

**CHANGING TRENDS IN UNITED STATES –
SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS SINCE 1990**

*Dissertation Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University,
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VENKATESHWARAN. L



**American Studies Division
Centre for American and West European Studies
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067
India
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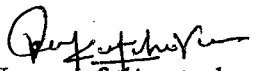
CENTRE FOR AMERICAN & WEST EUROPEAN STUDIES
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

NEW DELHI - 110067

Date: 26-07-2004

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Certified that dissertation entitled "Changing Trends In United States-Saudi Arabia Relations Since 1990" submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university and is my own work


Name of the student

Venkateshwaran. L.

We recommend that this Dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation

Chairperson


Dr. Abdul Nafey


Supervisor

Dr. Chintamani Mahapatra

DEDICATED

**TO MY FAMILY WHO HAVE BEEN MY SOURCE OF
STRENGTH THROUGH THICK AND THIN AND TO MY LITTLE
NEPHEW RAMAKRISHNAN WHO IS FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE
AGAINST CANCER**

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L. Venkateshwaran

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PREFACE

This work, titled: “**Changing Trends in United States-Saudi Arabia Relations since 1990**”, is an effort at conceptualizing the different phases through which relations between the United States, the world’s superpower and Saudi Arabia, a regional power of the Middle East, have gone through. The work assumes added importance in the wake of the geostrategic importance of Saudi Arabia in the region. Many American analysts considered the region, as potentially the most volatile region in the world. A cluster of states, which were led by dictators, suspected of tyranny and oppression of its people, along with the presence of the world’s most precious and scarce commodity, oil, made this region one of prime importance for the United States.

Chapter 1 titled: “**Evolution of U.S.-Saudi Relations: (1933-1990)**” traces the origin of relations between the two countries at a time when the Economic Depression and Hitler’s Nazis were threatening world stability and peace. Tracing the rise and rule of the Saud dynasty in Saudi Arabia, various defining factors, influences and circumstances leading to the establishment of relations with the United States has been elucidated. The significance of the establishment of relations in 4 key spheres - Oil, Military, Economic-Commercial and Political have been highlighted. Relations through the first five decades were largely restricted to these spheres and although both countries worked hard to keep these spheres independent of each other, pronounced linkages always existed between them, leading to a certain amount of ambiguity creeping into the relationship.

Chapter 2 Titled: “**Continuity and Change in Bilateral Relations in the 1990s**” analyses relations between the two countries during the decade after the cold war. The demise of the Soviet Union left the United States as the sole unilateral super power in the world while the clever manipulation of the ‘oil weapon’ had propelled Saudi Arabia into the status of a wealthy and powerful nation. In this backdrop, the Gulf war, fought to stop the ambitious plans of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, presented a severe test to both. Saudi Arabia’s flexibility in allowing American troops in it territory and providing financial and troop support pushed relations between the two countries into a phase of certainty and positive cooperation. Further, the threat

that terrorism and radical fundamentalism posed, forced active security and military cooperation between the two countries.

Chapter 3 titled: “**Impact of Terrorism and the US war on Afghanistan**” provides a continuing description of relations from the previous chapter. The impact of the September 11 terror attacks on the United States on relations with Saudi Arabia was disastrous. The involvement of 19 terrorists, out of which 15 were Saudi citizens, and the alleged financial links of the Saudi Royal family to terrorist organization created wide fissures in the relations between the two countries. American anger and frustrations at perceived Saudi hesitancy and hostility to fight terrorism saw relations’ deteriorate to its lowest zenith. The September 11 incident was so unprecedented and horrific that the United States simply had to act, which it did by attacking Afghanistan, the abode of Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. Saudi Arabia’s dilemma of not having enough conviction to positively support the United States worsened matters. Anti-American feelings in Saudi Arabia and Arab discriminations in the United States made analysts fear that Samuel Huntington’s prophecy of a “clash of civilization” could become a monstrous possibility.

Chapter 4 titled: “**The US war on Iraq and its Impact on Relations**” outlines relations between the two countries during the U.S. war on Iraq. The unilateral move by the United States to attack Saddam Hussein and Iraq in spite of condemnations across the world increased uneasiness in Saudi Arabia. It, again, refused to support the imperial ambitions of the United States leading to relations between the countries into a phase of ambivalence. The decreasing necessity of Saudi oil for the United States, as it had begun to look for new markets in the Persian Gulf and the Atlantic Basin, created another hurdle for further cooperation.

Chapter 5 provides the **Conclusion** to this work. The varying factors of common interests, concerns and necessities have been analyzed in a descriptive critical manner. The threat of terrorism, the necessity for continuous political and social reforms in Saudi society and the requirements of a cooperative role in the peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestine dispute are some of the factors analyzed. The U.S.-Saudi relations have turned a full

cycle and the 21st century provides it an opportunity to shed the excess baggage of the past and begin afresh.

Methodology

The research is based mainly on content analysis method. It is supplemented by the case study method. The researcher has aimed to acquaint himself with a survey of existing materials on the subject. Various issues and events have been graphically described and critically analyzed. Primary sources such as government documents and records have been utilized. Secondary sources from relevant books, journals and newspaper articles have been used to make the work meaningful.

CHAPTER ONE
EVOLUTION OF U. S - SAUDI RELATIONS
[1933-1990]

SUB TITLES

1. INTRODUCTION – EARLY YEARS OF RELATIONS
2. OIL RELATIONS
3. MILITARY RELATIONS
4. ECONOMIC-COMMERCIAL RELATIONS
5. POLITICAL RELATIONS

TABLES

1. SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE AND FIVE YEAR PLANS
(1973-1985)

INTRODUCTION

As a traditional monarchy deriving part of its legitimacy from adherence to fundamental Islamic tenets, Saudi Arabia during much of its brief history as an independent state, lived in comparative isolation from the rest of the world. While various ideological currents were sweeping most Arab states –nationalism, socialism and communism- Saudi Arabia remained attached to its own strict interpretation of Islam. Oil was the key to Saudi Arabia's economy, its future and source of many of its dilemmas and concerns as well. If geography has blessed it with oil, history has been relatively less kind. For just as Saudi Arabia came into its own as an economic power to be reckoned with in the Arab world, it's surrounding environment often remained in turmoil.

Physical isolation, however, kept this country away from the dangers of foreign intervention, allowing the Saud family to consolidate its power and to dominate its weak neighbours where possible.¹ This was in direct contrast to the early decades of the nineteenth century when some of the peripheral areas of the present-day Kingdom were under the control of rival Arab leaders. Force, persuasion and religion went hand in hand as the Saud family extended its sway over these Arab leaders and tribes. Yet many of these border issues were unresolved forcing Saudi Arabia to always get involved in Inter-Arab disputes. The Hashemites in Iraq and Trans-Jordan were especially seen as bitter enemies and competitors for political leadership in the Arabian Peninsula.²

Serious external threats, though, were deflected to some extent by the western presence in the region. Up until the mid 1950s, this arrangement

¹ William Quandt, *Saudi Arabia in the 1980s: Foreign Policy, Security and Oil*:(New York, 1981) pp.3-4

² *ibid*,p.13

worked fairly well. The British played a security role in the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Jordan and Egypt. The Americans were visibly present in Turkey, Ethiopia, Pakistan and Iran. The Soviets were nowhere in sight and Saudi Arabia was politically safe and financially sound on the verge of financial well being, as substantial oil revenues began to flow. The demise of this western-dominated security system surrounding Saudi Arabia with the virtually simultaneous appearance of the Soviet Union in Egypt, the intensification of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the emergence of Arab nationalism, under Gamel Abdel Nasser, as a powerful force became a serious threat to Saudi Arabia's territorial integrity. This, coupled with Syria and Egypt forming the self styled revolutionary United Arab Republic, civil war in Lebanon, the Iranian revolution, communization of Ethiopia, a bankrupt Turkey and unstable Pakistan, Shaky North Yemen and a South Yemen allied with the Soviet union, alarmed the Saudis as revolution appeared to sweep the Arab World.

Faced with these sources of threat and causes for anxiety, the Saudis, limited in human and material resources, but possessing vast amounts of oil and money, tried to shape a foreign policy suited to their modest capabilities. Isolation was no answer nor was exclusive dependency on the United States. Arab consensus proved to be fragile and Islamic solidarity failed to provide a strong alternative. Confronted with an uncertain future and shackled with the weight of tradition and a history that provided few clues to cope best with new challenges, the Saudis felt a deep ambivalence towards the United States, which became a source of both anxiety and security for them. The belief that their domestic developments could be seriously affected by events in the Middle East made them extremely attentive to the shifts of power and opinion around them. If they believed that they could shape events by drawing on their own

resources, they went to considerable lengths to do so. When the source of danger was beyond their reach - for example Israel or Soviet Union - they urged the United States to act.³

The Early Years of Relations

Relations between the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have existed for roughly half a century. This began in 1933 when the late King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud gave an oil concession covering a large area in the eastern part of the country to the standard oil company of California (CASCO). Up until 1940; Saudi-American relations remained purely commercial with oil being the chief sphere of attention. There was an occasional stray diplomat and military planners visiting, who were less worried about the country itself than about the enemy hands into which it could fall. Even western academic interest in the Middle East largely ignored Saudi Arabia.⁴

The Second World War (1939-45) however changed this situation when the United States began to play a more active role in world affairs especially after the war. The granting of an air base by King Abdul Aziz to the United States during the war and the historic meeting with the then American president, Franklin Roosevelt after the Second World War resulted, as aptly described in George Lengzowski's words, in – “What followed could be described as a multiple increase of diplomatic, military, technical and economic contacts between the United States and Saudi Arabia.”⁵

In spite of the establishment of Israel in 1948, the newly discovered oil resources in the Kingdom and the cold war that engaged the United States with the Soviet Union over

³ Quandt, n.1, pp.4-6

⁴ Fouad al Farsy, *Modernity and Tradition: The Saudi Equation*: (London, 1990) pp.284, 285

the spread of communism, made Saudi Arabia an important ally for the United States. On the one hand, as leader of the resurgent moderate Arab states, so long placed on the defensive by Arab radicals, Saudi Arabia was seen as a strong friend and a vital link in winning the other Arab nations over to terms that could result in a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace. On the other hand, the need for oil and energy resources and the control Saudi Arabia had over these resources created the image of Saudis as sinister oil Sheikhs in American minds. United States perception of Saudi Arabia largely remained ambivalent. Yet Saudi Arabia's non-experience of Western imperialism, as they had never been subjected to European colonial domination and a highly developed "encirclement syndrome" of constantly being surrounded by enemies led them to search for security, which became the basis of their early relations.

Despite changing perceptions and conditions, the basic common interests and differences of their relations remained constant in the first 50 years. The need to examine development and significance of ties in the spheres of oil, military, economic-commercial and political affairs were important as events in each of these spheres had an influential impact on one another. Yet each sphere had sufficiently independent characteristics and developed sufficiently independent dynamics to warrant being examined separately.⁶

Oil Relations

Oil has been a key factor in United States - Saudi relations from the beginning. Official American interest in Middle East Oil had occurred as early as World War I. Although the United States was the world's leading producer at the time with its own

⁵ *ibid*, p.285

⁶ Anthony Cordesman, *Western Strategic Interests in Saudi Arabia*:(London, 1987) pp.13,15

reserves adequate for domestic needs, the war cut off its allies from their foreign sources. The United States became the main supplier of oil for the Allied War effort and its official interest in overseas supplies increased. As oil production grew during the interwar period and world demand fell as a result of the “Great Depression”, American oil companies began to establish themselves in Saudi Arabia. With the growing world depression in the 1930s and increasing tensions, fuelled by Hitler’s Nazis, leading to the Second World War, the number of pilgrims to Mecca had begun to decline. As Hajj receipts were the principle source of income for Saudi Arabia the already fragile financial state became more precarious, King Abdal- Aziz came under pressure and gave oil concessions to the American oil companies.⁷

The Second World War convinced American officials that oil was of vital strategic significance. The, then, Secretary of Defense James Forrestal became a leading proponent of this view, warning prophetically that- “within the next twenty five years the United States is going to be faced with very sharply declining oil reserves...”⁸ As early as 1943, the United States declared Saudi Arabia to be eligible for lend-lease assistance. At the time, this was seen as a necessary step for bolstering the weak Saudi economy as well as the means of securing American stakes in Saudi oil. Before long the Arabian American Company (ARAMCO) was producing substantial amounts of oil thereby greatly profiting Saudi income. In the late 1950, the principle of splitting pre tax profits on a fifty-fifty basis also greatly benefited the Saudis. For instance in 1950 and 1951 alone, the Saudis received \$56 million and \$110 million respectively as pretax oil profits.⁹ In spite of substantial cooperation between the two in oil trading, the urgency with which

⁷ David Long, *The United States and Saudi Arabia: Ambivalent allies*, (London, 1985) pp.10-3

⁸ Quandt, n.1, p.47

the United States viewed its oil interests in Saudi Arabia significantly diminished after the War. Although American interest did not cease completely, the broader political and strategic threat of communism and Soviet-supported radical nationalism in the region took precedence of their attention over oil interests. As a result, efforts to create an active American public sector role in terms of open transactions in Saudi oil operations were replaced once again by a policy of indirect government involvement. The United States sought to maintain an overall environment in which the private companies could expand their Saudi and other Middle Eastern Operations.¹⁰

The intricate relationship developed over the years and by the 1960s, major oil companies dictated oil prices and production rates, aimed primarily to prevent an endemic oil glut that would lead to a collapse of the international oil market. Continuing American and foreign discoveries perpetuated the oil glut right through the 1960s. The control of production and prices by the oil companies led to resentment among the producing countries over their inability to determine or even regulate their oil revenues. This resulted in the formation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC] by the oil rich Arab countries.

The late 1960s saw great changes in supply-demand relationships in the International oil market. The glut had kept prices down and cheap oil had spurred demand more rapidly than virtually anyone predicted. Western Europe, principally fueled by coal in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had switched to oil. In the United States, the mania for mobility had pushed per capita gasoline consumption to the highest in the world. Even Third World

⁹ Long, n.7, p.16

¹⁰ Long,n.7,p.17

consumption was on the rise. Although new discoveries of oil wells were still being made, demand was rapidly outstripping supply. By 1970, the United States became a net importer of oil, signaling an end to the oil glut and the beginning of a Sellers Market. This set the stage for the oil producing countries to seize control of prices and production rates from the companies.¹¹

The closure of the Suez Canal and the Trans-Arabian pipeline during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war put a premium on Libyan crude. The Libyan ruler, Muammar Qadhafi instituted “conservation measures” and cut back production forcing all the operating companies in Libya to capitulate to Libyan demands. The implication of the Libyan success was the growing demands for higher prices and tax rates from all the oil-producing countries. The sellers market had truly developed and OPEC had begun to flex its muscles. In hindsight, the non-intervention of the American government to counter OPEC’s challenges to the companies could have made a mistake. Even the willingness of the companies to deal collectively with OPEC members was itself a departure from the 1960s when they, from a position of strength, insisted on dealing with the producing countries on an individual bilateral basis. Of course the United States and the companies while negotiating collectively were seeking to, in the words of, then Ambassador of Iran, Douglas MacArthur II – “play OPEC members against one another.”

At the same time that the oil-producing countries were gaining control over price setting, they were also gaining control over ownership of the oil resources in the Middle East. Some states such as Algeria, Iraq and Libya accomplished this through nationalization. Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states preferred to follow the route of “participation”- a strategy, according to then Saudi

¹¹ *ibid*, pp.20-21

minister of petroleum and mineral resources Ahmad Zaki Yamani, “kept companies in the game and maintained an incentive for them to continue to restrict production rates in order to maintain price stability”.¹²

In the fall and winter of 1973/74, three events took place, which focused international attention on Saudi Arabian oil policies. The first incident revolved around OPEC and the negotiations with the oil companies over prices. For the first time, OPEC unilaterally raised oil prices ignoring the pleas of power less companies.¹³ The second incident occurred during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The Saudi King Faisal had ominously stated that the “Oil weapon” might be used if the United States did not pressurize Israel to relinquish captured Arab lands. Washington paid little heed and when War subsequently broke out; the Saudis announced halting of oil shipments to the U.S. For the first time, the United States and Saudi Arabia found themselves on opposite sides of a major international crisis. Thirdly although the crisis subsided by the spring of 1974, oil prices had rocketed to over \$1 a barrel while Saudi income rose to \$22.6 billion that year. To the United States, it also meant that Saudi Arabia could begin to spend untold amounts on domestic programs, a development having potentially far reaching consequences.¹⁴

The embargo forced the United States for the first time to focus on the necessity for developing an integrated government-to-government energy relation. The policies adopted had to take into account domestic as well as foreign supply and demand factors. The realization that the United States was dependent on foreign oil to maintain its energy- intensive standard of living came slowly and painfully to Americans who had come to believe that personal mobility was their right. Domestically,

¹² *ibid*, pp.21, 23

¹³ *ibid*,p.24

the American government created the Federal Energy office/ Administration (FEA) and attempted to restrict private consumption more severely than industrial consumption. Development of alternative forms of energy under a government study called 'project Independence' attempted to evaluate various energy strategies. The foreign energy policy was both multilateral in terms of focusing on major oil consumers, and bilateral in focusing on the major oil exporter. Saudi Arabia, with its high production capacity and extensively proved reserves, its small population and low absorptive capacity for capital emerged as the key country for the United States.

By the late 1970s, Saudi Arabia played an influential role in reducing the prices of oil by arriving at a 'compromise price freeze' among the OPEC members. But the Iran revolution led to a dropping of Iranian oil production. The resultant climbing of oil prices led to "panic buying" in the market. In order to avoid another supply freeze, companies and countries alike began building up inventories, which increased the prices further. The Saudis, in the meantime limited production of oil (6.5 m b/d in 1979) with a warning that increased prices would bring down the demand, although the United States & the world at large felt the Saudis had acted in greed and irritation at the Americans. The world production had peaked by December 1979, yet the prices continued to rise. The breaking out of the Iraq- Iran War led to mayhem. As Iranian and Iraqi production now shut down, Saudi Arabia increased its capacity. However, by August 1981, it became obvious that, unlike the Iranian crisis, the war had occurred on the downside of a market cycle thereby merely postponing an oil glut. Saudi Arabia rapidly cut down production (4.5 mb/d in offered 1983) yet the demand kept declining. Oil producers and companies that had stocked offered "discounts" and de stocked their oil. In just a decade

¹⁴ Quandt, n.1, pp.50-1

since the producing countries had seized control of their oil resources, and OPEC, with Saudi Arabia at the helm, had seized control of price and production, the world had witnessed two rapid price escalations and two oil gluts. Despite every one's vociferous support for market stability it appeared to be as far from realization in the 1980s as in the 1970s. For the United States, the world's greatest oil consuming country, and Saudi Arabia, the world's greatest oil exporting country, oil relations would remain a crucial interest in the future.¹⁵

Military Relations

The strategic location of Saudi Arabia between the Vital Red Sea and Persian Gulf shipping routes and across the direct air route to India and the Far East were key reasons for early military relations to be initiated with the United States. Domestic opinion in the United States was in favour of furnishing certain direct assistance to Saudi Arabia in order to obtain additional privileges such as extensive air facilities.

The Land-Lease aid of 1943 that formally initiated military relations was followed by the United States sending several survey and advisory missions to enhance security infrastructure in Saudi Arabia. The "extensive air facilities" agreement (airbase at Dhahran and emergency air fields at Lauqa and Hafr al-Batin) was concluded in August 1945. This was an important agreement to the United States as it had control over the base for three years and thereby helped it control hostilities with Japan during the Second World War. Following the War, although the Dhahran air base greatly declined in importance, the advent of the Cold War, accompanied by a Soviet threat, and oil security, which was a major element of Saudi economic interests, increased the military relations between the two countries. A second agreement on

¹⁵ Long, n.7, pp.25-30

American access to the Dhahran airfield was concluded by June 1949. The first comprehensive United States plan, though, for building a modern Saudi Armed force was devised through the O'Keefe report made by a survey team headed by Major General Richard O'Keefe. The Saudis approved the recommendations of the O'Keefe mission despite deep bitterness over the United States role in the creation of Israel in 1948. Saudi resentment over American Support of Israel was out weighed by the continuing perception of encircling external threats to Saudi security and the desire for an American commitment for protection against such threats. Over the years, even though the Saudi desire for American military support against encirclement persisted, resentment at over weaning U.S. support of Israel created ambivalence in their military relations.¹⁶

In the broadest sense, the military relations involved a trade-off between the American desire for access to a forward strategic military base and the Saudi desire for evidence and reassurance for American commitment to protect the regime against foreign threats. The American did not want its military commitment to become so broadly constructed that it would possibly entangle itself in regional conflicts and place itself in a position of choosing sides on the Arab-Israeli issue. The Saudis on the other hand remained highly sensitive to any perceived infringement of their sovereignty and to charges of other Arab states that they had relinquished any portion of their sovereignty to a foreign power by granting bases. The influence of the Egyptian nationalist leader Abdel Gamal Nasser on king Saud Aziz during the 1950's, the Saudi king's suspicions on British influences Jordan and Iraq and his continued claims for Buraymi Oasis (a dispute with Oman and the United Arab Emirates) all played at least some part in keeping Saudi Arabia out of the American backed Baghdad

¹⁶ *ibid*, pp.33-5

pact of 1955.

The expiration of the Dhahran agreement and increased Arab-Israeli tensions, which forced Saudi Arabia to join an Arab "Defensive Alliance" in October 1955 worsened relations. Continued Saudi arms requests, necessitated by a five-year military development plan (the 1380 plan) did not receive any Washington commitment. But the military relations stabilized quickly with the signing of a new Dhahran agreement and financial assistance to the tune of \$120 million and arms sales worth \$110 million in 1957. However the decreasing relevance of overseas bases to the United States and increasing criticisms on Saudi Arabia by other Arab states led to a formal closure of the Dhahran agreement in March 1961.¹⁷

Amazingly the cancellation of base rights went a long way in reestablishing the military relations on a firmer footing. An event that helped to improve relations further was the crowning of King Faysal following his brother king Saud's abdication of the throne. Faysal ended the mismanagement and court intrigue that characterized the rule of his brother and kept continuity in national security affairs. A second influential event was the outbreak of the Yemeni civil war. It created a security threat so serious to Saudi Arabia that, for the first time, the Saudi leadership felt the need to develop a modern, effective military force tout weighing the internal security risks inherent in creating such a force.¹⁸

This was a direct contrast, as the Saudis up until this time had not made any serious efforts to develop their military might. The rationale behind such a reluctance of the royal family to place much power in the hands of military men was the

¹⁷ *ibid*, pp.36-40

¹⁸ *ibid*,p.40

need to neutralize the risk of a military coup. The Saudi National Guard and the king's tribally based army were mainly responsible for security. The former had traditionally occupied strategic locations near Riyadh, Jeddah and Dhahran, while the latter were kept away from urban centers, often without much ammunition or mobility. These practices though began to change in the 1970s. When the Yemeni civil war ended in 1970, only \$45 million was spent on American arms and services in a year. But by 1973, the figure rose to \$ 1.15 billion aided by an increase in Saudi oil income. Following the 'Yom Kippur War' it rose to \$2 billion per year and by 1979 it has shot over \$ 6 billion. In addition to this, 5000 Saudis from the military and National Guard had received American training during the 1970s. Expanding oil reserves led to huge increases in purchases of arms. The contribution of American military might to the global and regional balance of power provided a security umbrella to Saudi Arabia.

Despite the magnitude of these efforts, Saudi Arabia entered the 1980s without feeling confident of its ability to defend itself. It doubted American capabilities and determination to defend it and worried about circumstances in which American armed forces might be used against rather than in support of their interests.¹⁹

The United States meanwhile devised a "**Two pillar policy**" after the withdrawal of the British from the region. This policy looked at Iran and Saudi Arabia, as the two regional powers that could fill the so-called power vacuum left by the British. This was relatively successful, at least in the context of Gulf security and stability, until the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979. In spite of criticisms of an arms race developing between the two regional powers the policy provided an impetus for active military relations during the period.²⁰

¹⁹ Quandt, n.1, pp.51-3

²⁰ Long, n.7, pp.55-8

Yet relations worsened immediately there after, in large part as a result of four crises that followed: The fall of the shah of Iran in a revolution led by Islamic hard liners in Iran and the eruption of hostilities between Marxists in South and North Yemen, both of which took place in early 1979 was followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in late 1979 and the Iran-Iraq war, which broke out in 1980. During this period, military relations centered largely around two arms requests that came to be regarded by the Saudis as “litmus tests” of their friendship with the United States: the request for F-15 fighter planes in 1978 and the air defense “enhancement package” of 1981 that centered around the Saudi request for air borne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft. Although both arms requests were granted, it was not without stiff congressional opposition that itself had as negative an influence on the state of the military relations as the positive impact that the American government’s willingness to make the sales had.²¹

Yet the two arms sales package proved to be central to an American effort in creating a “strategic consensus policy” of prioritizing security in the face of the Soviet threat in the Middle East over the Camp David process. But the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 forced the United States to refocus policy concerns back on the Arab-Israeli problem. Military relations with the Saudis though quickly took precedence with the introduction of American troops to Saudi Arabia in the backdrop of the intensifying Iraq-Iran war. Thus, despite various distractions that had the potential for increased ambivalence the spirit of cooperation between the two countries remained reinforced. In spite of having not worked out a common strategy with their priorities differing and their political imperatives often clashing, the Saudis, on the one hand, recognized the importance of the United States to their security, while the United

²¹ Ibid, pp.59-65

States, on the other hand, needed the Saudis for maintaining regional stability in the region. As in the past, the long tradition of cooperation continued to provide momentum in the military relations despite the vagaries of Middle East Politics.²²

Economic – Commercial Relations

If Saudi Arabia showed some uneasiness about military ties with the United States doubting its benefits, the economic relationship between the two was clearly recognized as more beneficial to them. The development of economic and commercial relations between the two countries could be roughly characterized into two periods. The first, from 1933 to 1973, was basically a period in which Saudi Arabia evolved from poverty to become a major oil producer. Then following the energy crisis of 1973 –1974, Saudi Arabia seemed suddenly to emerge as a major power.²³

American oil companies had been responsible for the discovery, development and management of Saudi oil. Economic plans were designed in consultation with American experts. American technology flourished throughout the kingdom. The national airline, desalination projects, the hospitals, the National Guard and the vast petrochemical complexes at Jubayl and Yanbu all reflected American technology.²⁴

However, unlike other dimensions of U.S.-Saudi relations, economic development had primarily involved the American private sector, not the government. For many years, ARAMCO probably played a more important role in this sphere than the American government. When involvement of the American government occurred it was

²² *ibid*, pp.66-8

²³ Quandt, n.1, pp.53-4

usually limited to attempts to ensure that American firms were not unfairly discriminated and almost always justified on the basis that the political stability of the kingdom largely depended on economic stability, which in turn depended on the orderly development of its oil resources. The “benign neglect” on the part of the United States was not simply because of the relative economic insignificance of Saudi Arabia in the early days, but was only an adherence to a policy of governmental non-interference in private business. Thus American government policies had little to do with the solid foundation laid for U.S. - Saudi commercial and economic relations. The good reputations of American private companies, a respect for American technology among the best in the world and the governmental non interference over companies to obtain political toehold in the kingdom in the manner of the European imperial powers were perpetual factors that evolved the relationship over the years. Saudi business philosophy based on ‘laissez-faire’ also enhanced the development of strong relations. Moreover, the Hanbali School of Islamic Jurisprudence to which Saudi Arabia subscribed, although the most conservative school on social and religious issues, was the most lenient and liberal on economic and commercial issues.²⁵

Economic relations also like military relations formally began with the extension of the American Land-Lease aid to the kingdom in 1943. There were two influencing causes responsible for the Land lease agreement. The first one was the request for financial assistance by the Casco Company from the American government in 1941. The request materialized after the Saudi King Abdal Aziz, faced with the prospects of a financial collapse, had demanded an advance aid of \$12 m to exploit the oil resources. The Second

²⁴ Al Farsy, pp.286-7

²⁵ Long,n.7,pp.73-5

World War had brought the company's operation to a virtual stand still. The second motivating factor was the growing concern in Washington that the British intended to use their economic assistance to the kingdom as a wedge to increase their political and oil interests.

Following the war, mounting oil revenues ensured conclusively that the Saudi government would not collapse financially. Yet the rudimentary fashion in which the Saudi ministry of finance operated, seldom distinguishing between public and private finance led to the task of reforms led by the United States and Britain. The United States, partly on its own initiative, began offering technical assistance in 1948. The Eddy-Mikesell Mission was sent to look at currency reform, while John. E. Greany arrived to help design an income tax under the "point four agreement" signed in 1951. A Financial Mission under Arthur Young was sent to reform the budgetary and administrative system of the Ministry of finance and to improve the tariff system. All these missions were modestly successful in their pursuits. The biggest success though was the creation of the Saudi Arabian Monetary agency (SAMA) in 1952 to operate as the kingdom's Central Bank.²⁶

With the ascendance of King Saud to the throne in 1953, economic and political relations began to suffer just as they were gaining impetus. By 1954, the Kingdom revoked the point four agreements on the grounds that financial assistance to the country was too small in comparison to the assistance given to Israel. The outbreak of the Arab-Israeli war in 1956 and the advent of Nasser's "Arab nationalism" wrapped in emotional and sentimental strings did not help matters much either. But economic relations improved when king Faysal replaced his brother and became the King. American government technical assistance mainly focused

on the military field and mineral exploration. The United States geological survey (USGS) and Aramco, under joint U.S. - Saudi sponsorship had published a geological map of the country by the mid 1960s. Saudi Arabia's need for western technology and technical assistance, their preference for American technology, American strategic interests in Saudi Oil and the growing purchasing power of the Kingdom all contributed to insulate economic relations to a great degree from the divisive Middle Eastern political issues of the day.²⁷

In the years immediately preceding the world energy crisis of 1973-74, there was a growing realization in the United States about Saudi Arabia's expanding importance in world trade and economic affairs. The combination of change, opportunities and anxieties created by the massive accumulation of foreign exchange held by Saudi Arabia and other OPEC oil producers, following the energy crisis, resulted in a high level of ambivalence in the economic relations with Saudi Arabia. On the one hand, the United States welcomed investment of Petrodollars, keeping its open door economic philosophy in mind. Saudi Arabia was accommodated because it provided substantial advantages, such as investment capital and strengthened relations with the United States. Accordingly the United States facilitated Saudi and OPEC investment in two ways- one was an understanding reached in early 1974 to treat Saudi investment in the United States confidentially and the second was an arrangement between the U.S treasury department and SAMA, for SAMA purchases of American government securities through the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. On the other hand, there was concern over the inadequacy of the system to monitor growing OPEC and other foreign investment in the United States. There were fears that the world financial system would not be able to recycle huge amounts

²⁶ Ibid, pp.76-8

²⁷ ibid,pp.79,80

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of petro dollars amassed by Saudi Arabia and other oil producers, resulting there by in a massive world wide liquidity crisis. More over the United States feared that Arab Petro dollars would be used to buy American firms; controls segments of the economy and possibly inhibit Jewish financial interests. Within the domestic arena, especially in the Congress, concern that OPEC and its Arab members would acquire a 'money weapon' to accompany their near monopoly control over the supply of oil, increased. Saudi Arabia, in the mid 1970s, came under particular scrutiny and various sub committees on Multi National Corporation's corrupt practices and on technology transfer to OPEC countries were constituted. The points on confidentiality and the traditional U.S. policy of welcoming foreign investment on a non-discriminatory basis became involved in the broader constitutional issue of separation of power between executive privilege and the Congressional investigatory responsibility.²⁸

American commercial policy towards Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil producing states following the energy crisis was no less ambivalent. To offset the balance-of-payments deficit of growing oil imports as well as to recycle petrodollars, the United States had to promote exports to the oil producing countries. Domestically, this led to employment and the creation of the commerce Action group on the North East (CAGNE) in the U.S. At the same time, however, the Congress began passing or strengthening laws that impeded trade to the Middle East. The Anti boycott amendments was passed to establish the U.S. opposition to the Arab boycott of Israel which became a raging issue following the Arab oil embargo of 1973-1974, stemming from general American resentment over gas shortages and higher prices and a perceived linkage between American dependence on oil and the strength of U.S.- Israeli

²⁸ *ibid*, pp.81-4



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relations. The Sherman Anti trust act of 1890 prohibiting “every contract, combination or conspiracy in the restraint of trade or commerce among several states” together with the Tax Reform act of 1976, “denying offenders of anti boycott legislation their right to foreign tax credits” and the Export Administration act amendments of 1977 made up the bulk of U.S. anti boycott legislation. In sum, the anti boycott legislation provided an avenue for making a political statement in support of Israel, became an irritant to American firms doing business in Saudi Arabia, and by it self constituted a burden to U.S. commercial interest in the region.

The Economic Recovery act of 1982, which increased, exempted income and excluded from the computation many of the allowances, provided a welcome relief for powerful disincentives of taxes on personal incomes earned abroad, for American exports to Saudi Arabia. The passage of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977 prohibited bribery of foreign officials who exercised discretionary authority over government contracting decisions with private firms. Criticisms poured on the act as it added a significant burden, rather than comfort, on the companies to determine what was and was not permissible. These three laws in particular had the most adverse effect on trade in the 1970s. Yet with the quantum increase in oil revenues after 1973, Saudi development spending increased and commercial opportunities in the kingdom burgeoned.

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES		FIVE-YEAR PLANS	
YEARS	EXPENDITURES	YEARS	EXPENDITURE
1973	\$2.6b	1970-75	\$9.2b
1979	\$43.1b	1975-80	\$141b
		1980-85	\$250b ²⁹

American firms held 20-23% of the Saudi import market and hence reaped substantial revenues that helped American balance of payments in a period of growing U.S. oil imports. Not surprisingly, U.S.-Saudi trade expanded in parallel with these foreign exchange earnings. In 1979 American companies signed non-military contracts in Saudi Arabia worth \$ 6 billion. Actual exports from the U.S. to Saudi Arabia in 1980 amounted to \$ 5.8 billion.³⁰

In the 1980s, the Saudis desire to ease the strains in the relations created by the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and the subsequent oil embargo and the determination, with their new oil and financial power, to enjoy equal economic relations resulted in the formation of a Joint Commission with the United States in 1975. In its first decade, the Joint commission posted a solid record of achievement. The value of the commission to both countries, qualitatively rather than quantitatively, had been an incalculable boon to close economic and commercial relations. Although Saudi Arabia found itself in the ironic position of a negative cash flow problem in its current account, during the oil glut in the mid 1980s, American exports of industrial products exceeded \$9 billion with another \$500

²⁹ Ibid, pp.85-9

³⁰ Quandt,n.1,p.54

million in agricultural products. Around the same time 650 U.S. firms were represented in the kingdom with some 60,000 American employees and dependents. This had generated about 350, 000 Jobs in the U.S. Thus it would be no exaggeration to say that the economic relations between the two by the late 1980s had been established on a rock solid foundation.³¹

Political Relations

Politics runs through the entire gamut of U.S Saudi relations from oil to economics. The decade after King Abdal Aziz formally created the kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the 1930s, did not witness any spurt in political activities between the two countries. American interests at that time still did not warrant official representation and the 'Provisional Agreement' signed in 1933 was the only formal act of diplomatic relations. The outbreak of the Second World War laid the foundations for close relations between the two countries. Germany and Japan had expressed interest in oil concessions in the region while the traditional great power of the region, Britain, looked increasingly pressed to maintain its position of primacy. As the War spread to the Middle East, American interest in Saudi Arabia increased. Strategic military and oil considerations were the catalyst for the establishment of closer political relations. The Land-Lease assistance program followed an Agricultural Mission to Saudi Arabia in 1942. By the end of the war, the U.S. had expended nearly \$100 million in the country. Yet the new forward policy towards Saudi Arabia raised a broader issue of a necessity for realigning American relations with Britain through out the Middle East. The idea of playing a role independent of the British had gathered momentum in the United States. This had a direct effect on Anglo-American

³¹ Long, n.7, p.90-5

cooperation in Saudi Arabia, which suffered, particularly in military assistance, as rivalry between the two allies increased. This rivalry was not limited to military affairs and indeed the central issue was oil. The United States was desperate to stave off becoming a net importer of oil. Hence American policy makers concentrated on the strategic importance of husbanding American oil by using Middle East resources. The notion that Britain consciously tried to further its oil interests in Saudi Arabia at the expense of the United States worsened matters. Certain psychological and personality factors also affected the rivalry. The British, accustomed to political paramount in the Gulf, found it difficult to accept the rapidly expanding influence of the United States, while the latter, on its part, had its "Anglo Phobes" in Harold Ickes, James Landis, and Senator Henry Tank. In any event the Saudis apparently enjoyed the rivalry, for it enabled them to play one side off against the other in their ongoing quest for financial and political security.³²

The turning point of U.S. - Saudi political relations though was the famous meeting of King Abdal Aziz with the then American President Franklin Roosevelt, in February 1945, which centered on the Arab-Israeli dispute over the Palestinian territory. Analysts in the U.S. felt, in hind sight, that Roosevelt, a supporter of Jewish immigration was so charmed by the desert king that he personally promised that the United States would not take action in the Palestine problem without consulting both the Arabs and Jews.

The strategic concerns that had been the major determinants of political relations during the Second World War waned in the post war era. Although American domestic oil shortage continued and the European Recovery program (Marshall Plan) was increasingly dependent on Middle Eastern oil, the

³² Ibid, pp.101-4

glut in the world oil market, by the 1950s, lessened considerable American strategic concerns. At the same time, two developments in the immediate post war period became primary determinants of U.S. - Saudi political relations. They were the advent of the Cold War and the creation of Israel. The post war soviet threat in the Middle East created a mutual U.S. - Saudi security interest that became the backbone of political relations. In March 1947, the Truman Doctrine, by which the U.S. took over from Britain the responsibility for maintaining security in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, established a long term American global policy for containing communism, which in general coincided with Saudi security interests. The major difference, though, had been over the second development, which was the creation of Israel in 1948. President Roosevelt and his successors could never find a solution to the Palestine problem acceptable to the Arabs, given the pressures of American domestic politics where the Jewish lobby had a significant presence.³³

The Eisenhower administration involved itself far more intensively with the Arab world than its predecessors, a course that led to its role in the creation of the Baghdad pact in 1955, the mediation of the Suez crisis in 1955 and the creation of the Eisenhower doctrine of 1957. This involvement however caused decidedly mixed reactions among the Arab states. The Baghdad pact which was formed as a security arrangement for the region against the Soviet Union only split the Arab regions, drawing conservative Saudi Arabia into an unnatural alliance with Nasser's revolutionary Egypt and threatening to undermine political relations. Yet as U.S. -Egyptian relations gradually deteriorated, the Eisenhower administration entered into independent contact with the Saudis and entertained the notion of building up king Saud as a conservative, spiritual leader, to

³³ Ibid, p.106, 107

counter the growing pan-Arab influence of Nasser.³⁴

The Suez crisis of 1956 when Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal incited a response of aggression from Israel (which had interests in the Sinai Peninsula), Britain and France (infringement of their rights). The United States, to the apparent surprise of the aggressors, strongly condemned the invasion and coerced a ceasefire. This development went a long way in improving American reputation in the Arab world especially in Saudi Arabia. It greatly melted the under currents of Arab bitterness at the American role in the creation of Israel. It did not however alter the American cold war vision, which hastily concocted the "Eisenhower Doctrine" calling for employing American forces, as deemed necessary to protect the independence and integrity of any Middle Eastern state.

Saudi Arabia and Egypt's relations deteriorated gradually, leading both into opposite camps in the 1960s. With the crowning of Saud's half-brother Faysal to the Saudi throne and the advent of the Kennedy administration in the United States, ideological barriers crept in to the political relations around the same time. King Faysal's independence from western influences and the viewing of social and economic development largely in terms of Western Secular, liberal, representative democratic norms by many in the Kennedy administration combined effectively to incite these ideological barriers. But yet again, another external development, in the form of the Yemeni civil war in 1962 made military and security conditions the top priority in their relations, offsetting the continuous push by the United States to socially reform Saudi Arabia. This played an important influence in the Saudi decision not to break relations with the United States following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, one of the few Arab States not to do

³⁴ Ibid, pp.108, 109

so.³⁵

The creation of a Marxist regime in south Yemen became a major security threat for the Arab peninsula. Skirmishes with the Saudis elicited a cautious response of support from the United States. The 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the two OPEC price hikes that quadrupled the price of oil and the Saudi-led Arab oil embargo in response to U.S. arms from Israel brought this “honey moon period” to an abrupt end. These significant developments were a direct response to the Saudi leadership’s concerns over a direct Israeli military threat. Having largely ignored Saudi Arabia prior to the energy crisis of 1973, the Israelis increasingly viewed Saudi oil power as a greater threat than the combined capability of all Arab armed forces. Although Saudi and American interest coincided in their mutual desire for a peaceful solution, the Camp David accord in 1978 between Egypt and Israel, under the watchful eyes of U.S. president Jimmy Carter, and propelled by Egyptian President Sadat made the Saudis realize their worst fears. The departure of the shah of Iran, a close friend of the Saudis, after the Iranian revolution in 1979 brought the political relations to a full circle. Just a decade earlier, the Saudis who had basked, under the positive American responsiveness to their security threat, were left to wonder whether the U.S. would save them in similar circumstances as in Iran. The Horn of Africa where Ethiopia backed Marxists were involved in a conflict over the territory of Ogaden with Saudi backed Somalia saw the United States unwilling to support Somalia, despite Saudi requests. This added further strains to the relations, frustrating the Saudis at American unwillingness to counter a clear Soviet-Communist threat at the mouth of Red Sea.³⁶

The fall of the Shah was

³⁵ *ibid*, p.110-5

followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and by the Iran-Iraq war in September 1980. South Yemen continued to foment revolution, and growing Soviet influence in Marxist Ethiopia became another major security concern. Both the United States and Saudi Arabia, in the early 1980s, became preoccupied with regional security issues, which were reflected, in their political relations taking a back seat.

The renewed preoccupation with security issues once again emphasized to the Saudis the need for close cooperation with the United States. It did not, however, totally obscure political issues of mutual concern, nor did it incline the Saudis to accept American dictates on policy formulations. The Saudis showed increasing signs of adjusting to their status as an oil power and they began to exercise a growing independence on how cooperation in economic, political and security issues should be accomplished. This desire for taking initiatives was evident in the "Faud plan" that the Saudi King announced for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli problem in 1981. Although Saudi Arabia, in the plan showed intentions of recognizing Israel, the latter showed no trust in the plan and took a suspicious stance on it. The United States, caught in a ticklish position, did not discourage the Saudis altogether for taking an initiative. The 1973-1974 energy crises had transformed Saudi Arabia into a regional power and with the destabilization of Iran in the revolution, subsequently leading it, to a 7-year war with Iraq the U.S. was forced to enlist support and encourage Saudi diplomatic assistance for regional stability. The integration of security and diplomatic interests in the political relations was greatly accelerated by Israel's attack on Lebanon. With the United States getting bogged down in Lebanon and straining relation with Syria, Saudi Arabia took upon itself the role of a moderate Arab

³⁶ Steven Emerson, *The American House of Saud: The secret petrodollar connection* (New York, 1995) pp.97, 101

mediator between preventing the United States to cozy up to Israel on the one hand and Syria to the Soviet Union on the other. The United States having realized the importance of Saudi Arabia to the region provided a significant number of troops to the country and provided them Awaacs & F-15 aircrafts despite Israeli opposition to such sales.³⁷

³⁷ Long, n.7, pp.123-4

CHAPTER -2

**CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN BILATERAL
RELATIONS IN THE 1990S**

SUB TITLES

1. MAJOR DETERMINANTS OF THE GULF WAR
2. SAUDI ARABIA AND OPERATION DESERT STORM
3. INFLUENCE OF THE WAR ON U.S – SAUDI RELATIONS
4. DOMESTIC COMPULSIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA
5. SAUDI ARABIA AS AN EMERGING ARMS MARKET
6. THE PROBLEM OF TERRORISM
7. TRADE RELATIONS

TABLES

1. DOMINANT POSITIONS OF SAUDI ARABIA AND JAPAN IN THEIR RESPECTIVE REGIONS-A COMPARISON
2. NUMBER OF AIR SORTIES FLOWN ARAB COUNTRIES IN THE GULF WAR AGAINST IRAQ (ANNEXTURE)
3. SCUDS FIRED AGAINST SAUDI ARABIA DURING THE WAR (ANNEXTURE)
4. TARGET AREA FOR IRAQI SCUDS (ANNEXTURE)
5. COMPARISON BETWEEN SCUD ATTACKS AGAINST SAUDI ARABIA AND ISREAL (ANNEXTURE)

MAJOR DETERMINANTS OF THE GULF WAR

David Long, former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, had observed that – “Rapid economic and social change does not yet appear to have greatly affected basic conservative Saudi social values, nor has change threatened the cohesion of Saudi society; this has enabled Saudi Arabia to maintain its political stability in a region marked by Chaos.”¹

This observation was severely tested on August 2, 1990 when the Gulf War, which began with Iraq’s incursion into Kuwait, and was quickly dubbed as the world’s first post-cold war crisis, badly split the Arab World over the invasion. It also tested the foundations of the United States – Saudi relations built over the previous five decades.² This event, which precipitated a global crisis, was pivotal for several reasons. Firstly, Iraq’s aggression was unprecedented. Never before in the 20th century had one Arab state occupied and subsequently annexed another. Secondly, the Gulf War was the first regional war fought against an Arab state by a coalition of western and Arab countries with Israel’s backing. Saudi Arabian assertiveness even extended to the point of a public condemnation of Iraq’s launching of scud missiles against Israeli cities; one Arab regime had never condemned another for attacking Israel. Thirdly, for the first time in the 20th century, non-Muslim, western military forces launched an offensive against an Arab country from Saudi Arabia, the land of the two most sacred shrines of Islam. Despite legitimization of the offensive by some Muslim religious authorities, other Muslim clergy and activists considered the Saudi act blasphemous. Fourthly, unlike previous wars, this war produced a popular reaction that was neither uniform across the Arab world, nor

¹ David Long, “Stability in Saudi Arabia”, in Charles Durant and Stephen Buck, *The Gulf, energy & Global Security: Political and Economic issues* (New York, n.d), p.9

² Ibid, p. 9.

consistent from the beginning to the end of the crisis.³The Arab world was badly divided over providing support to the international coalition's war against Iraq. Fifthly, one of the major determinants for the United States to go to war against Iraq was to defend its oil supplies in the Gulf, of which the most important by far was from Saudi Arabia.

The second of August 1990 was as important in Arab history as the second of November 1917, the date of the proclamation of the Balfour declaration providing for a Jewish homeland. No Arab state endorsed the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Jordan, Yemen, Libya, Algeria, Sudan and the Palestine Liberation Organization insisted that the problem could and must be settled by the Arabs themselves. More importantly others led by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, thought outside help was required. The Saudi invitation to American troops was extraordinary since it was the main supporter of Israel. American outrage at the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was widely contrasted with its tranquil acceptance of Israel's defiance of a series of United Nations Security Council resolutions on Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Golan Heights and Lebanon. But all this was dismissed in the panic that followed Secretary of Defense; Richard Cheney's "convincing" report to the Saudis of an imminent Iraqi invasion of Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. This was another major determinant for the Saudi invitation to American troops. Countries that had long opposed "imperialism" and "Zionism" turned to the primary western military power for protection against another Arab country. Countries like Jordan and Yemen which found the "Solution" offensive and dangerous, had to face the full wrath of the supporters, especially the Saudis. Some 800,000 Yemenis were expelled from Saudi Arabia

³ Muhammad Fouar, *The Arab World After Desert Storm*, U.S. Institute of Peace Press (Washington, n.d) pp. 3,4.

subsequently. All subsidies from the kingdom to these countries were stopped. Saudi Arabia ceased delivery of oil to Jordan and stopped buying its agricultural produce. In short, the invasion of Kuwait and the Arab reaction to it marked the end of a period of Arab consensus and solidarity.⁴

Yet another determining factor was the American desire for a “new world order”. The need to propel Saudi Arabia as the regional leader was crucial in propagating this concept. Two powerful national symbols, the royal family and Islam, interacted to establish legitimacy for the kingdom in the Middle East. The attack on Iraq meant that there was no other state in the region in a position to act as a regional stabilizer. Although Iran was potentially the most powerful country in that part of the world, it was not an Arab state. Iran was seen predominantly as a continental power and thus was assumed to not interact well with the outside world. Further, Iran was surrounded by larger countries, especially the Soviet Union and had been perceived as marginalized in relation to the Middle East as a whole and was considered unable to play any constructive role.

The defeat of Iraq eliminated all external challenges that Saudi Arabia’s leadership feared. In large measures the Gulf War was fought to prevent Iraq from becoming the dominant regional power. The coalition arrayed against Iraq testified to the undesirability of that outcome. A “greater Iraq” having fought a war first with Iran and then with other Arab states, would truly have been in a position to influence events

⁴ James. E. Atkins, “The New Arabia”, Foreign Affairs, (2002) PP. 36-49.

throughout the region. If the Iraqi military campaign in Kuwait were crushed it would leave Saudi Arabia in a dominant and unchallenged position in the region.⁵

TABLE -1

Domination positions of Japan (former American colony) and Saudi Arabia in their respective regions- The Pacific Rim and the Middle East (1990-91) Population (%) as

	<u>Compared with total pop (select countries)</u>
Japan	63
Saudi Arabia	75
	<u>GNP (% 06 compared with total GNP or GDP (select countries)</u>
Japan	88
Saudi Arabia	60
	<u>Military expenditure (%) as compared with total expenditures (select countries) (based upon the traditional limit of % of GNP)</u>
Japan	60
Saudi Arabia	75

(source: for Japan, Far Eastern Economic year book,1990;and for Saudi Arabia, The World Fact book(1988,1989)and The Military Balance 1990-1991

Notes: Japan's percentages are calculated based upon Japan plus the East Asian NICs: South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong (no defense expenditure recorded), and Singapore. Saudi Arabia's percentages are calculated based upon Saudi Arabia plus pre-war Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Oman was excluded)⁶

As shown in the Table, Saudi Arabia occupied roughly the same position in the Gulf region as Japan did in East Asia. Thus the new type of "economic regionalism" which had emerged in East Asia was now operating in the Persian Gulf area. Not only did Saudi

⁵ MARTIN H. SOURS- "Saudi Arabia's Role in the Middle East: Regional stability within the Middle East" *Journal of Asian Affairs*, January 2003 P. 43-7.

⁶ Ibid, p.48

Arabia hold a dominant position within the Gulf area, but it also acted as the major link between the Middle East and the United States. It received the latter role by supporting the forces of Operation Desert Storm successfully, without the major social disruptions that had been anticipated. This linkage meant that Saudi Arabia, in the eyes of the United States had become the “official spokesperson” of the Arab World. Saudi Arabia further solidified its dominant position within the organization of petroleum exporting countries (OPEC) due to its influential role in oil price stabilization policies during the war. In fact, ARAMCO was the unsung hero of the Gulf War, having increased oil production by more than 50% to make up for lost Kuwaiti and Iraqi supplies to the international market place.⁷

Saudi Arabia and Operation Desert Storm

Iraq's relations' deteriorated with Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates over differences in decreasing oil prices by increasing supply in the market. Iraq's threat of using force raised tensions throughout the Persian Gulf, sparking frantic Arab mediation efforts especially by Saudi Arabia and Egypt. In spite of these efforts Iraq massed a troop build up on its frontier with Kuwait. Saudi observers at the time interpreted it more as an intimidation tactic than as preparations for war. The OPEC meeting in Geneva, called to resolve differences, resulted in an Iraqi victory as Saudi Arabia and Iran, despite their political differences, backed its demand for a price hike despite Kuwaiti opposition. The Geneva pact called for total production ceiling of 22.5 million barrels a day at \$ 21 per barrel, an increase of about 20%.⁸

⁷ Ibid, pp: 49-60

⁸ *Facts on File*, Volume 50, Number 2592, July 27 1990, PP. 549-550.

Meanwhile Saudi and Egyptian mediation had led to talks between Iraq and Kuwait in Jeddah on August 1st, 1990. In spite of the oil price hike agreed in the Geneva conference, Iraq had made a host of unilateral demands which required Kuwait and other Gulf Arab states to write off some \$ 30 billion in credits given to Baghdad during the Iraq-Iran War and for Kuwait and the UAE to pay \$14 billion in compensation for Iraqi income allegedly lost due to low oil prices. Iraq had also accused Kuwait of stealing \$ 2.4 billion in petroleum from the Rumaila oil field along their disputed border, and insisted that Kuwait settle long standing territorial disputes over the virtually uninhabited but strategically located islands of Bubiyan and Warbah at the head of the Persian Gulf. When Kuwait refused to compromise on its territorial integrity, Iraq broke off the Jeddah talks and with troops and tanks stormed across the border into Kuwait on 2 August 1990 catching most of the world by surprise. Iraq claimed that its troops had been invited to restore order by an "interim free government" of Kuwaiti revolutionaries who had overthrown the Sabah dynasty. But independent accounts concluded that the Iraqi invaders had ousted the Sabah government with the intention of installing a pro-Iraqi regime.

In seizing control of Kuwait and its oil fields, Saddam Hussein apparently sought to turn Iraq, virtually overnight, into a regional superpower with economic clout to match its military might. Together, Iraq and Kuwait possessed proven oil reserves of some 195 billion barrels. That was 20% of the world supply, more than 25% of the OPEC total and second only to Saudi Arabia's 255 billion barrels. World oil prices shot up in response to the crisis in the Gulf and financial markets were plunged into turmoil.

The United States strongly condemned the invasion, and ordered economic sanctions against Baghdad and quickly froze both Iraqi and Kuwaiti assets. The invasion badly split the Arab world.⁹ A Saudi Television report announced that– “The kingdom of Saudi Arabia, while following with concern the events that had been taking place on the territory of sister Kuwait since dawn today, would like to clarify that king Fahd bin-Abd al- Aziz ...began at dawn today intensive contacts with his brothers the kings and presidents of the Arab states, starting with... president Saddam Hussein ... with a view to claming and normalizing the situation between the two fraternal countries, the Republic of Iraq and the states of Kuwait in the interests of all”.¹⁰ Following extensive telephone discussions between American President George.H.Bush and Saudi King Fahd, Saudi Arabia inspite of traditional reluctance allowed foreign military forces to be stationed on its soil. Although the 66,000 Saudi armed forces were largely American trained and Saudi Arabia had purchased billions of dollars of American weapons over the years, Riyadh had long resisted American requests for military base rights. In dispatching American ground troops and warplanes to the kingdom, President Bush was ordering one of the greatest American overseas military build - up since the Vietnam War. Although it was a gamble, most western analysts argued that a greater gamble would have been to risk allowing Iraq to conquer or coerce the Saudis, an outcome that would give Hussein control over 45% of the world’s oil reserves. More importantly, this decision in one move swiftly swept aside decades of mistrust and suspicion that had existed in the U.S. – Saudi relationship, providing it a thrust towards a more positive and cooperative direction.¹¹

⁹ *Facts on File*, Volume 50, Number 2593, August 3 1990, p. 565,566.

¹⁰ P.R. Kumara Swamy, “The Arabian interpretation of Operation Desert Storm”, Strategic Analysis, June 1991, p. 321.

¹¹ *Facts on File*, Volume 50, Number 2594, August 10 1990, p. 581-583.

Among the 29 nations constituting the international coalition force against Iraq, Saudi Arabia was the lynchpin of the American operations. The Arabian Kingdom was thought to have provided the much needed political legitimacy, economic support and military logistics that a war of such proportions needed. Operation Desert Storm was largely an American-Saudi affair. The United States sent F-15 fighter planes, approximately 2300 paratroopers, AWACS radar planes and U.S. based B-52 strategic bombers to protect the Saudi mainland while the its navy took up positions in the Gulf of Oman and the Red Sea to protect the Saudi coast from an Iraqi attack.¹² A Saudi led Arab summit, in a landmark decision, voted to send troops to Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states to defend any attacks. Egypt, Syria and Morocco sent troops into Saudi Arabia to fight the invading Iraqi military, which King Fahd in his first public comment since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, blasted as “the most vile aggression known to the Arab nation in its modern History. He told his countrymen that the American forces “were here to help defend the kingdom... and would leave as the kingdom demanded.”¹³

United Nations mediations and Saudi led Arab diplomacy began to reduce tensions subsequently amidst indications that Iraq was seeking to avoid a military confrontation with the multinational forces arrayed against it at sea and on the ground in Saudi Arabia. The American Navy with active Saudi support had begun to block Iraqi commerce while warships continued to watch Iraqi tankers and cargo vessels in the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman and the Red Sea. Meanwhile the United States continued to pour men and war material into Saudi Arabia. Operation Desert Shield, as it was named in the first phase saw the most intense air lifting

¹² Kumaraswamy, N. 9, p.322-5.

¹³ *Facts on File*, Volume 50, Number 2595, August 17 1990, p. 597-8.

of American troops anywhere since the Second World War. By, August 1990 there were nearly 100,000 American troops in Saudi Arabia. The American Central Command was relocated temporarily to Saudi Arabia. The U.S. air force was using almost all of its 284-aircraft fleet of huge C – 141 and even larger C-5 transports to fly troops and supplies to the Persian Gulf. General Hansford. T. Johnson, the Chief of the U.S. transportation command to Saudi Arabia noted that- “The United States had moved a mid western town the size of Indiana, Fayette or Jefferson city, Missouri to the Gulf in a matter of two weeks.”¹⁴ More than one billion pounds (500 million kg) of arms, ammunition, food and other supplies had been transported by sea and air. Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, in keeping with its proactive role in the campaign against Iraq, teamed up with Venezuela to forcefully promote a consensus to increase oil production by suspending the production quotas that had been agreed upon in the OPEC summit in Geneva earlier. These two countries had already increased their oil output and only then informed the other members that they would act to offset the deficit from the embargo on Iraq. Although the official statement from oil ministers restated to the world that OPEC stood for market stability and regular supply of oil to consumers, the influence of Saudi Arabia in American led war efforts was highly significant.¹⁵ More importantly Saudi cooperation shifted quickly from not only providing oil but also aid in the form of finance. The higher oil prices caused b the crisis combined with the Saudi increase in production meant that Saudi Arabia was now earning about \$120 million more, per day, than it was before the Iraqi invasion. The money was expected to go a long way towards helping the countries hurt by the United Nations embargo of Iraq. There was also an informal understanding

¹⁴ Ibid,p:599

¹⁵ *Facts on File*, Volume 50, Number 2597, August 31 1990, p. 633-5.

between the U.S. and Saudi governments that the latter would use its huge oil revenues to help pay extra costs of the American military presence in the Gulf. The Saudis were already providing the bulk of the fuel, food, water and accommodation for the American troops.

This understanding became a formal commitment with U.S. officials indicating that they were seeking about \$ 500 million a month in Saudi contributions to defray U.S. military costs and another \$ 4 billion annually in aid to such countries as Egypt, Turkey and Jordan, whose economics were facing painful adjustments due to the sanctions on Iraq. With Iraq unrelenting on Kuwait, most Arab leaders especially Saudi Arabia privately urged a massive American military strike while stating publicly that the multinational force assembled was there only for defensive purposes. Then with a war becoming a certainty, Saudi Arabia was given ultimate responsibility for military operations involving the defense of the kingdom. The United States would assume responsibility for offensive operations outside. However, military operations against Iraqi troops in Kuwait would have to be mounted largely from Saudi territory, which in turn would require the joint authorization of King Fahd and President Bush.¹⁶

Once the war in the Persian Gulf began in the early hours of January 17, 1991, the role and importance of information heightened. The feudal and tribal character of Saudi Arabia left little room for the free flow of information. Like its counter parts in most Arab states, the Saudi government becomes the only source of information for the people. Saudi Arabia described the war for the liberation of Kuwait by the code name given by Bush: Desert

¹⁶ *Facts on File*, Volume 50, Number 2607, Nov. 9 1990, pp. 829,830.

Storm and reported how the war began: “At Dawn today, Thursday 2nd Rajab 1411, corresponding to 17th January 1991, formations of the Saudi and Kuwait air forces, and of the friendly American, British and French air forces, strafed the targets: Iraqi military installations and bases, starting the implementation of the joint operations plan....”¹⁷

Since the war was predominantly an aerial affair, the number of sorties flown became an internal part of the briefing. While the Italian and Canadian Air forces joined on the third day i.e. January 19, the Arab participation came much later. Together with its Arab allies, Saudi Arabia conducted about 8,200 air raids in 43 days.¹⁸

The significance of Saudi Arabia’s participation could be understood by the fact that most other allies were inactive and uneasy to participate in the offensive. The military communiqués of Saudi Arabia mentioned of participation by Egyptian and Syrian ground forces in action only towards the end of the war. Most allies had also felt that since they were in Saudi Arabia “only to defend” it from a possible Iraqi aggression, it would be difficult for them to take an active offensive role. Hence when one looked at the fragility of the coalition before the war, and various estimates, of its inevitable disintegration, Saudi Arabia’s success lay in maintaining it. The role of the Saudi navy in detecting, detonating and destroying a number of sea mines in the Gulf was also important. Similarly, Saudi Arabia not only provided monetary and military might but also demonstrated such an amount of flexibility, for an Islamic society, that it left many western analysts surprised.¹⁹ For instance, Commander, General Khalid Bin- Sultan while responding to Iraqi claims that religious sites were being attacked, defended the “surgical bombing theory” by reiterating that – “This does not mean that Saddam may not

¹⁷ Kumaraswamy, n.9, p.32

¹⁸ *ibid*, pp. 323-5.

¹⁹ Refer annexure – Table 2, 3, 4 and 5.

demolish a mosque himself as part of his media campaign. With respect to al-Najaf and Karbala... religious sites and mosques are not only in Karbala and al-Najaf but everywhere.”²⁰ However, the same flexibility was not shown in another sensitive issue of women soldiers. Although, they were accepted purely out of pragmatic consideration and with reluctance, no mention of American women in combat dress and the presence of Jewish soldiers, found a place in the Saudi coverage of the War.

INFLUENCE OF THE WAR ON U.S-SAUDI RELATIONS

The end of the cold war made it possible for the United States to forge an international coalition against Saddam Hussein and win the Gulf War with negligible losses. However, well before the outbreak of the Gulf crisis some features of the new international system began to have a significant impact on Arab politics and society. Most notable among these were the demise of the Soviet Union as a super power, the resultant transformation of the role of the United States in world leadership; the international trend towards economic and religious identities and the revival of national, ethnic and religious identities. The allies of the former Soviet Union in the region could not turn to its Russian successor for protection or support and sensing their vulnerability many of them in the region turned to the United States.

The break up of the former Soviet Union into independent states and the demise of socialism in Eastern Europe also facilitated the expression of deep-rooted ethnic beliefs and religious feelings that had been suppressed for decades. For example, Serbs, Bosnians and Croats demonstrated their conflicting national aspirations in Yugoslavia, while Muslims in Azerbaijan and other Central Asian states sought to assert their religious identity. There was also a surge of long suppressed

²⁰ Ibid, p.333

feelings of transnational group identity, such as that of the Kurds in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia. The revival of ethnic and religious aspirations led to the rise of radical political movements as an “antithesis” to the suppressive regimes of that time. A variety of Islamic groups with conservative, liberal and radical orientations emerged in the region seeking a political role. These groups became popular among young Muslim Arabs whose problems or basic human needs were neither addressed nor satisfied, by their regimes.²¹

DOMESTIC COMPULSIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA

The Gulf-War effected noticeable changes in the Saudi society. In many ways these changes led to the emergence of a radical shift in the Saudi foreign policy and gave considerable impetus to the relationship. Saudi Arabia was not only affected by demographic changes but also by economic changes. Indeed, increase in oil prices in the wake of the invasion of Kuwait resulted in a revenue windfall of about \$13 billion. Yet Saudi economic losses out weighed its gains in the war. Early in 1991, Saudi officials estimated their total economic losses as a result of the Gulf crisis at \$51 billion. After including expenses for oil spill clean up and contributions to Turkey, Egypt and Syria, the total expenses related to the war rose to a staggering \$64 billion.²² The clamour for political liberalization led to the king Fahd bin Abdul Aziz to issue three statutes that comprised the first written set of rules of government in the history of Saudi Arabia. The Gulf War also brought about a change in the ideology, which was popular in the Saudi

²¹ Fouar, n.3pp.6, 11

²² N.3, pp: 15-29.

society. Pan-Arabism was replaced by Islamism, which sprang up in part from hostility towards the spread of western influence and culture. It became a potent ideology of popular dissent especially towards American policies in the region.²³ Another effect of the Gulf war was the atomization of the Arab regional system, with each state placing its domestic interests ahead of regional or sub regional interests and thereby undermining any hope of making organizations such as the Arab league an effective instrument of a collective Arab policy. In the wake of the decline of Iraq as a power, Saudi Arabia assumed a key role of a leader in the region. The Saudi royal family stopped financial support to several regimes and Islamic groups including the PLO, the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, and the Algerian FIS realizing that such assistance did not ensure unswerving support for the Saudi position on any given issue. On the contrary, it found out that during the Gulf War some of the principal beneficiaries of Saudi largesse stood firmly and openly against the kingdom. This discovery, combined with the economic difficulties resulting from the conflict, led to a transformation in its role in the region.²⁴ The United States saw Saudi Arabia shift its role from a mediator between conflicting states and groups in the Arab region to becoming a party to regional conflicts. Saudi relations with Iraq turned in to deep resentment and suspicions about each other's capabilities. Yemen's opposition of the Gulf War destroyed the long-standing, cordial relationship it had previously enjoyed with Saudi Arabia. Relations with Jordan went equally sour and all Jordanian fence mending efforts failed apparently because of Saudi determination to punish its "disloyal" brother.

²³ Ibid, pp: 33-55.

²⁴ Ibid, p.33, 35

As a party to conflicts with three of its Arab neighbours, Saudi Arabia, in the post- Gulf War era, adopted a more aggressive foreign policy, losing in the process its long-standing role as a neutral third party in inter-Arab disputes. In addition, the policy of restricting economic assistance to trusted allies, subject to strict political and economic conditions, transformed Saudi Arabia from a major financial force throughout the Middle East into a regional bank that lent limited assistance to a select clientele. At the same time, Saudi Arabia became much more dependent on the United States for protection from external as well as internal threats.²⁵

The Gulf War was not the only catharsis for military dimensions to become the central focus of the U.S. - Saudi relations in the decade after the Gulf War. Significantly a decline in the American dependency on oil from Saudi Arabia was accelerated since the U.S. led war against Iraq in 1990-91. When sanctions were introduced against Iraq in August 1990, American traders and refiners had lost Iraqi imports averaging 50,000 barrels a day. At the time, Saudi Arabia and OPEC boosted their productive capacity and replaced the supplies from Iraq. Although the U.S. imports from the Gulf did reach a peak in 1991, at 27.7% of total supply, it did not last for long. The peak was largely the result of emergency stockpiling, precipitated by the conflict. Once the conflict came to an end, American buyers shifted towards purchases in the Atlantic basin.²⁶ With oil demand falling and supply continuing at such a high rate, an oil glut developed in the early 1990s continuing from the mid 1980s. The longer the oil glut lasted, the more difficult it became for OPEC to maintain discipline among its members in limiting production to stabilize prices and tougher it became for Saudi Arabia to impose price stability. As the

²⁵ Ibid, p. 77-97.

²⁶ Jonathan Bearman, "Oil flows out of U.S. pact with Arabic", The World today, October 1996, p. 241-8.

world's largest holder of oil reserves and with a large productive capacity and small domestic consumption, Saudi Arabia had long realized that maximizing the return on oil required maintaining stable prices and production at rates low enough to ensure a long-term export market. Right from the time OPEC was formed; Saudi Arabia had acted as a "swing producer" by rising and lowering production to keep prices stable. Yet it became apparently difficult to perform the role due to the length of the oil glut period that had affected the region.²⁷

EMERGING ARMS MARKET

In many ways, as the Gulf war marked a watershed in U.S. trade relations with Saudi Arabia, it also left a significant mark on military cooperation. With an active conflict enraging the region and with a rise in fundamentalist groups who resorted to violent methods for redressal of their grievances, the U.S. defense of the House of Saud was no longer about preserving oil supplies to the United States but was more about protecting an emerging market for arms systems and big engineering projects. In the time span of three years, U.S. arms suppliers had sold Saudi Arabia almost \$ 11 billion worth of equipments. Contracts for the biggest oil field projects during that time like the Shaybah structure also went mainly to American Companies.²⁸

The looming threat of an Iraq, which was wounded badly, but not finished, pushed Saudi Arabia in to increased military cooperation with the United States. The presence of over 5000 American military personnel in the kingdom confirmed a newfound understanding. Most of these personnel were involved in enforcing no fly zones over various parts of Iraq. This agreement to a

²⁷ David.E.Long, "Stability in Saudi Arabia", in Charles Doran and Stephen Buck, *The gulf, energy and global security: political and economic issues*, (New York, n.d) p.11-3.

²⁸ Ibid, p.248.

large-scale deployment of U.S. personnel, during and after the Gulf war, represented a major shift in Saudi foreign policy.²⁹ Saudi Arabia also emerged as one of the largest arms purchaser in the third world. During the period from 1988 through to 1995, the Saudis bought \$ 67.1 billion worth of military equipment accounting for nearly 30% of all third world arms agreements during the above eight-year period. It also gave away contracts worth \$ 17.9 billion since the beginning of 1991 through to 1995. 19% of the value of U.S. - Saudi arms contracts was for lethal equipment; the largest portion (29%) went for support services (repairs, rehabilitation, supply operations and training). Another major component was for the construction of military bases and facilities, accounting for the largest share (31%) through 1990 and the second largest share (24%) for the entire period. The military cooperation between the two caused many concerns to the Jewish lobby in the United States, which was seriously threatened by the enhanced coordination between U.S. and the Saudis.³⁰

THE PROBLEM OF TERRORISM

The necessity for such high level and unprecedented coordination was severely tested by the bombings of the American military facilities in Saudi Arabia in the mid 1990s. The first, which occurred on November 13, 1995, at the headquarters of a U.S. training program for the Saudi National Guard in the capital, Riyadh, killed seven persons (including five U.S. citizens) and injured 60 others (including 37 U.S. citizens). Three little-known fundamental groups called the “Tigers of the Gulf”, the “movements of Islamic Change”, and the “combatant partisans of God” claimed responsibility. Several

²⁹ Alfred. B. Prados, Congressional Report Service Document, December 2 1996, p. 5.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 7-8.

months later, four Saudi nationals, who confessed to being influenced by Islamic fundamentalist exiles, were convicted and executed.

The second and more lethal explosion, which occurred at Khobar Towers (a housing facility for U.S. Air force personnel near Dhahran Air base) in June 1996, Killed 19 U.S. Air force personnel, wounded many others and prompted the relocation of most American military personnel to more remote sites in Saudi-Arabia to improve security. This bombing was reportedly carried out by exiled Saudi terrorist Osama bin Laden while the Saudi minister of interior prince Nayaf suggested that the bombing “were carried out by Saudis with the support of others”.³¹

Both the incidents led to renewed cooperation between the two countries in the wake of the threats that radical fundamentalist groups posed to both countries. Yet Saudi Arabia chose to remain silent in the wake of the American missile attack in August 1996. In fact Saudi officials privately welcomed the American measures to constrain Iraq and the Saudis agreed to host the deployment of two batteries of U.S. patriot missiles, together with 150 additional U.S. military personnel to monitor Iraq. In September 2000, Saudi Arabia also bought three arms packages containing \$416 million in light armoured vehicles, anti-tank missiles and advanced communications equipment, \$ 690 million for maintenance support for its fleet of F-15 fighter aircrafts and \$ 1.6 Billion in flight simulators, repair parts and other technical services for the F-15 aircrafts.

TRADE RELATIONS

Inspite of enhanced military cooperation necessitated by the security threats faced, the trade relationship between the two did not have same momentum. Yet Saudi Arabia was

³¹ Ibid, p. 5-7.

the largest U.S. trading partner in the Middle East in the decade after the war. In the year 1994 alone, Saudi exports to the United States were estimated at \$ 8 billion and rose to \$ 14.3 billion by 2000 while imports from the United States, which in 1994 was estimated at \$ 6.4 billion and at \$ 5.9 billion in 2000. To a considerable extent, the high volume of trade was a result of American oil imports from Saudi Arabia and U.S. arms exports to the country. Saudi Arabia was the largest foreign supplier of oil to the United States until 1995 after which it took second place to Venezuela. The Saudis also bought significant amount of U.S. commercial equipment as well. In October 1995, U.S. and Saudi officials signed a \$ 6 billion contract to purchase 61 U.S. commercial aircrafts. In addition, U.S. Company AT&T won a \$ 4.1 billion contract to upgrade the Saudi tele communications system in May 1994. In April 1995 an agreement was signed to extend the Joint Commission for economic affairs established in 1974 and a Business council session for the two countries was also opened. Saudi-Arabia was removed from the U.S. Trade representative's priority watch list in 1996 in recognition of its progress in the protection of intellectual property rights.³²

The Gulf War and the active threat of radical groups led to enhanced security cooperation between the United States and Saudi Arabia. These factors played a largely influential role in removing the ambiguity that had existed in the earlier years of relations so much so that the decade after the gulf war witnessed military and trade cooperation emerge as an alternative to the oil weapon as the foundation on which the relationship moved ahead from the uncertainties of earlier decades.

³² Ibid, March 6 2002,pp.3-9

Annexure

TABLE 2

Number of sorties flown

Progressive Total				
Day of war	Date	US-coalition	Saudi Arabia	Other Arabs
1.	17 Jan.	-	-	
2.	18 Jan.	-	200\$	
3	19 Jan.	>5,000	-	
4.	20 Jan.	8,323	510	
5.	21 Jan.	-	-	
6.	22 Jan.	10,000	608	For the first time, Qatar Air Force took part
7.	23 Jan.	12,000#	765	
8.	24 Jan.	>15,000	1,007	For the first time Bahrain took part.
9.	25 Jan.	17,000	1,138	
10.	26 Jan.	20,000#	1,282	
11.	27 Jan.	22,528	1,431	
12.	28 Jan.	24,884	1,656	
13.	29 Jan.	27,661	1,719	
14.	30 Jan.	>30,000	>1,900	Kuwait: 182 Bahrain: 44
15.	31 Jan.	>32,000	>2,000	
16.	1 Feb.	>34,000	<2,200	
17.	2 Feb.	>37,000	>2,400	Kuwait: 224
18.	3 Feb.	>41,000	>2,600	
19.	4 Feb.	>43,000	>2,750	
20.	5 Feb.	>47,000	>3,000	
21.	6 Feb.	>49,000	3,200#	
22.	7 Feb.	>52,000	>3,400	Kuwait: 227 Bahrain: 112
23.	8 Feb.	>54,000	>3,600	

24.	9 Feb.	>57,000	>3,700	Kuwait: 330 Bahrain: 126 Qatar: 21
25.	10 Feb.	>59,000	>3,900	Kuwait: 355
26.	11 Feb.	>62,000	>4,000	
27.	12 Feb.	>65,000	>4,250	Kuwait: 441 Bahrain: 150 Qatar: 31
28.	13 Feb.	>67,000	>4,400	
29.	14 Feb.	>70,000	>4,600	
30.	15 Feb.	>73,000	>4,800	
31.	16 Feb.	>76,000	>4,900	Kuwait: >516 Bahrain: >190 Qatar: >39
32.	17 Feb.	>78,000	5,050	
33.	18 Feb.	>80,000	>5,200	Kuwait: 650 Bahrain: >208 Qatar: 43 For the first time UAE took part in the action
34.	19 Feb.	>83,000	”	More than 6,200 sorties by the Air Forces of the GCC.
35.	20 Feb.	>86,000	>5,500	
36.	21 Feb.	>88,000	5,773	
37.	22 Feb.	>91,000	>5,900	Kuwait: 636 Bahrain: 238 Qatar: 51
38.	23 Feb.	>94,000	>6,100	UAE: 26
39.	24 Feb.	-	-	
40.	25 Feb.	-	-	
41.	26 Feb.	>103,000	>6,500	Kuwait: 738 Bahrain: 266 UAE: 68 Qatar: 55
42.	27 Feb.	>106,000	>6,600	
43.	28 Feb.	>110,573	>7,061	

Note: (1) However, throughout the war, there was no mention the Omani Air Force in the communiqués.

Approximate estimate. ³³

³³ Ibid, p.326-8

TABLE 3

Scuds Fired Against Saudi Arabia

Wave	Local Time	Date	No.	Area	Remarks
I	Dawn	18 Jan.	1	Daharan	Intercepted; NC/ND
II	2200	20 Jan.	2	Eastern Region	Intercepted; NC/ND
III	0040	21 Jan.	4	Riyadh	Intercepted; NC/ND
	0100	21 Jan.	3	Eastern region	2 Intercepted; NC/ND 1 fell into the sea
IV	2200	21 Jan.	1	Eastern region	Fell into the sea
V	0345	22 Jan.	2	Riyadh	1 destroyed over the city 1 search was on; NC/ND
	0345	22 Jan.	3		1 destroyed; NC/ND 2 fell on the ground in unpopulated area; NC/ND
VI	2257	23 Jan.	2	Eastern region	Intercepted; NC/ND
			2	Riyadh	Intercepted; NC/ND
			1	Harf al Batin	Intercepted; NC/ND
VII	2223	25 Jan.	2	Riyadh	Landed in a populated area; 1 killed, 30 injured;
VIII	0329	26 Jan.	1	Eastern region	Intercepted; NC/ND
IX	2321	26 Jan.	1	Riyadh	Intercepted; NC/ND
X	2058	28 Jan.	1	Riyadh	Intercepted; parts fell on a farm in the suburb of Riyadh;
XI	0050	3 Feb.	1	Riyadh	Partly damaged: debris fell near a residential area in one of the suburbs of the city; 2 houses damaged, 29 people including 14 Saudis injured;
XII	0148	8 Feb.	1	Riyadh	Intercepted; NC/ND
XIII	2222	11 Feb.	1	Riyadh	Partly destroyed and fell on civilian quarters; 2 non-Saudis injured;
XIV	1145	14 Feb.	2	Saudi Arabia (i)	Exploded in mid-air without interception and fell in five parts of Hafr al-Batin region; 4 injured; 3 cars caught fire; a house and a workshop destroyed.

XV	0200	16 Feb.	1	Saudi Arabia (i)	Fell into the waters off the coast of Jubayl; Communiqué No. 30 put the total missiles fired at Saudi Arabia till the day at 33;
XVI	1706	21 Feb.	2	Hafr al-Batin	Intercepted; parts fell in an uninhabited area; NC/ND
XVII	2100	21 Feb.	1	Hafr al-Batin	Fell away from residential area; NC/ND
XVIII	0231	22 Feb.	1	Daharan	Destroyed in the air; parts fell into the Gulf; NC/ND
XIX	0500	23 Feb.	1	Eastern region	Fell in an uninhabited desert region; NC/ND
XX	2130	24 Feb.	1	Riyadh	Intercepted; NC/ND
XXI	2032	25 Feb.	1	Eastern region	Fell on a building housing men of the US forces; 28 killed; 100 injured.

Note: NC/ND: No casualty/ No damage

Not further identified.

Communiqué No. 39 puts the total Scuds launched at 43; 4 against Saudi Arabia and once each Bahrain and Qatar.

(Source: summary of world broadcasts-Middle East, foreign broadcast information service-Near East and South Asia)³⁴

TABLE 4

Target Areas for Iraqi Scuds

Riyadh	16
Dhahran/ Eastern Region	16
Half al-Batin	4
No identified / others	5
	41 ³⁵

³⁴ Ibid, p.329, 330

³⁵ Ibid, p.331

TABLE 5

Comparison between Scud Attacks against Saudi Arabia and Israel

	Saudi Arabia	Israel
Waves	21	19
Number of missiles	41	39
Targets hit/fell on the ground or uninhabited area	5	21
Misses/ fell into the area	3	7
Successfully intercepted by Patriots	21	10
Partially destroyed	7	1
Others and unaccounted	5	-
Maximum targets and Number of missiles Launched	Riyadh and Eastern Region At least 16 Each	Tel Aviv 26

(Source: Figures for Saudi Arabia are adopted from the military communiqués and for Israel from Jerusalem post)³⁶

³⁶ *ibid*,pp.331-3

Chapter –3

The Impact of Terrorism and the United States War on Afghanistan

SUB TITLES

1. SEPTEMBER 11 AND ITS IMPACT
2. THE WAR ON AFGHANISTHAN
3. SAUDI ARABIA:DILEMMAS DURING THE WAR
4. U.S- SAUDI RELATIONS DURING THE AFGHANISTHAN WAR
5. RISE OF ANTI AMERICAN FEELINGS
6. RELIGION AS AN INFLUENCING FACTOR

SEPTEMBER 11 AND ITS IMPACT

The threat that international terrorism posed to foreign and domestic security was highlighted by the September 11, 2001 terror attacks on selected targets in the United States. It dramatically re-energized the American focus and resolve on terrorism. The “Terror Tuesday” incidents, as it was later called and the subsequent anthrax attacks seemed to be the conclusion of a decade of anti-American terror attacks, such as bombings of USS Cole, Oklahoma city, World Trade Center in 1993 and the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. It also brought terrorism to the forefront of American public concern. The American polices and organizational mechanisms to deal with terrorism became urgent issues to investigate.

What the September 11 attacks did was to raise a host of new issues. Terrorist activities supported by sophisticated planning and logistics and with possible access to chemical, biological or nuclear weaponry created considerable concern. As the United States began its hunt for the perpetrators of the crime outside, it analyzed that a comprehensive review of terrorism policies, and domestic preparedness to respond to major terrorist incidents in the future was needed. The threat that radical Islamic fundamentalist groups posed to American interests and its allies like Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia generated an urge for the creation of an informal “watch – list” of nations.¹

What shook the United States on September 11, 2001 was the apparently well-financed and coordinated attack in which hijackers rammed jetliners into each of the New York World Trade Center’s Towers and brought them down. A third hijacked airliner plowed into the Pentagon and a fourth hijacked airliner crashed

¹ Raphel f. Perl , Congressional Research Service Document: November 2 2001, pp. 1,2.

near Pittsburgh. It raised speculation that a related mission aimed at the capitol had failed. The popular reaction by Americans and world at large provided both hope and despair.

The main question that preoccupied Americans was not why this happened but how it could happen. The perpetrators were considered mindless terrorists or religious fanatics who hated the United States and what it stood for - decency, democracy, freedom etc. Rare were the voices that were prepared to say that United States must not seek revenge by waging war on Afghanistan or engage in activities that would itself amount to terrorism i.e. killing the civilians of other countries. Many, however, pointed out that the U.S Government actions abroad had helped create the breeding ground from which terrorists had emerged. Largely absent was any recognition by the American government of the problems caused by their foreign policy. The public desire for revenge was so strong that the U.S Government had to act. The speed with which 'long range thinking' was put into place was also remarkable. It became clear that the United States was looking to seize this opportunity to launch an attack against all sub - state armed groups, which were considered unacceptable to American interests.²

The United States had to rework all its notions, plans and strategies about war and peace, security, safety and defense, individual and society, citizenship, civil liberties, human rights, economy and politics. A single day's event had touched all facets of American life. One of the first things the Bush government did was to give more power to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Yet very few pointed out to the CIA's

² Achin Vanaik, "Fortress America", *The Hindu* (New Delhi), September 15th2001.

role in nurturing the demons that had come to haunt America.³ As the president, George Bush put it – “The September 11th attacks awakened a sleeping giant”⁴ and he sought to build an “international coalition” to fight this new threat. With the United States realizing that any “anti-terror coalition” must have Muslim countries, Bush demanded that Arab countries “wrap up and prosecute terrorists on their soil”. The Arab governments, led by Saudi Arabia, countered with a collection of their stated conditions for actively cooperating with the coalition. They wanted the Israelis to be kept out of any such coalitions, while a concrete proof of guilt had to be offered before they would respond positively to the United States. There would be no unilateral military operation by the United States and instead a concerted international campaign mounted under the auspices of the United Nations. The United States had to have prior consultations with them on any action whether military, economic political or diplomatic and the focus of the campaign had to only be on the Islamic groups and networks associated with Osama Bin Laden. In particular they rejected any attempt by the United States to broaden the anti-terror campaign into offensive against Iran, Iraq, Sudan or Libya, Washington’s traditional West Asian antagonists. Finally the Arabs insisted that resistance groups involved in the struggle against Israel must not be targeted. General Ahmad Abdul Halim, an analyst with the Cairo center for Middle East, explained that the Arabs had to condition their participation because the September 11 circumstances were very different from those in 1991 when the international community was dealing with Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, “The Gulf war was about restoring the sovereignty of a country which had been stricken from the map by another... But now, the Arabs cannot join a coalition whose

³ L.K. Sharma – “Burnt Ego, Singed pride”, foreign panorama, *Deccan Herald* (Bangalore Edition), September 20 2001.

⁴ Ibid, september 20 2001

goals were unclear at a time Israel is trying to include Palestinian organization... a list of terrorist groups... Before there is any anti-terrorist coalition there must be a clear definition of terrorism which does not confuse terrorist groups and resistance movements.”⁵

THE WAR ON AFGHANISTHAN

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Lebanon, the four countries whose citizens were named as suspects for the September 11 attacks were particularly in a delicate situation because many of their citizens took the view that Washington itself was to blame for the terrorist assaults. Arab analysts argued that there would not have been such a devastating onslaught if the United States had adopted an even handed approach in the Israel - Palestine dispute, agreed to the lifting of the punitive sanctions regime on Iraq, pulled its forces out of the Gulf and pressed allied Arab leaders to reform their inefficient and corrupt administration. As the Afghan operations progressed rapidly, doubts were raised as to whether the United States was on the brink of making the same mistakes that doomed the Gulf war against Iraq to eventual failure. The Gulf war, in the American circles, was considered a failure because it did not result in the removal of Saddam Hussein. Tactical victory on the battlefield was considered as squandered when strategic wisdom did not follow in its wake. America's unwillingness to "finish the job" it was felt, not with massive weaponry, but with sensible diplomacy had led to an Iraq which threatened the Middle East and mankind with war, terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction. The strongest indication that the same scenario was developing in Afghanistan emanated from the exasperations expressed by leaders of the Northern Alliance which was the only ground force that could challenge the Taliban. It was felt

⁵ M.B.Naqvi, "The Salvation Mantra", Foreign Panorama, *Deccan Herald*, November 22 2001, p.1

that the United States had done nothing concrete to help their forces in determining whether the Taliban and could be driven from power. There was no programme of close coordination that had developed between the Northern Alliance and the American forces. What the Northern Alliance needed most was the application of American air power to their tactical requirements; that was to attack the Taliban infantry formation facing them on the front lines. As Major General Babajan, a Northern Alliance commander put it “if there aren’t any strikes on the front line, then the bombing will be in vain”.

As the war dragged on signs that the United States was succumbing to the “Gulf war syndrome” of limiting its goals to political half measures increased. It was, on the one hand trying to eliminate the Taliban for sheltering Osama bin Laden while on the other hand was averse to give the North Alliance space to go on the offensive. The use of air power and other assets to pave the way for a rapid Northern Alliance advance into Kabul was considered skeptically because it could result in a “dangerous political vacuum”. The United States purportedly wanted the lineaments of a provisional government in place before committing its ground and air forces to the fray at the grass roots. Otherwise they feared that the Northern Alliance, consisting of Afghanistan’s principal ethnic minorities (Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras) will some how gain the political upper hand in the post-Taliban period and foment an ensuing civil war between them and the majority pashtuns.

In hindsight what the American strategy did was to prevent the only viable military force on the ground, the Northern Alliance, to strike when the iron was hot; when the Taliban was in disarray and uncertain of its ability to stem the tide of counterforce which was mounting against it and when a whiff of American tactical air

power would stand the best chance of turning the tide. The propitious moment melted away quickly with the Taliban forces recovering from the initial shocks of the American assault and hunkering down in hide away to ride the storm.⁶

As the war progressed, the United States increasingly came under international scrutiny for what was perceived as another manifestation of a cavalier conduct, which America had historically come to be associated with. In prime focus was Washington's penchant for an awesome high tech war against an intransigent regime and its terrorist allies in an utterly impoverished country.⁷ In spite of blending a model used in the 1991 Persian Gulf war and the more restrictive approach of the 1999 conflict in Kosovo, when bombing targets were reviewed constantly and rejected as too risky due to civilian casualties and its own fanfare about air-drops of food supplies and medicines, America's war and the largely unspoken tragedy associated with it was reflected by the plight of innocent Afghan civilians. The humanitarian catastrophe was further blown up by the unpreparedness of the United Nations in coordinating its policies with those of the United States in a bid to provide the victims of the intensifying war with an escape route.⁸

The war in Afghanistan, despite the frightful asymmetry of forces on both sides dragged on for much longer than expected. Although the collapse of the Taliban regime brought some relief, the heavy bombarding by the American military might and the resulting civilian casualties made the poor people of Afghanistan swing between hope and despair. As the Taliban's absence and the power vacuum it had created was quickly filled in by the Northern alliance and various warlords

⁶ Harold. A. Gould, "Lessons from the Gulf war", *The Hindu*, September 22 2001.

⁷ Editorial, "The Unspoken tragedy", *The Hindu*, October 20 2001.

⁸ Eric Schmitt, "Putting their heads together", *Deccan Herald*, November 1 2001.

in their respective regions, the focus of international attention in Afghanistan was shifting to the task of rehabilitation and in establishing a stable interim government in Kabul. There were obstacles to mount in achieving both these goals. The task of rehabilitating the people of a country which had seen a generation of war, destruction of national assets and private property with out the international community having a well constructed method to go about it was not only a long drawn out but also a tedious process. There were million of Afghans living as refugees in scattered all over the world. Nearly a third of the population living within the country was internally displaced. The subsistence agricultural economy was in shambles too. The industrial infrastructure had suffered near –total destruction. There was hardly a service sector left in the country, which could generate employment in the immediate context. The public domain was no better. There was hardly any kind of government machinery functioning in the country with even banking institutions not existing. To add to the woes, various individuals had claimed their right to head the interim government. With the Northern Alliance occupying the areas vacated by the Taliban, Barhanuddin Rabbani who had been displaced by the Taliban in 1996 had formed a government at Kabul. There were other warlords who had their pockets of influence within the Northern Alliance like General Mohammad Fahim and Uzbek commander Rashid Dostum who had to be dealt with effectively.

The United States unlike what it did when Soviet forces exited from Afghanistan, realized the importance of not appointing Pakistan as its agent to manage Afghanistan. It had long-term interests in the region and hence realized the importance of nation building in Afghanistan. It had to build a friendly coalition, which it did under the interim government of President Hamid Karzai, as it would help

the American oil and gas companies wishing to reactivate any transnational project in the region. But, it also realized that before it moved on to bigger things the residual mess of Taliban forces and the Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden had to be cleared for claiming success for the purpose it had set of while attacking Afghanistan.⁹

SAUDI ARABIA: DILEMMAS DURING THE WAR

The West Asian country with the most to lose by cooperating with Bush in his “crusade” against terrorism was Saudi Arabia. Washington’s prime suspect, Osama bin Laden, was born in the Kingdom and was popular with ordinary Saudis because of his defiance of the United States. Bin Laden had been stripped of his Saudi passport in 1994 and anyone overtly supporting him risked the confiscation of his assets. But the permanent presence of thousands of American troops on Saudi soil, since the 1991 Gulf War and Washington’s unstinting support for Israel had angered and alienated many Saudis and created strong Anti-American feelings. Concerned with the prospect of a violent backlash, the Saudi authorities had insisted on handling investigations into the bomb attacks against American targets in the country and prosecuting those responsible in its territory rather than extraditing them to the United States.

Saudi Arabia was one of three states to have had diplomatic relations with the Taliban regime in Kabul, which was in the American hit list for granting sanctuary to Osama bin Laden. Riyadh had close ideological, political and economic ties with the Taliban that was inspired by the Saudi Wahhabi movement which had swept Abdel Aziz ibn Saud, the founder of the ruling dynasty, to power in the 1920s. Many saw the Taliban as a stepson of Wahhabi Arabia.

⁹ K. Subrahmanya, “Seeking a way out of the shambles”, Foreign Panorama, Deccan Herald, January 31 2002.

The movement enjoyed considerable support amongst ultra conservative clerics and wealthy citizens who financed its rise to power. Until the Sept. 11 terrorist atrocities, both Riyadh and Washington considered Taliban, to be the main Sunni asset in the struggle for control of strategic Afghanistan waged by Sunni Pakistan and Shia Iran.¹⁰

U.S - SAUDI RELATIONS DURING THE AFGHANISTHAN WAR

The September 11 incidents changed decades of mutual understanding of the Saudi-American alliance over security and oil. The relations came under considerable strain, for the first time, since the oil crisis of 1973. Even though various reports from the Arab Kingdom condemned the atrocious terror attacks and sympathized with the United Sates, Saudi Arabia, at first, refused to allow the United States to use its airfields for the strike on Afghanistan. It was only after considerable pressure from Washington that made it to announce immediately its wholehearted support to stand against the perpetrators of the attack. Such ambiguity was only met with skepticism in the United States. Where as other American allies like Germany, France and Singapore responded to the attacks on America with aggressive battles against hidden al-qaeda cells in their territories, Saudi Arabia acted as if the 15 Saudi hijackers had come, literally, out of no where.¹¹ The Taliban suffered an irreversible isolation only after Saudi Arabia decided to snap diplomatic links with it. The United States began to launch out aerial and military strikes in Afghanistan exactly a month after the September 11 attacks. Although American officials led by the President lobbied extensively around the world to build an international coalition under the United Nations umbrella, the absence of conclusive evidence to convict Osama bin Laden for the crime and his links to Afghanistan's

¹⁰ Michael Jansen, "Paying the price", Foreign Panorama, *Deccan Herald*, September 20 2001.

¹¹ Robert Fisk, "Nervous Saudis tell U.S: war on Terrorism will not be lunched in our airfields", *The Independent financial*, September 24 2001, pp. 4, 5.

uncivilized Taliban regime genuinely mystified many countries about America's plans. It was extremely difficult for the Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, to cooperate because of the vagueness of the proposed military response. The Saudi rulers met President Bush's talk of a "crusade" with a firm disapproval while the idea of a "long war on terror" created an atmosphere of skepticism among the emirs and sultans of the Gulf. They, in turn, preferred dictatorial stability rather than the necessity of explaining to their people why it was necessary to host another American bombing campaign.¹²

The September 11 attacks seriously compromised the close relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States. Throughout the war on Afghanistan, the American administration disapproved of what they perceived as Saudi indifference. Saudi political vulnerability had been exposed by a relentless campaign in the western press, inspired by Riyadh's alleged failure to cooperate fully by arresting possible accomplices, cracking down on dissident preachers and freezing bank accounts of wealthy Saudis funding militant groups.¹³

The Saudis had long frustrated American policy makers with their half hearted cooperation on security matters, regional diplomacy and intelligence sharing. The United States had long allowed itself to depend considerably on the secretive royal family for information. The Bush administration's suspicions, after the September 11 incidents, made it exclude the Saudis from among the allies who were informed in advance of the U.S moves to freeze the assets of organizations linked to terrorism. The Saudis had also not allowed American airplanes to use facilities in the kingdom for raids against

¹² Ibid, pp.: 5-6.

¹³ Micheal Jansen, "A Saudi Arabian problem", Foreign Panorama, *Deccan Herald*, November 8 2001.

Afghanistan. Several top officials within the U.S. administration as well as in the congress had endorsed the Rand Corporation's analysis, which suggested, "Saudi Arabia should be treated as an enemy". The study accused the kingdom of being a prime supporter of terrorism and instability in West Asia and said it should be issued an ultimatum to stop support for terrorism or face seizure of its oil fields. The concern in Washington was that Saudi Arabia could be "heading towards an Iran-style Islamic revolution". Although the Central Intelligence Agency concluded later that this was unlikely yet it remained uneasy about the lack of hard information about this closed society.¹⁴

Political differences between the Kingdom and Washington had been widening ever since Crown Prince Abdullah had become the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia in the mid - 1990s. Prince Abdullah, considered a pragmatic ruler, was widely respected in the Islamic nations for his support to the Palestinian cause. He was of the view that the present Bush administration did not maintain neutrality in the West Asian conflict. Differences also persisted on the policy towards Iraq and Iran. Bush had labeled both the nations part of an "axis of evil" demanding a change in their regimes. This conflicted with the Saudi policy that wanted to mend fences with its two neighbours. Saudi-American ties further worsened when Prince Abdullah initiated the move to bring back Iraq into the Arab fold on the condition that it would implement all the United Nations resolutions concerning the Gulf War. The United States believed that "the war on terrorism" would be won only when there were changes not only in the regimes but also in the political and social culture of the West Asian countries. Therefore it was not only demanding regime changes in Iraq and Iran but also putting pressure on the Saudis to root

¹⁴ Qamar Agha, "The Saudi-American relationship", *The Hindu*, October 21 2001.

out the terrorists in their midst and open up their system. It meant that the House of Saud had to introduce liberal Islamic values and find new political partners -something that was difficult for the conservative Wahhabi Saudi rulers. The Bush administration was increasingly of the view that Islamic militancy could not be contained unless and until some of its sources were identified and neutralized in Saudi Arabia. Differences also persisted on the presence in the Kingdom of about 500 American troops who had come to expel Iraqis from Kuwait.¹⁵ Although champions of the U.S.-Saudi alliance said the Saudis were transforming themselves from financiers to fighters of terrorism, yet they acknowledged that they had to go a long way in addressing not just the symptoms but also the causes of Islamic extremism.

The Saudi royal family, on its part, repeatedly insisted that Saudi Arabia had made no contributions to radical Islamic groups. When the Saudis were confronted by press reports that some of the substantial funds that the monarchy routinely gave to Islamic charities may actually have gone to Al Qaeda and other terrorist networks, they denied any such knowledge.¹⁶ Intercepts by the National Security Agency of the United States indicated that by 1996, Saudi money was supporting Bin Laden's Al Qaeda and other extremist groups in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Yemen and Central Asia. An American intelligence official confirming the suspicion said- "1996 is the key year. Bin Laden hooked up to all the bad guys -it's like the Grand Alliance - and had a capability for conducting large scale operations... The Saudi regime had gone to the dark side."¹⁷ Saudi Arabia, because of its oil wealth and its role as the guardian of the Islamic holy sites in Mecca and Medina, carried tremendous prestige in the Islamic world. Yet it was

¹⁵ Ibid, October, 21, 2001.

¹⁶ ibid

¹⁷ Report, "Why not war against Saudi Arabia?", Angelfire.com, September 8 2003, pp.1, 2

only the second to last of the Islamic countries to sever ties with the Taliban. For several weeks, it vacillated over the decision to allow the American military the use of bases on its soil. The American analysts believed that it was the Saudi oligarchy, which had helped and financed the religious schools and Moujahedeen training camps in Pakistan and Afghanistan. They also increasingly suspected the Saudi connection with Bin Laden's Al Qaeda. Therefore, it was not surprising that through its waffling, Saudi Arabia provided little if any assistance to American intelligence. In the words of Robert Baer, a former CIA officer in the Middle East – "It's a problem. Saudi Arabia is completely unresponsive as of today. The rank-and-file Saudi policemen are sympathetic to Bin Laden. They were not telling us who these people were on the planes."¹⁸ Vincent Cannistrato, the former chief of counter-terrorism operations for the CIA also said that the United States received little help from the Saudi. "We are getting zero cooperation now", he said "There is a whole pile of Saudi businessmen who have been providing regular contribution to Al Qaeda".¹⁹ Paul Michael Wihbe, a Middle East specialist and former consultant to the United States Defense Department, commented, "The Saudi royal family is divided, and that's what accounts for this paralysis... In Saudi Arabia, Bin Laden has, no doubt, tremendous support within the clergy. There is tremendous support for him in the middle class, in the professional class-and in the armed forces".²⁰ The American intelligence believed that even after Bin Laden turned against the United States in the 1990s; he still maintained close contact with key Saudi figures and intelligence.²¹

¹⁸ Report, "After 9/11: The Saudis", *Time* (New York edition) September 15 2003,p.40

¹⁹ *ibid*, p.45

²⁰ *ibid*, p.48

²¹ *ibid*, p.49

FBI agents pursued an investigation into alleged terrorist financing in 1998 much before the 9/11 incidents. They ran across a money trail of a Chicago firm that was suspected of laundering money for Hamas. Subsequently, some of the funding was traced to the Saudi Embassy in Washington. The same pattern emerged in the charity donated by the International Relief Organization.²² However, some officials appeared worried that any inquiry into the operations of the Saudis in financing terror networks could jeopardize U.S-Saudi relations. They also suspected that millions of dollars that were donated by the Saudi government and wealthy Saudis were diverted to terrorist groups. In some cases, Saudi funds were believed to have bank rolled specific terrorist acts, including the 1998 bombings of two American Embassies in Africa.²³

The strain in the U.S-Saudi relationship also resulted from Saudi Arabia's had engineered a detente with Iran, its traditional rival in the region and Riyadh's reluctance to consider Iraq a major security threat. "There is the lack of shared strategic vision. The Saudi deny there is any reason for the United States to be there to defend the kingdom against Iraq", explained Joseph McMillan, a former Pentagon official responsible for Saudi affairs.²⁴ One big problem, according to several past and present American officials, was the anti-American sentiments in Saudi society. As C. W. Freeman Junior, a former U.S. ambassador to Riyadh remarked – "...for the first time since 1973, we actually have a situation in which the United States is so unpopular among the Saudi public that the royal family now thinks

²² Ibid, pp: 3-4.

²³ Ibid pp: 5-7.

²⁴ David.B.Ottaway and Robert.G.Kaiser, "Saudis may seek U.S exit, military presence seen as a political liability in Arab world", *Washington Post*, January 18 2002.

its security is best served by publicly distancing itself from the United States".²⁵ This kind of hatred that had developed among a minority of societies of both the countries spread its tentacles among a majority of the population in a short period of time. For the United States it was a hard choice between exposing the suspected dubious Saudi links to terror groups and taking care of the sensitivity of the bilateral relationship. For the Saudi Arabian rulers it was a choice between the benefit of good standing with the world's only super power on the one hand and the increasing hatred of its people for American policies on the other.²⁶

RISE OF ANTI-AMERICAN FEELINGS

It was hardly surprising that Anti - American sentiments rose in the Arab world especially after the September 11 attacks. Anti - American demonstrations by students in Egypt ending in the deaths of several of them, sermons by preachers instigating Jihad across Yemen, Syria, Qatar, killing of two Americans in a rare incident of violence in Kuwait, gunning of an American diplomat in Lebanon and the murder of an American nurse in Jordan were some of the incidents that happened in quick succession after the terrorist attacks.²⁷ Meanwhile in Saudi Arabia, sermon broadcasts on the official television station showed an impassioned cleric lambast the United States-"O! Allah make their plans destroy them. O! Allah support Jihad for your sake everywhere. O! Allah deal with them for they are within your power."²⁸ More than previous bouts of Anti - Americanism in the region, the anger seemed to have permeated all strata of society, especially among the educated and was tinged with disillusionment at their own long

²⁵ David. B. Ottaway and Robert. G. Kaiser, Saudis may seek U.S. exit, Military Presence seen as political liability in Arab World, *Washington Post*, January 18 2002.

²⁶ Kesava Menon, Saudis getting restive with U.S, *Deccan Herald*, September 11, 2001.

²⁷ Barry Rubin, "The real roots of Arab Anti-Americanism", *Foreign Affairs*, November / December 2002.

²⁸ Fouad Ajami, "America is everywhere", *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2003,p.55

entrenched American-backed regimes. The ambiguous stance of the United States towards the Palestinian cause too angered the Arab countries. All though most of these regimes had solid relations with the United States, it was no secret that pro American Arab leaders rather than the common people promoted these relations. Arab enmity and hatred was, however, not directed against the American people. It was not a racist feeling against the Americans simply because they were Americans. It was a reaction against the American policies. The great historian and political scientist, P.J. Vatikotis in as many words, aptly described this "...why? Because everybody hates any country that has power and uses it".²⁹ The notion of an imperialist power had spread rapidly around the Arab world causing wide spread resentment. Yet as Barry Rubin pointed out-"Even remarkable pro-Arab and pro-Muslim policies over the years has not reduced the hatred. Such animus is also a product of self interested manipulation by various groups within the Arab society and it has been used as an excuse for political, social oppression and economic stagnation".³⁰ Obviously the United States had tried to pursue a foreign policy that accorded with its own interests. The numerous monarchies and dictators ruling there could have also influenced the United States wariness towards the region. To Americans it seemed too many monarchies and dictators for a region. The psychological perception of despotism and tyranny was often linked to such regimes. In these societies, a revolution was often considered impending by the Americans. The criticism of dictators like Muammar Qadhafi (Libya), Saddam Hussein (Iraq) and Prince Abdullah (Saudi Arabia) was based on stifled opposition and political disarray. The sanctions on Libya and Iraq, naming Lebanon as a key "safe haven" for terrorists, continued suspicion of

²⁹ Ibid, p.56

³⁰ Rubin,n.27,p.47

Saudi financial links with terror organizations, identifying Iraq and Iran as “axis of evil” powers only confirmed such a consistent pattern of thinking in the American administration. The growth of radical fundamentalist groups in the region like Fateh in Lebanon, Hamas in Palestine, Hizbollah in Lebanon, society of Muslim brotherhood in Egypt, Popular Struggle Front in Syria and the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia targeting the United States and Israel led to growing American scrutiny in the region.³¹

RELIGION AS AN INFLUENCING FACTOR

An important influence for the spiraling down in U.S – Saudi relations was also the role of religion. The influence of religion had received comparatively little attention of scholars analyzing these relations. Furthermore, when religion was addressed, it tended to be addressed within the context of some other category such as institutions, organizations, society, civilization or terrorism. All the Arab societies were dominated by one religion that was Islam, while the American society represented Christian values and ideals. The disparity in religious thinking reflected first, in the foreign policies, which were influenced by the religious views and beliefs of policy makers and constituents. Secondly, religion was a source of legitimacy for both supporting and criticizing government behavior locally and internationally. Thirdly, many local religious issues and phenomena, including religious conflicts, spread across borders or otherwise became international issues. Religion was often considered as part of people’s worldviews and influenced their perception of events and their actions. Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge noted that sociologists of religion assumed that “people almost universally possess a coherent, overarching and articulated ‘world view’, ‘perspective’, value

³¹ Mahmoud al-tohami, Al-alam, al-youm, The Arab Anti-Americanism: the reasons for the enmity & Hatred, *Independent financial*, September 1 2001

orientations' or 'meaning system' that was often based on religion".³² Melford Spiro stated, "Every religious system consists... of a cognitive system." Williams discussed fundamentalist social movements and described their belief systems as "frames" that are the "schemata of interpretation", which people used to "give meaning to events, organize experiences, and provide guides for actions."³³ Clifford Geertz deduced that not only did religion include a belief system, but most people also found religion necessary to interpret the world around them, especially when bad things happened. Weber too strongly connected religion with beliefs. Finally, Marx acknowledged its influence on beliefs and behaviour.³⁴

In many ways people in the Islam dominated Arab societies had their own tradition, values and beliefs. The attractions of the western culture with its liberal attitudes created a cultural conflict in the region. The religious leaders or the ulemas took advantage of this situation for their personal gains and strengthened their positions in the society. The political decay affected by lack of freedom to express views, and the strict religious laws perpetuated into a cultural decay with the invasion of westernization and hence a social decay in the way people lived life. This led to frustrations and resentment against European countries and particularly the United States. The unequal status of women, public executions, sectarian violence between Shia and Sunni Muslims created further social and cultural schisms. As Fareed Zakaria, editor of news week international, put it: "you are free in the Arab world to demonstrate as long as what you want to demonstrate is some vast abstract cause like anti-Americanism.... you are absolutely not

³² Jonathan Fox, " Religion as an overlooked element in International Relations", *International studies Association* 2001:(Blackwell Publishers, n.d),pp.53-58

³³ *ibid*,p.58

³⁴ *ibid*, pp. 59-64

free to demonstrate against your rulers”.³⁵ Rather than pushing for equality for women, democracy, civil society, freedom of speech and due process of law, which were sorely needed in the Arab world, the public was instead made to focus on hating the United States. A scholar explained it in these words – “When the average Arab citizen tries to reconcile his desire for domestic freedom, his feelings of frustrations at home, cautious American support for his government and the increasing presence of western culture in clothes, food or even music, he is caught in the middle. It is easier (and, in a very human way, more logical) to lash out at a distant America than to risk raising one’s voice against the local hegemony. Popular Arab support for America will be hard to muster until Arabs are able to live as they wish, with out oppression and without restrictions. Once Arabs are able to voice concerns about their own Government without fear of reprisals, their focus will turn inward...”³⁶

Anti Americanism set the stage for the vicious attacks of September 11. It also seemed the same anti Americanism was making the global coalition, which the United States sought to avenge the attacks, difficult to obtain. As Benjamin A. Gilman analyzed - “The United States today is facing an ideological enemy that may turn out to be harder to defeat than Al-Qaeda or the Taliban. It creates a culture of hatred directed at the United States and its allies.”³⁷

Yet if anti American feelings were a product of frustrations of oppressed societies, then the discriminations of Arab Americans in democratic America, post September 11 attacks, raised alarming consequences. A poll conducted by

³⁵ Schmitt, n.8, p.45

³⁶ Jansen, n.10

³⁷ Salman Rushdie, The altered states of anti-Americanism, *The Guardian*, August 31 2002,

the Zogby international and commissioned by the Arab - American institute foundation in May, 2002, significantly a year after the September 11 attacks indicated:

1. 78% of Arab Americans felt more profiling of their community after the September 11 attacks.
2. 30% of them personally experienced discrimination, 40% knew some one else who had been discriminated.³⁸
3. Roughly 1 out of 5 Arab Americans said they felt less comfortable speaking Arabic in public, while 63% were worried about long-term discriminations. Every 4 out of 5 Muslim Arab felt the same.
4. 2 in 5 Arab Americans changed their habits since September 11. 63% of them were Muslims, 70% in the 18-24-age bracket and nearly 50% were born outside the United States.
5. Finally, since September 11, Arab Americans born elsewhere (27%) had been more discriminated than those born in the United States (17%).³⁹

Leading American scholar, Samuel. P.Huntington analyzed whether this hatred was restricted only to ideological differences or was permeating into a conflict between different religions. As he explained-“I am elaborating a plausible hypothesis about the likely course of world affairs.... But there is plenty of reason to expect that the fault lines between civilizations – for example between the West on one hand and the Confucian societies of the East Asia and the Muslim world, on the other – will be the battle lines for

³⁸ Arab American Institute Foundation , “profiling and pride”, July 2002 pp: 1-2.

³⁹ Arab American Foundation, “Arab American attitudes & September 11 attacks”, October 15, 2001, pp: 1-5.

the future.”⁴⁰ He argued that the universal propagation of Western values was affecting “the West against the Rest” while the post - Cold War reduction of military power by the West and Russian was leading to a race for superiority due to the increased arms race in Islamic (political turmoil, West Asian dispute), Confucian (Koran dispute, China and Taiwan), Hindu (Kashmir) and Buddhist states.

With policy makers around the world being constrained by religious based attitudes among constituents, and religion also influencing the political and cultural mediums in which they act, several studies have found that states with Islamic populations are disproportionately autocratic making Huntington’s assumption a potential time bomb. In part, most scholars agree with his assumption that religion is linked to issues of identity, which has an important influence on politics. What they question is whether post cold war identities will be civilizational. Some posit that the relevant level of identity will be national or even sub national. Others contend that the world is unifying into a single identity.⁴¹

Yet the “crusade” launched by the present Bush administration against Afghanistan and subsequently Iraq, both Islamic societies in the back drop of a history of strife and clashes between Muslim and Christian societies has made scholars around the world closely scrutinize Huntington’s assumptions as to whether a “clash of civilizations” is a monstrous possibility.

⁴⁰ Samuel.P.Huntington, The Islamic-Confucian connection, *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Volume 10, issue 3, March 1993.

⁴¹ Samuel.P.Huntington, The age of Muslim wars, *New Week*, volume 138, issue 25, December 11 2001

CHAPTER 4

THE U.S WAR ON IRAQ AND ITS IMPACT ON RELATIONS

SUB TITLES

1. U.S- SAUDI RELATIONS, THROUGH THE IRAQ WAR
2. DUAL MONARCHY
3. SIMILARITIES AND DISSIMILARITIES IN U.S-SAUDI RELATIONS
DURING GULF WAR I AND II

TABLES

1. THE NUMBERS OF GULF WAR I AND II
2. U.S AND ALLIES MILITARY FATALITIES IN IRAQ

After the terror attacks on the United States, Arundathi Roy wrote: “America is at war against people it doesn’t know, because they don’t appear much on television. The trouble is that once America goes off to war, it can’t very well return without having fought one. If it doesn’t find its enemy, for the sake of enraged folks back home, it will have to manufacture one. Once war begins, it will develop a momentum, logic and a justification of its own and we’ll lose sight of why it is being fought in the first place”.¹

The war in Afghanistan dragged on, as the United States was unable to pinpoint the perpetrators of the September 11 attacks. In the words of a security analyst –“It has become yesterday’s news”. The U.S Administration had already trained its sights on other targets with Iraq topping that target list. The mounting crescendo of people in the United States, favoring an attack on Iraq and Saddam Hussein was summed up by William Safire of the New York Times: “Strike Saddam while Iron’s hot”. Americans were now being told that evil had not one, but many human manifestations. The Bush administration had charted the course clearly leaving none in doubt that given half a chance it would like to finish the unfinished agenda in Iraq. President George Bush had started talking about weapons of mass destructions (WMDS), terrorism and Iraq some two years before. From the time that terrorists had targeted the US homeland, he had been saying that the war against terrorism would go across the years and across the world. Many experts articulated even a broader vision. They said the war on terrorism was not just about hunting down terrorists. “It is above all, to protect an extraordinary opportunity that has come about to recast the international system,” wrote Henry Kissinger. It was clear that the events highlighted the urgency of shaping a new world order. As to the war against terrorism, President Bush had been saying that it would not

¹ Arundathi Roy, The September 11 terror attacks, *The Hindu*, September 29 2001.

be constrained by time or space. The ground had been adequately prepared for taking the war to another front after Afghanistan. The United States duly notified the United Nations Security Council on October 6, 2002 through a legal document that counter terrorism attacks might be extended beyond Afghanistan. Almost every day the Bush administration had spoken about the danger being posed by Saddam Hussein. President Bush kept reiterating: "Afghanistan is still just the beginning".² He made it clear that any one who harboured or funded a terrorist was a terrorist. "If they develop weapons of mass destruction that will be used to terrorize nations, they will be held accountable. As for Mr. Saddam Hussein, he needs to let inspectors back in his country, to show us he is not developing weapons of mass destruction ... part of the war against terrorism was to deny weapons getting in the hand of nations that will use them", Bush said.³

Saddam Hussein had been in the thoughts of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice also. She said-"we do not need the events of September 11 to tell us that this is a very dangerous man who is a threat to the region and a threat to us... there could only be one reason that he has not wanted UN inspectors in Iraq, and that's so he can build weapons of mass destruction".⁴

In mid-September, 2001, President Bush got a letter from a policy group called 'project for the new American century' warning him against failure to promptly remove Saddam Hussein from power. It suggested that the state sponsors of terrorism such as Iran and Syria should also be punished if they refused to withdraw support from Hizbollah.⁵ Another group named 'Defense Policy Board' recommended to President Bush that

² L.K.Sharma, where next, after Afghanistan?, Foreign Panorama, *Deccan Herald*, November 29 2001,p.1

³ Ibid,p.1

⁴ ibid, p.2

⁵ ibid, p.3

Ahmed Chalabi of Iraqi National Congress should be installed as the new leader in Baghdad backed by the deployment of American troops to secure Iraqi oil fields.⁶

The strategy such groups had in mind was of more support to Iraqi dissidents to help them organize resistance better. Their ability to channelise the anger of the Iraqi people and the U.S. air power, now proven in Afghanistan, could be a lethal combination for Saddam Hussein. These utterances were also accompanied by a series of media reports based on “intelligence” gathered by the United States seeking to implicate Saddam Hussein both in the September 11 attacks and the Anthrax tragedy. It was alleged by the Bush administration that one Al-Qaeda operative had met an Iraqi intelligence man in a third country some time ago. An initiative of sending a former CIA director to the United Kingdom to gather some “evidence” about Saddam’s links with Osama bin Laden was also taken up by the Bush administration. Although the mission got exposed and attracted ridicule, it did not dampen the enthusiasm in the Bush administration in targeting Iraq.⁷ Differences within the administration did persist between the Secretary of State Colin Powell led Moderates and the Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz led hardliners. Yet it did not prevent the policy and operational people in the Pentagon from drawing up strategies to attack Iraq. The hardliners felt that links between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein did not have to be proven. Timing was crucial and this was the moment to be seized for implementing the far right’s security agenda. This group had always felt that the United States should have taken the first Gulf War to Baghdad and replaced Saddam Hussein a decade ago. As Richard Perle explained –“the questions of how to deal with Iraq has caused a remarkable division

⁶ *ibid*, p.3

⁷ *ibid*.p.4.

between the Clinton administration and a bipartisan majority of both houses of Congress”.⁸ The group in the present administration did not criticize the earlier Bush Senior administration for sparing Saddam Hussein as it had reasoned the Gulf War had by averting his grand plans ensured that he would not survive the defeat. Moreover if Saddam had gone, Saudi Arabia might have stopped paying for its protection or hosting the American troops. It was also felt that to leave Iraq defenseless before neighbouring Iran at that point of time was highly dangerous. Hence, it turned its criticism on the policies of the Clinton administration, which succeeded the Bush Sr. administration. The group felt that Clinton’s strategy of leaving Saddam in place while claiming to have him “contained” was bound to be a failure. The Clinton administration’s policy ignored the increasing strength of Saddam’s position and the accelerating decline of their own. The group felt that the policy depended on a continuation of ever- weaker sanctions to obscure the decisive victory Saddam would achieve when the sanctions were eventually lifted. It ignored the deterioration of the coalition once arrayed against Saddam, and the emergence of France, China and Russia as opponents of tough measures against Saddam and advocates of lifting those sanctions still in force. “It left to the next administration a legacy of weakness and vacillation: pin prick military strikes that served principally to bolster the myth of Saddam’s invincibility; endless negotiations aimed at restoring United Nations on terms acceptable to Saddam and his friends on the security council; and a willingness to accept Saddam’s rule in Iraq which has demoralized his opponents and undermined resistance in the region” explained Richard Perle.⁹

⁸ Richard.N.Perle, “Iraq: Saddam unbound”, in Robert Kagan and William Kristol, ed., *Present Dangers, Crisis and Opportunities in American Foreign Policy* (New York, 2002) pp.103-110

⁹ *ibid*,p.102

The policy failed to comprehend the fundamental nature of Saddam Hussein's regime as well as the likely consequences of his removal from power. The Defense Policy Board group concluded that the policy of clinging to the sanctions and hoping for the best was a failure and could not protect American interests in the Gulf region or the world. The 'question of stability', which became the central focus of American diplomacy in the 1990s, the 'presence of Iran' and the 'bay of pigs syndrome' of getting bogged down in another civil war were strongly influential in such an ambiguous policy, according to the Bush administration hardliners.¹⁰

Preparations for an attack on Iraq began as early as January 2002 with the creation of a Terrorist Threat Integration Centre, which merged the counter terrorism units of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Defense Department and the Department of Homeland Security, which was led by the Director of CIA. Colin Powell, the Secretary of State, considered a moderate, confirmed the impending attack when he professed that – "Ambition and hatred are enough to bring Iraq and Al Qaeda together".¹¹ The campaign had reached such a crescendo that the United States went ahead with its attack on Iraq in spite of capturing, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the self described planner, organizer of the September 11 attacks and considered by American officials as the "Kingpin of Al Qaeda", on March 1st 2002 in Pakistan.¹²

"The American way of war"- that phrase popularized by the military historian Russel Weigley, spurred by dramatic advances in information technology, had undergone a change, from awesome destructive power that

¹⁰ Perle, n.8, p. 99-110.

¹¹ World Year Book 2003,p.41, 177-9,201

¹² ibid, p.200.

only a fully mobilized and highly industrialized democracy could bring to bear to a strategy seeking quick victory with minimal casualties on both sides. The “transformation”, which had a very high profile advocate in Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, of American military was showcased in Afghanistan in 2001.¹³ Instead of blundering into terrain that had swallowed up past invading armies, the United States chose to fight with a handful of special operations forces and massive precision- guided munitions. This skillful application of American power allowed the Northern Alliance, which had been stalemated for years, to topple the Taliban in just two months.

The second Gulf War, which was launched by the United States on Iraq in March 2003, proved to be more impressive to military analysts world over than the Afghan war because it was a truly combined – arms operation.

FIRST GULF WAR, 1991

	Troops deployed	Casualties	Duration	Cost
United States	500,000 (estimated)	300*	48 days	\$ 80 billion (estimated)
Allies	160,000	65 ⁺	48 days	

¹³ Max Boot, “The New American Way of War” *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 82, Number 4, P. 41-2.

SECOND GULF WAR, 2003

United States and United Kingdom	250,000 (estimated)	$\frac{129^{**}}{31}$	26 days ⁺⁺	\$ 20 Billion
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*To hostile fire + At least ** 84 of these to hostile fire ++ 21 days to the fall of Baghdad.¹⁴

As shown in the above table, coalition forces in the second Gulf War were less than half the size of those deployed in the first one. Yet they achieved a much more ambitious goal of occupying all of Iraq, rather than just kicking the Iraqi army out of Kuwait in almost half the time, with one-third the casualties, and at one-fourth the cost of the first war.¹⁵ Many would argue, in retrospect, that Saddam Hussein's forces were not all that formidable to begin with, yet they were capable enough when they fought the Iranian army in the 1980s and put down Kurdish and Shiite insurgencies in the 1990s. And, on paper at least, the Baath regime's military enjoyed a big numerical advantage over U.S and British forces. Although the Iraqi army was much degraded from its pre-1991 heydays, it still deployed more than 450,000 troops, including Paramilitary Units, the Republican Guard, and the special Republican Guard, whose loyalty had been repeatedly demonstrated.¹⁶ The coalition forces by emerging victorious also negated the strategies taught by war colleges for sure success of an attacking force having a 3 to 1 advantage. As Max Boot explained – "That the United States and its allies won anyway- and won so quickly- must rank as one of the signal

¹⁴ Ibid, P.43.

¹⁵ ibid, p.44

¹⁶ ibid,p.44

achievements in military history. Previously, the gold standard of operational excellence had been the German blitzkrieg through the Low Countries and France in 1940. The Germans managed to conquer France, the Netherlands, and Belgium in just 44 days, at a cost of “only” 27,000 dead soldiers. The United States and Britain took just 26 days to conquer Iraq (a country 80 percent of the size of France), at a cost of 161 dead, making fabled generals such as Erwin Rommel and Heinz Guderian seem positively incompetent by comparison”.¹⁷

The war began with offensive operations combined with simultaneous air and ground offensive, in contrast to the 1991 campaign, which saw weeks of air attacks to soften Iraqi resistance. This option depended upon the continued cooperation of regional nations like Turkey and Saudi Arabia for substantial staging areas/air bases and required months to deploy the necessary forces. There were reportedly 340,000 U.S. military personnel in the Persian Gulf region. The 3rd Mechanized Infantry Division, the 101st Air borne Division, the 7th cavalry regiment and the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force formed the bulk of the U.S. ground offensive. The Air force had approximately 15-air wings operation in the region. Strategic bombers operated from the British air base at Diego Garcia, and air bases in the Middle East, Europe and the United States. The United Kingdom also deployed over 47, 000 personnel, including a naval task force, an armored task force, a Royal Marine brigade, a parachute bridge, a Special Air Service regiment, and a special Boat squadron. Australia deployed approximately 2000 personnel, primarily special operations personnel, and one F/A-18 aircraft Squadron while Poland had 200 special operations troops.¹⁸

¹⁷ Ibid, P. 44-5.

¹⁸ Steve Bowman, “Iraq: US military operations” Congressional Research document, October 2003, P. 1-3.

Allied commandoes and special operations forces invading Iraq focused specifically on the search for weapons of mass destruction and missile launcher sites. Fifteen Hours after the start of the ground war in March 2003, the coalition began its full-scale air assault on Baghdad. Despite all the hype about “shock and awe”, the initial bombardment was very restrained. In addition to hitting the usual targets – air defenses and command-and-control facilities – allied commanders concentrated on bombing the Baath Party Head quarters and Saddam’s palaces. They had hoped that the regime would collapse at the first whiff of gunpowder, leaving its infrastructure intact. That overly optimistic expectation was dashed when allied ground forces ran into stiffer than expected resistance in southern Iraq. Coalition commanders had anticipated that Basra, a heavily Shiite city that had rebelled against Saddam in 1991, would rise up this time as well. Yet no such rebellion was forthcoming, in part because Basra’s citizens did not want to risk being slaughtered by Baathist security forces, as they had been in 1991 and partly because Saddam had formed the paramilitary Fedayeen to stiffen resistance and prevent any further revolts. The coalition’s response to this setback was to loosely cordon off Basra. The British Armored Division spent the next three weeks patiently chipping away at Iraqi defenses, all the while being careful to avoid the kind of street fighting that Saddam clearly hoped to trigger. Leaving the British behind, the rest of the coalition forces raced north towards Baghdad along two parallel axes. A section of the US Special Forces took to the largely empty deserts west of the Euphrates River while another segment advanced to its right, along the heavily populated east bank of the Euphrates. The initial speed of the advance was so fast that this dash towards Baghdad left the U.S.

lines of communication temporarily exposed to Fedayeen and other Iraqi security force's attacks.¹⁹

U.S. A and its 'allies' Military fatalities in Iraq

(March-December 2003)

Period	US	UK	Other	Total	Days
Dec-03	40	0	8	48	31
Nov-03	81	1	27	109	30
Oct-03	42	1	2	45	31
Sept-03	31	1	1	33	30
Aug-03	35	6	2	43	31
June-03	46	1	0	47	31
June-03	29	6	0	35	30
May-03	37	4	0	41	31
Apr-03	73	6	0	79	30
Mar-03	65	27	0	92	12
Total	479	53	40	572	277

Source: Lunaville.Org/war casualties / summary.²⁰

As the table indicated, attacks of resistance groups, on an average, worked out to be a little over one per day, reaching a peak in December 2003. The resistance groups, on an average managed to kill two military personnel of the U.S. and its allies per day in Iraq. It also indicated that although Saddam Hussein might not have actually coordinated these attacks, his capture on December 13th, 2003 had a demoralizing effect on the resistance group. Lastly there was no indication of the resistance groups' attacks coming down in any significant way.

These attacks, however, forced senior allied commanders to slow down temporarily the advance to allow their forces to get rest, regroup, resupplied and to secure rear areas. Yet, within twenty-five days of offensive operations, coalition forces had relative control of all major Iraqi cities like Basra, Mosul, Kirkuk, Tikrit and had arrived

¹⁹ N.5, P. 46-9.

²⁰ Sreedhar & S. Malakar, ed., *The Second coming: US war on Iraq 2003 :An Indian Perspective* (Delhi,2003) P. 6.

at the door steps of the capital, Baghdad. Approaching it with caution amidst fears of risking another 'Stalingrad', U.S. forces became progressively bolder as the probing attacks revealed the weakness of Iraqi defenses. Baghdad was occupied and the American forces felled the statue of Saddam on April 9th and the occupation of the entire country was completed by April 14, 2003.²¹

As the battle phase of the war ended, however, looting and lawlessness besieged Iraq. A year into the American occupation violence persists against both U.S. forces and Iraqis cooperating with the occupation. With the United States pledging \$2.48 billion for a special Iraq relief and reconstruction fund for the purpose of aid efforts in a wide range of sectors, including water and sanitation, food, electricity, education and rule of law, an environment of order and stability was contingent for its successful conduct.²² American diplomats are currently seeking to encourage international help through a United Nations Security Council resolution. Yet terror, violence and lawlessness created a major hurdle for such reconstruction works. The bombing of the U.N. Head Quarters in Baghdad on August 19, 2003, and the bombing of the Najaf mosque 10 days later indicated that resistance groups were sparing none. The assassination of the moderate Shiite Cleric Al-Hakim and Sergio Vieira de Mello, a Brazilian diplomat and U.N. special representative shocked the world as the war on Iraq was producing murky and grave consequences to supporters of the war. An ethnic religious war between Shias and Sunnis and the confrontations between radical cleric Muqtada Al-Sadr and American forces has also drawn media and international attention to the increasing incompetence of American forces to enforce order and stability. The

²¹ Boot, N.13, P.4-10.

²² Curt Tarnoff, "Iraq: Recent Developments in Reconstruction Assistance", Congressional Research Document, October 2 2003,p.1

continued instability has increased reconstruction costs and delayed implementations of further rehabilitation programs. Further, as institutions of commerce and security have yet to be fully reestablished ahead of the June 30, 2004 deadline for a transitional Interim government, the trust of Iraqi people in the U.S. leadership to bring about a democratic transformation in Iraq has been undermined, opening the door to political discontent and opposition.²³

U.S- Saudi Relations Through the Iraq War

The September 11th attacks increasingly made Americans question the closeness of their relations. The Bush administration laid clear emphasis on the necessity for reforms in the Saudi political and social system for a prosperous future for their relationship. Some critics of Saudi Arabia even suggested that the United States had invaded the wrong country and seized the wrong oil wells in the spring.

TIME\CNN POLL

1. Question. - Do you think Saudi Arabia is a country the U.S. can trust as an ally?

	OCTOBER1982	SEPTEMBER 2003
Cannot trust -	63%	72%
Can trust –	37%	17%

2. Question. - Is Saudi Arabia cooperating with U.S. as much as it can in the war against terrorism?

Yes	No
20%	71%

²³ Curt Tarnoff, "Iraq: Recent Developments in Reconstruction Assistance", Congressional Research Survey Report, October 2 2003, PP. 1-7.

3. Question. - Have your impression of Saudi Arabia become more favorable recently, stayed the same or got worse?

More favorable	4%
Stayed the same	50%
Get worse	38%

(Source: From telephone poll of 1,003 adult Americans taken for TIME/CNN, on Sept. 3&4 by Harris Interactive. Margin of error is $\pm 3.1\%$. "Not sures" omitted)²⁴

With nowhere to turn and go, crown Prince Abdullah, the de facto ruler declared his own war on terrorism. The kingdom's highest religious authority too issued a declaration backing this war. Abdullah's crackdown revealed the presence of Al Qaeda activists in Saudi Arabia. What followed the crackdown was an increasing surge of violence in the form of Al Qaeda attacks on three housing complexes in Riyadh killing 35 people including nine suicide bombers. One arrest suggested that Al Qaeda might have penetrated the Saudi security forces. Another key Al-Qaeda operative in U.S. custody revealed an explicit deal between the Al Qaeda and Saudi royals. Though, long ago, Osama bin Laden, a Saudi by birth, had condemned the royal family for allowing American troops on Saudi soil, his group had refrained from violence within the kingdom; its reasons were clear to U.S. intelligence. A former Bush administration official said- "There were Al Qaeda agents in the kingdom that urged Al Qaeda not to strike in Saudi Arabia because they (the Saudis) might cut off the "spigot" of funding flowing to the group".²⁵

²⁴ Report, "After 9/11: The Saudis", *Time*, September 15 2003, p.40

²⁵ *ibid*, P.40-1.

With the increased flurry of activities within the kingdom, American officials' scrutiny on Saudi Arabia tightened. Increased pressure from the Bush administration and terrorist attacks like the Riyadh bombing, which according to Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, acted as the "felling of the scales from the eyes of the Saudis", forced Prince Abdullah to fight a battle against what he called as "deviant and misguided" terrorists "with out any room neither for neutrality nor for hesitancy".²⁶ Yet such efforts largely generated mixed responses from American officials. An American official claims that, "Now they are taking on the militant sub culture head on" was accepted by Armitage who stated that, "cooperation on things that are internal to Saudi Arabia has been magnificent".²⁷ Yet top administration counter terrorism officials shot down such assessments by saying that they had "significant concerns" about the levels of assistance from Riyadh. Although there was a sharp division in the American circles over Saudi Arabia, the Saudis did get ever improving marks from Washington for prohibiting Saudi charities from sending money abroad with out government permission and for freezing bank accounts suspected of having links to terrorism. Yet even though the Saudi Foreign minister Prince Saud –al-faisal repeatedly claimed that, "the money aspect is now completely controlled, and your government knows it"²⁸, Robert Jordan, American ambassador to Riyadh, put it down as an exaggeration stating that, "It is sort of like trying to stamp our crabgrass. As soon as you stamp one of them out, something spring up somewhere else under a different name".²⁹ With the American political establishment increasingly divisive over Saudi commitment in rooting terrorism, criticizing, on the one hand, of "selective cooperation" and the insistence for knowing

²⁶ Ibid, p.42

²⁷ Ibid, p.43

²⁸ ibid, p.43

²⁹ ibid,p.44

everything, while on the other hand, praising the Saudis recent sweeps on Al Qaeda cells, relations had come a full circle from it's early years of inception when ambivalence was its basis.³⁰

When the Iraq war started, Saudi Arabia was caught in a precarious position between supporting a longtime ally's unilateral ambitions and opposing it as most of the Saudi public wanted it to do. The dilemma of choosing between the solid links established between the Saudi royal family and the Bush family and the domestic unrest that Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations threatened to unleash in both the countries, further increased the distrust and suspicions in the relations.

The Dual Monarchy

To understand why Saudi Arabia, one of Washington's staunchest allies, had been incubating anti-Americanism, the murky depths of Saudi Arabia's domestic politics have to be analyzed. The Saudi state, by the beginning of the 21st century became a fragmented entity, divided between the fiefdoms of the royal family. Among the four of five most powerful princes, two stood out: crown Prince Abdullah and his half brother Prince Nayef, the interior minister.

Relations between these two leaders were visibly tense. In the United States, Abdullah cut a higher profile but at home, in Saudi Arabia, Nayef, who controlled the secret police, cast a longer and darker shadow. Saudi Arabia was also in the throes of a crisis. The economy was unable to keep pace with the population growth while the welfare state was rapidly deteriorating and regional and sectarian resentments were rising to the fore. These problems had been exacerbated by an upsurge in radical Islamic activism. Many agreed that the Saudi political system had to evolve, but a

³⁰ Ibid, P. 42-5.

profound cultural schizophrenia prevented the elite from agreeing on the specifics of reform.

The Saudi monarchy functioned as the intermediary between two distinct political communities: westernized elite that looked to Europe and the United States as models of political development, and a Wahhabi religious establishment that held up its interpretation of Islam's golden age as a guide. Saudi Arabia's two most powerful princes took opposing sides in this debate: Abdullah tilted towards the liberal reformers and sought a rapprochement with the United States, whereas Nayef sided with the clerics and took direction from an anti-American religious establishment that shared many goals with Al Qaeda. The two camps were divided over the question of whether the state should reduce the power of the religious establishment. On the right side of the political spectrum, the clerics and Nayef took their stand on the principle of "**Tawhid**" or "**monotheism**", as defined by Muhammad ibn Abdal-wahhab. In their view, Christians, Jews and insufficiently devout Sunni Muslims were enemies out to destroy true Islam. Tawhid was closely connected to Jihad and hence it was not just an intolerant religious doctrine but also a political principle that legitimized the repressiveness of the Saudi State. In foreign policy, Tawhid translated into support for Jihad and so it was Nayef- not Abdullah – who presided over the Saudi fund for the support of fundamentalist groups.

If Tawhid was the right pole of the Saudi Political spectrum, then the doctrine of "**Taqarub**" - rapprochement between Muslims and non-Muslims –marked the left. Taqarub promoted the notion of peaceful coexistence with non-believers, downplayed the importance of Jihad and stood in opposition to the siege mentality fostered by Tawhid. Crown Prince Abdullah clearly associated himself with "Taqarub". He advocated relaxing restrictions on public debate, promoted democratic

reform and supported a reduction in the power of clerics. Between January and May 2003, he presided over an unusually open “national dialogue” with prominent Saudi liberals that included two petitions, one on a road map for Saudi democracy and another that included a call by the oppressed Shiite community, viscerally and vocally opposed by the Saudi religious establishment, for greater freedom. The first endorsed direct elections, the establishment of an independent Judiciary and an increased public role for women. The western world largely had no sympathy for hard task that the Crown Prince had to undertake.³¹

Saudi Arabia was a crucial cog for the American plans in Iraq. It launch pad for the US-led Gulf war in 1991. Washington could launch an attack on Iraq without using bases inside Saudi Arabia, but the air campaign would be more difficult if the US could not use Saudi air space. Saudi Arabia also made things difficult for the United States by refusing to allow the use of its facilities for any attack against neighbouring Iraq even if it was sanctioned by the United Nations. Foreign Minister Saud-al-Faisal, who had in the past indicated that the Americans could use bases in Saudi Arabia for an attack on Iraq, if the UN sanctioned it, ruled out such a move- “we will abide by the decision of the United Nations Security Council and we will co-operate with the Security Council. But as to entering the conflict or using facilities... that is something else”. He added: “our policy is that if the United Nations takes a decision... it is obligatory on all signatories to cooperate, but that is not to the extent of using facilities in the country or the military forces of the country”.³² His remarks were the strongest Saudi rejection to date of any assistance in a possible US attack on Iraq. One of the factors weighing heavily in the

³¹ Micheal Scott Doran, “The Saudi Paradox”, *Foreign Affairs*, volume 83, number 1, January/February 2004, P. 35-40.

³² Report, “Saudi snub U. S over Iraq attack”, *News.bbc.co.uk*, April 5 2003

Saudi minds for rejecting active cooperation was the fear of a backlash by the Al Qaeda and a determination to follow a policy of mending fences with its immediate neighbour. The former factor had already created ruptures in the Saudi society. Apprehensions about a free life for the common Saudi citizens were confirmed by the violence unleashed by terror groups across the kingdom. The latter factor was a continuation of the Saudi policy to erase the fear of a militarized Iraq and follow a policy of appeasement with its neighbour. By providing active cooperation to the United States in its attack on Iraq, Saudi Arabia did not want to antagonize the Arab world and in particular the Iraqi people. This was reflected in Prince Saud al-Faisal's statement: "You can never make a permanent change through occupation by foreign forces". He added that the kingdom wanted a political resolution to the Iraq crisis and that Baghdad had made a "very clear and unambiguous promise" to Arab States that it would abide by the UN resolution.³³

Adel-al-Jubeir, spokesman for the ruling family, added – "There is no country I know of supporting the use of force in Iraq at this time.... The rhetoric about using force is way ahead of the policy".³⁴ Saud al- Faisal explained the Saudi viewpoint in the following words-"The problem of Iraq cannot be solved militarily, and interference in Iraqi affairs is harmful to the people of Iraq and countries in the region. We have always opposed any attack against an Arab or Muslim country, and that also means Iraq".³⁵ Though the Royal family was concerned about angering its population further because of its close association with the United States, its opposition to a American - led war had been mollified so much that the Saudi governmental officials made an effort to take a middle path by giving consent to the use of the Prince Sultan Air

³³ Report on *news.bbc.co.uk* "Saudi Snub US over Iraq attack" April 5th, 2003.

³⁴ Report, "Attacking Iraq- International reactions", *global security.org*, May 12 2003

³⁵ *ibid*, May 12 2003

base and agreed for command-and-control, special operations and refueling missions to be staged out of the country.³⁶ They also agreed to keep delivering oil to maintain oil prices through the Iraq war. Ali Naimi, the minister of petroleum and mineral resources indicated that the major priority of OPEC was to maintain the stability of the oil market and guarantee oil supply based on fair and reasonable prices. He added that OPEC had signaled that it would pump more oil to make up for any disruption in supply caused by the war in Iraq. Saudi Arabia was believed to have as much as 50 million barrels in storage in the country and providing more to other storage facilities.

Accused by Washington of “feeding terrorism”, the oil-rich kingdom watched the US army Head Quarters in the Gulf move to Qatar. Similarly Bahrain, engaged in its own democratic process, had long served as the US naval Head Quarters, hosting the 5th fleet. Kuwait, invaded by Iraq in 1990, was the main launch pad for the war to oust Saddam Hussein and the UAE, from where much of the cash used by terrorists in the September 11 attacks was reportedly transferred, launched a crackdown on suspect money at the behest of Washington.

In spite of its efforts at pleasing everybody, the September 11 attacks and the subsequent Iraq war had greatly undermined the importance of Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. The issue of Iraq dominated American political discussions while smaller countries like Qatar, Bahrain and to a lesser extent United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait rose in prominence. “The changes followed the fall of the communist bloc in Europe at the end of the last century and were accentuated by the September 11, 2001 suicide attacks on the United States, in which 11 of the 19 suspected hijackers were Saudis. The message was well understood

³⁶ Report on www.globalsecurity.org, “Attacking Iraq- international Reaction”, May 12th, 2003.

by certain small countries like Qatar, Bahrain, UAE and Kuwait. On the other hand others (Saudis) turned a deaf ear because of the structural paralysis that was the nature of their power and the weight of religion and tradition” said leading Kuwaiti economic analyst Jassim al-Saadun.³⁷

Similarities and dissimilarities in U.S.- Saudi relations during Gulf War I and II

First, the common goal during both the wars, for both U.S. and Saudi Arabia was the ouster of Iraqi troops, yet in the Gulf War-I, both countries fought together to oust Saddam from Kuwait after he invaded it. The Iraq War was to oust Saddam Hussein himself. This made the Saudis uncomfortable as the charges trumped up against Saddam was the possession of illegal weapons of mass destructions (WMDs) and the close relationship the Iraqi dictator allegedly enjoyed with the Al Qaeda terror network. Second, the first Gulf War was fought to protect Saudi Arabia from a probable Iraqi invasion, which seemed a real threat. In other words, the coalition was formed primarily for a defensive strategy, which turned into an offensive campaign later. The Iraq War, a decade later was fought by the United States for a regime change, not only in Iraq, but also aimed at Saudi Arabia later. As John Lewis Gaddis, professor of political science in Yale University, explained, “I think they are further serious ... And again this is not going to be said in public (that) what they have in mind as a long term strategy is actually a kind of domino theory in the Middle East; that if, infact, you could get a functioning democracy in a place like Iraq, that truly would have an effect next door in Iran... this is a strategy that’s ultimately targeted at the Saudis”.³⁸ Third, the first Gulf War witnessed active participation and cooperation from Saudi Arabia which financed majority of the

³⁷ Hassan el Feikh, “9/11,Iraq war shifted Mid East power balance”, *middle-east-online.com*, June19 2003

³⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, “The War behind closed doors”, *www.pbs.org*, January 22 2004,p.1

American campaign, sent troops for active combat and kept up increased levels of oil supply to negate surging oil prices without any hesitation. The Iraq War saw Saudi Arabia placed in a dilemma. After refusing to participate outright at first, it agreed to provide minimum cooperation by way of refueling and a base later, to appease frayed American nerves. Fourth, the first Gulf War was the bedrock on which the US-Saudi relations received a boost due to the close cooperation between the two. For the Saudi royal family, it was an easy decision to side with its closest ally as there were no anti-American feelings or hatred among the Saudi public but the Iraq War saw anti-American feelings in Saudi Arabia reach a crescendo, as the United States was perceived as imperialist and anti-Islamic. Fifth, the first Gulf War was fought at a time when a popular, widely respected and nearly unanimously accepted ruler king Fahd was in power. He had ruled the kingdom for nearly a decade until then and was an American supporter. By the time the Iraq war took place; King Fahd had been restricted by a stroke while crown Prince Abdullah succeeded him. Abdullah was fighting a pitched domestic battle with his half brother Prince Nayef and was not seen as pro – American, unlike King Fahd. He was highly critical of the American support of Israel in the West Asian dispute. Sixth, the first Gulf War occurred at a time when the close relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia was necessitated by American dependence on Saudi oil, yet by the time the Iraq war took place, American demand for oil had taken them to the Asia Pacific region and the Persian Gulf region. Hence American dependence on Saudi oil had visibly decreased and the United States viewed the Saudi market more for arms sale rather than for oil. Seventh, the first Gulf War saw the United States lead a coalition of countries armed with a United Nations resolution to fight Iraq. This made Saudi Arabia's decision to participate in the war efforts logical to its rulers and people.

But the Iraq War was a unilateral move by the United States, which was opposed by many countries, and the United Nations. To the Saudis, the American move smacked of imperial designs and as a show of might. Hence it did not convince the Saudis to participate in the war.³⁹ Eighth, the first Gulf War was fought at a time when the Saudi society was peaceful and fairly stable. The economy driven by oil had generated a higher standard of living. Hence the decision to finance and participate in the war could be borne. But the Iraq war took place when Al Qaeda repeatedly targeted the Saudi society with its terror attacks. This had a resounding effect on the economy, which had begun to slow down. Finally, the first Gulf War saw Saudi participation because of its fear of Iraqi military might threatening its territorial integrity but the Iraq war took place after Saudi Arabia had decided to be less hostile and look at ways of rapprochement with Iraq to bring it back into the main fold. Hence, it was hesitant in providing support to American designs on Iraq.⁴⁰

The striking similarities, which remained the basis of the US- Saudi relations through both the wars, were first, the advent of a faceless enemy called terrorism, which had resounding impacts on both the countries. Terrorism became a major threat after the first Gulf War, and reached its ultimate manifestations in the form of the September 11 attacks, which led to the subsequent attack by the United States on Iraq for its alleged connections with terrorists. Secondly, the enemy for both the countries over the decade that separated both the wars was the same-Saddam Hussein & Iraq. Thirdly, when the Iraq war took place, Saudi Arabia, inspite of difficult relations, continued to be the closest ally of the United States. According to the Americans, both

³⁹ Policy brief, "US Challenges and Choices in the Gulf: Saudi Arabia", The Atlantic council of the US, The Middle East institute, the Middle East Policy council, The Stanley Foundation (Washington, n.d)

⁴⁰ N. 11, P. 211-231.

wars took place due to security threats to the territory of Saudi Arabia. Fourthly, both wars resulted in the building of a new world order. The first Gulf War was fought to stop Iraq emerging as a major regional threat to the Saudi dominance in the regime. The Iraq War was fought with the idea of taking control over Iraq, which would give the United States, along with Afghanistan, an opportunity to surround the other major threat, Iran. Fifthly, both the wars were seen as aggressive responses to events preceding them. The first gulf war took place as a result of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait while the Iraq war took place as a result of the deadly September 11 attacks by terrorists on the United States.⁴¹

⁴¹ N. 22,p.8, 10

CHAPTER-5
CONCLUSION

There has been a lot of anger and antagonism between the United States and Saudi Arabia. Both countries have felt the need to restructure their relationship in a far more positive way. They have realized that the events of 9/11 cannot be forgotten, and there is no way to go back to the past. Simultaneously, both countries are identifying a few reasons that should provide the basis for a more positive and vibrant relations between them. Significantly, Saudi Arabia, a monarchy, is in many ways an antithesis of the United States, the world's oldest democracy. Saudi Arabia also enjoys special importance in the international community because of its unique association with the Islamic religion and the abundant presence of a scarce and precious commodity like oil in the region. Studying the relations between the two countries will unlock the different trends in world politics such as the possibility of civilization clashes and the future ownership of oil to name a few. Around the time of the demise of the cold war the gulf war provided some serious challenges to the relations between the two countries. Both the countries faced a common threat from terrorism, both in terms of internal and regional threats. Saudi Arabia was slow to recognize how serious this threat was, but after frequent terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia, it had become clear that it was as real for Saudi Arabia as it was for the United States. It became clear that dealing with terrorism required close cooperation between the two countries, that Saudi Arabia needed American assistance in modernizing many aspects of its internal security operations, and that the United States in turn needed Saudi cooperation in reducing the flow of money to terrorists and for their ability to manipulate Islamic causes. Furthermore, it became clear that political, social, and economic forces were at work as to where this cooperation would head towards.

The most critical development in the relationship, compounding traditional ambivalence came in the wake of the global war on terror that the United States unleashed as a response to 9/11. It made both nations realize the necessity to have clear and flexible perspectives of how to counter the forces of Islamic extremism. Saudi Arabia was still the custodian of Islam's two most important holy places. It was still a symbol of Islam, as well as Arab rule, to many people outside as well as inside Saudi Arabia. If Saudi Arabia shifted its Islamic assistance overseas to support moderate and progressive Islam, it could have a major impact outside its territory. Meanwhile the United States was being pressurized domestically to look at more effective ways to tackle terrorism. There was an outcry for evolving a strategy of using hearts and minds, other than force to win over terror.

Cooperation to develop information campaigns to build understanding, rather than create anger and fear, between both the countries became a necessity. The cycle of US "Saudi bashing" by the Congress and US media, and its mirror image in the form of US bashing by Saudi opinion leaders and media, was becoming largely destructive in character. Both countries realized that constructive criticism was vital to creating mutual understanding on both sides. But exaggerated reporting and biased conspiracy sources was hurting both countries and helping extremists like Bin Laden.

The 9/11 incidents made both nations aware that forces threatening to unleash a "clash of civilizations" had to be negated in an effective manner

This reason went far beyond the immediate tensions between the United States and Saudi Arabia. The success of hate mongering extremists like Bin Laden was ultimately

dependent on provoking a conflict between the West and Islam, and between the United States and nations like Saudi Arabia. There was a strong feeling within the United States that extremism and terrorism could not by themselves either defeat the US or bring down moderate Arab regimes. They could only succeed, however, if they could provoke hatred and bigotry on both sides, and create a “clash of civilizations” that could make effective cooperation impossible.

The Iraq war or the Second Gulf war, as it was called by some analysts, again posed some tricky questions to relations between both the countries. There were many similar and dissimilar trends in relations between the two during both the wars that were fought within a decade of each other. The Gulf war - I was fought with a strategy that required nearly 700,000 troops to be deployed for 48 days to achieve the objective of driving out Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. It also cost a staggering \$80 billion. However the United States, during the Gulf war-II, used a different strategy that saw them occupy Iraq within a time span of 26 days and with a strength of only 250,000 troops. It also cost the United States only \$20 billion. However both wars were directed at the same threat perception; Iraq and Saddam Hussein. The Gulf war - I saw Saudi Arabia provide active support to the United States. The war actually became the bed rock on which the relations, after a period of uncertainty, were strengthened upon. However the second Gulf war saw the United States make a unilateral attack on Iraq that increased Saudi uneasiness and reluctance for providing any support to such aggressive postures. This created uneasiness and tensions in relations between the two countries. Yet, basically both wars were fought by the United States with a necessity to establish a new world order. The Gulf war - I was fought to stop Iraq from becoming a major regional

power and threaten Saudi Arabia's dominance, while the Gulf war – II was fought with an idea to make a regime change in Iraq that was ultimately aimed at forcing changes in Saudi Arabia and at enclosing Iran.

The Gulf war – II made the United States and the world realize the importance of Saudi and Gulf oil, while Saudi Arabia and its neighbours needed to export it. The US Department of Energy estimated that the global economy required Gulf oil production capacity to increase from 22.4 million barrels per day (mbd) in 2001 to as much as 24.5 mbd by 2005, 28.7 mbd by 2010, 33.0 mbd by 2015, 38.96 mbd by 2020, and 45.2 mbd by 2025. Saudi production alone had to increase from 10.2 mbd in 2001 to 23.8 mbd in 2025- an increase of 133 percent. A source estimated that Gulf OPEC states exported an average of 16.9 mbd, or 30 percent of world total of 56.3 mbd in 2002. It has made projections that Gulf OPEC exports would reach 35.8 mbd by 2025; and then reach 37 percent of the world total of 94.6 mbd.¹

Approximately 70-80% of Saudi government revenues came from petroleum exports, and they made up some 90-95% of all Saudi exports. These exports required both security and a level of investment that Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states could no longer sustain without massive direct investment in both Saudi Arabia's petroleum sector and the rest of its economy.

The United States and Saudi Arabia have a common interest in the long-term internal stability of Saudi Arabia. However, both countries realize that this requires more than just countering terrorism. Saudi Arabia's population explosion is having a major impact on its economy. American

¹ The Atlantic council of the United states, The Middle East institute, The Middle East policy council and The Stanley foundation, "U.S challenges and choices in the gulf : Saudi Arabia", policy brief, *acus.org, themiddleeastinstitute.org, mepc.org, emergingfromconflict.org/iran*, January 14 2004.

sources estimate that Saudi Arabia's population has climbed from 6 million in 1970 to 22 million in 2004. Even if birth rates decline significantly in future years, it is expected to rise to 31 million in 2010, 42 million in 2020, and to 55 million by 2030. The number of young Saudis between 15 and 24 years of age will also nearly double from 3.6 million in 2000 to 6.3 million in 2025.² This is a society where the government estimates that unemployment for native Saudi males is already 12%, and many experts privately estimate that real and disguised unemployment is in excess of 20%.

These pressures are so severe that Saudi Arabia is no longer "oil wealthy" in the sense that its present economy can provide for its people. The doubling of Saudi Arabia's population and worldwide cuts in real oil prices have reduced its per capita earnings from petroleum exports from \$24,000 in 1980 to \$2,300 in 2002. Although Saudi Arabia had high oil earnings in 2003, it has faced nearly two decades of major budget and trade deficits, and its government's debt is nearly 100% of its GNP.³ It can, no longer, provide social services, modernize and expand its infrastructure, and diversify its economy without major economic reform and foreign investment. Such reform and investment is critical to Saudi internal stability and this requires American support. This common interest extends to Saudi political reform. The United States wants Saudi Arabia's effort to make political reforms to be evolutionary and not revolutionary. The present mix of leaders in the royal family, Saudi technocrats, Saudi businessmen, and Western-educated Saudi intellectuals are probably as progressive elite as the United States can hope for in a country that is deeply conservative and vulnerable to Islamic extremism. The United States has realized that

² ibid

³ ibid

American pressure for reform, coupled to the support of Saudi reformers working at a Saudi pace, is far superior, to any regime that could arise in a crisis or on some revolutionary basis. Neither the United States nor Saudi Arabia will benefit if Saudi Arabia does not move at its own pace, that quietly encouraging Saudi reformers and reform will generally be far more productive than demands for such change. The wrong kind of American pressure would be deeply counterproductive because it arouses Saudi anger over outside pressure from a different culture and allows Saudi conservatives and extremists to charge that reform comes only as a concession to the United States and not because of an internal need for change.

There is a realization for active cooperation between the two countries to facilitate Saudi social reforms as well. Saudi Arabia has already moved a long way from the social structure it had in the 1950s, but the United States is urging it to make further major social reforms to allow economic growth to take place and maintain its internal security. Social reform, however, is an even more difficult problem for two such different cultures to deal with, and the United States recognizes that Saudi Arabia and many other countries will never evolve social structures that match those of the United States. Multiculturalism, tolerance, and human rights do not mean universal standards in the sense of mirror imaging. The United States is, however, assisting in such reform by pushing for progress in human rights and educational reform, and finding ways to allow Saudis to study in the US and maintain the flow of US educated Saudis that has been so critical to the Kingdom's past modernization. Both countries feel that influence comes, however, through communication and not antagonism.

Both the countries also realize the continuing need for security cooperation. Removing Saddam Hussein may have helped reduce the security risks in the Gulf, but it has scarcely eliminated them. The stability of Iraq is in question. The United States has not left Saudi Arabia in security terms. Saudi Arabia operates more than 750 US made main battle tanks, 4,800 other armored vehicles, and some 200 advanced combat aircraft. US training and support is critical to all of Saudi Arabia's military services and its National Guard. Moreover, Saudi Arabia signed some \$7.7 billion worth of new arms agreements with the US between 1995 and 2002, and the Saudi need for US training and technical support is continue. A military relationship built around American military assistance to Saudi Arabia, coupled to aid in internal security, and efforts to strengthen cooperation in the South Gulf and GCC is evolving now.

Domestically, the United States is being urged to make efforts to change Saudi and Arab perception of being a biased mediator in the Arab-Israeli peace process. Both countries know that if there is ever to be an Arab-Israeli peace settlement, or if the current Israeli-Palestinian War is to be contained, they need to work together as much as possible to push the peace process forward and reduce support for violent extremism on both sides. The United States is being pushed to make an effort to work towards removing biased policies favouring Israel in order to win the confidence of the Saudis and the Arabs

None of these reasons can lead the United States to ease its efforts to encourage Saudi Arabia to conduct a fully effective campaign to fight terrorism. Nor do any of these reasons mean that America will be passive in supporting

Saudi political, economic, and social reform, or that it will not encourage Saudi reformers in ways that do not cause a backlash inside Saudi Arabia over resentment of foreign interference. Similarly the United States is beginning to look hard within to identify those flaws that has made the world at large look at it as an imperialist power.

A critical dialogue between both the sides has begun to reform relations. For Americans, respect for a different Saudi culture in no way means that the United States will not demand Saudi tolerance of other faiths and encourage human rights and educational reform. At the same time, for the Saudis, it also means a necessity for the United States to have a far better understanding of Saudi history and culture, and seeking to develop a dialogue in dealing with Islam.

Both countries realize that the last thing either need is to hand Bin Laden and his inevitable successors a victory, paralyze effective cooperation through continued tension, or pass up the opportunity to create new forms of cooperation where they are so clearly in both nations' interests. Both nations are asking, as they criticize, each other, what is the real alternative to reforging this relationship or is any practical alternative to the present Saudi regime really going to serve the interests of the United States? Is an absence of American support and cooperation really going to help Saudi Arabia? The answer, as both countries realize does not lie in making the problem worse, it lies in serious efforts to reforge the relationship and in doing so on a basis of mutual self interest that will also serve the true interests of the Western and Islamic worlds. The United States and Saudi Arabia are looking to define the relationship as a strategic partnership based on common interests, rather than as a friendship based on common values. The

focus of the partnership will be on common security interests and other tangible issues. An effort is being made to strike a balance between exhorting Saudi authorities to institute political reforms (i.e. to democratize) and making efforts to change the anti American feelings that have engulfed the region. A continuous dialogue on oil price levels and price stability is being maintained. The United States is urging Saudi Arabia to be financially transparent so as to track the activities of social and charitable organizations outside the country and develop, in consultation, a revised policy towards Iraq.

Tracing U.S - Saudi relations to their historical origins has revealed a degree of continuity that has characterized the relationship. This stable community of interests has further been characterized by the relatively independent set of dynamics that has guided each of its four major components – oil, military security, economic and commercial concerns and politics. Generally, both the Saudis and the Americans have attempted to keep these component sets of relations separate, but for most part they have failed. Linkages among them have always existed. In times of crisis, these linkages have tended to become more pronounced, particularly the negative linkages. The so-called oil weapon used by the Saudis against the United States in 1973, for example linked oil and politics. The U.S. congressional debates over the sale of F-15 and AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia linked military cooperation and politics while the Arab oil embargo, U.S. anti boycott tax and trade legislation linked politics and economics

A second characteristic of U.S.-Saudi relations has been the constant under current of ambivalence that has permeated the relationship as a whole and each of its component parts. The difference

between the two countries over the Arab-Israeli problem, the differences inherent in the United States being the world's leading oil consumer and Saudi Arabia being the world's leading oil-exporting country, the predominantly regional focus of Saudi Arabia and the secular political orientation of the United States in contrast to the religious political orientation of Saudi Arabia are but a few of the underlying sources of ambivalence. Perhaps the greatest irony of all is to how two countries with such total cultural disparity have been able to get along for so long as well as they have.

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