Deal With the Devil: The Case for Reforming the Alliance With Saudi Arabia

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Some call it a “Faustian Bargain,” in other words, a deal with the Devil. President Franklin D. Roosevelt initiated an alliance in 1945, and every President since has maintained it. But our “ally” acts more like an enemy, and commits terrible abuses against its own people. It’s long past time for us to affirm that the United States should significantly reform its policy toward one or more countries in the Middle East.

OBSERVATION 1. Our DEFINITIONS

**Significant**: “large enough to be noticed or have an effect” (*Merriam-Webster Online Dict. 2014* [*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/significant*](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/significant))

**Policy**: “a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body”(*Merriam-Webster Online Dict. 2014* [*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy?show=0&t=1402599657*](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/policy?show=0&t=1402599657))

**Middle East** is defined contextually in our evidence, where experts use the term to include the country of Iran.

OBSERVATION 2. The GOAL: Promotion of Human Rights. Roberta Cohen of Georgetown University explained in 2008 why human rights should be upheld in our foreign policy:

Roberta Cohen 2008. Roberta Cohen (MA with distinction from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; specialist in human rights and humanitarian issues, is Senior Associate at the Institute for the Study of International Migration at Georgetown University ) Lecture at the Foreign Service Institute, 2008 INTEGRATING HUMAN RIGHTS IN US FOREIGN POLICY: THE HISTORY, THE CHALLENGES, AND THE CRITERIA FOR AN EFFECTIVE POLICY <http://issuu.com/georgetownsfs/docs/120731162020-b8844e15f9ea464f92fac4352d40eea3/10>

To conclude, let me leave the audience with this thought: what the United States is known and appreciated for around the world is not just its strong economy and military capability. It is its democratic way of life and commitment to the observance of human rights. Our nation defines itself by the Constitution and Bill of Rights, the ending of slavery and segregation, the promotion of equal rights for women, the struggle to end racial and minority discrimination, and the defense of free speech, press, and civil liberties. In its dealings with foreign governments and countries, it must necessarily reflect this identity.

OBSERVATION 3. INHERENCY, or the conditions of the Status Quo. One simple fact: The US has a longstanding alliance with Saudi Arabia

CNN 2014. (Peter Bergen, CNN’s national security analyst) 28 March 2014 “Why the Saudis unfriended the U.S.” <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/03/26/opinion/bergen-obama-saudi-tensions/>

The world's most powerful democracy and the world's most absolute monarchy have long been close, if unlikely, allies. They are bound together by common interests -- the free flow of oil and, more recently, fighting al Qaeda. That alliance was first sealed between President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Saudi King Adul Aziz on February 14, 1945, when they met on the deck of the USS Quincy as the American warship cruised in the Suez Canal.

OBSERVATION 4. FAILURES. Our alliance with Saudi Arabia is a bad policy

FAILURE 1. Abuses overlooked. Current policy is that we don’t promote human rights in Saudi Arabia

Joel Gehrke 2014. (journalist) 31 March 2014 "Obama refuses to raise human rights issues with Saudis" WASHINGTON EXAMINER [http://washingtonexaminer.com/obama-refuses-to-raise-human-rights-issues-with-saudis/article/2546504](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwashingtonexaminer.com%2Fobama-refuses-to-raise-human-rights-issues-with-saudis%2Farticle%2F2546504&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEYkwP4scKEaCirI-tRmtl31ueP5g" \t "_blank)

President Obama refused to raise human rights issues during his meeting Friday with Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah, despite urging from a bipartisan group of lawmakers and assurances from the White House that Obama "raises our commitment to human rights" on all his trips. “Saudi Arabia's human rights record is abysmal at best and its mistreatment of women is systemic, unthinkable and cruel," said Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., who -- along with Rep. Trent Franks, R-Ariz., Rep. James McGovern, D-Mass., and Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va., -- wrote a letter to Obama urging him to pressure Saudi Arabia about human rights abuses that take place in the country. "When President Obama meets with King Abdullah, he must speak out against intolerance and urge specific reforms to bring the country closer to the rest of the free world.” That didn't happen

FAILURE 2. Abuses encouraged. US military support encourages bad behavior

Prof. Toby C. Jones 2011. (assistant professor of history at Rutgers Univ) 22 Dec 2011 Don't Stop at Iraq: Why the U.S. Should Withdraw From the Entire Persian Gulf, THE ATLANTIC <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/12/dont-stop-at-iraq-why-the-us-should-withdraw-from-the-entire-persian-gulf/250389/>

Less obvious, the United States' military posture has also emboldened its allies, sometimes to act in counterproductive ways. Saudi Arabia and Bahrain justify their brutal crackdown of Bahrain's pro-democracy movement by falsely claiming Iranian meddling. While American policymakers support democratic transitions in the Middle East rhetorically, their unwillingness to confront long-time allies in the Gulf during the Arab Spring is partly the product of the continued belief that the U.S. needs to keep its military in the Gulf, something that requires staying on good terms with Gulf monarchies. The result is that Saudi Arabia and its allies have considerable political cover to behave badly, both at home and abroad.

FAILURE 3. US security threatened. The Saudis support terrorism and promote jihad, even within the United States.

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2012. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Uneven exchange with Saudis <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/uneven.html> (ellipses in original)

Third, the Saudis threaten our security. Saudis have helped fund terrorists from the PLO, Hamas and al-Qaeda. Undersecretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Stuart Levey said, “If I could somehow snap my fingers and cut off the funding from one country, it would be Saudi Arabia.” In addition to directly sponsoring terrorists, the Saudis are educating the next generation of Muslims to become jihadists through the radical teachings they propagate through mosques and schools. The Washington Post reported a few years ago about a Saudi textbook “after the intolerance was removed,” that had the following statements: “Every religion other than Islam is false,” “The apes are Jews…while the swine are the Christians” and “jihad in the path of God…is the summit of Islam.” Similar teachings appear in textbooks distributed around the world, and appeared also in a Saudi-funded school in Fairfax, Virginia.

OBSERVATION 5. We change this with our PLAN, to be implemented by Congress and the President.

1. No US military cooperation, military support, military assistance, or military security guarantees until Saudi Arabia meets the following conditions:  
   A) Undersecretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence certifies that Saudi Arabia is no longer a significant sponsor of terrorism  
   B) Complete freedom of religion is allowed  
   C) Open democratic elections are held and an elected government takes power.  
   D) No funding for jihadi propaganda abroad  
   E) Equal civil rights for women  
   F) Accept peace with Israel
2. Funding within current budgets, with net reduction of expenditures until conditions are met.
3. Enforcement through the President by normal administrative means and Congress ends funding for any activities not in compliance.
4. Plan takes effect on the first of October.
5. Affirmative speeches may clarify the plan as needed.

Now let’s see why this is the right policy in

OBSERVATION 6. We create comparative ADVANTAGES by achieving the Goal.

ADVANTAGE 1. Leverage for reform.

We see this in 2 subpoints:

A. Now is the time for the US to use its leverage to demand reforms in Saudi Arabia

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2011. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Why Doesn't Obama Call for Democracy In Saudi Arabia? <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/obamasaudis.html>

Rather than reassure the Sauds, now is an ideal time to, for the first time since Kennedy, insist on changes in the regime. Democratization is only one important step. The U.S. should demand an end to support for terrorist groups and the financing of radical Islamic schools and mosques. Obama should insist on ending the apartheid policy toward women and other human rights abuses. Finally, he should pressure them to take measures to demonstrate their willingness to make peace with Israel. It has always been the case the Saudis needed us more than we needed them and this is a unique opportunity to use the political, economic and military leverage we have to insist that they show a commitment to our values and interests for the benefit of their people and our security.

B. Ending security guarantees means increased leverage to promote human rights

Prof. Toby C. Jones 2011. (assistant professor of history at Rutgers Univ) 22 Dec 2011 Don't Stop at Iraq: Why the U.S. Should Withdraw From the Entire Persian Gulf, THE ATLANTIC <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/12/dont-stop-at-iraq-why-the-us-should-withdraw-from-the-entire-persian-gulf/250389/>

Given its global reach, the United States will always retain the capacity to project military power, but the terms should be limited. The challenge is less about finding friendly ports to station personnel than it is about charting clearer and more effective terms of political engagement with allies and rivals. And this requires a new strategic doctrine, one that makes clear to regional actors that the era of open security guarantees -- which have proven so dear to both Americans and to the hundreds of thousands who have died since the United States began its military build-up -- is over. This would not mean the loss of leverage or influence, but in fact the opposite. Once it is clear that the United States is not solely committed to preserving the status quo, regional states will no longer believe they can ignore American calls for reform, restraint, and respect for human rights.

ADVANTAGE 2. Right side of history.

The Saudi regime is doomed, and the US would be better off supporting people who want democracy instead of propping up the doomed oppressors. We see this in 2 subpoints:

A. Saudi’s days are numbered. The Saudis are in trouble with their own people because of corruption and disrespect for human rights

Erick Stakelbeck 2012. (journalist) 5 Mar 2012 Why the Saudis' Downfall Could Impact America , CBN NEWS, <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2012/March/Why-the-Saudis-Downfall-Could-Impact-America/>

Then, after governments fell in Tunisia and Egypt, the Saudi royals moved to appease their own restless subjects with billions of dollars in new welfare and housing programs. "It is absolutely bribery. That's what it is. When this uprising started, they started getting nervous," said Dr. Ali Alyami, of the Washington-based Center for Democracy and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia. Alyami believes the Royal Family's days are numbered. "The Saudi people suffer from corruption, lack of political freedom, lack of religious freedom, lack of press freedom, injustice, no accountability, no transparency," he told CBN News. "So the same problems that led all of these Arabs to take to the streets are in Saudi Arabia," Alyami said. "So regardless of all the bribes -- they know it, actually -- they are not going to be spared the wrath of the people."

B. The US will pay a price for supporting the oppressors when a reform regime takes over

Prof. Toby C. Jones 2011. (assistant professor of history at Rutgers Univ) 22 Dec 2011 Don't Stop at Iraq: Why the U.S. Should Withdraw From the Entire Persian Gulf, THE ATLANTIC <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/12/dont-stop-at-iraq-why-the-us-should-withdraw-from-the-entire-persian-gulf/250389/>

The Middle East is moving to an era of mass politics, in which mobilized publics demand greater rights and greater influence. While many observers believe that the oil states are less susceptible to such pressures, this seems far from certain. In fact, Saudi Arabia, the world's most important oil producer, shares many of social and political-economic characteristics of its beleaguered neighbors, including high unemployment, widespread poverty, popular disillusion with corruption, and an increasingly sophisticated network of grassroots organizations committed to political change. Even flush with considerable oil revenue and the capacity to throw money at its many internal problems, Saudi Arabia has still been forced to unleash its police and security forces to quell unrest. The United States, because of its relationship with Saudi Arabia and Bahrain and its apparent preference for preserving the political status quo in the Gulf, is increasingly seen by the region's citizens as conflated with the violent forces of counterrevolution. Should revolutionaries and would-be revolutionaries in the Gulf force political transitions in the future, the United States could pay a political price for its long-standing military entanglements.

2A Evidence: Reform Saudi Alliance

INHERENCY

Abuses overlooked. Current policy is that we don’t promote human rights in Saudi Arabia

Doug Bandow 2011. (J.D. (law degree) from Stanford Univ; senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties; worked as special assistant to President Reagan ) 21 Mar 2011 Riyadh Scores One for Tehran <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/riyadh-scores-one-tehran> (“gerontocrats” = elderly rulers)

Unfortunately, Riyadh also is essentially a totalitarian theocracy. A handful of feeble gerontocrats rule and 7,000 princes mulct a nation of 27 million. There are no elections or civil liberties and non-Muslims cannot even freely worship at home. The Saudi government underwrites fundamentalist Islam around the world and Saudi citizens have provided substantial financial support for terrorism. Yet U.S. officials say little to encourage the Saudi royals to adopt democratic reforms.

Big US arms, intelligence, and military cooperation with Saudi Arabia

Anthony Cordesman 2014. (holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at Center for Strategic & International Studies; recipient of the Dept of Defense Distinguished Service Medal; served as director of intelligence assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense; masters degree in International Studies, International Security, Middle East from Univ of Denver )17 Mar 2014 The Need for a New “Realism” in the US-Saudi Alliance <http://csis.org/publication/need-new-realism-us-saudi-alliance>

The United States is still building up its forward deployment and power projection capabilities in the Gulf states. It signed over $72 billion dollars worth of new arms agreements with Saudi Arabia and the Southern Gulf states in recent years. It signed $45.6 billion with Saudi Arabia alone between 2008-2011, plus $5.9 billion in actual deliveries. While its forces are no longer based in the Kingdom, they are based in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE. The United States has major training and advisory missions for Saudi military regular forces and the National Guard, and more quietly is working with the Ministry of the Interior, Saudi intelligence, and other counterterrorism efforts.

Pentagon says US and Saudis have military alliance

Donna Miles with American Forces Press Service 2012. (journalist), “Pentagon: F-15 Sale to Saudi Arabia part of broader effort,” 6 jan 2012, The Wire: An Award Winning ATF <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00098620/00495> (brackets added, ellipses in original)

More broadly, the U.S.-Saudi military-to-military alliance is a central feature of regional security," [Pentagon Press Secretary George] Little said. Little noted the U.S. Military Training Mission in Saudi Arabia, which was established in 1953 and remains a cornerstone of the U.S.-Saudi military-to-military relationship. In announcing the F-15 sales agreement Dec. 29, James N. Miller, the principal deputy under secretary of defense for policy, and Andrew Shapiro, the assistant secretary of state for political military affairs, emphasized the close military-to-military ties between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

US/Saudi military cooperation based on agreements/policies initiated in 1953, 1973 and 2008

Associated Press 2011. “US Quietly Expanding Defense Ties With Saudis” 19 May 2011 [http://www.foxnews.com/us/2011/05/19/quietly-expanding-defense-ties-saudis/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.foxnews.com%2Fus%2F2011%2F05%2F19%2Fquietly-expanding-defense-ties-saudis%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEcYWHcA64E24fj0SjyNaGYY1Fizg" \t "_blank)

The newly established specialized force is separate from the regular Saudi military and is also distinct from Saudi Arabian National Guard, an internal security force whose mission is to protect the royal family and the Muslim holy places of Mecca and Medina. The U.S. has had a training and advising role with the regular Saudi military since 1953 and began advising the National Guard in 1973. The new arrangement is based on a May 2008 deal signed by then-Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef.

US has military personnel in a joint training effort with special Saudi security force

Associated Press 2011. “US Quietly Expanding Defense Ties With Saudis” 19 May 2011 [http://www.foxnews.com/us/2011/05/19/quietly-expanding-defense-ties-saudis/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.foxnews.com%2Fus%2F2011%2F05%2F19%2Fquietly-expanding-defense-ties-saudis%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNEcYWHcA64E24fj0SjyNaGYY1Fizg" \t "_blank)

Details about the elite force were learned from interviews with U.S. officials speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of Saudi security concerns, as well as in interviews with private analysts and public statements by former U.S. officials. The special security force is expected to grow to at least 35,000 members, trained and equipped by U.S. personnel as part of a multiagency effort that includes staff from the Justice Department, Energy Department and Pentagon. It is overseen by U.S. Central Command. The force's main mission is to protect vital oil infrastructure, but its scope is wider. A formerly secret State Department cable released by the WikiLeaks website described the mission as protecting "Saudi energy production facilities, desalination plants and future civil nuclear reactors."

US-Saudi alliance established in 1945, guarantees Saudi security in exchange for supply of oil

Dr. Jeremy Ghez 2011. (Ph.D. in policy analysis, Pardee RAND Graduate School; M.A. in economics, Paris School of Economics) “Alliances in the 21st Century - Implications for the US-European partnership” <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP340.pdf>

The notion that some alliances are more resilient than others because they capitalize on a long historical tradition of cooperation is very intuitive. For instance, the claim that the US-Saudi alliance is strategic not merely because it is tactical but also because it relies on a long tradition of cooperation is straightforward. The partnership was first formalized by President Roosevelt and King Abdul-Aziz on the USS Quincy at Great Bitter Lake in Egypt in February 1945. In exchange for a continuous supply of oil from Saudi Arabia, Roosevelt guaranteed the kingdom’s long-term security. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of bipolarity, the persistence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the fall of Saddam Hussein, though they profoundly changed the strategic landscape in which Saudi Arabia operates, never challenged the foundations of the initial partnership. The two countries have continuously reinvented the purpose of the alliance despite ruptures in the international system.

US has joint military exercises with Saudi Arabia

Doug Bandow 2011. (J.D. (law degree) from Stanford Univ; senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties; worked as special assistant to President Reagan ) 21 Mar 2011 Riyadh Scores One for Tehran <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/riyadh-scores-one-tehran>

The real test of American commitment to democracy is long-time ally Saudi Arabia. U.S. and Saudi Arabian troops conducted a joint military training exercise in early March. Riyadh acts as the critical "swing" oil producer, upon which Washington long has relied to stabilize the international oil market. Saudi Arabia also is a major arms buyer. Perhaps most important, the Saudi royals have spread their wealth around Washington, collecting many influential friends.

US & Saudi Arabia are expanding military cooperation

ARAB NEWS 2014. "Saudi-U.S. talks focus on expanding cooperation" 6 Jan 2014 [http://www.arabnews.com/news/504316](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.arabnews.com%2Fnews%2F504316&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNF5uXF4f41D1_p8Jzp2Qn-HpbxVZg" \t "_blank)

Crown Prince Salman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense, discussed expanding Saudi-American military cooperation during his meeting with Gen. Lloyd Austin, commander of US Central Command, in Riyadh on Sunday.  The two discussed latest Middle East developments emphasizing the strong relations between Saudi Arabia and the United States.

The United State is expanding its military commitment to Saudi Arabia.

THOM SHANKER and STEVEN LEE MYERS 2011 (New York Times Journalists) October 29, 2011 “U.S. Planning Troop Buildup in Gulf after Exit from Iraq” THE NEW YORK TIMES<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/30/world/middleeast/united-states-plans-post-iraq-troop-increase-in-persian-gulf.html?pagewanted=all>

With an eye on the threat of a belligerent Iran, the administration is also seeking to expand military ties with the six nations in the Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. While the United States has close bilateral military relationships with each, the administration and the military are trying to foster a new “security architecture” for the Persian Gulf that would integrate air and naval patrols and missile defense.

Obama has no intention of promoting reform in Saudi Arabia

Suzanne Maloney 2011. (Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy, Saban Center for Middle East Policy; former U.S. State Department policy advisor, she has also counseled private companies on Middle East issues) The Alliance That Dare Not Speak Its Name 20 May 2011 <http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0520_obama_middle_east_maloney.aspx>

The administration needs to guard against ploys to undercut the President’s proclaimed agenda, including the fallacious argument that the Arab spring empowers Tehran. In reality, developments in Bahrain and elsewhere only confirm that continuing regional repression offers an opening rather than an antidote to Iranian influence. Finally, the Administration must carefully think through how to square the president’s call for efforts to promote reform across the region when we have neither the capacity nor the intention to do so with respect to our most important ally, Saudi Arabia.

Inherency: Obama fails to speak out against Saudi abuses

Joel Gehrke 2014. (journalist) 31 March 2014 "Obama refuses to raise human rights issues with Saudis" WASHINGTON EXAMINER [http://washingtonexaminer.com/obama-refuses-to-raise-human-rights-issues-with-saudis/article/2546504](http://washingtonexaminer.com/obama-refuses-to-raise-human-rights-issues-with-saudis/article/2546504" \t "_blank)

President Obama refused to raise human rights issues during his meeting Friday with Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah, despite urging from a bipartisan group of lawmakers and assurances from the White House that Obama "raises our commitment to human rights" on all his trips. “Saudi Arabia's human rights record is abysmal at best and its mistreatment of women is systemic, unthinkable and cruel," said Rep. Jackie Speier, D-Calif., who -- along with Rep. Trent Franks, R-Ariz., Rep. James McGovern, D-Mass., and Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va., -- wrote a letter to Obama urging him to pressure Saudi Arabia about human rights abuses that take place in the country. "When President Obama meets with King Abdullah, he must speak out against intolerance and urge specific reforms to bring the country closer to the rest of the free world.” That didn't happen.

Solvency: Last time we pressured Saudis to reform, they did (Pres. Kennedy, 1960s)

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2011. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Why Doesn't Obama Call for Democracy In Saudi Arabia? <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/obamasaudis.html>

Has anyone noticed that President Obama’s newfound affection for democracy in the Middle East has not resulted in a call for an end to the autocratic regime of Saudi Arabia? We also have heard of no serious protests in Saudi Arabia -- although we will see what the planned "day of rage" for March 11 will bring --despite the fact that the country is one of the most serial abusers of human rights in the world and practices a policy of apartheid toward Saudi women. How can this be explained? Obama’s failure to speak out against Saudi Arabia reflects a 70-year-old policy of U.S. administrations ignoring Saudi abuses against not only their own people, but American citizens. In fact, the only president to stand up to the Saudis was John Kennedy when he demanded that the kingdom abolish slavery in the early 1960s. And, contrary to the State Department Arabist views that you can’t impose our values on the Arabs, the Saudis complied.

FAILURES

Military support for Saudis allows them to undermine our values and interests

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2012. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Uneven exchange with Saudis <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/uneven.html>

Why is the Obama administration silent while the Saudis undermine our values and interests? The answer can be found in the unspoken Faustian bargain. To satisfy the Saudis’ insecurity, Obama agreed to sell the $30 billion worth of arms they don’t need and can’t use on the pretext that it will help them defend themselves against Iran. The sale is really about getting some of our oil money back and satisfying defense contractors and the Pentagon. The deal is made with a wink and a nod, knowing the Saudi’s only defense against Iran is the U.S. military. Members of Congress, nevertheless, look the other way because the contracts mean jobs for their constituents. Meanwhile, the Saudis have pumped more oil throughout the Arab turmoil to prevent the price from going so high that it will throw the U.S. economy into a more severe decline, which would imperil Obama’s reelection. In exchange, all Obama has to do is sell them arms and continue to support the totalitarian theocrats in Riyadh.

Saudis block peace and stability in the Middle East - they sabotage peace negotiations with Israel

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2012. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Uneven exchange with Saudis <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/uneven.html>

First, the Saudis undermine our interest in peace and stability in the Middle East. They do everything in their power, for example, to prevent the Arab world from making peace with Israel. When Israel and Egypt were negotiating peace, Anwar Sadat told President Carter that Saudi support was essential to achieving a comprehensive peace. Carter assured Sadat the Saudis would back his efforts, but, instead, they did everything possible to sabotage the negotiations, ostracizing Egypt and discouraging others from joining the peace process. Obama ran into the same obstructionism when he sought Saudi backing for his peace efforts in his first two years. He hoped the Saudis would make some gestures toward Israel to show that a broader peace would be possible if an agreement with the Palestinians was reached. Instead, the Saudis refused and increased their belligerence toward Israel.

Saudis undermine our values: One of the world’s worst human rights abusers

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2012. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Uneven exchange with Saudis <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/uneven.html>

Second, the Saudis undermine our values. This is a country that practices gender apartheid toward women, discriminates against Jews and Christians and is one of the world’s worst human rights abusers. Just recently, the Saudis beheaded a woman for “witchcraft and sorcery.”

SOLVENCY / ADVOCACY

US should stop the pretense of friendship with Saudi Arabia

Doug Bandow 2011. (J.D. (law degree) from Stanford Univ; senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties; worked as special assistant to President Reagan ) 21 Mar 2011 Riyadh Scores One for Tehran <http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/riyadh-scores-one-tehran>

Riyadh's intervention in Bahrain raises the stakes. The Pentagon has authorized the removal of military dependents and non-essential civilians from its Bahraini base, suggesting some doubt about the future of Khalifa family rule. If the latter survives only with the assistance of Saudi bayonets, Riyadh will have committed a form of aggression. What then of the West's devotion to liberal international norms? Through all this Iran looms ominously in the background. The Bush administration's foolish invasion of Iraq eliminated one of the most important constraints on Tehran. Saudi Arabia has now handed Shiite Iran a powerful recruiting tool. This potential disaster suggests the imperative of nuanced disengagement. The U.S. government should stop trying to constantly and publicly micromanage Middle Eastern developments; advice is best given sparingly and in private. Moreover, the administration should drop the well-publicized pretense of a warm friendship between Washington and Riyadh. Cooperation on shared interests will remain important. However, U.S. officials need to put distance between America and the Saudi regime. Especially now that the latter is aggressively imposing its system on its much smaller neighbor. Americans can hope that everything will work out in Bahrain. However, the odds are stacked against a happy outcome. Neither stability nor democracy likely will be the result.

US military aid props up corrupt Saudi regime

Prof. Anthony Dimaggio 2010. (prof. of politics, Illinois State U.) The Permanent War Economy: What’s Really Behind the U.S.-Saudi Military Alliance <http://www.veteranstoday.com/2010/09/22/the-permanent-war-economy-what%E2%80%99s-really-behind-the-u-s-saudi-military-alliance/>

The historic $60 billion military “aid” package between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia is a classic example of the dangers of the American war machine. Al Jazeera reports that it represents the “largest ever U.S. deal to sell advanced fighter jets to Saudi Arabia.” The deal speaks to the vital role of U.S. imperial planners in committing massive resources to entrenched oil oligarchies in the Middle East. As is well known, these regimes are more interested in providing cheap oil to the U.S. than in allowing democratic representation for their people. The new U.S.-Saudi agreement represents only the most recent attempt to prop up corruption throughout the region. This policy reaches back six and a half decades to the early efforts of FDR to establish ties to the fundamentalist medieval regime of Abdul Aziz bin Saud, the political and political founder of modern day Saudi Arabia.

We need to pressure Saudi Arabia on human rights

Ken Roth 2012. (executive director of Human Rights Watch) 6 May 2012 Ken Roth's Advice to President Obama: 'Intensify Pressure on Russia Before Thousands More Syrians Lose Their Lives'[http://www.forbes.com/sites/rahimkanani/2012/05/06/ken-roths-advice-to-president-obama-intensify-pressure-on-russia-before-thousands-more-syrians-lose-their-lives/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.forbes.com%2Fsites%2Frahimkanani%2F2012%2F05%2F06%2Fken-roths-advice-to-president-obama-intensify-pressure-on-russia-before-thousands-more-syrians-lose-their-lives%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNH2v6YcS9U_qMxGuk3gjrecOy6fqQ" \t "_blank)

Much work remains to ensure that the Arab Spring yields positive human rights outcomes. Philanthropists can advance the cause by helping to build a stronger community of local human rights activists in key countries. In some places, such as Egypt and Tunisia, human rights activists are working to shape new Constitutions, laws, and government institutions. In Kuwait, Jordan and Morocco, greater human rights pressure is needed to help nudge relatively enlightened monarchs in a more democratic direction. In countries like Bahrain or Saudi Arabia, pressure is needed to counter entrenched and repressive monarchies.

DISAD RESPONSES

“Need Saudi support/cooperation in the Middle East” – Response: Saudis oppose US policies

CNN 2014. (Peter Bergen, CNN’s national security analyst) 28 March 2014 “Why the Saudis unfriended the U.S.” <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/03/26/opinion/bergen-obama-saudi-tensions/> (ellipses in original)

What went wrong? In recent months the normally hyper-discreet Saudis have gone on the record about their dissatisfactions with the Obama administration. In December, Prince Turki al-Faisal, the former Saudi intelligence chief and ambassador to Washington, took the [highly unusual step of publicly criticizing](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/16/world/middleeast/saudi-prince-accuses-obama-of-indecision-on-middle-east.html?_r=0" \t "_blank) the administration, "We've seen several red lines put forward by the president, which went along and became pinkish as time grew, and eventually ended up completely white...When that kind of assurance comes from a leader of a country like the United States, we expect him to stand by it." It's inconceivable that Prince Turki, whose brother is the Saudi foreign minister, would make these public comments without approval from the highest levels of the Saudi government. Why are the Saudis going public with their dissatisfaction with the Obama administration? The laundry list of Saudi complaints most recently is that the United States didn't make good on its "red line" threat to take action against the Bashar al Assad regime in Syria following its use of chemical weapons against its own population.

“Need Saudi support” – Response: Saudis don’t support US foreign policy

Bob Dreyfuss 2013. (journalist) [The Israel-Saudi Alliance Against the US-Iran Talks](http://www.thenation.com/blog/176836/israel-saudi-alliance-against-us-iran-talks) 25 Oct 2013 [http://www.thenation.com/blog/176836/israel-saudi-alliance-against-us-iran-talks#](http://www.thenation.com/blog/176836/israel-saudi-alliance-against-us-iran-talks)

Recently, Saudi Arabia has expressed bitter unhappiness with the fact that the United States is talking to Iran, and the kleptocratic kingdom has also stated its extreme disasstifaction with the fact that President Obama, instead of bombing Syria, opted for a diplomatic path there, too. As I [wrote earlier this week](http://www.thenation.com/blog/176771/us-uk-are-having-trouble-finding-moderates-attend-syria-peace-talks): Saudi Arabia, which is fostering the war in Syria as part of what it sees as a regional Sunni vs. Shiite conflict, is in a major snit. Saudi Arabia’s foreign minister canceled his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September, [shocking UN members](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/04/world/middleeast/in-a-first-saudis-cancel-a-speech-at-the-un.html?ref=syria). Then, adding insult to injury, Saudi Arabia [turned down](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/19/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-rejects-security-council-seat.html?ref=syria) a prestigious seat on the UN Security Council—a post the country had long campaigned for—because the Saudi rulers are upset with the UNSC and the United States over what Riyadh considers their insufficient enthusiasm for the kingdom’s Syria policy. Now, [according to The Wall Street Journal](http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303902404579150011732240016) and other sources, Saudi Arabia is on the verge of a fundamental break with the United States.

“Radical new regime in Saudi Arabia would be worse” - Response: Couldn’t get any worse than status quo

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2011. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Why Doesn't Obama Call for Democracy In Saudi Arabia? <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/obamasaudis.html>

Now why doesn’t Obama call for democracy in Saudi Arabia? One reason is fear. While the administration is happy to ignore warnings about the possibility of a radical Islamist regime taking power in Egypt, the administration is petrified of that happening in Saudi Arabia. But could a different regime be worse than the Sauds who undermine American interests and values in the region and threaten our security as the leading sponsors of international terror.

“Oil supplies at risk” - Response: Oil supplies have never been in danger - Saudis are motivated by their own survival

Dr. Mitchell Bard 2011. (Ph.D. in political science from UCLA; master’s degree in public policy from U of Calif-Berkeley) Why Doesn't Obama Call for Democracy In Saudi Arabia? <http://www.mitchellbard.com/articles/obamasaudis.html>

The Saudis have cleverly played on our fears by warning the oil would be threatened by our relations with Israel, then the threat of Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser followed by the Soviet Union and now Iran. The truth is our oil supplies have never been in danger because the prime motivation for Saudi policy is to guarantee that the royal heads remain connected to the royal shoulders, and the Saudis decided very early in their history that the United States was the only country that could guarantee their security.

China is the principal export destination for Saudi oil, not the US.

Dr John Alterman, who advocates US intervention in the Middle East, nevertheless admits in 2011:

Dr. John B. Alterman 2011. ( PhD History, Princeton Univ. Director of the Middle East Program at Center for Strategic & International Studies; former member of the Policy Planning Staff at the U.S. Department of State and as a special assistant to the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs) “Fierce or feeble - Persian gulf assessments of U.S. power” p. 77 [http://issuu.com/csis/docs/capacity-resolve](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Fissuu.com%2Fcsis%2Fdocs%2Fcapacity-resolve&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNH7TaBJK3vwgw1ufNFppROoxO1Sjg" \t "_blank)

In this regard, what many in the Gulf are watching closely are signs of diminished U.S. commitment to provide free passage of energy resources out of the region. U.S. economic ties to the Gulf have always been secondary to security concerns. The United States is not the principal oil export market for any country in the region, nor is any Middle Eastern country the principal source for U.S. imported oil. In fact, Saudi exports to the United States have flattened, and China is now the principal destination for Saudi oil.

Saudis losing ability to control world oil prices

Karen E. House 2012. (journalist) An End to Saudi Oil? 31 Oct 2012[http://alcalde.texasexes.org/2012/10/an-end-to-saudi-oil/](http://www.google.com/url?q=http%3A%2F%2Falcalde.texasexes.org%2F2012%2F10%2Fan-end-to-saudi-oil%2F&sa=D&sntz=1&usg=AFQjCNGCHX01e4Z6ibh20S7h7dU3phzjqg" \t "_blank)

All this led Matthew Simmons, chairman of Simmons & Company International in Houston and the author of Twilight in the Desert: The Coming Saudi Oil Shock, to challenge Saudi reserve estimates and the country’s ability to continue to serve as the world’s “swing producer,” raising production in times of high demand and then taking oil off the market when demand declines to keep prices stable. In short, Saudi leverage on the world market has become more limited. In this meticulously researched book on Saudi oil fields and their production past, present, and future, Simmons, now deceased, examined data in published scientific papers on the four biggest Saudi oil fields which account for 90 percent of Saudi oil production. He makes a convincing case they are in decline, even though Saudi ARAMCO refuses to publish production numbers by field or allow any independent audit of production or reserve estimates.

Oil prices have very small effect on the economy

Dr. Lutz Kilian 2009. (Ph.D. in Economics; prof. of economics at University of Michigan) Oil Price Volatility: Origins and Effects, December 1, 2009 <http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/ersd201002_e.pdf>

The second problem is that, to the extent that oil prices affect domestic output, under standard assumptions their impact should be bounded by the cost share of oil in domestic production, which is known to be very small. For example, for the United States, the ratio of imported and domestically produced crude oil in GDP has been fluctuating between 1 and 5 percent (see Edelstein and Kilian 2007). Thus, if oil price shocks are viewed as cost shocks for the oil-importing economy, their effect by construction cannot be very large. Indeed, Backus and Crucini (2000) have demonstrated that standard production-based general equilibrium models of the transmission of oil price shocks are not capable of explaining large fluctuations in real GDP. This type of result came as a surprise to many researchers who expected oil price shocks to be a major determinant of the business cycle.

“Need Saudi support for US policies” - Response: Saudis are developing new policies independent of ours

Suzanne Maloney 2011. (Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy, Saban Center for Middle East Policy; former U.S. State Department policy advisor, she has also counseled private companies on Middle East issues) The Alliance That Dare Not Speak Its Name 20 May 2011 <http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0520_obama_middle_east_maloney.aspx>

For their part, the Saudis are in no mood to pull punches, and have already begun to outline an approach to the region that is quite contrary to the vision laid out by President Obama. In a Washington Post op-ed piece several days ago, an influential Saudi analyst heralded Riyadh’s decision to embark on an “assertive” new foreign policy independent of Washington on the grounds that “there is simply too much at stake for the kingdom to rely on a security policy written in Washington, which has backfired more often than not and spread instability.” The oped cited the Iranian threat, an increasingly obsessive fixation for an aging and fearful Saudi leadership and a cynical appeal to American (and Israeli) security concerns.

“Iran threatens Saudi Arabia” - Response: Iran isn’t a threat and Saudi jets and missiles won’t matter anyway

Prof. Anthony Dimaggio 2010. (prof. of politics, Illinois State U.) The Permanent War Economy: What’s Really Behind the U.S.-Saudi Military Alliance (brackets and parentheses in original) <http://www.veteranstoday.com/2010/09/22/the-permanent-war-economy-what%E2%80%99s-really-behind-the-u-s-saudi-military-alliance/>

The Wall Street Journal reports that “the [Obama] administration plans to tout the package as a major job creator – supporting at least 75,000 jobs – and sees the sale of advanced fighter jets and military helicopters to key Middle Eastern ally Riyadh as part of a broader policy aimed at shoring up Arab allies against Iran” (which has long been framed, contrary to all available intelligence, as a nuclear threat). The notion that the Iranian (non) threat will be countered by additional Saudi fighter jets and anti-ballistic missiles should strike any rational observer as insane, but the administration’s comments on the importance of the deal for the military industrial complex are instructive.

Iran is not an expansionist threat

Dr. Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed 2008. (M.A., Ph.D. from University of Sussex, Associate Professor at the University of Sussex, Executive Director of the Institute for Policy Research & Development, and has testified as an Expert Witness in Congressional Hearings), July 2008 “The Iran Threat: Why War Won’t Work” Transcend Research Institute <http://www.transcend.org/tri/downloads/The_Iran_Threat.pdf>

In reality, US military perceptions of Iran as a dangerous power-expander attempting to maximise its regional hegemony are inaccurate. As two senior Iran analysts at the Council on Foreign Relations point out in *Foreign Affairs*, the main obstacle to a resolution of the Iran crisis is “the Bush administration’s fundamental belief that Iran cannot be a constructive actor in a stable Middle East and that its unsavory behavior cannot be changed through creative diplomacy. Iran is not, in fact, seeking to create disorder in order to fulfill some scriptural promise, nor is it an expansionist power with unquenchable ambitions.

“Loss of dollar as reserve currency” - Response: Not unique - it will happen in the next 10 years anyway

Dr. Barry Eichengreen 2011. (PhD; professor of economics and political science at the University of California, Berkeley) Why the Dollar's Reign Is Near an End 1 Mar 2011 WALL STREET JOURNAL Foreign Exchange Report <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703313304576132170181013248.html>

The greenback, in other words, is not just America's currency. It's the world's. But as astonishing as that is, what may be even more astonishing is this: The dollar's reign is coming to an end. I believe that over the next 10 years, we're going to see a profound shift toward a world in which several currencies compete for dominance.

“Loss of dollar as reserve currency” - Turn: Would produce net benefits if the dollar were replaced

Journalist Michael Shuman quoting finance Professor Michael Pettis 2011. (Pettis - finance professor, Peking University, MBA in Finance and MIA in Development Economics from Columbia University) 15 Apr 2011 Is the dominance of the dollar bad for America? TIME magazine, (brackets added) <http://business.time.com/2011/04/15/is-the-dominance-of-the-dollar-bad-for-america/>

His conclusion is that what benefits the U .S. gets from the reserve status of the dollar are outweighed by the costs: [quoting Prof. Pettis:] The large imbalances that this system has permitted now destabilise the world. If forced to give up the dollar, the world might reduce global trade somewhat, and it would probably spell the end of the Asian growth model. But it would also lower long-term costs for the US, and reduce dangerous global imbalances. The US should therefore take the lead in shifting to multi-currency reserves, in which the dollar is simply first among equals. [end Pettis quote]

“Religious extremism” – Response: Root causes are discrimination against Shias and Western policies against Iran

Also, cross-apply the Dreyfuss card above: Saudis are fomenting Sunni-Shia tensions and angry that the US is negotiating with Iran.

Shireen Hunter 2007. (Director of the Carnegie Project on Reformist Islam at Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding) SUNNI –SHIA TENSIONS ARE MORE ABOUT POLITICS, POWER AND PRIVILEGE THAN THEOLOGY 5 Feb 2007 <http://acmcu.georgetown.edu/sunni-shia-tensions>

In post-war Iraq, too, sectarian conflict is the result of two interrelated factors: years of discrimination against the Shias by repressive Iraqis governments and the failure to develop a sense of national identity transcending tribal and sectarian affiliations; and fears generated among the Sunnis about their future economic and political position under a Shia-dominated government. On a broader scale, the latest intensification of sectarian tension throughout the Muslim world reflects the Western strategy of instrumentalizing sectarian differences to forge a regional alliance against Iran.