



Saudi Arabian Ambassadors to America in Context: The Diplomatic and Geopolitical Lives of Ambassadors Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel Al-Jubeir



HRH Prince Bandar bin Sultan



HRH Prince Turki Al-Faisal



H.E. Adel A. Al-Jubeir

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December 5, 2011

An earlier version of this essay appeared in:

Biographical Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa, Vol. 1 A-K, Vol.2 L-Z (2-vol set), 1E.

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In the rapid succession of dramatic events related to the Arab countries, the Middle East, and the Islamic world, one frequently has reason to wonder what on earth could happen next. Something like this happened this past month. Once it became clear that former Libyan President Muammar Al-Qadhafi had been killed, news references reporting on his death throughout the world added a phrase to his name that no one had ever heard or read before: namely, " ...the late president Qadhafi" Indeed, it is often the nature of a given day's diverse news cycle that dramatic events of only a few days before suddenly become "old news."

But not always.

Such is the bizarre case of one of the last several weeks' hottest news items. For days on end the focus was on an alleged plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Adel Ahmed Al-Jubeir. Once reports of the dire threat hit the news wires, it was as though the international media, and especially its American components, could focus upon little else.

Understandably.

All of a sudden, few remained unaware of the media's extensive references to Mexico's drug cartels, the international reach of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, and the imposition of additional sanctions against specific individuals and institutions associated with the Iranian government. Neither did the media ignore what, if the reports were true, the implications might be for Iranian-U.S. relations or Iran's position and roles within regional and global affairs. Nor did it ignore for long the drawdown of American armed forces from two of Iran's neighbors, namely Afghanistan and Iraq. Instead, in writing about these and related phenomena, large portions of the media failed to provide an account of one of the central figures to the story: the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia himself.

What follows is an unofficial biographical portrait of HE Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir, the Ambassador to the United States of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, arguably one of America's most strategically vital partners. The author, Dr. John Duke Anthony, wrote an earlier biography of Adel Al-Jubeir before HE Al-Jubeir was appointed ambassador. He did so for the *[Biographical Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East & North Africa](#)* in 2007. Centgage Learning, the publisher of that two-volume work, has granted permission to reprint and distribute that version and to bring the essay up to date so as to reflect the numerous, diverse, and far-reaching developments, as well as some of their impacts, that have occurred since then.

Adel A. Al-Jubeir Family and Early Life

Adel Al-Jubeir was born in 1962 in Majma'ah, a village not far from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in the central Arabian area of Najd, to a family involved in diplomacy and government. An uncle, Shaykh Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Jubeir, served as Minister of Justice and became the first head of Saudi Arabia's *Shura* Council (*Majlis al-Shura*), an appointed, consultative body established in 1992. Presently, the Council is comprised of 150 members serving four-year terms with the possibility of being reappointed to a second term.

On six different occasions, the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations has organized and hosted *Shura* Council Members in the nation's capital. In the process, the *Shura* Members addressed Members of the United States Congress, the International Diplomatic Corps, congressional staff, media specialists, corporate representatives, and other foreign affairs practitioners. They did so with a view to explaining the circumstances in which the *Shura* Council was established, the position and roles of its numerous policy-related committees, and through the members' input and comment, the Council's growing impact on the government's proposed policies, positions, actions, and legislation.

Because Al-Jubeir's father was a diplomat, the family traveled frequently throughout Adel's formative years, and lived in, among other places, Germany, Yemen, and Lebanon. In 1977, Adel Al-Jubeir, together with his mother and siblings, had been living in Lebanon while his father served at a diplomatic post in Yemen.

When the family was on vacation in the United States that year, the level of violence escalated exponentially among Lebanese political factions that, since 1975, had been vying for position and influence.

Later that same year, Israeli Defense Forces bombed Beirut in retaliation for attacks by Lebanon-based Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) fighters against sites in northern Israel. Owing to the deteriorating security situation in Lebanon and the limited number of first-class universities in Yemen, the family decided to remain in the United States. A friend helped Adel and an older sister, who had been enrolled at the American University in Beirut, to find places at the University of North Texas in Denton, where Adel enrolled at the age of sixteen.

Formative Education and Training Experiences

Al-Jubeir graduated *summa cum laude* [With Highest Honors] from the University of North Texas in 1982 with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Economics. He went on to earn a Master's Degree in Political Science and International Relations from Georgetown University's Graduate School of Foreign Service in 1984. He entered Saudi Arabia's Diplomatic Corps in 1986 and served as Special



Ambassador Adel A. Al-Jubeir with a young student at a reception for Saudi Arabia National Day 2010.

Assistant to the then-Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States, HRH Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, for the next thirteen years.

Professional biographers and students of leadership in international affairs would arguably find it hard to imagine anyone being as privileged as Princes Bandar and Turki as well as Adel Al-Jubeir were to have the one-of-a-kind learning and diplomatic development opportunity provided them upon their entry into Saudi Arabia's Foreign Service. For the nearly quarter of a century that followed beginning in the mid-1980s, Prince Bandar became in many ways Adel's teacher in the internecine ways of international politics and diplomacy, especially in and around not only the corridors of power and influence in the executive branches of the United States government in Washington, D.C., but also the capitals of the Five Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council, namely, in addition to the United States, China, France, Great Britain and the Soviet Union/Russia. Indeed, in addition to being entrusted with representing the kingdom's interests in the United States, Ambassador Bandar came in time to serve as Dean of the Washington International Diplomatic Corps, the first Arab ever to do so.

The Impact of Gulf Cooperation Council Dynamics

During this same period of the 1980s -- starting on May 28, 1981, to be exact -- Mr. Al-Jubeir witnessed the formation of the six member-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Comprised of Bahrain,



Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, the GCC at its outset was not taken seriously in international geopolitical circles. Many foreign observers thought the GCC was destined to fail like so many other previous ill-fated Arab country attempts to forge mechanisms for effective cooperation. The GCC's critics, however, were soon proved wrong. Indeed, in June 1981, less than three weeks' time after the GCC began, the member-states enacted an Economic Unity Agreement (EUA).

The EUA was designed to serve as a consensual frame of reference by which the members would henceforth seek to coordinate their respective economic development plans. The objective was to strengthen and expand not only their international economic and geopolitical clout. The goal was also to increase their overall influence in regional and world affairs. Although it would eventually take far longer than anticipated, the GCC member-states in time were able to agree on a common external tariff of five per cent, a common market, and a customs union. All three achievements were, and remain, the first of their kind in modern Arab history. Along the way, while the Iran-Iraq war was still being waged, and indeed in large measure because of it, the members also established *Dar al-Jazeera* (Peninsula Shield), the first pan-Arab collective defense force not only in the history of eastern Arabia but in the modern history of the Arab countries, the Middle East, and the Islamic world as a whole.

On innumerable occasions throughout Adel Al-Jubeir's long service to his country, he was provided an extensive and at times intensive exposure to and educational experience in the course of often having to deal directly with the dynamics of America's national legislative and policymaking processes. In their time, too, Princes Bandar and Turki would have the same experience. The context and atmosphere in which much of this occurred could hardly have been more receptive. Neither could the moment have

been more politically propitious. Indeed, to this day, the vast majority of those serving in the Congress in one capacity or another are among the first to admit, albeit in most instances privately, that they have had little to no experience for viewing and understanding firsthand the situation on the ground in Arabia and the Gulf.

In a multi-faceted effort to begin to remedy this situation, Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel Al-Jubeir recognized that they had no choice but to try to cultivate ties with as many relevant Members of Congress, their chiefs of staff, and their defense and foreign policy advisers, together with their communications and legislative affairs directors, as possible. To this end, Ambassadors Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel Al-Jubeir would seek to engage and educate the maximum number of select legislators and their assistants for the purpose of heightening their respective understanding of the Saudi Arabian structure of government and its system of political dynamics.

When and where they could, all three of these Saudi Arabian ambassadors endeavored to enlist the relevant Congressional representatives in an informal educational process. The purpose was to enable the participants to have an empirical educational experience that few if any high-ranking elected or appointed American leaders had had before. Through such an experience it was believed the participants would come to better understand the nature, extent, and foreign policy implications of issues that pertained to Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabian-U.S. relations, and, more broadly, the Arab and Islamic worlds, regarding which they were expected to cast accurate and responsible votes in the Congress.

The value of the extraordinary range of contacts and experience acquired and applied by these three Saudi Arabian ambassadors in the process of their coming to understand the United States and the American people cannot be underestimated. The exceptions notwithstanding, nothing remotely like it has been part of the American and Saudi Arabian -- or arguably other Arab -- diplomatic tool chests either before, then, or subsequently.

Seeing is Believing and So is Experiencing

The value of the extraordinary range of contacts and experience acquired and applied by these three Saudi Arabian ambassadors in the process of their coming to understand the United States and the American people cannot be underestimated. The exceptions notwithstanding, nothing remotely like it has been part of the American and Saudi Arabian -- or arguably other Arab -- diplomatic tool chests either before, then, or subsequently. Moreover, despite the empirically-based knowledge and insight into the United States and the American people acquired by these three and numerous other Saudi Arabian diplomats posted to the kingdom's embassy in Washington, its Consulates-General in Houston, New York, and Los Angeles, and its Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, something else was missing. The exceptions again notwithstanding, no remotely comparable number of American diplomats existed then, as now, as deeply schooled in the language, history, culture, society, and domestic politics as well as foreign relations of Saudi Arabia as there were then and still are Saudi

Arabian diplomats schooled in the language, history, culture, society, and internal politics and foreign relations of the United States.

The Implications of Asymmetrical Knowledge and Understanding

In the United States, if not also elsewhere to the same degree, this last point seldom receives its due. Indeed, in terms of mutual understanding and knowledge as well as of reciprocal respect and tolerance of one another's moral principles, religious beliefs, institutions, and practice, which can often be equated to the bricks and mortar of many a people's culture, consider the implications of the following. *Every second* since 1975, when a new Saudi Arabian Council of Ministers (or Cabinet) was sworn into office, until the present, the number of American-educated PhDs in Saudi Arabia's Cabinet has exceeded the number of American-educated PhDs of any kind and from anywhere in the United States Cabinet, Senate, Supreme Court, and House of Representatives *combined*.

Moreover, using the exact same time period as a frame of reference, the total *lowest* number of Saudi Arabian graduates from American institutions of higher education is, conservatively estimated, to be at least 100,000, if not higher. (Reliable estimates by a longtime highly respected Saudi Arabian Deputy Minister, himself, as well as his half a dozen children who, like him, received their higher education in the United States, place the number at higher than 200,000.) In contrast, with the exception of perhaps as many as 100 American adherents to the Nation of Islam, Muslim graduates from Umm Al-Qura University in Makkah and the Islamic University of Madinah, the number of Americans who have graduated from one of Saudi Arabia's more than a dozen other universities is *zero*. Upon hearing such statistics for the first time, many Americans question their validity, asserting that the reason for the practically non-existent numbers of American alumni of Saudi Arabia's universities surely has to be because admission into the kingdom's universities is prohibited for non-Muslims.

To the contrary, the opposite is the truth. Saudi Arabian university presidents that have met with members of delegations I have escorted to the kingdom have been at pains to assure American academics that non-Muslim students from other countries would indeed be eligible for admission, were they to apply. However, the number that has done so remains very limited. And, until recently following the establishment of King Abdallah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), of those that did apply and were accepted, few remained enrolled beyond a single year.

Among the numerous results stemming from these phenomena, the following is stunning: the number of Saudi Arabians with educational knowledge of American culture, values, and traditions rooted in academic and personal first-hand experience derived from the years they spent in universities in the United States exceeds the American alumni of Saudi Arabian universities by a ratio of as much as *100,000 to one, if not higher*. What is more, the sheer number of well-placed Saudi Arabians with important American contacts and experience acquired in the process of their studying in the United States would serve Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel Al-Jubeir well when it came to be their turn for the Saudi Arabian government to appoint them to the kingdom's top diplomatic post in the United States.

In the years prior to his appointment as ambassador, when he assisted Prince Bandar at the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington, DC, Adel Al-Jubeir played important supportive roles in numerous evolving developments between Saudi Arabia and the United States in addition to other countries.

Among the more important tasks he would undertake during parts of both Prince Bandar's and Prince Turki's ambassadorships to the United States – and in between the two, when Adel was Foreign Affairs Advisor to then-Crown Prince and later King Abdallah -- was a bridging role. In that capacity, and in the vein of his two immediate predecessors as ambassador, he endeavored to do whatever he could to strengthen and expand the elements of trust and confidence in the previous special Riyadh-Washington bilateral relationship.

In the process, one of the more unique and valuable accomplishments that occurred was when Saudi Arabia and the United States reached agreement upon a mechanism they had periodically discussed and

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acknowledged before as of obvious mutual interest and value but, being inadequately funded and understaffed, went unimplemented. Of necessity, however, this time around would be different, underscoring Riyadh's and Washington's respectively heightened statuses as major international players with the power and the influence to affect more numerous, diverse, and challenging issues of a global nature than before. The result left them no option but to meet more frequently and institutionally with a view to confronting jointly a range of common needs, concerns, interests, and objectives.

To these ends, Ambassadors Prince Bandar and Turki, followed by Ambassador Adel Al-Jubeir, helped to ensure that the kingdom's national priorities were adequately reflected and represented, and the United States did likewise. Leaving nothing to chance, the two countries' highest representatives

agreed that the tasks before them would best be administered in the course of a series of year-round and multifaceted bilateral strategic dialogues on issues of importance to their respective citizenries.

Following the Money Trail

As a result, both sides assigned specialists to represent their respective country's specific interests comprising their joint needs and concerns relating to economics, finance, trade and investment, defense, etc. That the two countries' representatives agreed from the outset that the venues for their meetings should rotate each six months between their national capitals was a diplomatic masterstroke. Like nothing else, it helped ensure the building and maintaining of a degree of trust and confidence between their policymaker counterparts that, while not previously lacking, have become more intensive and extensive than ever before.

One of the most reciprocally rewarding results of the dialogues between Riyadh and Washington that began during Prince Bandar's tenure as ambassador and continued throughout Prince Turki's ambassadorship and beyond until the present during the tenure of Ambassador Al-Jubeir was at once novel and logical. The purpose of the dialogues was to address not only the legitimate issues of concern

to their respective populaces, but also to allay and assuage the stated fears of potential foreign investors in both countries' economies. The institution's name and focus: the Saudi Arabia-United States Joint Terrorist Financing Task Force. In this regard, representatives of both countries are on record as stating they know of no other two governments internationally that have consistently cooperated as regularly, intensively, extensively, and effectively on this particular issue. The fruits of this cooperation have been manifested in innumerable foiled terrorist plots made possible by the exchange of information and intelligence that the Task Force made possible.

Unity in Action

During the successive turns of Prince Bandar's, Prince Turki's, and Adel Al-Jubeir's times as Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to the United States, all three, along with many others at the embassy, the country's consulates, its mission to the United Nations and numerous other international institutions as well as the kingdom's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, participated in innumerable regional and global developments. The varied substance of these phenomena – which included but were not limited to matters of war and peace, energy, economics, commerce, trade, investment, defense cooperation, and the reconfiguration of their respective visa systems that had become controversial at both ends of the relationship -- were of a nature as to affect the special bilateral relationship between not only Riyadh and Washington most particularly, but, by extension, relationships between the kingdom and numerous other countries and international organizations as well. In terms of mutual national security interests, few challenges to their governments over the past three decades were more important and multi-faceted than the Iran-Iraq war from September 1980 until Tehran's final acceptance of a ceasefire in August, 1988, more than a year after Iraq's acceptance.

Long before Adel Al-Jubeir was appointed Chief of Mission of the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington, he was witness to extraordinary milestones in three different areas of the special American-Saudi Arabian relationship. For example, in the waning months of the Presidency of Richard M. Nixon in the mid-1970s, then-Saudi Arabian Minister of Finance Muhammad Abukhail signed with then-U.S. Secretary of Treasury William Simon an agreement that established the Saudi Arabia-United States Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation. (In another agreement signed at the same time, but which was much less publicized, the two countries pledged to strengthen and expand the nature and extent of their defense cooperation.)

The "Joint Commission," as it would become known, had a pronounced but largely unstated threefold strategic purpose. First, the commission would in effect allow for the re-circulation of the hundreds of millions of dollars that Saudi Arabia had accrued as a result of the sharp increases in international oil prices that followed in the wake of the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Lost upon many observers since then was that was the last time in which the so-called Arab "oil weapon" or embargo was administered by Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil-producing nations against such countries as the United States, Great



President George W. Bush meets with Saudi Arabian Ambassador Prince Bandar bin Sultan at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, Texas in 2002.

Britain, and the Netherlands that were deemed to have been unfairly and illicitly supportive of Israel's illegal occupation and annexation of Arab lands.

Also lost upon many observers was awareness of the decreasing likelihood that the two countries would soon if ever again engage in actions or reactions that would place the long term strategic and special nature of the bilateral relationship in jeopardy. A major reason was the strategic, financial, geopolitical, and related importance of their respective investments in each other's economy. The sheer volume and value of these investments meant that both would incur immense damage were they to allow the emotions of a given moment on either side of the relationship to provoke actions by one against the other, entailing damage and costs that could not be justified or easily repaired. On America's side, it was not long before the rest of the world was informed that the nature and extent of U.S. investments in Saudi Arabia's economy were second to none worldwide and that the same was true regarding the number and value of American-Saudi Arabian joint commercial ventures.



H.E. Adel A. Al-Jubeir, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United States, and The Hon. James B. Smith (Brigadier General, USAF, Ret.), Ambassador of the United States to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations' 2009 Arab-U.S. Policymakers Conference.

Rank and file Americans from time to time may have had their emotions whipped to fever pitch by this or that sensational media account of some occurrence

pertaining to America's image or interests in the kingdom, or vice versa regarding something a Saudi Arabian did in the United States to which people took exception. However, at the highest levels of the two governments respectively, their leaders are nowadays more fully aware than ever of the innumerable and multifaceted increased interests at stake between their two peoples and economies. So too are they more mindful than before that these interests needed not only to be defended but also, wherever possible, strengthened and expanded.

Uncommon Strategic Wisdom

On the Saudi Arabian side, an appreciation among the country's decision makers in the realms of the kingdom's economic, and financial, and commercial interests have had and continue to have much the same effect. For example, Riyadh remains wedded to the American dollar as the medium of exchange for its international financial transactions. In addition, the lion's share of its banking institutions' financial reserves also remains in dollars.

These two strategic decisions have not been without effect. They have helped ensure the prolongation of the American unit of currency as the preferred medium of international exchange, thereby helping not only to perpetuate the preeminence of the American banking system worldwide. They have also aided in providing additional and ongoing grounds for maintaining the closer economic and commercial relations than might otherwise have been the case.

Moreover, the kingdom's steady purchasing of American debt instruments has helped keep U.S. rates of inflation lower than would likely otherwise have been probable. Doing so has lessened the need to raise

taxes to cover the difference between America's purchases of the kingdom's oil exports to the United States, on one hand, and Saudi Arabia's purchases of American goods and services, on the other. In yet another major material benefit, the kingdom's large purchases of tens of billions of dollars in American-manufactured defense structures and equipment have carried with them employment, production, and other economic benefits to the American aero-space and defense industry. Such purchases have also meant that the per unit costs of the equipment produced have remained lower than would otherwise have been the case, thereby helping to ensure that America's defense sales remain competitive.

From Dependence to Independence to Inter-Dependence

Also lost among many foreign observers was knowledge of the policy implications of the steady and substantial levels of Saudi Arabia investments in the American economy in the aftermath of the war, on one hand, and the increase in the levels of American investments in Saudi Arabia's economy, on the other. Indeed, what the increase in each country's interlocking commitments to the other's infrastructure and related economic and financial interests achieved over time was significant. In effect, it edged the relationship ever closer to the mutually beneficial partnership of earlier years. In so doing, it became increasingly unthinkable among decision makers and policymakers in the executive branches at either end of the bilateral relationship that they would do anything to harm the relationship.

Second, the initiation by Saudi Arabia of a massive industrial and related infrastructure development scheme, in tandem with the kingdom's successive series of Five Year Development Plans, yielded still other bilateral benefits. For example, the increased exports of American goods and services to Saudi Arabia not only furthered the kingdom's ambitious industrial, other economic, and social development schemes. The heightened level of such exports helped greatly to lower the increasingly high cost of American imports of Saudi Arabia's hydrocarbon fuels vital to helping grow the American economy.

Third, the Saudi Arabian government continued to purchase American government Treasury bills, bonds, and other debt instruments. In combination, the kingdom's purchases and deposits helped make possible a range of positive results that most likely would not have otherwise occurred. For example, Saudi Arabia's purchases of U.S. debt obligations helped enable the United States government to finance its growing official deficits. They also helped make it possible for the Department of Defense to pay the salaries of America's armed forces personnel. And they helped not only to cover portions of the retirement pension payouts for school teachers throughout the United States but also the costs of school lunches for needy children.

Yet another milestone in the Riyadh-Washington relationship that Ambassadors Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel Al-Jubeir witnessed, as the evolution of the relationships between Riyadh and Washington continued apace, had to do with matters pertaining to America's and Saudi Arabia's national security and related interests and was twofold. The earlier of the two milestones occurred in the 1970s. The second took place in the early 1980s. The first was synonymous with Saudi Arabia's and the United States governments and private sectors achieving breakthroughs regarding their respective national interests. The breakthroughs were the more important and unprecedented for the fact that they occurred over the opposition of numerous Members of the United States Congress, much of the American mainstream media, the Embassy of Israel, and the latter's legions of American lobbyists, agents, supporters, and sympathizers throughout the United States.

At issue in the first instance was Saudi Arabia's quest to purchase American-manufactured F-15 fighter aircraft. In the kingdom's favor was that buying such modern advanced state-of-the-art fighter aircraft would enhance the safety of the kingdom's citizenry in the event that they should be attacked by the armed forces of a hostile country. In constructing this narrative in support of the purchases, it was not as though Riyadh's defense strategists were concocting threats. Such threats existed. Indeed, after the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War ended, as separate American and British assessments of the kingdom's longer term defense needs concurred, the most dangerous potential threats came from the north, as represented by then-Arab socialist, revolutionary, and Ba'thist Iraq, and from the south in the form of an anomaly in Arab and Islamic history that has never existed before or since -- the then-revolutionary Marxist-Leninist People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.



An F-15 Eagle aircraft of the Royal Saudi Air Force takes off during Operation Desert Shield.

That the Soviet Union had the premier foreign defense and geopolitical relationship with these two countries at the opposite north-south geographic ends of Saudi Arabia was hardly comforting. From the perspective of Riyadh, Moscow's relationships with these two countries constituted a potential pincer movement against which the kingdom was at the time ill-prepared to resist and defeat. The effect served to accentuate the kingdom's less than credible ability to deter, let alone defend against, the possibility of an armed attack coming from either direction or worse, from both directions simultaneously.

An Unwelcomed Intruder

Left unstated and ignored in most American media accounts of the clash between American and Israeli interests and foreign policy objectives in this matter was a related issue. Indeed, it was that many thought what ought to be considered as seriously as any of the issues in play was something else. This was how the outcome of Riyadh's quest to purchase U.S.-manufactured defense technologies and systems in order to protect Saudi Arabia's, America's, and other partner countries' assets and interests in Arabia and the Gulf might affect not Saudi Arabia or the United States but Israel.

Those who engaged in the heated debates that ensued took issue with Saudi Arabia's and the United States' stated reasons for why the kingdom needed to be allowed to purchase the aircraft. However, the number of people they persuaded, especially among the U.S. government specialists working on the issue, was relatively few. Neither was anyone prepared to quarrel with the implications of the following: that defense equipment, defense systems, and ammunition not in place have never deterred anyone. Indeed, practically everyone in favor of the sale agreed that, with the advanced defensive aircraft in place, the kingdom's prodigious oil fields and reserves, along with the thousands of American and other countries' citizens then-living and working in Saudi Arabia, would be considerably more secure than otherwise.

Seeing that the mere American pro-Israeli and anti-Arab opposition to the arms sale was likely to be ineffective, the opponents of the sale decided to pursue an entirely different line of reasoning, much of it specious. Members of Congress, their staff, innumerable paid media advertisements, and television talk

show pundits who had never been to the kingdom stood logic and common sense -- and by extension the lives, livelihoods, and material well being of tens of thousands of Americans and Saudi Arabian Arabs and their families -- on their head. They argued that whether the arms sale should be approved or disapproved ought not to be determined on the basis of America's or Saudi Arabia's interests. Rather, they reasoned, the decision should be weighed and judged instead on the basis of Israel's interests. More specifically, the argument against the sale implied that were it to be approved by the Congress, the result risked significantly eroding Israel's American-guaranteed qualitative military edge over any possible combination of Arab armed forces arrayed against it.

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In the end, the American and Saudi Arabian governments prevailed over the sales' opponents. That they did so, however, was not without exceptionally heavy political and economic costs. These took the form of, on one hand, the American executive branch having to promise Israel that it would soon be granted favorable consideration for obtaining the next most-state-of-the-art U.S.-manufactured weaponry and/or defense system deemed available for export.

On the other hand, and far less publicized, was the number of additional post offices, bridge repairs, and other federal expenditures that the White House felt it had no choice but to promise individual Members of Congress in order to win their pledge to vote in favor of the arms sale package. An upshot of this extended test of wills between interests serving the perceived needs of another country, versus the actual needs of the United States and Saudi Arabia,

then as now one of its most vital international partners, was instructive. For Princes Bandar, Turki, Adel Al-Jubeir, and countless others, it was a lesson in applied Machiavellian politics the likes of which few other Arab ambassadors to the United States or any other country have ever experienced.

The second of the two defense-related milestones in the defense relationship between Riyadh and Washington occurred close on the heels of the first one. At issue this time was Saudi Arabia's wish to purchase a special American-manufactured aircraft equipped with an integrated advance warning command, communications, and control systems (AWACS). From early April until the first week of October 1981, a metaphorical Arab-U.S.-Israeli red-hot do-not-cross-political line that neither country had experienced since the partition of Palestine in 1947 was drawn in the sand.

On one side were, again, Israelis and their American supporters. On the other side were, also again, senior corporate executives in the American aerospace and defense industries, together with the executive branch of the United States government led by then-President Ronald Reagan. At issue was the adamant determination of Israelis and their American supporters to prevent the U.S. government supporters from allowing the American defense and aerospace industry to sell such technologically advanced defensive aircraft to Saudi Arabia.



The E-3 Sentry AWACS aircraft is used by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, NATO, and Saudi Arabia.

From beginning to end, the essence of this legislative battle between Israelis and Americans was less about the alleged threat that such a sale of defensive equipment would arguably pose to Israel's qualitative edge over the combined militaries of the entire Arab world. Indeed, the White House and the U.S. Defense Department had gone out of their way to assuage the pro-Israeli camps' stated concerns in this regard. In addition, American defense specialists practically assured Israeli military leaders in advance that the sale would in no way occur if Israel's national sovereignty, political independence, or territorial integrity would be at risk or impaired as a result. To drive this point home, the White House and the U.S. Department of Defense were even prepared to further the gap between Israel's and the Arab world's combined military

capacities by gifting Israel additional advanced weaponry that, up until that time, the United States had offered no other country.

Deceit Run Amok

The real, albeit unspoken, Israeli concern regarding this particular arms sale lay elsewhere. It was rooted in the pro-Israeli perceived need to deceive America's body public and private sectors as to Israel's true intentions. The essence of Israelis' and their American advocates' apprehension this time around, however, would prove different than on the previous occasion involving the sale of the F-15s.

The argument of the pro-Israeli lobby groups in the United States against Saudi Arabia acquiring such advanced American defense equipment was clear and straightforward. It was that, in the course of implementing such a sale, the significantly heightened joint American and Saudi Arabian training in strategic and tactical doctrine that would surely follow as a result would represent a setback to Israeli interests. How so?

Pro-Israeli analysts opposed to the sale argued that it would be the inevitable result of the American teachers and trainers revealing much about Israel's defense strategies in the process. To be sure, this was a field of knowledge Israel's military leaders preferred be shared only with their closest American counterparts. It was not something that, under any circumstances, they wished to be known by the representatives of a country that was not engaged in a peace treaty with Israel.

The Real Fear: Improved Saudi Arabian-U.S. Relations

A related Israeli concern was equally clear and straightforward. It was what else would likely happen in the course of the joint American-Saudi Arabian military education and training, field exercises, and air maneuvers that would likely follow this particular sale. The "something else" that would almost certainly transpire as a direct result of an arms transfer of this nature and magnitude was what, ever since the beginning of the Jewish state, many Israeli defense strategists hoped would never occur. This was that large numbers of representatives within the American and Saudi Arabian defense

establishments would increasingly come to know and trust one another to a far greater extent than at any previous point in history.

The Israeli fear, although grounded deeply in paranoia, was not entirely groundless. It was based on the view that, in time, the act of American and Saudi Arabian troops cooperating and/or fighting side by side in an international conflict or serving jointly in a humanitarian crisis in which their respective armed forces were mobilized and deployed, would, sooner or later, likely achieve one or more successes -- not separately, but, horror of horrors from an Israeli national security perspective, *together*.

Such a development, Israel's more ardent advocates argued, had to be resisted at all costs. This line of thinking reflected the rather crude and politically incorrect line of reasoning that numerous Israelis had voiced in private over the years: America can have as many mistresses in the Middle East as it wants, but it can be allowed but one bride: Israel.

Failure to defeat this particular Saudi Arabia-U.S. arms sale, so pro-Israel opponents of the sale reasoned, would not be cost-free. It would risk vitiating the American cinema- and literature cum media-generated traditional portrayals of Westerners and Arabs as "we versus them," as "those people," and as "others." Beginning in the 1930s and continuing until the present day, such negative American stereotyping had for decades characterized the dehumanized descriptions in the more than 400 Hollywood-produced films depicting Arabs and Muslims.

The concept and prospects, let alone the reality, of the two countries' armed forces sharing sensitive secrets, exchanging intelligence analyses, participating in joint field exercises, and eventually doing something of positive consequence and, heaven forbid, successfully "together," was not frivolous. In its reality lay an unspoken but nonetheless Israeli-perceived need for a real and present bogeyman. To this end, numerous Israelis and many of America's more ardent supporters of Israel for the past twenty years since the end of the Cold War have welcomed the replacement of "Communism" with "Islamofascism" and "Arabophobia." At the core of many an Israeli and American and other pro-Israeli strategist's fears was that the bogeyman in this particular instance embodied what die-hard Israeli extremists and their American agents and fellow travelers were determined must never be allowed to occur: a degree of American and Saudi Arabian military sense of "togetherness," of "us-ness," of "we-ness" -- of "us."

Fast Forward

Although it was not always clear that the Saudi Arabian-United States special relationship would survive the eight-year Iran-Iraq war intact, this is indeed what happened. So, too, would the American-enhanced deterrence and defense capacities of Saudi Arabia serve the interests of both countries against those elements within the post-Shah revolutionary government in Tehran that were determined to overthrow the government in Riyadh. In response to the perceived threats that the revolutionary government in



Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld (left) escorts Prince Bandar Bin Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz (right), the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United States, through an honor cordon and into the Pentagon for a meeting on Feb. 5, 2001.

Tehran posed to Saudi Arabia throughout the 1980s and continuing to the present, much has been noteworthy.

Particularly remarkable has been the degree to which the American aerospace and defense community, the U.S. White House, Defense, Department of State, along with the National Security Council and the Departments of Commerce, Energy, and Treasury, have all been more or less in agreement that Saudi Arabia has been, is now, and is likely to remain a strong strategic partner to the United States.

Along the way were three historical markers. Each underscored the solidity of the relationships between Washington officialdom and its counterparts in Riyadh, inclusive of the kingdom's chiefs of mission in the United States, namely Ambassadors Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel-Al-Jubeir. Three of the markers were embedded in the defense cooperation component of the Saudi Arabia-United States relationship.

The first marker was designed as a means of deterring Iranian attacks on Arab and Arab-allied interests. For the first time in history, the American flag flew above oil tankers and other naval vessels sailing to and from Kuwait. The so-called “re-flagging campaign,” when first proposed in the autumn of 1986, became immediately contentious in the United States Congress. Numerous Congressional leaders argued against the measure. Their grounds for doing so were that such an action would *ipso facto* entail the United States entering into a war zone without an authorizing Congressional Act of War as required by the American Constitution.

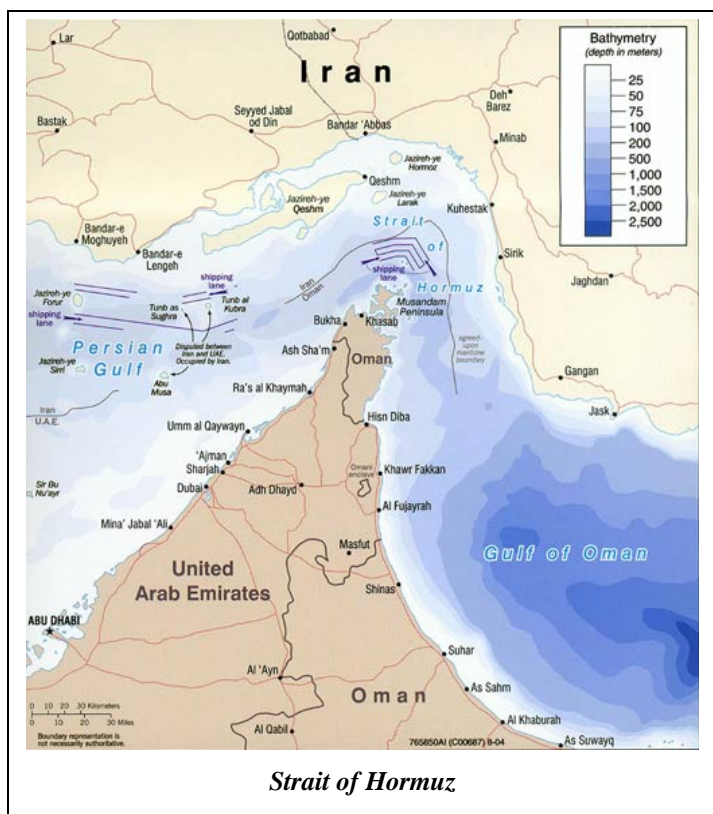
Not surprisingly, months of heated opposition to the proposal followed. During this period, Prince Turki, in his capacity as head of Saudi Arabian foreign intelligence long before he became the kingdom’s Ambassador to the United States, worked in close association with his counterparts among the UN Security Council’s Five Permanent Members (China, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States). He did so with a view to persuading them not to prevent the re-flagging proposal from going forward. Simultaneously, Prince Bandar, Adel Al-Jubeir, and others at the Embassy of Saudi Arabia, teamed to find ways to enable the most influential senators of the American national legislative chamber to visit the region to see for themselves why such a self-defense mechanism was needed.

The purpose was twofold. First, it was to allow the Senators or their designates to experience at close range how the Iran-Iraq conflict's prolongation threatened not only Saudi Arabian and United States national security and related interests. It was also to familiarize them with the threats that the war’s perpetuation posed to the interests of all five of the other Gulf Cooperation Council countries' peoples, the countries that imported energy resources from the region, and the Americans and others who lived and worked among them.



Second, the purpose was to prove to these constituencies what no stateside briefing, lecture, book, or video could demonstrate: how the perpetuation of the war threatened the entire Gulf region and, with it, the prospects for future world economic growth. The reflagging proposal's numerous American critics' judgments notwithstanding, the initiative was effective. It succeeded in gaining Congressional ascent for hoisting the United States flag atop vessels going to and coming Kuwait.

In so doing, the measure ensured, for the remainder of the conflict, the free and safe naval passage of all vessels not only sailing the length of the Gulf. More especially, it guaranteed the transit into and out of the globally vital Hormuz Strait, through which, then as now, passed daily a fifth of the world's internationally-traded hydrocarbon fuels, the lifeblood of the world's industrial economies and global material well being.



The effectiveness of the American-Kuwaiti reflagging campaign was but one among other successes of global strategic importance that occurred during Ambassadors Prince Bandar's and Prince Turki's as well as Adel Al-Jubeir's respective turns in representing their country's interests within the kingdom, in the United States and elsewhere. Additional successes occurred as America, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and many among the two dozen other countries comprising the internationally concerted action teamed to help bring the Iran-Iraq war to a close. Further, Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel Al-Jubeir, plus GCC Secretary General Abdalla Bishara, other GCC Secretariat representatives, and additional GCC countries' diplomats, working in close association with many of the same countries

that helped to end the conflict between Baghdad and Tehran, worked assiduously to achieve three other strategic victories.

Additional Strategic Achievements

For most of the countries involved, the first of these successes was unprecedented. It was a diplomatic feat the likes of which had not occurred since the Korean War. In UN Security Council Resolution 598 of July 1987, all fifteen Council members' representatives voted unanimously to demand that Iran and Iraq immediately accept a ceasefire. Also included in the Resolution, in Article Six, was an additional demand. It had to do with the establishment of an independent international tribunal once the ceasefire took effect.

This particular part of the Resolution, like all the other components, was rooted on solid ground. It reflected some of the more laudatory legal precepts, cultural mores, moral principles, and ethical notions of elementary justice enshrined in the United Nations Charter, international law, and the norms of

interstate behavior. The purpose would be to determine in an international court of law in Geneva, Switzerland, which of the two countries was the more responsible for the war's onset.

With a view to legally obtaining justice and effective closure on one of the 20th century's longest wars, Article Six could hardly have been clearer or more straightforward. For Iraq's part, its certainty that the tribunal's judges would decide in Baghdad's favor and against Iran is one of the main reasons it accepted the resolution within twenty-four hours of its passage. In contrast, Iran took thirteen months before then-Iranian Grand Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini, said he would have rather drunk poison, accepted the Resolution, thereby bringing the conflict to a close.



In the eyes of many Iraqis, their view that Iran, and not Iraq, bore by far the greater blame not only for the war's commencement but also for its lengthy prolongation, remained in place as their firm conviction. Indeed, the Iraqis became quickly convinced that, the opposite view of their critics notwithstanding, their position was vindicated when, in the process of implementing Article Six of the UN Security Council Resolution, their representatives arrived to Geneva to attend the tribunal's first meeting. What they could not then have known, however, was that this would be the only meeting of the tribunal to date. Whereas the

Iraqi delegation remained present and dedicated to participating in the proceedings and seeing the process through to its conclusion, the Iranian delegation, in marked contrast, left abruptly and, to this day, has never returned.

The second success also related to Iran. However, it was of a different nature. As before, the same combination of diplomatic finesse and strategic oneness of view was on display. Saudi Arabia and its fellow GCC member-countries, together with their largely Western Great Power associates, prevented the Iranian Revolution from spreading to the GCC countries. Underscoring the nature and importance of this success was that, not long after Iran ousted its short-lived Pahlavi Dynasty, the new regime's revolutionary leaders turned their sights on Saudi Arabia's government and its fellow dynasties that spanned the length of eastern Arabia. However, albeit not for lack of trying, over-throwing the six GCC Arab ruling families would then, as now, prove to be far more complex and elusive.

The substance of the third success was as momentous as the first two, if not more so. Saudi Arabia, the United States, Pakistan, and Iran, among others, cooperated with indigenous Afghan and foreign freedom fighters' efforts to defeat the Soviet Red Army in Afghanistan. In so doing, they metaphorically drove the final nail into the coffin of the Cold War and its anti-Western Communist bulwarks: the then-government of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Bloc's Central and Eastern European countries.

Out-of-Arabia Lessons of Leadership

But the number and kinds of strategic successes that Princes Bandar and Turki as well as Adel Al-Jubeir -- each in their own time and way -- helped to make possible were not limited to the geographical confines of Arabia and the Gulf. Nor were their efforts focused solely on the extended armed conflict between Iran and Iraq then being waged literally on their collective doorsteps. Rather, two other major challenges to Saudi Arabia's leadership credentials were simultaneously being hammered out elsewhere -- in the eastern Mediterranean.

The first had to do with Lebanon. In 1975, Lebanon erupted into a civil war that would last 13 years. Before it was over, it would claim the lives of 150,000 Lebanese citizens and Palestinians, exceeding by a substantial measure the 17,000 of both peoples, most of whom were unarmed civilian men, women, and children, killed by the Israeli Defense Force in its two separate attacks against the country in 1978 and 1982.

Israel's invasion and occupation of South Lebanon, which co-existed with the Lebanese civil war, lasted nineteen years. During that time, Israel vastly expanded the number of its illegal settlements on Occupied Palestinian land in Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank. Simultaneously, it continued to illegally destroy or exploit Palestinian as well as occupied Syrian natural resources such as water, vineyards, and orchards. From one year to the next, as the war dragged on, numerous foreigners, Saudi Arabians and Americans among them, were either assassinated or taken hostage by Lebanese militias that, in effect, were wholly-owned subsidiaries of Revolutionary Iran. The result was that Saudi Arabian, U.S., Palestinian, Lebanese, and other countries' citizens were either killed or held in captivity for extensive periods of time.

The 1988 Taif, Saudi Arabia Accord

But for Saudi Arabia's diplomatic mediation among the surviving legislators of Lebanon's last elected parliament, whose members were invited to Taif, Saudi Arabia in 1988, no telling how many more Lebanese leaders and ordinary citizens would have died or been wounded from internecine fighting among the eastern Mediterranean country's various sectarian factions then vying for power. The upshot of the Taif meetings was the 1988 Taif Accord.



Nearly a quarter of a century later, Saudi Arabia and its Algerian and Kuwaiti co-mediators could look back on a substantial diplomatic resolution of what had long been one of the most contentious intra-Arab political disputes. Against what many at the outset believed were poor prospects for success, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Kuwait persuaded Lebanon's legislators to reconfigure the distribution of power in their country's legislative body. This, indeed, is what occurred: Lebanon's Shi'a Muslims won the right to increase their numerical representation in the country's parliament vis-a-vis the parliament's Christian and Sunni delegates.

The second major challenge to the kingdom's leadership credibility in the 1980s beyond the Iran-Iraq war, like the conflict in Lebanon, was situated outside Arabia and the Gulf. Involved was the political and humanitarian plight of the more than a million Palestinian Arab Christians and Muslims under Israeli armed occupation. In September 1982, and again in September 1983, Saudi Arabia's then-King Fahd had proposed what was originally known as the Fahd Peace Plan and, later, the Arab Peace Plan. The Plan was unanimously endorsed by the designated representatives of virtually all the 22 Arab countries at meetings in Fes, Morocco.

The momentous and unprecedented action and impact of Saudi Arabia's king proposing -- and all the League of Arab States' members acknowledging and endorsing every Middle Eastern country's right to exist and live in peace and security -- initially seemed lost upon the leadership of Israel and many of its American and other supporters. For most others, however, it was clear that, in terms of political symbolism as well as historical fact, the statement served notice that, with Saudi Arabia's government in the lead, the Arab quest to bring about a just, enduring, and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict was still alive and genuine.

Although the Plan was well-received by the then-Reagan Administration, it was practically ignored by the Israeli government. Especially nonplussed and non-committal were Israeli leaders that Riyadh and Washington officialdom had hoped would agree to a moratorium on the further building, in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, signed by Israel and the United States, of illegal Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian territories. Viewed in the rear view mirror, Israel's rejection in the early 1980s of a Saudi Arabian and broader pan-Arab initiative for peace and the normalization of relations between the 22 Arab countries and Israel was hardly cost-free.

Indeed, among the consequences of Israel's anti-peace stance were a repeat performance in the form of two separate and intensive Palestinian Intifadas (one beginning in December 1987 and the other in September 2000) -- efforts at shaking off the ongoing denial of freedom to the Palestinian and Syrian peoples whose lands Israel continues to occupy, expropriate, and exploit illegally. Also following the Israeli government's defiance of the UN Charter, international laws, and specific UN Security Council Resolutions it has accepted, have been and remain, in the absence of a peaceful settlement, the ongoing loss of countless Arab Christian and Muslim as well as Israeli lives. Lost, too, would be the untold numbers of people on both sides maimed for life, and the dilution, from expenditures that have continuously facilitated the prolongation of this tragic conflict, of the moneys in numerous American, Israeli, and Arab treasuries for which arguably better and more humane uses could all along have readily been found.

Continuous Trials by Fires and Smoldering Embers

Throughout their lengthy but still formative diplomatic services, Princes Bandar and Turki and Adel Al-Jubeir, among others before them, continued to expand their knowledge and understanding of Great Power as well as regional and sub-regional geopolitics. Even so, little could any of the three or others have known with any degree of certainty at the time what lay nearer to hand than they might have imagined. Neither could they have known that, notwithstanding the respite from the regional conflagrations, civil war, and foreign military occupations of Arab lands that transpired in the late 1970s and 1980s, the decreases in the causative factors behind various conflicts would, disappointedly, be so partial and incomplete, leaving portions of the disputes that went unresolved likely to re-erupt sooner rather than later.

Some examples follow. Egypt, for instance, did not regain full national sovereignty over the Sinai Peninsula that Israel had wrested from it in the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Syria would not regain its sovereign rights to the entirety of its Golan Province, the country's richest in terms of natural resources, that Israel had not only seized during that war but later proceeded to annex, permit thousands of Israelis to occupy it, and continue to illegally exploit and refuse to compensate Syria for the theft of its land and water resources.

Lebanon would not regain full control over its southernmost territories that Israel's armed forces had invaded and occupied until many years later than expected. Nor would Palestinians living under Israeli armed occupation of their lands receive anywhere near the freedom they were led by Israelis and Americans to believe they would obtain from the various American-Spanish-and Norwegian-brokered diplomatic meetings between Israelis, Palestinians, and Syrians that were referred to as peace conferences, but from which peace, let alone a measure of elementary justice and respect for human dignity, proved almost as elusive as ever.

Nor could Princes Bandar and Turki and Ambassador Al-Jubeir have guessed that hardly had the Iran-Iraq war ended in August 1988 than Iraq, still led by the same Saddam Hussein that Saudi Arabia, the other GCC countries, the United States, and much of the rest of the world had backed for the better part of a decade during Iraq's war against Iran, would do the unexpected as far as non-Iraqis were concerned. Against most but not all scenarios to the contrary, Iraq proceeded to smash to smithereens the de facto Arab regional system of geopolitical order that had lasted since conclusion of the Camp David Peace Accord of 1979 between Egypt and Israel. That order and the delicate balance of power it reflected, fragile but relatively stable and effective as it was, came to an end literally with a bang when, on August 2, 1990, Baghdad invaded and occupied Kuwait.

Reality's Rapid Reckoning

Reality's reckoning was not slow in coming. Prince Bandar, Saudi Arabian Foreign Intelligence Service Director Prince Turki, Adel Al-Jubeir, and the entire Embassy of Saudi Arabia's team, together with leaders of the United States and other international powers, found themselves immediately in a strategic dilemma not of their choosing,

given their commitment to the maintenance of the governmental status quo in the Gulf. The implications of the policies, positions, attitudes, and actions they would perform have to take were at once obvious and ominous, for they found themselves face to face with a challenge the likes of which none had ever experienced either singly or jointly.

The scenario that followed was one for which no country was known to have previously war-gamed in terms of their knowing or having any inkling of what had just happened or what they should do as a result. Indeed, within a few months, with a view to reversing Iraq's aggression, there would be a monumental projection of power the likes of which the world had not seen since World War Two. In



rapid succession, what followed was an extensive and historically unprecedented mobilization and deployment of more than half a million largely Western and American-composed and -led armed forces.

Joining them were the militaries of a dozen Arab countries and units from South Asian, Southeast Asian, African, and even Latin American countries' armed forces, all united in their determination to do



*US Navy F-14A Tomcat in flight
over burning Kuwaiti oil wells
during Operation Desert Storm*

whatever would be necessary to ensuring the restoration of Kuwait's freedom and security. Determining how best to effectively administer and facilitate the movement, accommodations, and feeding of hundreds of thousands of men and women to achieve the objective boggled the imagination.

Compounding the sheer feat of endeavoring to do so was the simultaneous need to coordinate the materiel of numerous nationalities, and languages together with the vast differences in armed forces uniforms, myriad insignias denoting different countries' military systems of rank and hierarchy, as well as command, control, communications, control, and protocol.

From where Adel Al-Jubeir was positioned, not least among the innumerable challenges facing the allied forces committed to confining Iraq's blitzkrieg to Kuwait and preventing it from spilling over into Saudi

Arabia, was one that could hardly be more obvious. It was the need to blunt the extraordinary, effective, professional, and pervasive propaganda -- much of it specious -- unleashed by Saddam Hussein's regime. Connived, contrived, and practiced in varying degrees over a period lasting from the 1930s, Iraq's messages were clear, straightforward, and, for a time, remarkably persuasive.

Iraqi Subterfuge

Unrevealed until later was that Baghdad, in addition to developing a case for its quest to absorb Kuwait in its entirety, had for years administered an effective but unpublicized geopolitical campaign that served Iraq's interests vis-à-vis Kuwait -- its smaller, less populous, and militarily far weaker southern Arab neighbor -- but, arguably, no one else. The purpose: to suborn vast numbers of media producers, editors, correspondents, commentators, and politically savvy diplomats in Arab countries who were covertly friendly if not overtly aligned with Iraq and its territorial claims against Kuwait. The gist of the Ba'athist Iraqi media's multi-pronged line of attack was that Iraq's territorial, financial, and political grievances against Kuwait were longstanding, legitimate, and of a nature that hardly warranted the international mobilization of armed forces arrayed against it.

Countering Saddam Hussein

Saudi Arabia and its fellow GCC member countries were caught off-guard and initially hard-pressed to counter the official Iraqi line. Yet counter it they did. In so doing, among practitioners and representatives within the kingdom's diplomatic, intelligence, and information establishments, few were

as indefatigably engaged as Saudi Arabia's Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, and Adel Al-Jubeir in projecting a convincing counter-view of Saddam Hussein's policies, positions, actions, and attitudes regarding the Iraq-Kuwait conflict.

Most of Prince Bandar's, Prince Turki's, and Adel Al-Jubeir's means of rebutting Iraq's case were traditional and predictable. In the main, they consisted of innumerable press conferences, visits to Congressional offices, and live and widely-viewed interviews with prominent international media outlets. Among the most effective means that Adel employed, alongside Prince Bandar's role in Washington and Prince Turki's role in Riyadh, was his helping choreograph the media's coverage of the conflict from a rapidly assembled international information center in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province.

American and Other Foreign Exposures to Arabia

Exact figures of how many foreign media representatives came to the kingdom to report what was happening on the ground inside Saudi Arabia are hard to come by. However, it is generally acknowledged that several thousand print and broadcast journalists as well as other media representatives throughout the world, and the United States in particular, traveled to Saudi Arabia during this period, most for the first time. Once there, they were received and briefed in numerous instances not only by Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister HRH Prince Sa'ud Al-Faisal, and Adel Al-Jubeir, but also by Supreme Commander of the Allied Arab Armed Forces HRH Prince Khaled bin Sultan. Also providing briefings to select media representatives were U.S. Central Command Commanding General Norman Schwartzkopf, U.S. Air Commander Charles ("Chuck") Horner, U.S. Army Commander General John Yeosock, and other officials in Saudi Arabia's Ministries of Defense and Information and individual American armed forces commands.

Learning by Doing

In this way, the world learned much about the dynamics of the encampment of more than half a million, largely Western, Saudi Arabian, and other Arab and Islamic armed forces in Saudi Arabia and the placements of smaller numbers of allied military personnel in all the other GCC countries. Their mission in Saudi Arabia in particular was not only to prevent the Iraqi invasion from spreading to the kingdom and/or possibly elsewhere in the immediate region. It was also to do whatever else was necessary, if need be in association with their counties' strategic partners, to protect the GCC experiment, the member-countries' vital infrastructure, and defend the interests of the GCC's citizenry whilst, with the help of others, doing whatever they could to assist in helping to reverse Iraq's aggression.



U.S. Secretary of Defense William J. Perry (center) emphasizes a point as he answers questions about the terrorist bombing at the Khobar Towers complex at a press conference in June 1996. Flanking Perry are Saudi Arabian Prince Bandar Bin Sultan (left) and Gen. J.H. Binford Peay III (right), U.S. Army, Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command.

But Prince Bandar, Prince Turki, Adel Al-Jubeir's and numerous other high-ranking Saudi Arabian defense, diplomatic, media, and other public and private sector representatives were not to be mistaken for comprising a unique and an extraordinarily close-knit, intelligent, and competent threesome. Neither could it be said that their respective individual and concerted efforts to roll back Iraq's threats to Kuwait's, Saudi Arabia's and their GCC fellow members' security, stability, and prospects for peace and prosperity occurred within a vacuum.

To the contrary, in 1999, with two decades of first-hand education and empirical experience of public diplomacy and the skills gained from holding forth at innumerable press conferences and public interviews behind him, Adel Al-Jubeir was appointed director of the Saudi Arabian Information Office in Washington, D.C. In that position, he would gain still further, valuable, on-the-job training. This would occur naturally in the course of his liaising with the representatives of almost all of America's mainstream satellite television, newspaper, radio, and other media networks as well as members and

select staff of the United States Congress. Shortly thereafter, Adel was appointed Foreign Affairs Adviser to then-Saudi Arabian Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister, and National Guard Commander HRH Prince 'Abdullah bin 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa`ud, half-brother to then-King Fahd bin 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa`ud.

After King Fahd suffered a stroke in November 1995, Prince 'Abdullah served as *de facto* head of the Saudi Arabian government until the passing of King Fahd in August 2005, when then-Crown Prince, Heir Apparent, and Saudi Arabian National Guard Commander-in-Chief Abdullah succeeded him as Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques.

Having won King 'Abdullah's confidence, Al-Jubeir proceeded to play a progressively effective role in representing and defending the kingdom's foreign

policies to visiting delegations of foreign leaders as well as media representatives from largely Western countries. In the process, Al-Jubeir, to an even greater extent than before, would become increasingly well known to and admired and respected by the Western leaders, and Americans in particular, primarily through his public diplomacy, public relations, and public affairs activities. For example, he frequently appeared on American talk shows and interview programs, explaining and defending Saudi Arabia's policies and actions.

Globalizing the Kingdom's Commerce

Not least among other impressive and far-reaching developments occurring during Adel Al-Jubeir's long and steady rise in his country's circles of foreign affairs practitioners was the culmination of his and his predecessors' efforts in support of the kingdom's successful entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO). None among the country's leaders could possibly have imagined that the process of becoming a full-fledged member of the world's most powerful trade organization would be automatic or pro forma. Nor could they have envisioned that the process would be devoid of a diverse range of legal, technical,



(Right to Left) King 'Abdullah bin 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa`ud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and Adel Al-Jubeir meet with the President of Zambia

and bureaucratic difficulties the likes of which Saudi Arabia had never previously had to surmount in joining any of the other international organizations to which it belonged, often as a founding member.

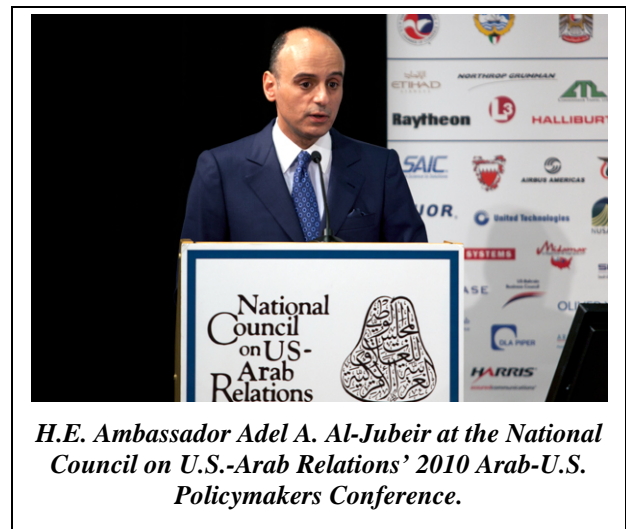
Indeed, the road to the kingdom's entry into the WTO was far more arduous and lengthier than even the most ardent among the critics or proponents of its admission had wagered would be the case. When all was said and done, the entry process amounted to an extraordinary twelve-year due diligence affair. Indeed, the process entailed the Saudi Arabian government's passage of 42 new laws, rules, and regulations in order to be recognized as being in conformity with the rulebook of the world's most important international trade organization tasked with guiding the dynamics of inter-state trade, investment, and commercial as well as financial transactions.

September 11, 2011 and its Aftermath

In the past decade, to an extent far surpassing his earlier roles, Adel Al-Jubeir's serving as a major public window on Saudi Arabia's positions and roles in international affairs arguably exceeded that of any other Arab or Muslim world information officer or diplomat posted to Washington. His role in this regard became critically important after the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States in which it was revealed that fifteen of the nineteen Arabs that hijacked four American airliners were Saudi Arabian citizens. The U.S. political response to these attacks was at once emotional and political, prompting many to examine the merits of the overall relationship between Riyadh and Washington.

What followed was not pretty. Like nothing previous in the history of Saudi Arabia-U.S. relations, a pervasive American national media blitz relentlessly attacked the kingdom's culture, religion, foreign policies, and system of governance. It also questioned the wisdom of the United States continuing to view and relate to the country as a strategic partner and ally. Adel Al-Jubeir's response to these highly inflamed condemnations and often ill-informed accusations was hardly one of passivity or "radio silence." To the contrary, he played a key proactive role in the kingdom's response to these attacks, projecting the kingdom's perspective to key public and private sector audiences in the United States at every available opportunity.

To these ends, Al-Jubeir was instrumental in the establishment of Saudi Arabia-centric activities associated with Qorvis, an American private public relations company in Washington, DC. The firm rapidly proceeded to mount major information and analysis campaigns at the national, state, and local levels throughout the United States. The effort was designed to convey little-known positive facts related to Saudi Arabia's multifaceted contributions to international affairs in general and its seven decades-old relationship with the United States in particular.



In Pursuit of Peace, Security, and Stability

In 2002, the firm produced a series of public affairs advertisements that appeared on select American radio and television stations in support of then-Crown Prince Abdullah's Peace Proposal to Israel of March 31, 2002. The proposal included accommodation of virtually all of what the Israeli government has demanded of its neighbors and other Arab countries for decades. Endorsed unanimously by all 22 members of the League of Arab States, the proposal, however, initially received little more than a lukewarm positive response by the American administration of then-President George W. Bush and not even that by the government of Israel.

But hardly had Adel Al-Jubeir completed his extended period of learning under Saudi Arabian longtime Ambassador to the United States Prince Bandar than he entered yet another stage of honing his array of professional competencies. He did so when Prince Bandar in 2005 was succeeded as Ambassador to the United States by HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal Al Sa'ud. The ambassadorships of Prince Bandar and Prince Turki, while similar in many ways, including their being Saudi Arabia's "go to" representatives in Washington, were in other ways a study in the contrasts of different personalities. For example, in public speeches and in interviews, Prince Bandar often seemed more at home in referring to himself as "just a fighter pilot."

This indeed Prince Bandar very much was. He had been trained respectively by British and American aviators at Cranwell in the United Kingdom and at the Air University and Air Command and Staff College at Montgomery, Alabama, in the United States, in addition to being a former Commander of the Saudi Arabian Air Force base in the kingdom's sprawling Eastern Province. In addition, Prince Bandar obtained a Masters in International Public Policy Degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

Prince Turki was in many ways similar to Prince Bandar but different. In contrast to the formative influences on Prince Bandar's education and experience, Prince Turki was introduced to the United States and American culture as well as literature at an earlier age and in a quite different setting. In comparison to Prince Bandar, he had been schooled for a portion of his teenage years at Lawrenceville Academy, one of America's more renowned college preparatory schools, located near Princeton, New Jersey.

Later, Prince Turki pursued studies at Georgetown University, where he became interested in international relations and the arts and science of diplomatic service. Still later, as an adviser in the kingdom's Royal Court, he furthered his interest and skills in international intelligence-gathering and analysis as well as learning how to navigate the shoals

of geopolitics. In addition, he became a founding member of the King Faisal Foundation and, in time, Chairman of the Foundation's Center for Islamic Studies and Research. At Georgetown University, in Washington, D.C. which, as noted, was also the alma mater of Adel al-Jubeir, Prince Turki furthered



Dr. John Duke Anthony, Founding President & CEO of the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, with HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal Al Sa'ud at the Council's 2011 Arab-U.S. Policymakers Conference.

what he has never lost: namely, his early acquired love for -- and near mastery of -- the written and spoken word and his ability, among the rarest of gifts, for speaking in public and, when doing so, leaving no room for doubt in saying what he means and in meaning what he says.

From One Prince to Another

As such, it came as no surprise that Prince Turki, after a brief stint as an adviser at the Royal Court in Riyadh, was assigned in the mid-1970s to the post of Director General of Saudi Arabia's General Intelligence Directorate. In the process, he effectively headed for nearly a quarter century the kingdom's principal international intelligence service until in the late 1990s, when he was appointed Ambassador to Great Britain. Later, as his country's chief diplomat in the United Kingdom, Prince Turki developed an uncanny ability to relate to ordinary people with a degree of uncommon grace, ease, and without a trace of royal or any other affectation. These traits, deemed unusual if not unheard-of in most countries' ambassadors, quickly endeared him to wide swaths of the British public, the media, members of the country's diplomatic corps, and ordinary citizens in general.

Even more surprising to many was the way in which Prince Turki often endorsed and agreed to be a featured speaker at various British national, provincial, and local as well as institutional commemorative events. In one year alone in Great Britain, he delivered more than two dozen public speeches, almost all of which were original and presented in flawless English. What is more, each was crafted for the specifics of the occasion and almost always spoken without the use of notes.

In addition, to a greater degree than any ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the United States previously, Prince Turki focused extensively on the furtherance of people-to-people relations and exchanges, for which, having discovered that he was gifted in the practice of the art, he needed no training.

Overall, the impact was extraordinary. For months on end, senior officials of the United States Government appeared confused and off-balance -- so baffled and unprepared were American officials at the candor and courage this particular ambassador exhibited when asked to speak his mind on what most needed to be improved in the Saudi Arabian-U.S. relationship. Many, including then-U.S. President George W. Bush and Vice-President Dick Cheney in particular, were seemingly at a loss as to how to react and relate to the articulate and often outspoken ambassador of this especially vital country of global importance.

Many, too, were taken aback by a member of the Saudi Arabian ruling family who, unlike most diplomats, was as much at home, if not more so, in grassroots venues throughout the United States, than he was with fellow royalty and his ministerial counterparts, whether in his native country or elsewhere. Even more bewildering to Washington officialdom for an extended period was whether it would be appropriate to ignore, accommodate, remain silent, condemn, or applaud when Prince Turki proceeded



HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal Al Sa'ud, manifesting his trademark people-to-people touch, takes time out from an informal chat with two high school students from New Era Academy (Baltimore, Maryland) at the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations 2006 Arab-U.S. Policymakers Conference.

to mince no words in answering questions about the causative roots and manifestations of the various tensions in American-Saudi Arabian relations. Of particular concern among his pro-Israel detractors was the candor in which he addressed the manifold challenges to improving the overall Saudi Arabian-U.S. relationship that lay rooted in the cause of Palestine, a topic that few other ambassadors, whether Americans or Saudi Arabians, dared to address publicly as accurately and straightforward as he would do.

Additional breakthroughs in the Saudi Arabia-U.S. relationship occurred during Ambassador Al-Jubeir's tenure, dating from before his succeeding Prince Turki in 2007 as Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Saudi Arabia and extending afterwards to the present. Among them were the holding of the kingdom's first-ever municipal elections in 2005 and 2011, the appointment of women advisers to the *Majlis ash-Shura* (National Consultative Council), and women winning the right to vote in future municipal elections. In terms of strengthening and expanding the foundations for future generations of close Saudi Arabian-U.S. relations, Ambassador Al-Jubeir proceeded to build upon Prince Turki's legacy in taking the people-to-people exchanges in the two countries' relations to an even higher level than ever before.

Parallel to these developments were the extraordinary, breakthrough, educational agreements forged between King Abdallah and then-U.S. President George W. Bush. The upshot of these exceptional efforts by representatives of both countries to protect and build upon all they had achieved in their seven decades-long special relationship enabled a record-high of tens of thousands of Saudi Arabian undergraduate and graduate students' entry into American institutions of higher education.

That all three of the Saudi Arabian Ambassadors to the United States depicted herein have made extraordinary contributions to strengthening and expanding the special Saudi Arabian-U.S. relationship,



HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (left), Head of Saudi Arabia's King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies, speaks at the panel discussion organized by UNESCO, "Building peace: Reconciliation through the power of education, the sciences, culture, and communication." Pictured beside him is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.

despite the extraordinary efforts by the many Americans, Saudi Arabians, and others opposed to their doing so, is self-evident. If there remains to this day one paramount goal that has eluded the respective best efforts to date of all three ambassadors, it has been and remains the achievement of a just, enduring, and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, now 63 years old and counting and showing no sign of near-term abatement, let alone resolution.

Yet, even here, as in the numerous other examples set forth in this essay have illustrated, the failure of the three ambassadors' best efforts to date have not been for lack of their respective good faith efforts toward that end. Nor is there evidence that the cause is lost. Indeed, the original Saudi Arabian peace proposal to Israel and the unanimous support of it by the 22-members of the League of Arab States is, as of this writing, still on the table. So, too, are its provisions: pan-Arab peace with Israel and the normalization of relations with all 22 Arab countries in exchange for

Israel's compliance with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions – Resolutions 242 and 338 in particular -- and the UN Charter, all of which Israel has signed and committed itself to uphold and

implement, but failed to do so, and which underscore the UNSC prohibition "against the acquisition of territory by force" by any of the organization's members.

Influences and Contributions

From the perspective of the rear view mirror as well as the continuous present going forward, Adel Al-Jubeir remains one of Saudi Arabia's most prominent spokesmen to Western and especially American media. Shortly after the resignation of Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States Prince Turki bin Faisal Al Sa`ud on 11 December 2006, Al-Jubeir was appointed Ambassador to the United States. He presented his credentials to U.S. President George W. Bush in February 2007. The exact opposite of being "a newcomer to Washington," Al-Jubeir was already a widely known and respected professional within the United States capital and the American media. However, his prominence in the American national press corps skyrocketed following the attacks of 11 September 2001.

Since then, he has remained what he was before: an indefatigable leading figure in Saudi Arabia's concerted actions to persuade a skeptical U.S. public that the kingdom has long been, is now, and almost certain to remain a reliable ally. Throughout, he has remained a committed partner in the campaign against terrorism, and, indeed, on 13 May 2003 as well as earlier and subsequently, the kingdom has itself repeatedly, although increasingly less than before, been a victim of extremist violence. At a time when the American media and public opinion generally were sharply focused on the fact that a majority of the nineteen men who carried out the attacks were Saudi Arabian citizens, Al-Jubeir faced the demanding task of rehabilitating the kingdom's image in the United States.

Through numerous appearances on American television talk shows, Al-Jubeir has repeatedly reiterated the message that Saudi Arabia acknowledges shortcomings in its earlier efforts to prevent or curb extremist acts and attitudes by its citizens at home and abroad. He has always followed such statements by quickly also stressing that the government in Riyadh has been doing everything in its power to cooperate with U.S. authorities in combating politically militant violence. To be sure, not all Americans, some of whom seem prone not to believe anything the Saudi Arabian government says, have been persuaded.

Even so, most foreign affairs specialists agree on Al-Jubeir's considerable skill at handling the press. And many more than would likely be willing to state so publicly find it difficult if not impossible to refute his facts. This in itself lends ongoing credence to what Prince Bandar once wrote in a *Washington Post* editorial to the effect that "facts are stubborn things," the implication being that, like it or not, irrefutable facts bearing on international affairs, especially when ignored or denied, have consequences for policies, domestic as well as foreign.

International Perspectives: Legacy and Conclusion

On an online Public Broadcasting System *News Hour with Jim Lehrer* broadcast, Larry Johnson, a former deputy director of the U.S. Department of State's Office of Counter-Terrorism, sitting across from Al-Jubeir, said, "[Y]ou have to understand [that] this is the Michael Jordan of Saudi Arabian diplomacy" (Johnson 2001). The reference, not without reason, likened Al-Jubeir to an extraordinary practitioner of the art of repeatedly succeeding in the often exceptionally difficult task of making his government's policies, positions, attitudes, and actions seem eminently plausible, reasonable, moderate, and a model of prudence and efficacy as far as statecraft is concerned.

In the estimation of his adversaries and admirers alike, Adel Al-Jubeir has long been acknowledged as ambitious and effective. His ability to remain on-message throughout interviews and press conferences is widely acknowledged and respected. He has become an important player in Saudi Arabia-U.S. relations for his role in asserting the benefits of that relationship and the arguments for its continuation. Since assuming the post of ambassador to the United States in February 2007, Al-Jubeir, like Prince Bandar and Prince Turki before him, has stood near the vortex of the dynamics of continuity and change in the Saudi Arabian-U.S. relationship. In so doing, he has remained focused on the long-term effort to place the institutional dimensions of the bilateral Saudi Arabia relationship on a firmer foundation.

To this end, Al-Jubeir has continued to explain to the American public the kingdom's ongoing efforts to deter and defend against threats to regional order as well as promote global economic growth through responsible positions relating to energy production, pricing, and the enhancement of fuel efficiencies. In addition, again alongside of and at other times apart from but complementary to Princes Bandar and Turki, Amb. Al-Jubeir has continued to serve as a voice of reason and moderation regarding Saudi Arabia's constant effort to formulate and administer policies and actions that enhance the prospects for regional peace and stability.

A Double-Edged Sword

In sum, Ambassador Adel Al-Jubeir's task of projecting and protecting Saudi Arabia's interests, image, and special relationship with the United States has remained likened to a double-edged sword. On one hand, he has been required to deal continuously with his country's many American and other detractors as well as those within his own country. These, in the United States and elsewhere, have persistently viewed not only Saudi Arabia itself but equally, if not more so, the relationship between Riyadh and Washington with a degree of hostility, suspicion, and distrust that, in the eyes of many, constitutes little more than – name the country – extreme jealousy and resentment. As a result, Al-Jubeir has had little choice but to contend with the kingdom's adversaries in pursuit of their own interests, having incessantly worked to misrepresent what the kingdom is and does.

On the other hand, Al-Jubeir's efforts have been strengthened by his, Americans', and many others' acknowledging that many countries' governments, were they to construct an international bilateral relationship of their choosing, would readily trade places with either the United States or Saudi Arabia were there ever to be an opportunity to do so. They would do so for reasons that, as many have long argued, are eminently understandable. They would do so in the hope of replicating for themselves the unparalleled benefits that Americans, Saudi Arabians, and countless others have derived from Riyadh's and Washington's bilateral relationship. Their frame of reference: nearly seven decades of extraordinary efforts of thousands of citizen leaders on both sides of the American and Saudi Arabian relationship. And not last nor least, among the thousands of mostly unknown and unsung heroes and heroines on both sides, from the extraordinary efforts of the three Saudi Arabians and their times as depicted here.



Ambassador Adel Al-Jubeir with General David Petraeus, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, at Saudi Arabia National Day 2011.

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Additional Publications from Dr. Anthony can be found on the National Council's website www.ncusar.org.

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