leaders, served as inspiration for both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Saudi Wahhabiyya.

In 1955, representatives of 38 Muslim governments met at Jeddah in Saudi Arabia to decide about "cleansing" the Middle East of its Christian minorities. Anwar Sadat, personally close to the Muslim Brotherhood and a liaison between them and Nasser's Free Officers Movement, committed Egypt to a policy of persecuting the country's Christian Copt population. He declared that in 40 years the Copts "will emigrate or be transformed to shoe polishers...or converted to Islam". About 15% of this embattled minority left Egypt in subsequent years. Wahhabi petro-dollars penetrated the Egyptian

media, brainwashing the country through religious radio broadcasts, on television, and in the press. *Shari`a* (Islamic law), rather than secularism, captured the moral high-ground in Egypt, while blocking the Copts from military, civil service, professional, and academic positions, or advancement. It was forbidden to repair churches and build new ones. Preaching disdain and hatred of Christians (and Jews) became the staple Islamic Wahhabi ideological and cultural diet in Egypt, as it was in Saudi Arabia.⁶

Osama bin-Laden, who worked for the Saudi intelligence until 1988, and was massively funded before and thereafter for his Islamic terror activities, himself provided financing for the *al-Gama`at al-Islamiyya* movement and other zealous religious groups in Egypt over many years. Muslim attacks against Copts in Egypt have been relentless since 1972, in Cairo neighborhoods and in Coptic populated towns in Upper Egypt. The *Jihad* Organization, a violent offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, appeared in 1979 and carried out attacks against helpless Coptic targets in order to destabilize Egyptian society. Instances of Copt girls being raped, kidnapped and forced to convert to Islam and wear the *hijab*, are widespread into the 21st century. On New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, from December 31, 1999-January 1, 2000, 22 Copts were murdered in el-Kosheh. The Egyptian authorities ignored the savagery of the "Muslim mob" and no one was punished for this wanton crime.

In matters of political importance, King Faisal prevailed upon President Sadat to expel the Russians from Egypt in the early 1970s, lavishly distributing cash to buy support for this move, and pushing Egypt to move closer to the United States. This done in 1972, Sadat took upon himself the mantle of a *jihadist* in going to war against Israel in 1973, with the Saudis paying for his arms purchases then and later.⁷ Yet, while the Saudis bribed the Egyptian regime during both the Sadat and Mubarak presidencies, they concurrently financed the Muslim Brotherhood as a Wahhabi proxy in the land of the pyramids.⁸ The government and the opposition, despite friction and competition, both propelled the Islamic wave forward.

Egyptian Islam has leaned toward Saudi Wahhabism for at least the last three decades.⁹ "Islam is the solution" serves as the essential formula for a mode of religious totalitarianism that animates the public and private domains of life. In a meeting in Jeddah in 1975, the Saudis made an agreement with the Egyptian Brotherhood, which has branches in perhaps as many as 86 countries, to bribe and coax everyone necessary in the holy war

for global Islamization. The symbiotic relationship between Saudis and Egyptians was attested to by the fact that two notorious Egyptian terrorist clerics, Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman and Ayman al-Zawahiri, were in Saudi Arabia in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively. Meanwhile, President Mubarak, ostensibly at odds with the Muslim Brotherhood, was actually cooperating with them in promoting Islam in Egypt, though on occasion he rounded up militant Islamists as was the case in February 2007. Islamic street pogroms or village gang violence against innocent Copt Christians were always dismissed as “sectarian clashes”, which the security forces and judicial authorities inevitably ignored. No one guilty of murdering a Christian was ever sentenced to pay for his crime.

The absence of intellectual freedom and normative religious pluralism highlight the dismal state of human rights in the Islamically-charged public environment of Egypt. Manifest examples of this reality of repression and fanaticism include the murder of author and activist Farag Foda by the *al-Gama`at al-Islamiyya* fundamentalists in 1992, the stabbing and wounding of the 1988 Nobel Prize winning author Naguib Mahfouz in 1994 and the arbitrary imprisonment of Professor Saad al-Din Ibrahim and the closing down of his Ibn Khaldoun research institute from 2000-2002. The absence of freedom is a mortal threat to the Coptic community, the remnant of the indigenous Egyptian people millennia ago, and its future in the land of the Nile.

The Islamization of Egypt charges ahead while the country's Christian population, perhaps numbering 12 million – some claim 15 million¹⁰ – out of a total population of 75 million people, is reduced to fear and persecution. Central to this policy of oppression is money and religious atavism, swept along through the invasion of Egypt's mind and mentality by Saudi Wahhabism on its march “in the path of Allah”. Four of the 19 terrorist operatives from 9/11 were Egyptians, while 15 were Saudis.

Lebanon

Home to the ancient Maronite Church and people, in addition to other religious sects and communities, Lebanon prided itself on being a land of sanctity and liberty, tolerance and culture, for all. But Saudi involvement in Lebanese affairs, promoting Arabism and Islamism, especially on behalf of

the Sunni population, targeted this most distinct of Middle Eastern countries to unravel its confessional tapestry and obliterate its Christian character.

The Saudis, practicing the *batini* tactic of concealment usually reserved for the Shiites, promote Islamic fundamentalism while adopting a posture of moderation. For many years, Saudi lobbying and bribing in official Washington and the oil industry guaranteed that Lebanon would not be an American priority concern in the Middle East; it was to dissolve under the assault of radical anti-Christian forces. As early as 1969, the Saudis showered money on the PLO and supported its armed infiltration into Lebanon after “Black September” in 1970. Riyadh’s Sunni clients in Lebanon, politicians and sheikhs, advocated the Palestinians’ case against the elected Christian-led government in Beirut. It was also Saudi pressure on the Americans that saved the PLO from obliteration at the hands of the Israelis during the siege of West Beirut in July-August 1982. Washington’s policy was orchestrated in Riyadh, when the Saudis threatened to withdraw their investments from the United States if Israel’s army was not reined in.

In 1976, following the eruption of warfare in Lebanon and Syria’s military intervention, the Saudis led the way to camouflage Damascus’ hegemony by wrapping it in the form of the “Arab Deterrent Force” on behalf of peace and stability in the “land of the cedars”. This move was approved at the Riyadh mini-summit on October 18 and gave the Arab aggressors – Palestinian and Syrian – a cover of pan-Arab legitimacy to fight the Christians of Lebanon. Two days later on October 20, 70 Maronites were burnt alive and murdered – with women raped, children decapitated, newborns ripped apart – by Palestinian terrorists in the village church of Aishiyyah in southern Lebanon.

This gloomy political situation continued until June 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon in a military campaign against the Palestinian movements. While the IDF’s rapid assault on the PLO forces was very effective, the ADF remained far beyond its initial six-month mandate as an occupation army dominated by Syrian units until, in fact, Syria’s military withdrawal from Lebanon in April 2005.¹¹ Throughout those years, the Saudis did not protest or condemn Syria’s siege and suppression of the Christian population of Lebanon, or the Palestinian massacres of Lebanese, as in the Ashrifiyya neighborhood in East Beirut, Tall Abbas, Damur, Beit Mellat, Deir Ashash, and elsewhere. Yet the irony and tragedy of the Christian predicament was highlighted when Bashir Jemayel, Maronite candidate for president in

August 1982, felt it prudent to seek Saudi support for his candidacy – underscoring Saudi domination of the Beirut political scene.¹²

In May 1989, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia headed a new Arab committee to resolve the Lebanese problem, later convening a meeting in Jeddah in September attended by the leaders of Morocco and Algeria. In October, again under Saudi auspices, Lebanese parliamentarians were brought to Taif near Mecca, and under duress “consented” to political reforms that equalized Muslim representation to that of the Christians in the Lebanese legislature and strengthened the Sunni prime minister at the expense of the Maronite president. Through the flexible mediation efforts of the Lebanese billionaire Rafiq Hariri, a Sunni from Sidon who enjoyed Saudi citizenship and carried a Saudi diplomatic passport, money flowed into the parliamentarians’ pockets to assure they sign the Taif Accord, in association with Washington and Damascus. Before returning to Lebanon, the 62 accommodating or traitorous parliamentarians were hosted and feted by Hariri in a Parisian hotel. In addition, he bribed George Saade of the Phalange Party with \$3-5 million to support the Taif Accord, while preparing the political ground to become prime minister, which he did in 1992. With Lebanon now defined as “Arab in belonging and identity” and enjoying a “special relationship” with Syria, the Christians were again on the losing end of Saudi machinations in their country. In 1990, when the Syrians sent military forces ostensibly to help defend Saudi Arabia from a menacing Iraq, King Fahd greased President Assad’s palm with \$500 million for his symbolic gesture of solidarity. The Saudi-Syrian axis was rich in bribery and collaboration for many years across a broad spectrum of topics.

It is interesting to point out that Rafiq Hariri became a major Lebanese political defender of the Shiite Hizbullah movement when, in the 1990s, the United States and Europe considered listing the party as a terrorist organization. Hariri traveled to Washington and Paris in order to present his views which were, in fact, intertwined with his own political ambitions and need to secure Shiite support. Later developments proved this to be a myopic approach, as the Hizbullah-Syrian-Iranian axis later became a formidable rival to his Sunni-Saudi alliance. The assassination of Hariri in February 2005 drove the message home.

The Saudis successfully exercised multiple modes of influence to damage Lebanon's independence and Christian character. Leaning on Washington, the Saudis led the Americans in 1976 to actually propose to the Christians that they emigrate from their historic homeland. Within the country, the Saudis purchased large tracts of private Christian property, as in the Maronite Kesrouan area, while investing \$14 billion – about half of all foreign investments in Lebanon – in real estate, tourism, and industry. Funding mosque construction in Beirut, and inspiring Wahhabi-style *Usbat al-Ansar* Sunni insurgents in the northern Akkar mountains, were additional Saudi methods to arrogate a dominant role in Lebanese affairs. Seemingly innocent Saudi vacationers in Beirut and the coastal and mountain resorts convey the insidious notion that, the Wahhabists are at home in the country they came to conquer.

In 1998, Sunni clerics in Lebanon opposed the proposal to institute secular and civil marriage in the country. Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, no doubt following Saudi religious directives, refused to sign the civil marriage bill. After he was assassinated in 2005, the Saudis chose his son Saad to lead his father's political party.¹³ The following year, in the aftermath of the Israeli-Hizbullah summer war, Saudi Arabia promised to contribute \$1.5 billion to assist Lebanese reconstruction work. While the contest between Sunnis and Shiites exacerbates in Lebanon, with Iran-supported Hizbullah challenging the Sunnis' Muslim predominance, Saudi Arabia remains committed to its long-term goal of Islamizing and de-Christianizing Lebanon. This converges strategically with the political fact that the Saudis over the decades never denounced Syria's occupation and manipulation of Lebanon, murdering its leaders, colonizing its cities, traumatizing its economy, and strangling its independence. Riyadh watched all this from 1975 until 2005 – and not from the sidelines but at center-stage – with equanimity and satisfaction. The fact that the Palestinians remained armed in the refugee camps of Lebanon, in defiance of Beirut's formal authority, is also to the political credit of Saudi influence in the country. It is also likely that, though Lebanon has refused to grant citizenship to this disenfranchised Palestinian Sunni population of some 400,000, the day may come when Saudi pressure will force this reform measure to strengthen the Muslims against the Christian community in the country.

The true villain in this wholesale Arab conspiracy against Lebanon is none other than Saudi Arabia.

Israel

In principle and in policy, Saudi Arabia is committed to the destruction of the Jewish State of Israel, considering its establishment both illegal and illegitimate. King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, as the kingdom's founder, provided the requisite dogmatic Wahhabi statement to the British Political Representative in Kuwait on November 23, 1937: "Our hatred for the Jews dates from God's condemnation of them for their persecution and rejection of Jesus Christ and their subsequent rejection of His chosen Prophet [Muhammad]." King Fahd, his son, called for *jihad* in 1986 against Israel in order "to recover Islamic Palestine" and realize "the return of Palestinian rights".¹⁴ A Wahhabi preacher in the mosque of Medina, Sheikh Salah Bin-Muhammad al-Budayr, prayed to Allah in 2002 that He "defeat the usurper Jews...shake the land under their feet, instill fear in their hearts, and make them booty for Muslims...O God, destroy them. O God, scatter them. O God, annihilate them soon. O God, have mercy on our brothers and sisters in Palestine".¹⁵

While Saudi preachers and teachers poured venom on the Jews, and approved of suicide-bombing attacks within Israel, Prince Abdullah – later King – posed as the Arab conciliator and mediator by presenting peace initiatives, as in 1982. He called for a complete Israel withdrawal and Palestinian refugee return. These steps would, however, fulfill the strategic conditions for Israel to be overrun from the outside or collapse from within.

The true Saudi objectives have never been concealed, though obfuscated by diplomatic flurry and Arabian dust thrown in the eyes of bewildered politicians. Advocacy support for the Palestinian struggle has been consistent throughout recent history. In 1973 Saudi intervention with Lebanese politicians saved the armed Palestinian organizations in the refugee camps of Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut from Lebanese army forces. In 1974 the Saudis appointed Yasser Arafat as the vice-president of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, with the PLO attending as a full member. Thereafter, the Arab League recognized the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, followed in November of 1974 by United Nations' recognition of the PLO. The following year, Israel was condemned in the UN General Assembly vote for the "Zionism is Racism" resolution.

Perhaps yet more politically specific was the Fahd Plan from 1981-1982 that promoted the political terminology of a “Palestinian state” as a just solution to the conflict with Israel, while cajoling the United States to begin a dialogue with the PLO. The Saudis’ deceitful moderation, always ambiguous, was politically upgraded two decades later when in 2002 Saudi Prince Bandar, the ambassador to Washington, persuaded President Bush to call for “the two state solution” – Palestine alongside Israel – as America’s foreign policy in the Middle East. Bush’s subsequent “Road Map” was of Saudi political vintage. Sacrificing Israel on the altar of a false peace conflates American interests with Saudi goals. It has been Saudi Arabia’s standard historic policy to persuade Washington that the core of Middle East instability – be it in Lebanon, Iraq, or elsewhere – is the Israeli-Palestinian dilemma and the absence of a full solution to the “Palestinian problem”.

While the royal House of Saud posed as a positive force for peace-making, true Saudi aspirations were never actually hidden. In August 2003, Sheikh Salih al-Talib in the mosque of Mecca called for “destroying the haughtiness of Jews” while “filling the world with justice”. The elimination of Israel would enact the Saudi script on both points. After 1967, with Israel’s astounding military victory against three Arab states, Saudi money was provided to Palestinian *fedayeen* operating against Israel from bases located in Jordanian territory. From the 1970s, a Saudi grant of \$40 million annually – some claim \$100 million – reached PLO coffers.¹⁶ Although this generosity was considered protection money to assure that Palestinian terrorism bypass the kingdom, it did after all fund incessant Palestinian terrorism against Jews and Israel. This generosity was later replicated for Hamas, a branch of the Muslim Brotherhood and Palestine’s “Islamic Resistance Movement”, founded in 1988. Hamas proclaims “holy war” as the method to liberate Palestine, indoctrinating future martyrs from kindergarten, and sending men and women relentlessly on suicide missions against Israel. Saudi financial support for Hamas began from its early days in Gaza; in 1998 its leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin was welcomed in the kingdom, provided medical treatment and a gift of \$25 million. Prince Abdullah, the future king of the kingdom, then visited him in the hospital.

With the outbreak of the *Intifada al-Aqsa* in October 2000, Saudi support for Hamas increased for the organization itself and the families of sacred martyrs (*shahids*). One report claimed that during an 18-month period from the beginning of the *intifada* until April 2002, the Saudis provided Islamic

groups and the Palestinian Authority with a total of \$500 million – to Arafat personally and the Hamas movement.¹⁷

In 2002, Khalid Mashal, heading the movement's political bureau in Damascus, visited Riyadh. The government-controlled Saudi press typically praised Palestinian suicide-bombers, like Abd al-Baset Oudeh who blew himself up in an Israeli hotel in Netanya in April 2002, killing 29 Jewish Passover holiday guests.¹⁸

In 2003, 60% of Hamas' budget came from Saudi Arabia. Back in 1995, we recall, the United States had listed Hamas as a terrorist organization.

In January 2006, Hamas won a majority of the seats in the Palestinian elections and formed the government under Ismail Haniya. Firing "Qassam" rockets at the Israeli town of Sderot and other western Negev communities continued as before and despite Israel's withdrawal from the Gush Katif settlement communities in the Gaza area. Later that year, on November 13, it was reported that the spokesman of Hamas, Mushir al-Masri, carried \$2 million he received in Saudi Arabia across the border at Rafah into the Gaza Strip.

But Saudi support for the Palestinians was more than financial and terrorist-oriented, there was also Saudi diplomatic support for Western recognition of the PLO and Palestinian national rights that fit the kingdom's smooth image, business contacts, and international propriety and clout. As the Saudi-Palestinian connection was always strong, it was perfectly fitting that when PLO terrorists kidnapped and murdered American diplomats in the Saudi embassy in Khartoum in March 1973, the Saudi ambassador was not harmed. The later European recognition of the PLO, as by the European Community in June 1980, was very much a Saudi achievement. American recognition of the PLO in late 1988 should be considered in the same light. And all along, Saudi money flowed into Arafat's pockets: In 1982, prior to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June, the Saudis gave the PLO \$250 million to purchase Soviet-bloc weapons.

A central model-message and legacy of Muhammad the Prophet of Islam was his seventh-century fierce warfare and massacre of Jews in Arabia and their subsequent expulsion from the peninsula. Saudi Arabia, the home of Islam, has assumed its sacred responsibility to support Muslim warfare against the Jews – the "most hostile to the believers" according to the *Qur'an* – and bring about their expulsion from Israel. In a grand diplomatic

gesture on behalf of the Palestinians, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia hosted delegations from the PLO and from HAMAS in Mecca in February 2007, to work out an agreement between these groups, toward a National Unity Government for the Palestinian Authority. The Saudi patron of the Palestinians and their campaign against Israel demonstrated its high-profile authority in regional politics, with international attention focused on the event.

Saudi Arabia and the World

Saudi Arabia's regional and global outreach establishes its hegemonic credentials in advancing Islam as extensively as possible. Posing as an advocate of a peaceful religion, the Saudis have poured many billions of dollars into promoting and supporting Islamic fanaticism, Wahhabist ideology, and terrorist insurgency for the following benefactors across Asia and Africa: Osama bin-Laden's *Al-Qai'dah*, Taliban *mujahideen* in Afghanistan who studied in Peshawar *madrasas* in Pakistan, Bangladesh *jihadists*, Abu Sayyaf fighters in the Philippines, Laskar *Jihad* troops in Indonesia, Uighur Muslims in China, Muslim warriors in Eritrea and Somalia, Hasan al-Turabi and his National Islamic Front in Sudan, the French-acronym GIA (Armed Islamic Group) in Algeria, and Salafist *jihadi* groups in Morocco.¹⁹ In addition, Saudi manpower and a limitless supply of copies of the *Qur'an*, along with innumerable *jihad* internet postings, have likewise been a demonstrable feature of Riyadh's involvement in Chechnya, Bosnia and Kosovo, against Russian and Serb forces, respectively. In Chechnya Abu Wahid, a Saudi national, commanded the rebels on the eastern front against the Russian army, while another Saudi citizen known as Amir Khattab, who had fought in Afghanistan, was killed in Chechnya in March 2002 by Russian forces. Wahhabi missionary preachers and training centers also operated in nearby Dagestan in the Caucasus Mountains.

Saudi Arabia – “the political mother of fundamentalism” according to Judith Miller, and “the greatest purveyor of international terrorism” in the words of Bat Ye'or²⁰ – was the primary financial supporter of the *mujahideen* Islamic war against the Soviets in Afghanistan during the 1980s. With Prince Turki in touch with both the American CIA and Mullah Omar of the Taliban, the Saudis provided an estimated \$500 million per year for the Afghan *jihad*.²¹ Out of that successful holy war the “Afghan Arabs”, the largest contingents

of which were Saudi and Egyptian, filled the ranks of *Al-Qai`dah* under the leadership of the Saudi national, Osama bin-Laden. Although at political odds with the organization, and even threatened by its terrorist agenda, the Saudis chose to bankroll Osama bin-Laden. Princes of the royal house, Khalid bin Mahfouz and Sherif Sedky, funded *al-Qai`dah*, out of solidarity or as bribery – or both – to stay away from Arabia.²² The Saudis were bin-Laden's patrons while his *Al-Qai`dah* outfit spread a terrorist net around the world and, among other targets, attacked strategic US sites in East Africa and in America itself. Mukhrain al-Najdi, a Saudi national in the service of *al-Qai`dah*, fought US “special forces” in Somalia in 1993, and was later active in confronting the Americans in Tora Bora in Afghanistan in late 2001.

Having contributed to the expulsion of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan and prior to that the British expulsion from the Persian Gulf, the Saudis initially opposed American military involvement against Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 2003. Yet, when discussion of American withdrawal increased in the latter part of 2006, the Saudis feared for the day after, when Shiite domination and terrorism could undermine the minority Sunni population in sectarian-divided Iraq. Meanwhile, through to March 2005, the largest number of Islamists killed in the insurgency in Iraq were Saudi nationals. Clearly Saudi authorities turned a blind eye to the infiltration of Sunni warriors across the border into the Iraqi crucible of war. Wahhabi hostility to the Shiites merged smoothly here with a zealous struggle against the “crusader” forces from the West.²³ Throughout, Saudi Arabia had no less than contended impressively against the two superpowers of Cold War vintage.

Europe, for its part, has already been dubbed a “tolerated and protected” *dhimmi* continent, submerged and manipulated, under the doctrine of “Eurabia”. Muslim religious leaders have openly forecasted Europe’s ultimate demise under an Islamic assault. Sheikh Yousef al-Qaradhawi, an Egyptian teaching in the Wahhabi environment of Qatar, stated in his “Conquest of Rome” sermon on December 2, 2002, that “Islam will return to Europe...we will set up an army of preachers and teachers...Europeans will convert to Islam”; while the head of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Muhammad `Aqef, declared in early 2004 that “Islam will invade Europe and America, because Islam has logic and a mission”. Meanwhile the European Union, forfeiting its pride and independence, while reaping

financial benefits through commercial transactions with Saudi Arabia and purchasing OPEC oil, has chosen to try and buy quiet. But this has not secured the continent from suffering Muslim subway bombings in London, train attacks in Madrid, riots in Paris, and a host of indignities and assaults in Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and elsewhere. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia feels responsible for the Islamic education of Muslims in France by offering stipends to send youth to study religion in the Saudi kingdom, or in *madrasas* in Pakistan or Egypt. This scholarly investment prepares future *jihadi* warriors for Islam.

The American-Saudi connection is a highly unusual combination of compatibility and cooperation, yet loaded with enmity and rivalry.

The United States and Saudi Arabia shared common interests on many political issues of regional and global concern, even though they disagreed on others, like the republican coup in Yemen in 1962 and the legitimacy of Israel's military policy of self-defense in 1967. The two countries long ago developed an "oil-for-weapons" equation with conservative strategic cooperation against radical forces. The bilateral relationship highlighted, as a very special component, the role of the Carlyle Group, of which the presidential Bush family is a major player, as a global merchant bank engaging in far-flung business activities with the Saudis. US firms provided military training services for Saudi Arabia; on the other side of the coin, Prince Al-Walid ibn-Talal, grandson of Abdul Aziz who founded the desert kingdom, became a major investor in Citigroup Bank.²⁴ Overall Saudi investments estimated as high as \$800 billion and 100,000 home purchases in the United States reflected deep financial penetration of the American economy and society.²⁵

But as Washington provided Saudi Arabia with sophisticated military systems, such as AWACS radar planes in 1981, and helped defend it during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis and war, the Saudis preached hatred for America and the Christian religion. Their pursuit of policies inimical to American interests and goals did not diminish. It is likely that Saudi bankers and money supported the Muslim opposition to the Iranian Shah, an American ally, which brought fanatical Islam to power in 1979 in Tehran.²⁶ Western interests were severely damaged by this tidal-wave political and strategic event that occurred during the Carter presidency in Washington. Saudi Arabia later opposed the US-brokered Camp David Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt in 1979 and the US-mediated Israel-Lebanese agreement of

1983. In 1982 the Saudi "Fez" Plan called for PLO recognition, while the Saudi Arab Peace Plan in 2002 demanded Palestinian refugee right of return, both positions considered each in their time incompatible with US policy. Saudi recognition of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 1996 was consistent with Wahhabi doctrine, but was a diplomatic move out of step with Washington's policy. No Arab country, exercising its weighty leverage in Washington, whitewashed the PLO in the eyes of American policy-makers more than Saudi Arabia. The link between radical Islam and terrorism garnered increasing attention and certainly aroused grave suspicion, when 15 Saudis of a total of 19 terrorist operatives carried out the colossal attack of 9/11 in the United States.

Washington turned a blind eye from a variety of direct and indirect Saudi intrigues. Prince Bander ibn Sultan, a grandson of Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, served as ambassador in Washington, paying kickbacks to promote US weapons sales to the Arabian kingdom. It was later discovered that his wife signed checks allegedly for charity purposes, but whose funds financed Islamic terrorist personnel in the United States, who actually participated in the 9/11 assaults. The scene of Saudis flying out of Kennedy Airport thereafter, when all air traffic had been grounded, appeared as political theatre directed by American officials, probably the CIA to conceal Saudi involvement in that day of nightmarish *jihad* striking America.

In fact, American vigilance had collapsed in the face of the Saudis roaming around America. Saudi citizens, even though they had done *jihadi* stunts in Afghanistan and Bosnia, easily received US visas while preparing a sacred terrorist mission in and against America. And once in the United States, the FBI did not suspect them or their behavior, leading up to 9/11. Although the enemy was within the walls, the sanitized Saudi identity served as a perfect political anesthetic to psychologically disarm drowsy Washington.²⁷

Saudi financial investments in Islamic education, studies, and law, have facilitated the construction and operation globally of more than 210 Islamic centers, 1,500 mosques, and 2,000 schools for educating Muslim children across Europe, the Americas, and Asia.²⁸ The expansion of neo-fundamentalist Wahhabism in the West, through well-oiled networks of societies and associations, preachers often of Muslim Brotherhood affiliation, is a vast spiritual *jihad* funded by the Saudis. The good name of Saudi Arabia and its alliance with the United States facilitates the penetration strategy.²⁹ Islamic studies departments at prestigious American

universities, such as Georgetown and Harvard, endowed academic legitimacy to Saudi infiltration tactics. The criminal case of Dr. Sami al-Arian, representing the Palestinian Islamic *Jihad* movement in the United States, exposes however, the dangers involved; for while teaching at the University of South Florida, he served as a link for Saudi funding of Palestinian terrorism against Israel. In 2006, 14,000 Saudi students were studying in US colleges and universities, more than twice the figure in 2001. Saudi-financed Islamic charities in America are also vehicles of Saudi policy, like the *Haramain* [referring to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina under Saudi Islamic custodianship] Organization, and have been exposed as conduits for terrorist activities while spewing their religious venom against the United States.³⁰

The broad Saudi strategy aims at nothing less than the Islamization of America, with that country's liberalism and freedom the ideological stepping-stones to the higher goal of "Allah's nation" bringing Muhammad's final revelation and truth to the "infidel". Preachers can be the ultimately victorious Muslim players in this enduring religious struggle more effectively than terrorists. Islamic penetration of American society has been highlighted in various ways: demanding prayer-rooms in factories, separate swimming hours based on sexual differentiation at public pools, physical separation between men and women at gym facilities, the right of Muslim cabbies not to accept liquor-carrying customers, and the right of ear-splitting *muezzin* prayer calls from the local neighborhood mosque. Recent years have witnessed highly contentious confrontations at American universities, with rowdy Muslim students disturbing speakers on campus and even, by militant threats and vociferous protests, preventing speaking events from taking place. All this is justified by radical Islam's defense of Palestine and opposition to Israel in an academic environment which, once inspired by the free market of ideas of John Stuart Mill, is now inspired by the fundamentalist spirit of Wahhabism stifling debate and differences of opinion on American campuses.³¹ Complaining of discrimination, Muslims advance their agenda to dominate America. They reject integration and prefer penetration as the centerpiece of their radical operational scheme to alter the cultural landscape of the United States.³² Already, with only the preliminary stages of the war behind us, there are an estimated 3,000 mosques in sprawling, vulnerable America. A new one is planned for the city of Boston, to be financed by the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah, a subsidiary of the Saudi-led Organization of Islamic Conference.³³

From just one mosque in the 1970s, there are reportedly 94 mosques in metropolitan Houston in 2007. Islamic *Dawah* missionary outreach activities extend to the churches and the prisons, and throughout communities, to spread the *Qur'an's* message and Muhammad's faith to the American people. Converting the "infidel" is the time-tested sacred task.

America meanwhile, defending Saudi Arabia in the Middle East alternatively from Ba`athist Iraq and Khomeinist Iran, has nonetheless been targeted within Saudi Arabia. In 1995, an American bus in Jeddah and a Saudi National Guard facility in Riyadh were hit, with five Americans killed in the latter attack; in the Khobar Towers bombing near Dhahran in 1996, 19 US servicemen died. When *al-Qai`dah*, or an Iran-backed cell as at Khobar, carries out terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia, it carefully avoids targeting its patron's citizens and focuses instead on the American "infidels". And just to note two more points: reports pointed to the direct involvement of Saudis in the *al-Qai`dah* bombings of American embassies in East Africa in 1998; while in the attack in 2000 against the USS Cole vessel on the Yemeni coast, direct Saudi involvement was ascertained.

Since the 1970s the US-Saudi "special relationship" has, therefore, not been based on Saudi gratitude or compelling mutual inter-state trust. The global Islamic tidal wave that struck Bali and Baslan, and earlier brought destruction down upon New York and Washington, is pursuing US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. It earlier chased American troops out of Lebanon and Somalia. It is perhaps not surprising that the Saudi Wahhabi regime, an active agent of *jihad*, has been called by some as "evil" and "anti-American";³⁴ though there were other voices, like Ambassador James Akins and scholar William Quandt, who advocated the American-Saudi alliance as strong and necessary.³⁵

Conclusions

In December 2006, the Iraq Study Group headed by former Secretary of State James Baker III proposed the conventional Saudi-based conception for US policy in the Middle East. This would mean the ongoing abandonment by America of both the Middle East's largest Christian population in Egypt, by single-mindedly endorsing the Washington-Cairo strategic relationship, and of its most politically significant Christian population in Lebanon in favor of renewing the US-Syrian dialogue. This morally decadent policy,

bereft of historical memory, draws upon Saudi lobbying, chicanery, and bribery. The end of Oriental Christianity would be tragically realized by the collaboration of the “Christian” West with the Islamic *jihād*. One is reminded of American policy toward the Serbian people, whereby, according to one commentator, there lurks “the cynical expectation that feeding local Muslims with the morsels of Balkan Christendom will keep the global beast at bay”.³⁶ Meanwhile Christians have been expelled from Kosovo and the Saudi-financed Islamic KLA has expanded its power. As when America desisted from occupying Baghdad in the 1991 Gulf War, or when it supported the Bosnian Muslims against the Serbs in the 1990s post-Yugoslavian turmoil, Saudi hands seemed to be shaping Washington’s policy in Islamic-significant theatres of war.³⁷

Apparent here is the American mind-set of expediency and appeasement in dealing with Saudi Arabia. James Baker, himself a close friend of Prince Bandar and intimately involved politically and financially with the Saudis for decades, cannot exercise independent judgment in evaluating US interests. His law firm of Baker, Botts is representing the House of Saud in the financial suit filed by families of the victims of 9/11. Here is Baker defending the Saudis for a monstrous crime they were involved in against American citizens, and on American soil. The moral turpitude of his position is matched by political impertinence with his report calling upon Washington to have Israel “return the Golan Heights to Syria” and agree to Palestinian refugee return. It is clear that Israeli capitulation to the Arab world, the converse of America’s abandonment of the Jewish state, is seen as the key to strengthening Washington’s role in the Middle East. The “Saudization” of Washington’s policy could hardly be more blatant, shameful, and ultimately ineffective.³⁸

In this regard, former president Jimmy Carter was also a focus of the Saudi role in America when, for example, King Fahd granted a gift of \$7.6 million to the Carter Center at Emory University. His nephew Prince Al-Walid bin-Talal gave at least \$5 million. Carter, known for his support of a Palestinian homeland back in 1977 and for being extremely sympathetic to the PLO and accommodating to Hamas thereafter, while always bitterly disparaging of Israel’s settlement policy in the territories, viewed the Saudis as friends and allies of the United States.³⁹

A few days before the Baker report was issued, Vice-President Richard Cheney visited King Abdullah in Riyadh. The Saudi monarch was less

interested in discussing the question of Iraq, which was the primary purpose of Cheney's visit, than the stalemate on the Israeli-Palestinian track. The Saudis clearly wanted to extricate Hamas, their proxy, from international isolation and American sanctions. It is, moreover, a Saudi goal to prevent Hamas from falling completely under the influence of Iran.

Meanwhile, the Saudis portray temperance and victimization in their political rhetoric to obfuscate their authentic policy position. In October, 2006, King Abdullah stated: "We are fighting terrorism and extremism in our midst. Why would we be funding it somewhere else?"⁴⁰ The Saudis have a different definition of terrorism than some other people do. For them it is holy war and martyrdom, eliminating evil and untruth, establishing justice, cleansing Palestine of infidel Jews, fighting the crusading West. Remember: one man's freedom-fighter is another man's terrorist.

In the latter part of 2006, the Saudis were preoccupied with promoting peace with Israel, based on Abdullah's Beirut Summit plan of 2002, and cajoling Syria to do the same. These diversionary tactics, lacking permanent significance or political coherence, buttress the Saudis' political image in the United States while achieving nothing concrete for peace, Israel, or the Arab world. In the aftermath of the summer war of 2006 between Israel and Hizbullah, the United States reportedly blocked the transfer of weapons and technology to Israel. Marginalizing Israel's strategic stature was Washington's way to assuage Saudi Arabia, hoping for more cooperation from Riyadh concerning the Iraqi imbroglio.⁴¹ Meanwhile a unilateral Israeli cease-fire regarding the Gaza Strip in mid-December 2006, while Palestinian missile fire continued to rain down on the western Negev, specifically Sderot, and Ashkelon, pointed to the long-reach of Saudi influence on Middle Eastern developments.

The destruction of the West, America included, appears to be the long-term religious and strategic goal of Saudi Arabia. This can be achieved through a combination of ways: **economic**, by the oil weapon (charging a price of \$65 for a barrel of oil that costs \$4.00 to produce) to flatten the West's industrial power; **political**, by penetrating Washington's Establishment and influencing its foreign policy in the Middle East; **demographic**, by generating Muslim population growth in Europe and America; **diplomatic**, by employing international bodies to strengthen Muslim and Arab forces in the world against all other countries and peoples; and **military and paramilitary**, by acquiring military capabilities, perhaps nuclear, and supporting

militant struggle and terrorism against Western targets. Interestingly, the Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal stated in February 2007 that his country was seeking Russian cooperation for the development of nuclear energy. While Saudi Arabia is compelled to consider Shiite Iran as a formidable religious and strategic rival, this very onerous problem has not deflected Saudi efforts to pursue the global struggle against America, its allies and friends, and the West as a whole.

In the post-October War period of 1974, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger intimated that America might use military force to take over the Gulf oilfields, the Saudis' included. The 1973-1974 oil embargo imposed on the United States and the danger to the industrial world as a whole evoked consideration for this policy option. Others argued that occupying the oil fields or destroying them would unleash Arab retribution of awesome proportions.⁴² But as the future unfolded, attacks struck American cities without America attacking the Arabian oil fields.

In March, 2002, with 9/11 fresh in mind, the Pentagon determined that Saudi Arabia is not an ally in the war against terrorism. Envoys from 27 countries, but not from Saudi Arabia, attended a meeting on this matter with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.⁴³ In the summer, a secret Rand Corporation briefing at the Pentagon labeled Saudi Arabia "an enemy" and recommended aggressive US actions against it. The Rand team called upon the Bush Administration to tell the Saudis to stop their rhetoric against the United States and Israel, and to dismantle its Islamic "charities". If not – and all other things considered – then America should target Saudi oil, Saudi assets in the United States, and its holy cities.⁴⁴

A change in Washington's Middle East and global political paradigm toward Saudi Arabia requires a truly monumental decision from the White House. If it comes, US policy may take actions that have been unthinkable, by and large, over the span of many decades. These could include the following measures:

1. Considering and treating Islam as an anti-American militant missionary creed.
2. Limiting and restricting the construction of mosques in America.

3. Supporting and funding Christian communities throughout the Middle East, especially in Egypt and Lebanon.
4. Planning and executing attacks against Islamic sites under special circumstances.

In addition, American support for the state of Israel, while a traditionally central feature of Washington's Middle East policies, ought to be upgraded in a public, consistent, and strategic fashion as never before.

With a new spiritual resolve and stiffened political posture, the United States could turn the tables on the Saudis both within and beyond mainland America.

Afterthought

The seventeenth-century religiously militant doctrine of Wahhabism – “perfidious, vindictive, and fanatical” as described by an English diplomat in the Persian Gulf area in the nineteenth-century – is the Islamic foundation of the Saud House and Saudi policy. The then Saud ruler declared to the Englishman: “We abominate your religion” [Christianity]. And added: “When the question is one of religion we kill everybody; but in politics we make exceptions.”⁴⁵ This bold and humiliating statement conveys the spirit and thrust of Saudi Wahhabism and its agencies, appendages, and allies around the globe until today. The Saudis, having spent an estimated \$87 billion from 1973 to 2002 to promote the Wahhabi *da`wa* (preaching and missionizing) worldwide, and \$500 million for *al-Qai`dah*'s terrorist campaign during 1992-2002, proudly demand global triumph.⁴⁶ Though admittedly astounding, and undoubtedly still incredible to many, the long-term doctrinaire Wahhabi historical perspective aspires to nothing less than the Islamization of America itself at the very end of the road.

Knowing the enemy is the secret to thwarting and defeating him in time.

Endnotes

- ¹ See generally Sherifa Zuhur, *Saudi Arabia: Islamic Threat, Political Reform, and the Global War on Terror*, Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, March 2005.
- ² Dore Gold, *Hatred's Kingdom: How Saudi Arabia Supports the New Global Terrorism*, Washington: Regnery, 2003, chapter 7.
- ³ Rand Project Air Force, *Beyond al-Qai`dah*, Part 1 – The Global Jihadist Movement, 2006, p. 45.
- ⁴ *Mashrek International*, December 1984, p. 33. Buddhism, like Judaism and Christianity, is also a target of Islam, as when the Taliban destroyed ancient Buddhist statues at Bamiyan in Afghanistan, in 2001.
- ⁵ Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, London: Oxford University Press, 1969, pp. 131, 247.
- ⁶ See *Copts in Egypt: A Christian Minority Under Siege*, editor-in-chief Martyn Thomas and co-editor-in-chief Adly A. Youssef, Zurich: G2W V&R, 2006.
- ⁷ Robert Lacey, *The Kingdom*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981, pp. 393-98.
- ⁸ John Loftus, "The Muslim Brotherhood, Nazis, and *Al-Qai`dah*," 4 October 2004, from <<http://www.frontpagemagazine.com>>.
- ⁹ Rasha Saad, "Labyrinths of the Sect," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 19-25 October 2006.
- ¹⁰ Magdi Khalil, "The Muslim Brotherhood and the Copts", 20 April 2006, Internet.
- ¹¹ Etienne Sakr (Abu Arz), "From Lahore to Taif: The Saudi Role in Lebanon", Political Paper [in Arabic], 18 March 2002, 9 pages.
- ¹² Robert Fisk, *Pity the Nation: The Abduction of Lebanon*, NY: Atheneum, 1990, pp. 272-279.
- ¹³ *Lebanese Political Journal*, online web site, 16 May 2005.
- ¹⁴ *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, 17 July 1986 and 11 August 1986.
- ¹⁵ "Saudi Imam Says: Goodbye to Peace Initiatives" [in Arabic], *FBIS* (Foreign Broadcasting Information Service), 19 April 2002.
- ¹⁶ Abraham Foxman, "The Myth of Moderation", *The Jerusalem Post*, 18 September 1981.
- ¹⁷ Yehudit Barsky, *Hamas – The Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine*, New York: American Jewish Committee, 2006, pp. 22-24.

- ¹⁸ Article by Khalil Ibrahim al-Saadat in the Saudi daily *Al-Jazirah*, reported by MEMRI, dispatch no. 367, 12 April 2002.
- ¹⁹ Ted Thornton, "The Middle East after September 11, 2001", *History of the Middle East Database*, Internet; and Uriya Shavit, "Al-Qai'dah's Saudi Origins," *Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2006, from <<http://www.meforum.org/article/999>>.
- ²⁰ Judith Miller, *God Has Ninety-Nine Names: Reporting from a Militant Middle East*, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1996, p. 87; Bat Ye'or, *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*, Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2005, p. 116.
- ²¹ Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qai'dah and the Road to 9/11*, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006, pp. 100-104.
- ²² "Saudis Continue to Fund Al-Qai'dah", *MENL* (Middle East Newsline), Washington, 20 March 2002; and Daniel Pipes, "Make the Saudis Pay for Terror," *New York Post*, 15 April 2002.
- ²³ Ely Karmon, "Al-Qa`ida and the War on Terror after the War in Iraq", *MERIA*, March 2006, pp. 9-10.
- ²⁴ Dan Briody, *The Iron Triangle: Inside the Secret World of the Carlyle Group*, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003.
- ²⁵ Remarks by Chas W. Freeman, Jr. at the Middle East Policy Council meeting of the World Affairs Council of North Carolina, 7 May 2006.
- ²⁶ Rachel Ehrenfeld, "Carter's Arab Financiers", *The Washington Times*, 21 December 2006.
- ²⁷ *The Looming Tower*, pp. 309, 314.
- ²⁸ MEMRI, special dispatch 360, "Saudi Arabia", 27 March 2002.
- ²⁹ Olivier Roy, *L'Islam mondialisé*, nouvelle edition, Editions de Seuil, 2004, pp. 148-154.
- ³⁰ David Wurmser, "The Saudi Connection", *The Weekly Standard*, 20 October, 2001; and also Daveed Gartenstein-Ross, "Prison Jihad", *The Weekly Standard*, 12 October 2006.
- ³¹ See for example, Calev Ben-David, "Nonie Darwish isn't Afraid", *The Jerusalem Post*, 8 December 2006.
- ³² Daniel Pipes, *Militant Islam Reaches America*, NY: W.W. Norton, 2002.
- ³³ David Eberhart, "Franklin Graham Takes the Stage", *NewsMax Magazine*, December 2006, p. 57; and Jeff Jacoby, "The Boston Mosque's Saudi Connection", *The Boston Globe*, 10 January 2007.
- ³⁴ By Sheikh Abdul Hadi Palazzi in 2002, and journalist Mark Steyn in 2006.

- ³⁵ James E. Akins, "The New Arabia", *Foreign Affairs*, 70, 3, Summer 1991, pp. 36-49; and William B. Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security, and Oil*, Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1981, chapter 9.
- ³⁶ Srdja Trifkovic, "Kosovo and the Global War on Terrorism", *Chronicles Online*, 3 October 2006.
- ³⁷ See Raphael Israeli, *From Bosnia to Kosovo: The Re-Islamization of the Balkans*, Shaarei Tikva (Israel): Ariel Center for Policy Research, Policy Paper 109, 2000, p. 27.
- ³⁸ Michel Gurfinkiel, *USA/Rapport Sur Baker*, 26 December 2006, at <http://www.michelgurfinkiel.com/articles/96-Etats-Unis-Rapport-sur-Baker.html>.
- ³⁹ Jacob Laksin, "Jimmy Carter and the Arab Lobby", <FrontPageMagazine.com>, 18 December 2006.
- ⁴⁰ "Saudi King Abdullah Talks to Barbara Walters", ABC News 20/20, 10 October 2006.
- ⁴¹ MENL, Tel Aviv, 26 December 2006.
- ⁴² J.B. Kelly, *Arabia, the Gulf and the West*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980, pp. 494-95.
- ⁴³ MENL, Washington, 14 March 2002.
- ⁴⁴ Larry Everest and Leonard Innes, "The Saudi Arabia Debate: US Ally or Enemy?" *Z Magazine Online*, volume 15, number 12, December 2002.
- ⁴⁵ Lewis Pelly, *Report on a Journey to Riyadh*, originally 1866, Cambridge – Oleander: Naples/Falcon, 1978, pp. 53, 47.
- ⁴⁶ Rachel Ehrenfeld, *Funding Evil: How Terrorism is Financed – And How to Stop It*, Expanded Edition, Chicago and LA: Bonus Books, 2005, pp. 26 and 35; also pp. 196-201.

Saudi Arabia launched an air war in late March, hoping to stem the advance of Houthi rebels, who are allied with Iran. The Houthis, who belong to the Zaidi sect of Shia Islam, took control of the capital, Sanaa, last year in a surprise offensive and later moved on Aden, Yemen's second city in the south, exiling the Saudi-backed president, Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. While the air strikes have prevented the Houthis and their allies from seizing control of all of Yemen, it has not reversed their advance. "Yemen is the Mexico of the [Arabian] Gulf," said Farea al-Muslimi, a Yemeni expert with the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut. "It's not on the border of Israel and our blood type is not oil, so nobody cares what's happening there." Saudi Arabia's rulers don't attach great importance to being called "king." There are many kings in the world. The Saudi rulers prefer to call themselves the "Custodians of the Two Holy Mosques," a reference to Mecca and Medina. It sounds modest, but it denotes a claim to power that extends well beyond the kingdom. Mecca and Medina are the two holiest places for Muslims, where people from all continents come together, from Bosnia to North America, Nigeria to Malaysia. It remains unclear whether this leadership has a vision for bringing peace to the Middle East and whether it can transform a country that is dependent on oil exports into a modern economy. It also remains to be seen whether it can liberalize its archaic system of rulership and break the power of its religious leaders. Along Saudi Arabia's long, lonely desert border with its northern neighbour Iraq, the Ministry of Interior guards have every reason to stay alert. Isis, the well-armed and well-funded jihadist army that has seized control of most of western Iraq, is now effectively at the kingdom's doorstep. Nearly half the 900km (560 mile) Saudi-Iraq border is with Iraq's Anbar province where The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Isis), now rebranded as simply "The Islamic State", is largely able to move its fighters around at will. Isis is now perhaps the world's best-funded and most formidable militia movement and the countries around the region have good reason to worry what it does next. Related Topics. Iraq.