

## ABSTRACT

### U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE BUSH WAR ON TERROR: ELITE OPINION AND THE FAILURE OF U.S. STRATEGY

By

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October 2006

Bush's foreign policy in the Middle East has generated increased anger in the region. The U.S. war against Iraq has sharply increased the level of anti-Americanism in regional terms. That is not to say that anti-Americanism was caused by the events following 9/11. Anti-Americanism is a result of attitudes and perceptions toward what many Arabs and Muslims call the "anti-Arab and Muslim" foreign policy, especially in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, that has existed over a longer period of time. Of course, the Bush Administration is aware of anti-Americanism in the Arab and Islamic world and has admitted that it has reached an unprecedented level.

This study attempts to understand the debates over U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East from a Middle Eastern perspective. Mainly it is a case study of the Saudi perspective. It aims to find whether the conduct of U.S. policy has exacerbated the discontent and radicalism which underpins the actions of terrorist groups.

Of the Saudi elites interviewed for this study, 90% believe that U.S. foreign policy has contributed to the growth of terrorism. Most of the participants (90.5%) agreed that U.S. support for Israel is the main reason for anti-Americanism.



U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE BUSH WAR ON  
TERROR: ELITE OPINION AND THE FAILURE OF U.S. STRATEGY

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Politics

The University of Sheffield

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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October 2006

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful. I am very grateful to Allah. My appreciation to the Assistant Minister of Interior, Prince Mohammed Bin-Naif for granting me the scholarship to do my Doctorate degree in Politics at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom.

I would like to express my appreciation to my Thesis Chairperson, Professor Caroline Kennedy-Pipe for supervising my thesis; without her guidance, the completion of this study would not have been possible. I would also like to thank Dr. Rhiannon Vickers. Her comments have helped me throughout my work. My thanks, also, to my friend, Ilene Dice, for her assistance.

My deepest love for my parents, who have supported and encouraged me to continue my graduate study and kept me in their daily prayers, and I hope that what I do makes them proud of me. Also, I am grateful to my father-in-law, Sheik Hamad Al-Sayari, for supporting me to reach my goal.

My deepest love to my sweet wife, Ghada, (Um Mohammad) and my little sons Mohammad and Hamad, for their support and patience. their love have given me the motivation to reach my dream. May what I do bring honor to my family.

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## INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This thesis sets at to explore why American foreign policy is so controversial in the Middle East. It is perhaps the key question in contemporary international relations. I hope to ask and answer this question.

America policy in the Middle East after the events of 9/11 has been described by many Middle Eastern commentators as representative of unprecedented activity in the region. This action actually is consequence of a uni-polarity resulting from the end of the Cold War and the attacks on America on 9/11 and the subsequent 'war on terror.' The Bush Administration has reshaped foreign policy, especially in the Middle East, to obtain new objectives. In reaction, many countries in the Middle East have reviewed and re-structured their policies in order to conform to the aims of the United States. However, conformity with U.S. foreign policy has become difficult for some governments in the Middle East for a variety of reasons.

The literature on 9/11, the United States, and the war on terror are varied and broad. Books and journals present different views and represent different schools of thought. For example, *Worlds in Collision* (Booth & Dunne, 2002) presents 31 essays written by some of the most distinctive thinkers, intellectuals, and academics in the world, examining world affairs after the 9/11 attacks. The book assesses the major issues of terror, world order, and international security. As a major turning point, another book, *Fighting Back: the War on Terrorism from Inside the Bush White*

*House* (Sammon, 2002) illustrates in chronological order the war on terror since 9/11 and up until the fall of the Taliban regime in December 2001. This provides the Bush Administration's preparations for the 'war on terror' and how plans evolved leading up to the decision to wage war in Afghanistan. Probably another book like *America Unbound: the Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Daalder & Lindsay, 2003) explore what the authors called a revolution in foreign policy by the second President Bush, who came to office with a little knowledge about the world affairs, but pursued very controversial policies. Another influential book is *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil: How to Oust the World's Last Dictators by 2025* (Palmer, 2003). The book has been considered one of the most important and controversial books published since 9/11. Mark Palmer was the one who wrote President Bush's speech on the State of Union in January 2004, which highlighted the issue of democracy in the Middle East.

There have also been attempts to understand mechanics of the war on terror and American foreign policy against a broad backdrop of the shifting patterns of world politics and the broader dimension of how and why states clash in the international arena. Perhaps the most important book on this subject is the *Clash of Civilizations* by Samuel Huntington (2002). Huntington diagnoses anti-Western sentiment in Muslim societies. He argues that 'an overall trend in Islam has been in an anti-Western direction. In part, this is the natural consequences of the Islamic Resurgence and the reaction against the perceived 'gharbzadegi' or Westoxication of Muslim societies' (p. 213). Of course, Huntington's thesis proved controversial and evoked a range of critical responses. Booth and Dunne (2002), for example, believe that there is no clash of civilizations between America and Islam. Rather, they have speculated that the

notion of the clash of civilization is all about 'A confusion of misunderstandings, crude stereotypes, and parallel absence of self-knowledge' (p. 5).

For global politics, the problem is obviously not one of Islam and the Western world. It may be, and this forms part of the backdrop of my thesis, that the current problems among civilizations are the result of a clash between U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and what might be termed the more militant or radical face of the Muslim world. It is important to point out that a clash of civilizations can be inflamed by the elements mentioned by Booth and Dunne when members of one culture attempt to force their values and beliefs on another culture, disrespecting and belittling the values and beliefs of that culture. Matters worsen when communication between cultures lacks a minimum level of knowledge and respect. Let us look at what I see the central problem.

### A Statement of Problem

The Bush Administration's foreign policy in the Middle East, both before and after 9/11, has generated increased anger in the region. This has resulted in two features: the second Palestinian uprising (Al-Aqsa Intifada) in 2000, and after 9/11, increased more expressions of anger and outrage by elites, middle class, and street people throughout the Arab world. The Bush Administration is aware of anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world and has admitted that it has reached an unprecedented level (Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, 2003). The U.S. war in Iraq has increased the level of anti-Americanism in regional terms. However, that is not to say that anti-Americanism

was caused by the events following 9/11. Anti-Americanism is a result of attitudes and perceptions toward what many Arabs and Muslims call the 'anti-Arab and Muslim' foreign policy, especially in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, has existed over a longer period of time.

The anti-Arab/anti-American conflict took root in 1917 when the United States supported and financed the Jewish migration to Palestine and then later played a major role in the creation of the state of Israel in 1947. Since that time, the United States has been perceived as conducting a series of policies against Arabs in the region, especially in respect to the Arab-Israeli conflict. A general concern over these strategies, which may be genuine, has been utilized by some militant and other terrorist organizations (like Al-Qaeda) to justify actions against the United States and to recruit followers who are willing to conduct attacks on American targets. I try to understand how perceptions of U.S. foreign policy have evolved to understand the problem of the United States.

#### Purpose of the Study

So, this study attempts to understand the debates over U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East from a Middle Eastern perspective. Primarily, it is a case study of the Saudi perspective. It aims to find whether the conduct of U.S. policy has exacerbated the discontent and radicalism which underpins the actions of certain terrorist groups. However, this study is not a general review of American-Saudi relations. Rather, Saudi perceptions are used as an example of how people in the Arab and Muslim world (in the Middle East) have perceived and reacted to aspect of U.S. foreign policy.

The one unique character of the Arab world is a sharing of the same ethnic, cultural, and religious bases. It is of no small consequences that this region plays an important and vital role in the world, not least because of its oil.

As part of this research, I conducted interviews with intellectuals and policymakers from Saudi Arabia who have direct knowledge of U.S. foreign policy in the region. The first purpose was to strengthen the understanding of Saudi perceptions. The second purpose was to examine whether U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East had contributed to the growth of radical terrorist groups. The methodology section explains in detail the way interviews were conducted. The thesis asks:

1. What are the reasons for anti-Americanism in the Arab/Muslim world?
2. Has U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East provoked and contributed to an asymmetric response from what may be described as radical or terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda? Specifically, has American over-reliance on military power instead of diplomacy and nurturing of the balance of power meant that certain groups in the region have come to believe that they have little recourse except violent actions?
3. When the George W. Bush Administration pursued strategies radically different from those of the Clinton Administration in foreign policy in the Middle East, did this exacerbate tension and anti-Americanism? Specifically, has the U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East become a target of Islamic militants, radicals, and terrorist groups?

## Definitions of Terms

### The Middle East

The definition of the studied region, the Middle East, varies from one institution to another. For example, the United Kingdom Parliament (2003) defines the Middle East as the states of Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Other institutions, such as the Middle East Institute in Washington (2003), define the Middle East broadly as 'those countries stretching from Morocco to Pakistan, including Turkey and the countries of Central Asia.' According to Ambassador Mohammad Al-Tayeb (author's interview, 2004), the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs defines the Middle East as the countries from Morocco in west Africa to the Gulf states, Turkey, and Iran (see Appendix A for Middle East map). For the purpose of this thesis, the definition of the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the most appropriate definition with consideration to include Afghanistan and Pakistan as they correlate to U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

### Terrorism

The controversy over the definition of 'terrorism' is not a new issue. It has been discussed internationally for a long time without any significant agreement. Wardlaw (1998) mentioned the history of the international community's efforts to gain cooperation in terrorism prevention dating from 1934 after the assassinations of King Alexander I of Yugoslavia and the French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou in Marseilles on 9 October 1934, but, without an agreement on a definition for terrorism,

cooperation was a challenge. The international community's disagreement on a definition of terrorism has been the 'central problem' crippling cooperation in the prevention of terrorism. Treaties rely on legal terms, and it has not been possible to find a definition of terrorism to which all parties can agree.

Terrorism knows no boundaries— crossing cultural, religious, and national lines. No one group of people can be singled out as terrorists. Terrorism is not based on building something new. Instead it seeks to destroy what exists. Perhaps people resort to terrorist acts when they believe that there is no hope. Desperation takes a terrible toll on the human spirit— the Palestinian case is a tragic example (The Paper Presented by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia— Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Counter-Terrorism International Conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, February 2005, which was attended by the author).

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been one of the controversial issues that has made it difficult to agree on a definition of terrorism. The United States and Israel consider the Palestinian 'resistants' to be terrorists; Arab and Muslim states consider them to be freedom fighters who have the right of self-defense against Israeli occupation. Al-Rawaf (author's interview, 2004) believes that there is no international controversy over the definition of terrorism but rather disagreement between America and other countries, mainly Arab and Muslim, over the acts of freedom fighters and so-called state sponsored terrorism. The United States considers the acts of freedom fighters, such as those conducted by Hamas to be terrorism. On the other hand, some Arab and Muslim states consider military operations conducted by Israel against the Palestinian civilians as act of terrorism. Ambassador Mohammed Al-Tayeb (author's

interview, 2004), from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, speculates that if the Arab-Israeli conflict ended, the term 'terrorism' could be defined because the international controversy surrounding the word hinges on the concept of freedom fighters. Kolko (2002) asserts that 'The problem of who is a 'terrorist' and who is a 'freedom fighter' exemplifies the core of the United States' dual standard and is the heart of its present grave dilemma in the Middle East.' (p. 14).

Even though there is agreement regarding the denunciation of terrorism, there is a complex controversy over the definition of terrorism and the appropriate means to prevent it. Controversy over the definition of terrorism has caused the United States to develop a 'double standard' policy. Noam Chomsky (2002), a well known liberal intellectual, claims that the United States applies the definition of terrorism to its enemies, but when the United States commits acts that fall within the definition of terrorism, the definition never applies. Chomsky thinks that terrorism is not only the weapon of the weak, as many believe. It is also a weapon that has been used, sometimes excessively by powerful states. When used by the powerful, it is redefined as 'counter-terror, or law-intensity warfare, or self defense, and if successful, rational and pragmatic, and an occasion to be united in joy' (p. 134).

Bruce Hoffman (1999), an expert in terrorism and global security and Vice President of External Affairs at Rand's Washington D.C. Office, believes that the current definitions of terrorism are too broad to be applied to current terrorist acts. He stakes that the definition of the U.S. Department of Defense— 'the unlawful use of— or threatened use of— force or violence against individuals or property to coerce or intimidate governments or societies, often to achieve political, religious, or ideological



objectives' (p. 38)— lacks a social dimension. This is an example of a definition that reflects the interests of the defining organization or government without awareness of the interests of others.

Hoffman (1999) made a distinctive illustration by describing 109 elements found on all definitions of terrorism. He emphasized the differentiation between terrorists and criminals. Despite his efforts to arrive at a long definition, he was unable to overcome the problems of previous definitions. For example, in his definition, terrorism is 'the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change. All terrorist acts involve violence or the threat of violence' (p. 43). Arguably, there are different kinds of terrorist acts that do not necessarily involve violence. For instance, in Sri Lanka, tea crops are considered one of the most important sources of national income. Several years ago, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam in Sri Lanka announced that they had poisoned the tea crops that were ready to be sent to Europe. The European Union immediately responded by embargoing tea crops from Sri Lanka. This terrorist act was not violent.

Having one definition of terrorism is practically impossible unless terrorism is divided to different types, such as political or economic terrorism. Finding agreeable definitions for each type would be easier. Al-Sayad (author's interview, 2004) argues that it is methodologically and academically impossible to define terrorism unless the term is categorized. To the contrary, Merdad (author's interview, 2004) believes that cultural, religious, social, and customs differences between nations around the world make it impossible to define terrorism.

The definition of terrorism is the central problem, and before reaching an international agreement on this matter, two things need to be done. First of all, break down the elements of all the proposed definitions of terrorism. This will allow for clarification of the points of disagreement between all parties. Secondly, to avoid the pitfalls of a definition that is too broad, terrorism must be categorized into different types, such as political terrorism, revolutionary terrorism, and economic terrorism. For the purpose of this study, I will use the definition approved as a part of the Arab League Treaty on Terrorism Prevention. (All members of the Arab League are located in the Middle East– Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen). According to the Arab League Treaty, terrorism is any act of violence or threat committed by an individual or group of people, regardless of its motivation, which causes fear, loss of life, or property damage in society (Al-Jahni, 1998).

In the section on ‘state-sponsored terrorism,’ Hoffman (1999) states, ‘Certainly, governments have long engaged in various types of illicit, clandestine activities– including the systematic use of terror– against their enemies, both domestic and foreign’ (p. 185). Unlike in the other sections (definitions, history of terrorism, religious terrorism), where he tried to present comprehensive information, Hoffman presented only the American point of view, mentioning all the countries that the United States considers to be engaging in state-sponsored terrorism. There are some countries, however, not listed by Hoffman which are considered by other countries to participate in state-sponsored terrorism, including the United States and Israel. For

example, until the mid 1970's and before the U.S. Congress prohibited the assassination of U.S. enemies, the CIA was involved in sponsoring and conducting such activities. According to Corn and Russo (2001), some former CIA officers have justified such activities, saying that 'the CIA conspirators were not rouges but loyal civil servants following orders' (p. 1). U.S. attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro are a case in point regarding U.S-sponsored terrorism. Israel has used similar strategy assassinating enemies with the (Mussad) being responsible for such terrorist acts. The assassinated Yahya Al-Mashad, an Egyptian scientist, in France 1980. He was the director of the Iraqi nuclear reactor (Heikel, 1993).

Even though Hoffman (1999) considers the United Nations' resolution in December 1997 defining indiscriminate attacks on civilians, such as bombings, as terrorist acts is 'clearly a step in the right direction,' he said nothing about such actions by Americans and Israelis. Instead, he referred to countries on the American list (Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria). He mentioned the U.S. attack against Libya, the attempt to assassinate President Al-Gaddafi in 1986, stating 'Despite the particularly careful selection of military targets for the US fighter-bombers, thirty-six civilians were killed in the air strike and ninety-three other wounded' (p.193). Hoffman also used the American and Israeli point of view when referring to relationship between Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah organization as evil relations. During the Soviet-Afghani War, the U.S. government had a relationship with the Mujahidins, training and supplying them with weapons in a manner similar to Iran and the Lebanese Hezbollah (Hartman, 2002).

What is the standard that legitimates American actions and makes illegitimate similar actions taken by other countries? Is it U.S. interest? Is it true that the United States does not want terrorism to be defined, so it can expand or narrow the definition to benefit its own interests? Al-Otaibi (author's interview, 2004) believes that 'vagueness is a big advantage in politics.' The United States wants to retain a broad, loosely defined concept of terrorism as it serves American interests.

In his assessment of states that seek to obtain WMD, Hoffman (1999) did not mention Israel, who refused to sign a treaty banning WMD. Instead, he mentioned the American list of Middle Eastern countries seeking to obtain WMD. The American list excludes Israel, which refuses any inspection of its reactors. The United States wants the Middle East to have no WMD with the exception of the state of Israel. This is an example of the U.S. double standard regarding its foreign policy in the Middle East.

In regards to state-sponsored terrorism, Wardlaw (1998) has tried to present a point of view different from Hoffman's. He stated that the U.S. list of countries found guilty of state-sponsored terrorism represents U.S. interests. 'The list of such countries continually grows and changes, with the changes often appearing to be related directly to the political needs of the U.S.' (p. 176). All the Arab countries disagree with the U.S. definition of state-sponsored terrorism, considering the frequent attacks by the Israeli Army against Palestinian civilians as a type of state-sponsored terrorism. Hasn't the United States been involved in state-sponsored terrorism when it invaded Panama and Grenada or attempted to assassinate Libya's President Al-Gaddafi?

In his prediction about the future of political terrorism, Wardlaw (1998) raised three questions. 'How can terrorists be identified and their bases targeted without causing innocent civilians to suffer? Where can the strikes be launch from? How can the launch-site be protected from counter-attack?' (p. 204).

Wardlaw (1998) argues that military retaliation in countering terrorism is 'both difficult to justify morally (because of the problem of accurate targeting and avoiding unconnected casualties) and difficult to implement practically (because of the logistic and planning difficulties or because of its negative side effects)' (p. 206). In any war against terrorism, it is of utmost importance to convince the countries around the world to cooperate, and that is possible only through the United Nations. Thus, any war against terrorism must gain its legitimacy through U.N. resolutions. However, in a world of unilateralism this seems increasingly unlikely.

Paul Wilkinson (1977) is one of the classic scholars on terrorism. Many, who have followed him, such as Hoffman and Wardlaw, have been influenced by his work. Wilkinson defined political terrorism as 'The systematic use of murder and destruction, and the threat of murder and destruction in order to terrorize individuals, groups, communities or governments into conceding to the terrorists' political demands' (Wardlaw, 1998, p. 16). Wilkinson also characterized three types of political terrorism: revolutionary terrorism, sub-revolutionary terrorism, and repressive terrorism.

For the purpose of this thesis, I found the definition of Brian Jenkins as the most appropriate. He defined terrorism in the following manner:

The threat of violence, individual acts of violence, or a campaign of violence designed primarily to instill fear to terrorize may be called terrorism. Terrorism is violence for effect; not only, and sometimes not at all, for the effect on the actual victims who may be totally unrelated to the terrorists cause. Terrorism is violence aimed at the people watching. Fear is the intended effect, not the by-product of terrorism (quoted in Mullins, 1998, p. 16).

In his book, *Terrorism and the Liberal State* (1977), Wilkinson described common terrorist goals. One of the distinctive goals was 'to push the liberal state into authoritarianism, and hence into denying its constitutionalism, into dropping all humane restraints and checks on power, and ultimately into becoming a paramilitary or police state' (p. 80). In the United States, the Secret Evidence Law was passed and signed by former president Bill Clinton and strengthened by the Bush Administration. This law allows the U.S. government to detain any suspect for an open-ended period of time. This law was one of the main issues brought up during the U.S. presidential elections in 2000, when President Bush promised voters during the race that he will seek to abrogate the law. However, after 9/11, he did the opposite, establishing even more restraints on the people's rights.

The definition of terrorism has been and continues to be subject of wide debate. However, this thesis claims, as do the majority of Saudi elites who were interviewed by the researcher, that the Bush Administration has abused the issue of terrorism, taking advantage of the controversy over the term's definition.

### Organization of the Thesis

This review of U.S. foreign policy is not of course comprehensive, but it does outline and explore the major themes and debates surrounding the war on terror.

Chapter one provides a backdrop to the events of 9/11. What led to the tragedy? How did it occur? How did the Bush Administration receive and react initially?

Chapter two presents a background of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East dating back to its engagement in politics in that area. Also, Chapter two together with Chapter three (oil and the American-Saudi relationship) attempts to evaluate the broader contours of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East through Saudi eyes, providing a case study of how U.S. actions contributed to the growth of terror in the style of that which has been witnessed since 9/11. While there is a significant amount of literature on the subject of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, it is apparent that scholars are divided on the reasons as to why terrorism has emerged in its 9/11 context.

Chapter four discusses U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East during the George W. Bush Administration, focusing on the U.S. war on terror, specifically, attempting to tie together issues surrounding the emergence of the war on terror and the contours of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

Chapter five examines the roots of anti-Americanism in the Middle East. The Arab-Israeli conflict is considered a major aspect of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and the main reason for anti-Americanism according to the Saudi elites interviewed by the researcher. This was confirmed by the Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World (2003), which mentioned U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, and the policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict in particular, as the basis for anti-American sentiment. Further, the U.S. war on terror has intensified anti-Americanism, with the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq and

what has been described by many Arabs and Muslims as the anti-Islamic position taken by the Bush Administration. The last section of the chapter provides an in depth examination of the real roots of anti-Americanism.

Chapter six presents interpretations of the outcome of the interviews with the Saudi elites as data was statistically generated. The results are presented on tables followed by interpretations. Overall, the thesis offers the opportunity to reflect on Saudi views of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

The last section of this thesis (Chapter seven) presents the reflections of Saudi elites on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. The reflections include perspectives on Bush's role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Bush war on terror (including the war on Iraq), and anti-Americanism as they all are key themes in U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

### Methodology

The focus of this thesis is on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East during the Bush Administration, especially in regard to what has become known in Western literature as the 'war on terror.' The hypothesis underlining the research is that U.S. foreign policy has contributed to the growth of anti-Americanism and provided a substantial boost to the size and strength of what may be described as radical groups in particular states in the Middle East. This is not to argue that this was ever the primary intention of U.S. foreign policy or a grand strategy, but rather the unintended consequence of a series of decisions made by successive U.S. administrations after the



end of the Second World War. The key questions for the thesis are how and why Middle Eastern groups have responded as they have to U.S. hegemony.

This thesis relies on 'contemporary historical sources.' The originality and contribution of the thesis rests on understanding the literature and perspective of Middle Eastern sources. The main perceptions are Saudi. The thesis uses Arabic sources along with American and international sources. Information has also been obtained through face-to-face interviews. Secondary sources, such as the internet, newspaper, and magazines have been reviewed to provide additional support.

One of the main problems encountered in this study has been the lack of published material in the Arab world and difficulty finding literature that covers contemporary issues. To tackle this problem, 24 interviews were conducted with intellectuals, academics, and policymakers in Saudi Arabia who have direct knowledge of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

The thesis pursues several themes on which there is substantial literature— the war on terror; and what may be regarded as a unilateral U.S. approach; the Arab-Israeli conflict; democratization; and the public role of intellectuals in the U.S. war on terror. There is much literature that focuses on international factors that have affected the shape of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. This has been helpful to my research. Discussing the international determinants of U.S. foreign policy in terms of unilateralism and the use of military force provides a better understanding of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. In a uni-polar world, the United States is more likely to confront terrorism as it is, perhaps, the only power with the economic, political, and financial power to withstand its onslaught. The crux of the thesis is

disentangling the literature on terrorism which tends to be very specific and integrating it into the literature on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and starting a new literature on the Saudi case perception.

The first section of the research, Chapter one, focuses on the series of terrorist attacks against the United States leading up to 9/11. During the period between the Second Gulf War (The Desert Storm) in 1991 and 9/11, there was a more assertive U.S. foreign policy and the emergence of terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda. There was also an increase in terrorist operations against American targets. This section also discusses debate within the Bush Administration regarding preparation for the U.S. war on terror. The second chapter provides historical background on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East before 9/11– focusing on the central themes of regional politics between 1945 and 9/11. The history of the U.S. role in the Arab-Israeli conflict covers the period beginning with the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 to the present. The thesis makes the claim that in order to understand the roots of Osama Bin-Laden (an example of anti-Americanism that shifted to terrorist activities against U.S. targets in the world), it is necessary to understand how U.S. actions taken before 9/11 were perceived in the Arab and Muslim world of the Middle East. Chapter three diagnoses oil as central issue of American Saudi relations and as a major pillar of American foreign policy in the Middle East. Also, the chapter presents perceptions of Saudi elites toward the American foreign policy toward the region and their country in particular. Chapter four is the most substantive part of this research. In it, U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East during the George W. Bush Administration is examined, especially in the post 9/11 period. Chapter five explores

what may be considered the roots of anti-Americanism, which the Bush Administration has failed to address. Chapter six presents the findings of interviews conducted with Saudi elites. The information is presented in tables with elaboration. In conclusion, Chapter seven reflects on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, providing a Saudi perspective.

### Research Design

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews. The method was most appropriate given the number of interviews used for the case study— 23 interviewees from the Saudi elite. This is a reasonable number of interviews when those participating are elites (Hagan, 2000). In-depth interviews served the purpose of this study— its attempt to evaluate the broader contours of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East from the Saudi perspective and how it contributed to the growth of terrorism. It allowed the researcher to ask probing questions covering many sub-issues, especially when more details were required and the information given was not enough (Vickers, 2005), (Hagan, 2000).

There were advantages to the use of an interview methodology. First, interviews provided personal contact with the participants, enabling the interviewer to generate more information than might have otherwise been obtained. For example, among the interviews I conducted, there was one participant who apologized because he did not have a time for me to interview him (due to a trip business), but he called me said he had emailed me answers to all the questions that I sent to him prior to our proposed meeting. Ten out of the thirteen questions were answered with only one

sentence. When I compared the outcome of this interview with the other personal interviews, I found an approximately one-to-five. However, these short answers were utilized in the tables of findings as they clearly provided Yes/No answers and, for example, description of what the interviewee believed to be the roots of anti-Americanism.

Interviews as method prevent misunderstandings by participants. The interviewer was able to explain questions when necessary, and that happened several times during the interviews I conducted. Face-to-face interview enables the interviewer to probe for more information on issues or comments raised by the interviewees, and that is subject to the flow of the interviews. For the convenience of most participants who did not want to be taped, I did not use a taped record of interviews, making it possible to obtain less reticent answers (Hagan, 2000). Perhaps most importantly, elite interviews provide information not available from other sources (Vickers, 2005).

There are also some disadvantages to interviews. Since tape-recording was not used, notes had to be taken while thinking about answers and generating questions. Keeping eye-contact with interviewees to show attention was somewhat challenging. Immediately after interviews, questions and answers had to be reviewed and missed information had to be added (Hagan, 2000). Finally, it was difficult to compare the outcome of the interviews, especially categorizing answers to key questions.

There were difficulties with actual interviews. Since the interviews were conducted with Saudi elites, much preparation was needed for the meetings and it was not easy to schedule time for interviews, which in some cases had to be conducted in

two sessions. To even reach the elites, it required a network of connections. It was a somewhat a daunting task to interview people who have direct knowledge of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East (Vickers, 2005).

In his book, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Science*, Bruce Berg (2001) presents what he calls 'The Ten Commandments of Interviewing.' They are the following:

1. 'Never begin an interview cold.' The interviewer must chat for few minutes with the participants in order to 'warm up' before starting.
2. 'Remember your purpose.' Keep the focus on the subject.
3. 'Present a natural front.' The interviewer should be natural, memorizing the questions to avoid reading from a paper.
4. 'Demonstrate aware hearing.' Interviewer should offer some verbal and facial expressions in response to interviewee answers. For example, if the answer is humorous, smile.
5. 'Think about appearance.' The interviewer should be dressed.
6. 'Interview in a comfortable place.' Conduct the interview in a convenient place.
7. 'Don't be satisfied with monosyllabic answers.' When the interviewer begins to receive inadequate information or short answers, probe by asking questions that as for explanation.
8. 'Be respectful.' Show respect for participants.
9. 'Practice, practice, and practice some more.' The interviewer should be knowledgeable and well-prepared before the interview. For example, in the case of

this study, the elites who were interviewed have direct knowledge to U.S. foreign policy; therefore, practice and preparedness, especially for in-depth questions was extremely required before the interviews.

10. 'Be cordial and appreciative.' Express gratitude and appreciation to the subjects for their participation (p. 99-100).

Interviewees were asked 13 semi-structured questions, the answers to which generated more questions and answers. These interviews allowed for direct contact with interviewees, making it possible to get clear answers and prevent misunderstanding. Also, this type of interview provided flexibility in questioning.

For the convenience of some of the interviewees, the interview questions were sent to them ahead of time. The interviewees were offered time to become acquainted with the questions and prepare their answers. An important part of the research process was the use of Arabic language interviews and materials (only one participant preferred to be interviewed in English). This provided information, which on the whole, has not been utilized by Westerns researchers. Note that some statements will be quoted in Arabic and explained in English. The most complex part of the process was translating the Arabic interviews into English. The right words had to be selected as inaccurate translation would have resulted in distorted answers. Much time was spent on the translation and revision processes and consultation was conducted with two specialists in Arabic-English translation.

It is important to note that as these interviews were conducted between January 2004 and February 2005, some of the answers were subject to the actions and situation during that time. For example, the attitudes toward the United States have been

negatively affected by series of actions in Iraq, which have deepened anti-American sentiments in the Arab and Muslim worlds. For example, scandals like Abu-Gharib prisons torture, the raising number of casualties among Iraq civilians, and the chaotic situation, which has given an indication of civil war, have all impacted the Middle Eastern perceptions and attitudes toward the American invasion and occupation of Iraq. Therefore, I argue that if the interviews of this study had been conducted now, the answers of the questions regarding Iraq would have generated different outcome to the 2004-2005 interviews.

### Subjects

The target population for the proposed study was represented by 23 members of the Saudi elite. One of the main objects was to have participants representing academia and political sectors in Saudi Arabia. The interviews were used to explore the puzzle of the failure of U.S. strategy in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia was selected to represent the Arab states in the case study. The Arab world has almost the same ethnic, cultural, and religious background. There are many political parties in the Arab world conducting political discourse that addresses the people of the region. Public opinion in the Arab states is in agreement on many vital issues and shares similar attitudes about many things, especially in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World that was submitted to the U.S. Congress in June 2003 supports that claim. The report indicated that in a survey in 2002 only 6% in Egypt 'had a favorable view' of the United States. In the same year, according to the Report of the Advisory Group, a

survey conducted by Gallup found that only 7% in Saudi Arabia had a ‘very favorable view’ of the United States. These show a strong similarity percentages between Egypt and Saudi Arabia and is evidence supporting the claim that Saudi perceptions can be taken as a valid representation of perceptions throughout the Arab world and a valid case study.

The 23 interviewees included Saudi academics from King Saud University in Riyadh, King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, and Naif University for Security Science in Riyadh. There were also Saudi Ambassadors and experts from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Saudi Diplomatic Institute. Other interviews were conducted with the Chairman of Majlis Ash’shura (the Saudi Parliament), four members of Ash’shura, the Governor of the Saudi Monetary Agency, a former Principal (Minister) for Girls Education, the Deputy Minister of Information, and the Co-editor in Chief of the Riyadh daily newspaper.

Due to the fact that the interviews were made with Saudi elites, the number of participants that the researcher was able to interview was 23 people. However, not all the interviewees were asked to answer all the 13 questions because some of the questions were made especially for those who are specialists in U.S. foreign policy: Questions 2, 6, and 11 (See appendix C).

### Question Design

The interview constituted of 13 questions (see Appendix B). There were, however, a number of snowball questions. The snowball questions varied according to who has been interviewed, based on the flow of the interview and the knowledge



differences among interviewees. There were also different questions that were addressed to specialists. For example, it was necessary to ask the former Principal of the General Presidency for Girls Education (both girls and boys education was united under one Ministry of Education in 2002) a question about U.S. media attacks on the educational system of Saudi Arabia and the accusations that intolerance and hatred were being taught. Other questions could be answered only by experts in U.S. foreign policy, and that was subject to the researcher's discretion. All 13 questions were designed to address the themes of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East that are discussed in this study and to answer the core questions of the research. Findings based on answers to questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 are presented in Chapter six.

Question 1 explores the pillars of Bush's foreign policy in the Middle East from a Saudi perspective. Of course, knowing the pillars of American foreign policy in the Middle East, from a Saudi point of view, enables us to understand the basis of which U.S. actions and policies move from. This is probably a key question in exploring U.S. foreign policy from Middle Eastern point of views. Each pillar that was mentioned by the interviewees is discussed in this study as a major theme in the politics of the Middle East.

Question 2 considers the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War and the impact of these events on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. The purpose of this question was to differentiate between the impact of the end of the Cold War and the later actions of the Bush Administration on foreign policy in the Middle

East. The approach of Bush's foreign policy can be explained as a consequence of the impact of the end of the Cold War and is discussed in Chapter four.

Question 3 addresses the Bush Administration's role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, a major theme of Bush's foreign policy in the Middle East. America's traditional role in the Arab-Israeli conflict has been described by many Middle Eastern and Western foreign policy experts as one of the main reasons for anti-Americanism. This question was designed to probe the Saudi perceptions and assessments of this matter.

Question 4 reveals how Saudis look at the U.S. war on terror and its focus on the Middle East. The outcome from this question will not be utilized in the findings of Chapter six but will be incorporated in Chapters one, three, four, and five. With the problem of lack of publishing in the Arab world, it was impossible to get this variety of elites' views in present issue like the war on terror without interviews. The outcome of this question boosted the Middle Eastern perceptions of the U.S. war on terror in this study especially that all the 23 interviewees were asked to address this issue.

Question 5 addresses the controversy over the definition of terrorism and America's use of the term. The U.S. war on terror has evoked a controversy over the definition of terrorism with claims of American abuse of the term's vagueness by Middle Eastern commentators and intellectuals. It was important to probe the controversy over the definition of terrorism as perceived by Saudi elites as it relates to advantages or disadvantages for U.S. foreign policymakers and the short and long-term consequences resulting from America's use of the term.

Question 6 was designed for those who are specialists in U.S. foreign policy. They were asked for their assessment of the Bush Administration's use of unilateralism in the war on terror. Like Question 4, the responses to Question 6 will not be utilized in the findings of Chapter six but will be used in the body of the thesis, especially in the section on the Bush Administration and the use of unilateralism.

In Question 7, interviewees were asked for their assessments of the Bush Administration's success in the war on terror. More than three years after 9/11 (when the interviews were conducted), it has become increasingly debatable whether the Bush Administration has succeeded or failed in its campaign. The interviewees also discussed the impact of the war on terror upon anti-American sentiment in the Arab and Muslim world.

Question 8 was designed to ask Saudi elites if the United States has succeeded or failed to justify its invasion of Iraq and the war that has followed. The Bush Administration's efforts to show this war to be legitimate was meant to convince other governments to support the United States and participate in the war. The United States has had an ethical dilemma and has sought to avoid being seen by people in the world as an outlaw state and by Arabs and Muslims as crusaders against Islam.

Question 9 explores Saudi perceptions regarding post-war Iraq. Since the Bush Administration's announcement of the end of military operation in Iraq in April 2003, the post-war situation in Iraq has witnessed various actions and events. Authority was passed to Iraqis and elections took place. So, the interviewees were asked about their assessment of the U.S. post war situation. This outcome of this

question will be used to support the section on the U.S. war in Iraq in Chapters four and seven, which presents reflections on U.S foreign policy in the Middle East.

Question 10 investigates the roots of anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world constitutes a pivotal section of this study. There are many reasons for anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world, as discussed in Chapter five. This question and its answers allow for the reasons for anti-Americanism to be categorized in a table in Chapter six.

Question 11, like Question 6, was designed only for interviewees who are specialists in U.S. foreign policy. The answers will be utilized in the section on, Bush's foreign policy in the Middle East (Chapter four) and in the findings in Chapter six. It was important to examine if the George W. Bush Administration pursued radically different strategies from the Clinton Administration to see, for example, how the increasing use of its unilateralism evolved.

Question 12 (together with Question 10) are the most important questions in the study. They address the core issue of this study as it examines the claims that U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has provoked and contributed to an asymmetric response from what may be described as Islamic militants or terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda. Does U.S. foreign policy and terrorism have an action/reaction relationship?

Finally, Question 13 asked the interviewees to reflect, speculate, or comment on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Because the purpose of these interviews was to explore Saudi perceptions of American foreign policy in the Middle East, it was important to ask them such an open question.

## Data Analysis

All data will be presented in tables with interpretation in Chapter six (Findings). The data analysis is primarily descriptive. A bi-variate relationship between anti-Americanism in the Arab-Muslim world and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East will be examined. Again, the hypothesis of this study states that the conduct of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has exacerbated discontent and radicalism, which underpins the actions of terrorist groups. To examine the core questions of this thesis, the answers will be categorized in tables according to the interviewees' responses.

This thesis contributes to the overall materials available on this subject by introducing the perceptions of Saudi elites on American foreign policy in the Middle East. It is enhanced by the author's ability to read both Arabic and English, gaining information and insight into Middle East politics and U.S. foreign policy. The originality of this thesis rests on the interviews conducted with the Saudi elites, providing information not available in other sources. Interviews were with elites from all spectrums in Saudi Arabia (See Appendix C).

Before 9/11, there were a series of actions taken by the United States dating since the end of the Second World War, which have had accumulative effect leading to the current negative perceptions of the United States in the Arab and Muslim worlds. The foreign policy actions taken by the United States will be discussed in Chapter two. It would be difficult to understand the current problem relative to American foreign policy without knowing the history of American foreign policy in the Middle East and the roots of anti-Americanism, which the Bush Administration

has failed to address. Chapter five presents the perceptions of Saudi elites on the main themes believed to be the reasons for anti-Americanism. Reflections on the future of American foreign policy, a variety of visions and thoughts expressed by Saudi elites who have direct knowledge of American foreign policy, is presented in Chapter seven. Many interviewees agreed that if the United States wants to seriously address the problem, it must start a dialogue with people in the region. This dialogue must not seek to merely explain U.S. foreign policy. Instead, it must discuss the concerns the interests of the nations of the Middle East along with American interest.

### Findings

This chapter presents and interprets the findings of the interviews that were conducted with Saudi Arabian intellectuals and policymakers who have direct knowledge of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. The findings are original and not available by any other sources. The interviews represent a snapshot of Middle Eastern views, mainly Saudi. The interviewees were selected to represent various spectrums of elite in Saudi Arabia. Academics, policy makers, intellectuals who some are columnists in distinguished Arabic and Saudi newspapers.

Of course, it is important to mention that there is no practice of political parties in Saudi Arabia. Also, elites in Saudi Arabia do not use right/left wing terms to identify themselves. However, some of them tend to describe themselves as liberals or moderates, for example. Saudi elites, in some cases, have different definitions for their liberal, moderate, or conservative affiliations. Therefore, it was hard for the researcher to predetermine the affiliation of the interviewees. However, there were

some indications of the attitudes of those elites toward some cases, which can be implied from their writings. The main factor considered in selecting the interviewees was their knowledge of American foreign policy in the Middle East. As there were some interviewees who are critical of U.S. foreign policy, there were also some interviewees who described themselves as pro-Americans (see Chapter three, America-Saudi relations).

The purpose of the interviews was two fold: (1) to examine the claim that U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has contributed to the increase in anti-Americanism and the growth of fundamental terrorist groups, and (2) to determine the Saudi perspective on U.S. policy and actions. The findings involve answers to all the questions, except numbers 4, 6, and 13, which were incorporated into the text in other sections of this study, and are presented in tables following interpretations of the findings. Each table is categorized according to the interviewees' answers.

### The Pillars of Bush's Foreign Policy in the Middle East

'Pillars' refers to the main issues that shape the Bush Administration's foreign policy in the Middle East. Understanding the pillars of American foreign policy in the Middle East from a Saudi point of view provides the basis for understanding the motives behind U.S. policies and actions. This is probably the key to exploring U.S. foreign policy from a Middle Eastern point of view. Each pillar mentioned by the interviewees has been discussed in this study as a major theme in the politics of the Middle East.

Table 1 shows that all of the interviewees asked about the pillars of the Bush foreign policy in the Middle East agreed that the ‘security of Israel’ and ‘oil’ were the most important pillars. Additionally, 57.1% added the ‘war against terrorism’ as an important pillar and 35.7% included the ‘maintenance of stability in the region’ as a major pillar for the Bush Administration.

TABLE 1. The Pillars of Bush’s Foreign Policy in the Middle East

|   | The Security of Israel |     | Oil |     | The War against Terrorism |      | Maintaining Stability in the Region |      |
|---|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|---------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|------|
|   | f                      | %   | f   | %   | f                         | %    | f                                   | %    |
| What are the pillars of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East? | 14                     | 100 | 14  | 100 | 8                         | 57.1 | 5                                   | 35.7 |

The Impact of the End of the Cold War on U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East

The interviewees were asked about the impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War upon U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. All participants 100% agreed that the end of the Cold War did impact American foreign policy in the region. The purpose of this question was to differentiate between the impact that the end of the Cold War had on American foreign policy and the impact of 9/11 and later actions by the Bush Administration.

TABLE 2. The Impact of the End of the Cold War on U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East

|  | Yes |     | No |   |
|--|-----|-----|----|---|
|  | f   | %   | f  | % |
| Did the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War have an impact on the strategy of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East? | 13  | 100 | 0  | 0 |



### The Bush Administration's Role in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

In answer to the question regarding the Bush Administration's role in the Arab-Israeli conflict as a major theme of Bush's foreign policy in the Middle East, none of the participant described Bush's role as 'positive.' Only 6.7% described Bush's role in the conflict as both positive and negative, with the majority (93.3%) describing the role as 'negative.'

TABLE 3. The Bush Administration's Role in the Arab-Israeli Conflict

|  | Positive |   | Negative |      | Both |     |
|--|----------|---|----------|------|------|-----|
|  | f        | % | f        | %    | f    | %   |
| How do you assess the Bush Administration's role in the-Arab Israeli conflict? | 0        | 0 | 14       | 93.3 | 1    | 6.7 |

### The Controversy over the Definition of Terrorism

The U.S. war in terrorism has created controversy over the definition of 'terrorism' with claims of American abuse of the term's vagueness. The claims of American 'abuse' of the term terrorism have been sounded mainly by Middle Eastern commentators and intellectuals. The U.S. definition of 'terrorism' has justified the Bush Administration's wide-ranging targets and military threats/actions. It was important to probe how the controversy over the definition of terrorism is perceived by Saudi elites (as an advantage or disadvantage for U.S. policymakers). Table 4 shows that the majority of interviewees (77.8%) described the controversy over the term terrorism as advantageous for U.S. policymakers; 11.1% described it as disadvantageous. Another 11.1% of the participants described it as both advantageous and disadvantageous for U.S. policymakers.

TABLE 4. The Controversy over the Definition of ‘Terrorism’

|   | Advantage |      | Disadvantage |      | Both |      |
|---|-----------|------|--------------|------|------|------|
|   | f         | %    | f            | %    | f    | %    |
| Is the vagueness over the definition of ‘terrorism’ an advantageous or a disadvantageous for U.S. foreign policymakers? | 14        | 77.8 | 2            | 11.1 | 2    | 11.1 |

Assessments in Regard to the U.S. War on Terrorism

After conducting the U.S. war on terror for more than three years, it has become increasingly debatable whether the Bush Administration has succeeded or failed in its campaign. When interviewees were asked between January 2004 and January 2005 if the United States has succeeded in its war on terrorism, only 7.3% of them considered the U.S. successful. The majority (56.6%) believed the Bush Administration had been relatively successful in its campaign, describing various reasons for success and failure. There were 37% who believed (for different reasons) that the United States has actually failed in its war on terrorism.

TABLE 5. Assessments of the U.S. War on Terrorism

|   | Success |     | Relative Success |      | Failure |      |
|---|---------|-----|------------------|------|---------|------|
|   | f       | %   | f                | %    | f       | %    |
| Approximately three years after 9/11 and the beginning of the U.S. war on terrorism, has the Bush Administration succeeded in its campaign? | 1       | 7.3 | 9                | 56.6 | 6       | 37.8 |

Opinions in Regard to U.S. Promotion of the War in Iraq

According to the Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World (2003), as a result of the U.S. war in Iraq, ‘Hostility toward America has reached shocking levels’ (p. 15). This raised the question of whether the

Bush Administration had succeeded or failed in its promoting of the war in Iraq. The Bush Administration had sought to justify going to war against Iraq and tried to convince many countries to participate by joining the ‘coalition forces.’ Table 6 reveals that only 6.3% of the interviewees believed that the Bush Administration succeeded in promoting the Iraq war, and only 12.5% described it as a ‘relative succession.’ On the other hand, the majority of participants (75%) believed that the Bush Administration had failed in its efforts to promote the war. Interestingly, 6.3% of the participants claimed that the Bush Administration had not really promoted the war because it did not need so.

TABLE 6. Opinions Regarding U.S. Promotion of the War against Iraq

|   | Succeeded |     | Was Relatively Successful |      | Failed |    | Did Not Need To Promote |     |
|---|-----------|-----|---------------------------|------|--------|----|-------------------------|-----|
|   | f         | %   | f                         | %    | f      | %  | f                       | %   |
| Has the United States succeeded in promoting the war in Iraq? | 1         | 6.3 | 2                         | 12.5 | 12     | 75 | 1                       | 6.3 |

#### Assessment of the U.S. Situation in Post-war Iraq

Since the end of military operations in Iraq in April 2003, the post-war situation in that country has been chaotic and deadly. There have been positive events, like the elections and subsequent passage of authority to the Iraqis. However, for the United States, the post-war situation in Iraq has been one of escalated violence and death. Iraq has become an arena in which terrorist organizations, anti-American militants, and anti-occupation militants have targeted United States and coalition forces. The Iraqi resistance has increased the number of casualties among U.S. troops (139 during the war compared to 2,729 as of October 8, 2006) which has placed the

Bush Administration under increasing pressure from within the United States. When the interviewees were asked (see table 7) for their assessment of the U.S. post-war situation in Iraq, all of them (100%) agreed that it was negative.

TABLE 7. Assessment of the U.S. Post-war Situation in Iraq

|   | Positive |   | Negative |     |
|---|----------|---|----------|-----|
|   | f        | % | f        | %   |
| How do you assess the U.S. situation in Iraq after the war? | 0        | 0 | 15       | 100 |

### Reasons for Anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim Worlds

The roots of anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world constitute a major aspect of this study. The many reasons for anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world were discussed in chapter four. Table 8 lists those reasons mentioned by the Saudi elites in order of significance. The majority of interviewees (90.5%) attributed anti-American sentiment among Arabs and Muslims to American support of Israel. In addition, 42.9% of them mentioned what they call ‘U.S. anti-Arab and anti-Muslims policies and actions.’ Another 28.6% attributed anti-Americanism to their frustration with U.S. intervention in their countries’ internal affairs. Interestingly, only 23.8 % had mentioned U.S. wars against Afghanistan and Iraq as reasons of anti-Americanism. Finally, 14.3% attributed anti-Americanism to what they called ‘American arrogance,’ excessive use of power, and American policy double standards.

TABLE 8. Reasons for Anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim World

| To what do you attribute anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world? | f  | %    |
|---|----|------|
| 1- American support of Israel   | 19 | 90.5 |
| 2- U.S. anti-Arab and anti-Muslim policies and actions                  | 9  | 42.9 |
| 3- Frustration with U.S. intervention in their states' internal affairs | 6  | 28.6 |
| 4- U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq                                    | 5  | 23.8 |
| 5- American arrogance; excessive use of power; unilateralism            | 3  | 14.3 |
| 6- American policy double standards                                     | 3  | 14.3 |

Has Bush Pursued Strategies Radically Different from the Clinton Administration?

It was very important in this study to determine if the Bush Administration has actually pursued radically different strategies than those of the Clinton Administration. Of course, 9/11 had a significant impact on the Bush Administration. However, the Bush Administration has, as many have argued, pursued radically different strategies than the Clinton Administration, starting before 9/11. The majority of interviewees (86.7%) believed just that while 13.3% believed it has not.

TABLE 9. Has Bush Pursued Strategies Radically Different from the of the Clinton Administration?

|   | Yes |      | No |      |
|---|-----|------|----|------|
|   | f   | %    | f  | %    |
| Has the Second Bush Administration pursued Middle Eastern foreign policy strategies radically different from the William Clinton Administration thus exacerbating tension and anti-Americanism? | 13  | 86.7 | 2  | 13.3 |

Has U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East Provoked Militants or Terrorist Groups?

This is probably the most important question in this study as it seeks to examine claims accusing U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East of provoking and contributing to an asymmetric response from what may be described as Islamic

militants or terrorist groups, like Al-Qaeda. In other words, is the relationship between U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East and terrorism an 'action/reaction' relationship. The majority (90%) of interviewees answered 'yes,' 5% said that there is a 'relative' relationship; and 5% said that no such relationship exists.

TABLE 10. Has U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East provoked militants or terrorist groups?

|   | Yes |    | Relatively |   | No |   |
|---|-----|----|------------|---|----|---|
|   | f   | %  | f          | % | f  | % |
| Has U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East provoked and contributed to an asymmetric response from what may be described as Islamic militants or terrorist groups, like Al-Qaeda? | 18  | 90 | 1          | 5 | 1  | 5 |

The next chapter, (chapter seven) presents reflections on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East made by Saudi elites. The reflections will be made on the Bush's role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Bush's war on terrorism including the war on Iraq, and reflections on anti-Americanism as they all are key themes in U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 9/11 AND THE 'WAR ON TERROR'

This chapter examines themes and issues which have characterized George W. Bush and the 'War on Terror.' Specifically, it will try to tie together issues of how we understand the emergence of the war on terror after the events of 9/11 and its consequences. It is, therefore a study of the conduct of American foreign policy in the Middle East and the perceptions within that region which have developed in reaction to the President and the war. Other aspects of Middle East politics, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, are central as they influence American foreign policy in the Middle East region and more broadly U.S./Arab relations. As Richard Crockatt (2003) has stated,

September 11 must be understood in the light of the interaction between America's dominant international position since the end of the Cold War, the rise of political Islam, and the complex set of phenomena that comes under the heading of globalization (p. I).

I use Saudi Arabia as a case study to be representative of Arab feelings and perceptions and as the motor for my primary research work.

#### 9/11 and the War on Terror

9/11 was a major turning point in American and some would say global politics. At the very least, the attacks of 9/11 represented the beginning of a new chapter in terrorist activity and ambitions. A terrorist organization, Al-Qaeda,

succeeded in utilizing technology and communications (such as the internet) to prepare for the 9/11 attacks, which were of a spectacular nature and, of course, took place on U.S. soil as opposed to the usual attacks in the third world. It proved seminal moment for the Bush Administration and altered the course of American foreign policy, especially as it turned out in the Middle East. Before 9/11, the Bush Administration had focused on NMD (National Missile Defense) and a robust disinvests. Post 9/11, the administration's position was transformed into a bid to counter any possibility of terrorist in alliances on attacks on the United States again. To do this required a reassessment of global politics and international organizations by the Bush Administration and a restructuring of the course of the United States in world affairs (Cox, 2002).

Let us return to the events of what became known as 9/11. On September 11, 2001, at 8:45 a.m. (ET), the American people and government faced one of the most critical events in U.S. history. The World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., were attacked by 'hijacked' airplanes. First, American Airlines flight 11 crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center. Eighteen minutes later, United Airlines flight 175 crashed into the south tower of the World Trade Center. Forty minutes later, American Airlines flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. At 10:10 a.m., another United Airlines plane headed toward Washington, D.C. crashed in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, southeast of Pittsburgh. The four flights were hijacked by terrorists; three of those aircraft successfully hit their intended targets. The crash in Pennsylvania killed all of the passengers but seems to have missed its target. It was believed that more than 3,000



people died in the September 11 attacks on New York, Washington and Pennsylvania (CNN, 2001).

The U.S. Government investigation placed responsibility for the terrorist attacks on Osama Bin-Laden and his organization, Al-Qaeda. (In a released videotape in December 2001, Bin-Laden talked about the plan for the 9/11 attacks and, in later speeches, praised the perpetrators of the attacks). To counter any further terrorist activity, the Bush Administration declared a so-called 'war against terror.' On September 14, 2001, all but one member of Congress voted to give President Bush the authorization to use force against those responsible for the attacks. The congressional resolution stated the following:

Authorization for Use of Military Force - Authorizes the President to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations, or persons. (The Library of Congress, September, 2001)

On October 7, 2001, an international coalition led by the United States launched a war against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the country that had harboured Bin-Laden. Then was the first stage in the war on terror. The attack on the base of the Taliban and the Al-Qaeda organization in Afghanistan was called 'Enduring Freedom.' In early October 2001, the United States notified the United Nations that its war against terror would be extended to other states when it is required, and therefore to request authority from the United Nations to such actions. The second stage in the war on terror was launched against Iraq on March 19, 2003. This action toppled the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein (Crockatt, 2003).

An Naim (2002) links the events of 9/11 directly to the conduct of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. He argued that the U.S. policies helped increase a general sentiment of anti-Americanism. 'It is relevant, indeed necessary, to consider the relationship between the attack of September 11 and US foreign policy. This perspective applies to US policy in relation to particular regions of the world – the Middle East' (p. 168). This is, of course, the focus of this study.

### Bin-Laden and Al-Qaeda

In *Fighting Back: The War on Terrorism from Inside the Bush White House*, (2002), Bill Sammon details George Bush's war on terror from the attacks on 9/11 through to the end of May 2002. Also, and perhaps more importantly for the purpose of this chapter, Sammon outlined the factors that he believes led to the tragedy of the twin towers. He begins from the date that Al-Qaeda leader, Osama Bin-Laden, publicly announced his support for the people who perpetrated the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York in 1993. Bin-Laden praised them, saying 'God has blessed a group of vanguard Muslims, the forefront of Islam, to destroy America' (p. 149).

That was the first time that Bin-Laden, who had been supported by the United States during the Soviet-Afghani war, had released an anti-American statement (Mosili, 2004). Bin-Laden's attitude toward the United States became increasingly negative after U.S. involvement in the Second Gulf War in 1991. He began to publicly to denounce American foreign policy in the Middle East, especially in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict (Reitman, 1998). After a series of released videotapes by

Al-Qaeda, in which Bin-Laden claimed responsibility for the 9/11 attacks and explained the processes of the operation, the United States and the world were convinced that Al-Qaeda had indeed been behind the 9/11 attacks.

Bin-Laden's relationship worsened with the Americans and with his own country of Saudi Arabia. Friction between Saudi-born Osama Bin-Laden and the Government of Saudi Arabia had begun during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991. The Saudi Government accepted an American offer to send American troops to defend Saudi Arabia and liberate Kuwait. For Osama Bin-Laden, who publicly opposed the allowance of American troops to land in Saudi Arabia, the idea of having any non-Muslims troops in the Arabian Peninsula was something completely unacceptable (Reitman, 1998).

In Sudan in 1996, Bin-Laden spoke out against the Saudi Government and the American presence on the Arabian Peninsula. While he was not against the liberation of Kuwait or the defense of Saudi Arabia, he opposed stationing non-Muslim troops on the Arabian Peninsula— the home of the two Holy Muslim cities of Mecca and Medina. However, this public face is too simplistic as an explanation for Bin-Laden's disaffection from the United States and Saudi Arabia. Bin-Laden's attitude has to do with what he calls 'Western imperialism.' He believes that the governments of Arab and Muslim countries have deviated from the right path of Islam and blames Western influences, especially that of the United States, for this (Mosili, 2004).

It is important to mention that some of the most despicable acts of terrorism have been committed in the name of a God. It can be particularly bewildering to non-believers of any sect unable to understand the mix of passion, hatred, and violence

which contributes to many terrorist acts. The use of religion as a motivational base has increased tremendously since 1968. In 1968, none of the 11 international terrorist groups identified were religiously motivated; in 1994, a third of 49 international terrorist groups were identified as religious (Stern, 1999). Bin-Laden's organization, Al-Qaeda, is one of the groups using religion to justify its actions. It has justified its operations against American targets as a reaction to the stationing of non-Muslim troops on the Arabian peninsula and American support of Israel, which seems a more political than religious act. Othman Al-Rawaf (author's interview, 2004), a former member of *Ash Shura* (Parliament) in Saudi Arabia, argues that the issue of Palestine is actually a minor issue on the agenda of Al-Qaeda. However, Al-Rawaf believes that the issue of Palestinian is essential to other groups, like the Muslim Brotherhood Party in Jordan, and its attitude and actions toward the United States (the Muslim Brotherhood movement was founded by Hassan Al-Banna in Egypt in 1928. The party is active religiously, politically, and socially and has branches in many Arab and Muslim countries. The Muslim Brotherhood advocates the creation of Islamic government, applying Islamic law 'Sharia' as the primary source of governing) (Mosili, 2004). Asaad Al-Shamlan (author's interview, 2004), from the Institute of Diplomatic Studies under the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, agrees with Al-Rawaf that the Arab-Israeli conflict has been utilized and abused by some groups, like Al-Qaeda, which then portray it as main issue in their agenda when, in fact, it is not.

After the U.S. involvement in the Gulf War, Bin-Laden left Saudi Arabia for Sudan in 1991, taking with him \$250 million of his wealth. In 1994, the Saudi Government revoked Bin-Laden's citizenship because of his terrorist activities

(Mosili, 2004). Two years later, Bin-Laden left Sudan for Afghanistan after the Saudi government put pressure on the Sudanese regime to expel him. The Taliban regime came to power in Afghanistan the same year and Bin-Laden found a haven (Fandy, December 2002).

In 1992, Bin-Laden began anti-American operations by financially backing the Somali militias against U.S. troops. In an operation against Somali militants in the streets of Mogadishu, eighteen U.S. rangers were killed and 77 were wounded. For Bin-Laden, this was his first real victory against the United States. The debacle in Somalia ultimately led to the resignation of U.S. Secretary of Defense Les Aspin after less than a year in the office (Weber, 1993). After the failure of the U.S. operation in Mogadishu, Aspin was called for an emergency briefing on the Capitol Hill where he failed to brief Members in how the administration planned to proceed in Somalia. On 28<sup>th</sup> October, 1993, 39 Republicans in the House of Representatives signed a letter to President Clinton calling upon him to ask Secretary Aspin to resign because of his failure in Somalia. He did (Human Events, November 1993).

After the Gulf War, Bin-Laden and his organization (Al-Qaeda) were accused of sponsoring a series of attacks against U.S. targets, including the bombings of American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Elsalam, Tanzania in 1998 and the bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000 (United States Bureau of International Information Programs, November 1998).

In 1998, Ayman Al-Zawahri merged his Islamic Jihad organization with Al-Qaeda and allied with Bin-Laden. In 1981 Al-Zawahri had been arrested in Egypt after the assassination of Egyptian President, Anwar El-Sadat. He was sentenced to

prison for three years for possessing a weapon without a license. Later, he went to Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion and served as a surgeon for an Afghani field hospital. He created the first platoon of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad. After joining with Bin-Laden, the founder of Islamic Jihad in Egypt became the second most important person in the Al-Qaeda organization (Mosili, 2004).

On August 7, 1998, Bin-Laden masterminded the devastating bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Elsalam, Tanzania. The attacks marked the eighth anniversary of the arrival of U.S. troops in the Arabian Peninsula. The bombings caused 224 casualties, dozens of which were Americans (United States Bureau of International Information Programs, November 1998). On August 20, 1998, President Clinton changed the dialogue regarding terrorism— considering it as an act of ‘war’ instead of a criminal act. He declared a war on terror and, without waiting for ‘federal indictment’ concluded that Bin-Laden was the prime suspect for the attacks. On the same day, President Clinton ordered missile attacks on selected targets in both Afghanistan and Sudan. President Clinton justified these attacks because of the embassy attacks and what he claimed was ‘compelling evidence’ that Bin-Laden was preparing more attacks against U.S. targets (Reitman, 1998). However, Clinton was preoccupied with scandal. The Lewinsky case was returning to both a grand jury and the headlines of the U.S media. For example, the headlines of the New York Times on August 18-19<sup>th</sup> were (President's Explanation Fails to Quiet Republicans or Fire Up Democrats, Clinton's Legal Perils Extend Beyond Lewinsky Relationship, Clinton Admits Lewinsky Liaison to Grand Jury; Tells Nation 'It Was Wrong,' but Private, Graphic: The Public's Initial Reaction After Clinton's Speech, Prominent

Democrats Are Unhappy With Clinton) (New York Times, August 1998). The attacks seemed to be a way to take attention away from the Lewinsky case. Bill Sammon (2002) recalls that the missile attacks 'happened on August 20, 1998, the day after Monica Lewinsky testified before a federal grand jury in the sex-and-lies case that led to Clinton's impeachment' (p. 210). Sammon added that 'The President was widely accused of 'waging the dog,' contriving a military crisis to divert attention from his sexual misdeed' (p. 210).

Approximately, 75 American cruise missiles were fired at two targets in Sudan and Afghanistan. The first target was the Al-Shefa Medicinal Factory in Sudan. It was believed to be a chemical weapons plant, but that belief was erroneous (National Review, September 1998). Yosif Al-Kuaileet (author's interview, 2005), Assistant Editor-in-Chief of the Riyadh daily newspaper in Saudi Arabia described the U.S. air missile attack on the medicine factory 'Al-shifa' as an example of the U.S. using the term 'terrorism' as a tool to incorrectly label the medicine factory as a chemical weapon site and to justify hostile action. The second target of the American missiles was on one of Bin-Laden's training camps in Afghanistan. Twenty-four people were killed, but Bin-Laden and his top assistants escaped harm. After the missile attacks, one of Bin-Laden's spokesmen declared that 'The real battle has not begun' inferring that Al-Qaeda had an agenda and reason to move forward (The New York Times, August 23, 1998).

On October 12, 2000, a small boat filled with explosives ran into the U.S.S Cole as it was refueling in Aden, Yemen. The resulting explosion caused the deaths of seventeen American sailors and injured thirty-nine others. In different speeches, Bin-

Laden justified his attacks against U.S. targets, attributing them as a reaction against U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. For example, in one speech, he denounced American support for Israel and for its sanctions on Iraq:

A million Innocent are dying as we speak, killed in Iraq without any guilt. We hear no denunciation, we hear no edict from the hereditary ruler. And every day, Israeli tanks rampage across Palestine, in Ramallah, Rafah, and Beit Jalal and many other parts of the lands of Islam, and we do not hear anyone raising his voice or objecting .... But when the sword fell upon America, hypocrisy raised its head up high. (CBS News, October, 2001)

The speech made by Bin-Laden was directed at Arabs and Muslims, as it addressed vital issues of concern, including Palestine and Iraq. It condemned the America's double-standards policy. According to the final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States (2004), Bin-Laden wanted to punish the United States for its foreign policy in the Middle East, especially its support for Israel.

In 1998, after the U.S. missile attacks on the Al-Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan and on Sudan, Al-Qaeda decided on a plan to attack U.S. targets on American soil (Reitman, 1998). The targets were the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C. The time was September 11, 2001. It was considered the worst attack on America since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The event revealed the capability of Al-Qaeda to launch attacks on U.S. soil, and revealed the vulnerability of U.S. homeland security.

Over three thousand people were killed in the attacks (the highest number of casualties within the United States since the Civil War). The immediate economic damage was \$35 billion (Kolko, 2002). According to Sammon (2002), after the attacks, 100,000 people lost their jobs. Investors in the American stock market lost



approximately one trillion dollars. When the New York Stock Exchange reopened four days after the attacks of 9/11, the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 684 points, the worst one day drop in history. The consequences of 9/11 were economic and strategic. A week after the attacks, President Bush signed bills for \$40 billion for emergency expenditures. That figure doubled to \$87 billion when he requested funds in September, 2003, to cover military and reconstruction operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

### The Bush Administration's Reaction to 9/11

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, George Bush had to confront a new type of terrorism that has not been experienced by a U.S. President: a devastating terrorist attack on American land. Middle Eastern experts in U.S. foreign policy like Abdulaziz Al-Fayez (author's interview, 2004), a former member of the Saudi Consultative Council *Majlis Ash Shura* (Parliament), believe that the reaction of the Bush Administration to the 9/11 attacks was exaggerated. Al-Fayez believes that previous administrations dealing with the same situation would have reacted less aggressively and perhaps more diplomatically. Al-Shamlan (author's interview, 2004), from the Institute of Diplomatic Studies under the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, asserted that the Bush Administration has harmed the world order with its response to September 11. Any other administration, like Clinton's would have, arguably, handled the situation better.

Other Middle Eastern experts, like Al-Otaibi (author's interview, 2004), from King Saud University, argue that previous administrations in the same position would

have, actually, reacted the same as Bush. If 9/11 had occurred during the Clinton Administration, Clinton would have reacted as Bush did. In other words, it is Al-Otaibi's position that the character of the state and circumstances influence the approach of all American presidents. Regardless of party, the 'means' pursued by the Bush Administration have made its foreign policy active, and any active foreign policy generates dissent. What ever the varieties of opinion, the Bush Administration chose a path of revenge. Middle Eastern views will be presented in greater details in following chapters.

George Bush vowed to pursue all terrorist organizations in the world, claiming that the war against terror is not aimed only at Al-Qaeda. He proclaimed the United States would not stop 'until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated.' (The White House, September 2001). Bush told the Congress that it was going to be a 'whatsoever' strategy. One could only speculate about how long the war would last, and what and where the next target would be after Afghanistan and Iraq (Sammon, 2002)

In a press conference on September 16, 2001, President Bush used the word 'crusade' to refer to the war on terror. The 'crusade' speech caused worldwide criticism, especially by Muslims. In the same day, French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine said, 'We have to avoid a clash of civilizations at all costs ... One has to avoid falling into this huge trap, this monstrous trap' had been 'conceived by the instigators of the assault' (The Christian Science Monitor, September 2001). Bush quickly sought to make amends for the use of this controversial word. He visited the Islamic Center in Washington, D.C. the very next day to correct this mistake. In his

speech at the Islamic Center, he talked about Islam as a tolerant religion and about Muslims as a part of American society. He emphasized in this speech that the war was against 'terror' not Islam. As he said, 'The face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That's not what Islam is all about. Islam is peace. These terrorists don't represent peace. They represent evil and war.' (U.S. Department of State, September 2001). However, as Abdulaziz Al-Fayez (author's interview, 2004) states, the word 'crusade' impacted negatively on Middle Eastern perceptions of the U.S. war on terror. Ali Al-Jahni (author's interview, 2005), from the Prince Naif University for Security Science in Riyadh, believes that the United States was actually engaging in two battlefronts, one against terror and the other against Islam.

There are problems with using controversial words or those that have negative connotations. Noam Chomsky referred to the vagueness of the concept of 'global terrorism,' arguing that 'the term 'terrorism' is restricted, in practice, to the terror that affects the US and its clients and allies' (Quoted in Saint-Prot, 2005, p. 68). Gendzier (2002) mentioned an informal meeting that took place nine days after 9/11 at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. Participants at the 'Campaign against Terrorism,' including former national security advisors Zibgniew Brezinski and Brent Scowcroft made comments regarding the U.S. war on terror. Berzinsiki admonished against 'the notion of terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism as synonymous' (Quoted in Gendzier, p. 596). He and Scowcroft cautioned against expanding the number of states identified as sponsoring terrorism, predicting that this would increase the number of enemies. Brezinski and Scowcroft also urged the administration not to use the word 'war' but, instead, to refer to a 'prolonged,

international campaign against terrorism' (p. 597). Despite this advice, the White House was determined to use the word 'war' (war against terror) and expanded the number of states it identified as sponsoring terrorism.

Initially, two approaches to the war against terror were considered by the Bush Administration. The first one was a unilateral approach led by Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. The second one was a pro-multilateral approach led by the former Secretary of State, Colin Powell. In the White House, Deputy Secretary of Defense (now the World Bank President) Paul Wolfowitz argued that the United States should engage in war against both Afghanistan and Iraq because Saddam already had WMD (weapons of mass destruction), as exemplified by his use of poison gas on his own people in the 1980,s. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, opposed Wolfowitz, explaining that launching a war against both Afghanistan and Iraq would cause the U.S-led international coalition to collapse (Daalder& Lindsay, 2003). Powell lacked support for his position. In his first term, Bush was influenced by the American Neo-Conservatives in the White House. (Now in his second term, current Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Bush's former National Security Advisor, has significant influence on Bush).

As part of the war on terror, on September 20, 2001, before the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, President Bush gave the Taliban regime an ultimatum. To avoid war, the Taliban had to hand-over Osama Bin-Laden and close all terrorist camps (The White House, September 2001). The Taliban refused. On October 7, 2001, the United States began the war on Afghanistan. President Bush emphasized that the war on terror would not end in Afghanistan, 'Today we focus on Afghanistan, but the battle is

broader' (The White House, October 2001). Sammon (2002) believes that this speech by President Bush was a veiled threat that Iraq was next. During the war in Afghanistan, the United States began to raise the issue of WMD in Iraq. In his State of Union speech on January 29, 2002, President Bush said, 'Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade.' (The White House, January 2002)

In a joint news conference with the French President Jacques Chirac, President Bush used a phrase that became known as the 'Bush doctrine' in the war on terror—'You are either with us or against us' (The White House, November 2002). Bush's proposal for the formation of an international coalition against terrorism and the later speeches that addressed the war on terror, such as Bush's 'Axis of Evil' speech, were unacceptable to some countries and publicly criticized by many governments, like France (Palmer, 2003). The French Foreign Minister, Hubert Vedrine, reacted to the 'Axis of Evil' speech in an interview with the French Radio, saying, 'Today we are threatened by a simplistic quality in US policy that reduces all the problems of the world to the struggle against terrorism. It is not properly thought out.' (BBC, February 2002)

President Bush was also criticized by some American figures, who disagreed with his position that those unwilling to participate with America in its war against terrorism were actually on the side of the terrorists. The Democratic, Senator Fritz Hollings of South Carolina agreed with Bush's foreign policy but disagreed with the way Bush proposed to wage it.

The President's policy is correct – but his implementation miserable . . . One would hope that, with an imminent threat, the Congressional leadership is corralled quietly, briefed, and allies consulted for whatever action is taken. On the contrary, this President started off by threatening friends and foes alike blabbing, 'You are either with us or against us,' 'We are the world superpower,' 'I don't need the U.N.,' 'I don't need the Congress.' He seemed totally oblivious to the fact that he is going in two different directions at the same time. (Hollings, October 2002)

There were other ramifications of Bush's strategy. Immanuel Wallerstein (2002), a senior research scholar at Yale University describes Europe's negative reaction to the 'Axis-of-Evil' speech as Europe's strongest negative reaction to U.S. foreign policy since the Second World War:

It should be noted that, since 1945, there has never been so strong a negative European reaction to an announced US policy than after the 'axis of evil' speech. Not only the French, but the Germans, the Spaniards, the Swedes and even major British figures spoke out loudly and strongly in negative terms, describing the project as folly (Wallerstein, 2002, p. 97).

The European reaction can be attributed to concerns over the extension of the U.S. war on terror to many places around the world. Crockatt (2003) referred to concerns over Bush's unilateral and aggressive (preemptive strike) foreign policy. Belgium, France, Germany, and Russia adopted a position which was opposed to American unilateralism. Ambassador Al-Tayeb (author's interview, 2004) from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs speculates that U.S. unilateral foreign policies would lead to an emergence of a European power to counter U.S. hegemony. Since the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, most of the countries of that region have come under American influence; most of the countries in Western Europe have become, over time, critical of U.S. unilateralism and intervention in European affairs.

In the Middle East, there were very specific understandings of the effects of Bush's foreign policy. Abdulkarim Al-Dokhayel (author's interview, 2004), from the

Politics Department at the King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia considers Europe as the only bloc that can possibly dissuade the United States from conducting unilateral actions and, instead working within the framework of the United Nations, especially after the war in Iraq. The potential role of Europe is of utmost importance to the Arab states in the Middle East as they believe that the region has been the focal point of the U.S. war on terror. Al-Dokhayel described two different approaches of European elites toward the U.S. war on terror. The first one is based on morality and international law. The European ethical perspective of the war on terror requires adequate evidence before accusing or taking action against any states and any action taken should be sanctioned by the United Nations. The second approach is based on the sense of Europe's duty or loyalty to support its partnership with the United States. The advocates of this approach view the European relationship with the United States as a substantial one, exemplifying America's role in Europe after the Second World War. The United States helped Western Europe to recover and restore their economies through the 'Marshall Plan' and stood up against the Soviet threat (Al-Dokhayel). Therefore, they believe that Europe should support the United States in its war against terror, even without U.N. authorization.

Raed Gormoly (author's interview, 2004) from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicates that U.S. unilateralism has made it subject to internal and international pressures. International and domestic pressure on the Bush Administration increased after the war started in Afghanistan. The goal was to limit the war on terrorism to the domain of the United Nations. International pressure was applied mainly by France, Germany, and Russia. Domestic pressure came from some

prominent U.S. politicians, mainly Democratic Senators, such as Patrick Leahy, Edward Kennedy, and Tom Daschle. Senator Leahy, urging U.N. support for war in Iraq, warned against weakening the United Nations.

The President also failed to address a key concern that divides Americans, that divides us from many of our closest European allies, that divides our allies from each other, and that divides the UN Security Council . . . without the support of key allies on the UN Security Council, we risk seriously weakening the Security Council's future effectiveness and our own ability to rally international support— not only to prevent this war and future wars, but to deal with other global threats like terrorism (U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy, March 2003).

While the Bush Administration focused on the war in Afghanistan, a series of anthrax attacks were apparently took place in Washington D.C., New York, and Florida, killing five out of 19 people who were infected (Daalder & Lindsay, 2003). This time, unlike the expectations that jumped to conclusion accusing Arabs and Muslims of being behind the anthrax attacks, the investigation had found that a native American who had access to the Pentagon's high-grade biological weapons was behind the attacks. According to Arasli (2005), since 9/11, the activities of the right-wing militants in America have increased, where the numbers of arms are being heaping up. The 'Citizen Militants' organization has the largest number of followers among all right-wing militants in the United States. In the early 2004, it was estimated that 'Citizen Militants' has approximately 50,000 members distributed in 'structural units' in 50 states. Moreover, approximately 137 of these units have connections with other radical groups in America like Ku-Klux-Klan and Aryan Nations (Timothy Mc Veigh who committed the Oklahoma bombing in 1995, which caused the death of 168 people and over 500 injuries, was a member of the Aryan Nations) (Arasli). That is to



say, that in the time the Bush Administration excessively focuses on the external phase of the war on terror, it almost omits the internal phase.

The Middle East is the focal point of the American war on terror because of the high degree of anti-Americanism and anti-secularism that exists in the region. The United States seems determined to reform the entire region to satisfy its interests. This was launched by former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and later reiterated in the U.S. initiative for 'The Greater Middle East.' The main goal is democratic reform in the Middle East. This will be discussed in chapter four.

Saudi perceptions of the war on terror vary. However, Saudi commentators like Alghmadi, Al-Tayeb, Al-Shamlan, Fadel, and Mogaiad (author's interviews, 2004-2005) believe that the Bush Administration has actually failed in the war on terror. According to them, the world has become less secure than it was before 9/11. Al-Tayeb, considers the U.S. failure to restore security and stability in both Afghanistan and Iraq as a failure of the American model that the Bush Administration sought to apply and promote in the region. Mogaiad argues that Bush's foreign policy has failed to quell terrorism. Iraq has become another Afghanistan, a breeding ground for terrorist groups which export terrorist cells to neighbouring countries. In the bombings that took place in Jordan in November 2005, one of the culprits admitted coming from Iraq. Mogaiad added that terrorist groups have found it easier to recruit terrorists from the countries around Iraq, indicating that the number of terrorist operations has increased.

Al-Rawaf (author's interview, 2004) asserts that the Bush Administration has, along with fighting terrorism, (Al-Qaeda in particular, promoted for social change,

economic development, and democracy in the Middle East as the administration believes that reform is one of the important means to fight terrorism. Reform will defeat what the administration calls the culture of 'intolerant violence.' However, Al-Rawaf believes that reform and developments cannot be imposed by the United States. Changes will require the willingness of the people of the Middle East. Saudi perceptions of Bush's foreign policy and American foreign policy in general will be presented in greater detail in Chapter Six (the findings) and Seven (reflections on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East).

The Bush wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have provoked anger in the Arab and Muslim world. The people in that world are religiously tied to the Middle East which is the homeland of the Muslim holy cities. Bush's immediate reaction to the events of 9/11, with his focus on the Middle East, has exacerbated the emotions and ideology that fuel terrorism. His 'heavy-handed' approach has seemingly failed to accomplish an end to terror.

The next chapter presents a background of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. In order to understand the complexities of U.S./Middle East politics, one must consider U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East since the beginning of its engagement in the politics of the region. Evaluating the broader contours of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East provides a unique perspective through Saudi eyes. Has the U.S. approach contributed to the growth of terror in the style that we have witnessed since 9/11? There is considerable literature on the subject of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, but scholars are divided over the reasons why terrorism has emerged in the 9/11 context.

## CHAPTER TWO

### AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

American foreign policy is of course complex, as it seeks to address competing interests and trends, which span different parts of the globe. However, one constant has been the support for the state of Israel. This in turn has made Israel and U.S. support for it a key factor in Middle East politics. It is U.S. foreign policy at that region that is to be investigated in this chapter.

Any contemporary research on such foreign policy requires reflection on the historic conduct of America since the beginning of its direct involvement in the region after the Second World War. After 1945, the Middle East became one of the most important arenas in world politics. It was an area into which the United States was inevitably drawn as a superpower. There are numerous correlations between previous and present American policies. One must consider the events taking place since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century – the role of Washington in the creation of the state of Israel, support for Israel during the wars against its Arab neighbours, and the use of the U.S. veto in the United Nations against resolutions condemning Israel. The actions of the United States established a base for the current negative perceptions of Bush which exist throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds.

This chapter examines American foreign policy in the Middle East, analyzing the actions and positions taken by the United States and how U.S. conduct have

seemingly impacted upon contemporary terrorist groups. Scholars, like Sardar (2002), An Naim (2002), and Gendzier (2002) believe, albeit in different ways, that the past conduct of American foreign policy has actually been responsible for the growth of radical terrorist organizations.

Currently, the American-Saudi relationship may be considered as one of the strongest in the region, after that of the Israeli relationship. The United States has seemingly picked and chosen its partners for the purpose of maintaining its hegemony throughout the region. In this respect again the Saudi case is central to my argument.

The period in which the most obvious anti-Americanism took root in the Arab and Muslim worlds was after the Second World War. The Truman Administration played a significant role in the creation of the Jewish state of Israel in the land of Palestine. Since that time, the level of anti-Americanism has increased in reaction to American support for Israel against its Arab neighbors and the Palestinians during a series of wars in 1948, 1967, and 1973. The United States has also been blamed by Arabs and Muslims for adopting a 'double standard' in the way it condones Israeli action against Palestinian civilians and yet condemns the actions of Palestinian militants. The level of anti-Americanism in the region has increased sharply after 9/11 in reaction to the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

The current Bush Administration is aware of this trend in anti-Americanism. The issue has been the subject of intense debate by policymakers and is widely discussed in the American media. In June 2003, the Department of State assigned an Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy to visit some Arab and Muslim countries to recommend new approaches for U.S. public diplomacy. Part of the task of this

Advisory Group was to conduct interviews and surveys about public diplomacy in the Middle East, where many of the participants' answers were seen as critical to an understudy U.S. foreign policy. The report stated,

Surveys indicate that much of the resentment toward America stems from real conflicts and displeasure with policies, including those involving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and Iraq. But our mandate is clearly limited to issues of public diplomacy, where we believe a significant new effort is required. (Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, 2003, p. 9)

The report of the Advisory Group was submitted to the Committee on Appropriations in the U.S. House of Representatives in 2003 and, it should be noted, included results which help support some of the claims investigated in this thesis. The report stated that 'Hostility toward America has reached shocking levels . . . In our trips to Egypt, Syria, Turkey, France, Morocco and Senegal, we were struck by the depth of opposition to many of our policies' (pp. 15, 18). The report indicated that in a survey in 2002, only 6% of the people in Egypt 'had a favorable view' of the United States, and in the same year, a survey conducted by Gallup found that only 7% of Saudi Arabians had a 'very favorable view' of the United States. This official report, in part, reflected the negative perceptions of the United States in parts of the Middle East and provides some evidence that Saudi perceptions are a useful case study and may be taken as a valid representation of attitudes in the Arab states for the shared features which were elaborated in the methodology.

Very negative Middle Eastern perceptions of the United States (as the American Advisory Group found on the trip) were not formed in reaction to a single U.S. action or a specific U.S. Administration. Many people in the Middle East believe that, even before the war on terror, there were a series of policies that generated anti-

Americanism. However, the post-9/11 period, including the war on terror, seem to have inflamed and added to the existing host of negative perceptions. Kolko (2002) considers the relationship between the historic and current conduct of American foreign policy. For example, he argues that:

Since the end of the Second World War, the United States has reacted to events and crises as they occur and wherever they arise, without reflection or wisdom, and it has gone from one blunder to another. Yet it has never been more confused or dangerous, both to itself and to the world, than at the present moment .... The inevitable legacies of a half century of U.S. policies and adventures in the Middle East have returned both to haunt the United States and to plunge it into a crisis (pp. 85, 137).

The United States had inherited from the British Empire a tumultuous situation in the Middle East. The British had ruled the Middle East during the 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and controlled the routes to the British colonies on the Indian peninsula. After the Second World War, particularly, the end of the British mandate in Palestine in 1947, the United States inherited the Anglo-French 'hegemonies' in the Middle East because both countries were ravaged by the war. The United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the post-war superpowers, seeking to extend their influence in the Middle East. After Suez crisis of 1956, the United States became the predominant power in the Middle East. Since that time, according to Ambassador Mohammad Al-Tayeb from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs (author's interview, 2004), the Middle East has been a vital zone for the United States. It has become committed to three pillars in the region: Israel, oil, and regional stability.

The Middle East became a crucial arena for two reasons. First, U.S. policymakers supported the creation of Israel (which was achieved in 1948) and then acted to ensure the security and stability of the newborn state as it faced war with the

surrounding Arab states which were struggling to nip the Jewish state in the bud. Second, in 1948, the United States began to import oil, and the government became increasingly concerned about 'oil resources.' At that time, American and European oil companies were exploring huge oil reserves in the Gulf region while the Arab-Israeli conflict was inflamed by the Arab-Israeli War of 1948 (Leonardo, 2003). The situation required frequent intervention by the United States in order to soothe tensions between the Arabs and the Israelis. The goal was mostly to accommodate the Gulf states (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates) and in to prevent the opportunity for a Soviet presence. For example, in reaction to the British-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1956, the Soviet Union threatened to engage militarily using air missiles (Shlaim, 2004). The United States wanted to quell any Soviet military intervention. President Eisenhower condemned the invasion and demanded a ceasefire and quick withdrawal from the occupied Egyptian lands by all occupation forces. In his memoirs, *The Eisenhower Diaries* (1981), President Eisenhower said,

Secretary Dulles will warn the Ambassador that while, of course, we would hate to create misunderstandings and needless passion in this country over this question, at this moment he should inform his government that no considerations of partisan politics will keep this government from pursuing a course dictated by justice and international decency in the circumstances, and that it will remain true to its pledges under the United Nations (p. 332).

It is worth saying here that, since President Eisenhower, the United States has exerted influence, not control, over the Israelis. This is an important distinction. For example, during the Second Gulf War, the United States used its influence to deter Israel from retaliating after a series of air missile attacks by Iraq in order to prevent a crisis within the international coalition and an expected uprising in the Arab and

Muslim world. However, this was unusual situation. All pressures made by previous American administrations did not overstep Israeli national interests, especially in security issues (Crockatt, 2003).

One of the reasons of the frequent intervention to soothe the Arab-Israeli conflict was to prevent a substantial Soviet presence in the Middle East. In 1958, Iraqi Arab Nationalists, led by Abdulkarim Qasim overthrew the monarch of Iraq who was a member of the Baghdad Pact— joining with Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey to prevent the expansion of communism into the Middle East. Qasim came to power with an anti-American and anti-British agenda. While the Qasim regime was pro-Soviet (but not Communist), the Iraqi Communist party was very powerful and imposed its influence upon Qasim (Slater, 1990). In 1963, Qasim was killed in coup d'état and his regime was overthrown by the Ba'ath party led by Abdulsalam Arif. King Hussein of Jordan mentioned later that he, along with the CIA, had supported the Ba'athist coup d'état (Ali, 2004).

Abdulaziz Al-Fayez (author's interview, 2004), the Saudi Ambassador in Kuwait and former member of the Saudi Consultative Council *Majlis Ash Shura* (Parliament), believes that the geo-strategic importance of the Middle East is an influential factor in U.S. foreign policy for three reasons. First, the Middle East contains approximately 70% of the world's oil reserves (90% of it in the Gulf region). Second, the Middle East is considered the geographic centre of the world, with geodetic lines between the east and the west intersecting as do the world trade lines, passing through the Suez Canal between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. Third, the region has geo-military importance for the United States, providing strategic



locations that enable the movement of troops and supplies for any action in Africa, Europe, or Asia, such as during the war in Afghanistan (Al-Fayez, author's interview, 2004).

In late 2001, Qatar granted the United States a military base at Al-Odaid, one of the best facilities in the world. Qatar is a Gulf state. In September 2002 and before the war in Iraq, the United States moved its Central Command Headquarter from Tampa, Florida to the Al-Odaid base in Qatar. Ambassador Jameel Merdad (author's interview, 2004) from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs claims that the Al-Odaid base was one of the major factors that had led to a U.S. victory in the war against Iraq in 2003. The presence of U.S. troops in the region guarantees quick action against any threat to American interests in the region, especially the security of Israel and oil. The security of Israel requires an American guarantee of Israel's superiority over its Arab neighbours, like the arms airlift to Israel during the 1973 War against Egypt and Syria which will be addressed later in this section. Oil, on the other hand, requires a smooth flow of the resources.

Ambassador Merdad (author's interview, 2004) asserted that all U.S. administrations had input into the Arab-Israeli conflict because Israel itself, is 'American made,' referring to the American role in the creation of the Israeli state. Thus, according to Merdad, the United States has been a key player. The U.S. role in the Arab-Israeli conflict has been shaped and utilized by pro-Israeli and Zionist lobbies within America. According to a number of specialists, including Bamyeh (2003), those lobbies have successfully integrated and interplayed within the cultural, social, economic, and political fabric of the United States. Critics believe that those

lobbies have a major influence on the American media and hence public opinion (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). Hence, criticism of Israel by officials was deemed unacceptable. The highly organized Zionist and pro-Israeli lobbies consider any anti-Israeli position to be one of anti-Semitism (Curtiss & Hanley, 2005). Among these lobbies is the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), considered as one of the most powerful pro-Israeli lobbies in the United States. It was described by Congressional members and their staffs, according to study by Fortune magazine in 1997, as the second most powerful lobby in America only after the American Association of Retired People (AARP). In March 2005, another study sponsored by the National Journal, ranked AIPAC second 'tied' with AARP in a hierarchy of influence (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006).

Zionist and pro-Israeli lobbies seek in this version of politics to discredit officials who attempt to criticize Israel or American support for Israel. These include former Congress members, Paul Findley, Cynthia McKinney, and Earl Hillard. In his book *They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby* (2001), former Congressman Paul Findley (Illinois) mentioned how the pro-Israeli and Zionist lobbies mobilized opposition against him inside the Congress and in Illinois in reaction to his demand for a balanced American role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This, according to him, led to his defeat in the election of November 1982 (Findley, 2001).

Whatever the nuances of the Findley case, historically, Zionist lobbies have played a major role in gaining support for a Jewish state in the land of Palestine. According to Ahmed (1990), the efforts of Zionist leaders in America and Britain led to the Balfour Declaration of 1917. Zionism was founded by Theodor Herzl after the

First Zionist Congress in 1897 which launched the World Zionist Organization (Berger, 1991). In 1991, the United States and Israel succeeded in abolishing the 1975 U.N. General Assembly resolution 3379 that equated Zionism and racism. According to the United Nations website (1991), the resolution stated that the General Assembly 'Decides to revoke the determination contained in its resolution 3379 (XXX) of 10 November 1975.' Abdulati Al-Sayad (author's interview, 2004) from the Prince Naif University for Security Science in Riyadh attributes anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim worlds to 'an American partiality to Zionism.'

The strategy of the predominant Israeli and Zionist lobbies in the United States are different than the strategy of other ethnic lobbies in America because they promote what they believe are mutual interests between the United States and Israel. In fact, they discuss issues relating to Israel as 'internal' U.S. issues instead of those of foreign policy, portraying the security and the mutual interests and values between Israel and the United States as one undivided entity. The discourse of the Israeli and Zionist lobbies tend to present Judaism and Christianity as the only religious bases of the American culture. For example, in his article, *Israel American and the Arab Delusion* (2001), Daniel Pipes said, 'As Muslims, these Middle Easterners fail to understand the emotional resonance of a common Bible and a host of Judeo-Christian features' (p. 28).

Zionists and pro-Israeli lobbies in America played a major role in promoting Israel as an American ally who could 'save' U.S. interests in the region, especially after the Israeli victory in the Six Days War against its Arab neighbours in 1967. Since the Six Days War, relations between the United States and Israel shifted from

that of a superpower state and a lesser state to that of two partner states (Al-Ghamdi, author's interview, 2004). This change can be attributed to the overwhelming victory of Israel against the Arab nations engaged in the Six Days War, proving as argued by some American policymakers after the war, that Israel had the ability to defend itself and protect American interests. This notion of Israel became widely supported by American policymakers after Israel defeated Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in the Six Days War. However, as explained by Saleh Al-Khathlan (author's interview, 2004), from the King Saud University in Riyadh, the security and superiority of Israel has been sustained and guaranteed militarily by the United States in order to maintain the balance of power in the region. After the Israeli success in 1967, unlike before where American supplies to Israel had been limited to 'defensive weapons,' the United States began to supply Israel with offensive weapons, like Phantom jets (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998).

The oil crisis in the 1970s after the Arab embargo following the 1973 War consolidated the notion of American reliance on Israel as a major ally in the region. Because it was only after this crisis that the United States created emergency plans to seize the oil fields in the Gulf region. Israel was a central base in the Pentagon plans. After the oil crisis (the issue of oil will be dealt with in the next chapter), keeping a smooth flow of oil supplies with reasonable prices became an important issue for all U.S. administrations. To achieve this goal, they sought to maintain stability in the region by ensuring Israel's superiority and protecting 'friendly' regimes from the threat of regimes that antagonize the United States, such as Nasser's regime in Egypt

in the 1960's-1970's and the Khomeini regime that came to power in 1979 (Crockatt, 2003).

Some Saudi experts, such as (Al-Khathlan, author's interview, 2004) argue that both oil and the security of Israel have been the main reasons for the American presence in the Middle East. Abdullah Al-Otaibi (author's interview, 2004), from King Saud University, argues that a clash of interests in the United States between the pro-Israeli lobbies and the oil lobbies regarding U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East would never happen due to 'mutual' interests. However, the oil lobbies have always pressured administrations, to seek 'appeasement' between the Arabs and Israelis to avoid the escalation of animosity. The U.S. oil industry would be a major loser in any further wars between the two parties.

During the Cold War, Washington sought to maintain regional allegiance to the United States. Many Muslim countries, especially Saudi Arabia, played a major role in keeping communism at bay, defeating the Soviet army in Afghanistan. In that struggle, the Arab and Muslim Mujahidins played a leading role in the guerilla war against the Soviets. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the beginning of American uni-polarity, the United States began engaging in clashes with regimes that had been considered 'friendly' during the Cold War (Al-Jahni, author's interview, 2005).

After the end of the Cold War, Washington became concerned about consolidating and insuring American hegemony in the region. While using different strategies, the main approach was that of the 'Carrot and Stick' as elaborated upon by Ambassador Merdad (author's interview, 2004). According to Middle Eastern and

Western specialists in American foreign policy, such as Othman Al-Rawaf (author's interview, 2004), former member of *Ash Shura* (Parliament) in Saudi Arabia, in some influential circles and among some theoreticians in the West, like Samuel Huntington the author of *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (2002), suggestions were made about Islam being a threat to the western world order, replacing the previous threat of the Soviet Union (This issue is discussed in greater details in Chapter four).

So, we have identified the themes of oil and Israeli security as predominant themes in U.S. foreign policy. This is at least, an Arab perception, let us explore these further and the general history of U.S.-Middle East relations.

### The Arab-Israeli Conflict

The Arab-Israeli conflict has been a major cause of anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world. The United States has been a significant variable in the equation of the Arab-Israeli conflict, playing a major role in the creation of Jewish state, helping it survive, and condoning its expansion at the expense of Arab neighbours.

Jewish emigration to Palestine started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the full support of Great Britain and the United States. Those countries exerted pressure on the Ottoman Empire to facilitate the emigration process. Jewish and Zionist lobbies in both countries played a major role in the making of the British and U.S. foreign policies toward Palestine, demanding a homeland in Palestine based on Biblical

claims. The United States actually went beyond that by helping finance the Jewish emigration (Heikel, 1996).

When the First World War broke out, the British government promised the nationalistic Arab movements in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon (except Iraq, those were Arab states coming out of the area known as Greater Syria) to help them restore the Arabic national *Khilafa* over the Arabic lands, if they allied with Britain and staged a revolt against the Ottoman Empire. When the war was over, however, Britain broke the promise. Immediately after the First World War, Britain and France divided the Arabic lands according to the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916: Syria and Lebanon were placed under French mandate, and the Palestinian land was placed under British mandate along with Egypt (Kubursi, 1996). In 1917, Britain announced the Balfour Declaration, promising the Zionists that Britain would 'view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people' (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004). The declaration caused a massive Arab uprising in Palestine and led to clashes between them and the British-backed Jewish minority. At that time, the Palestine population was 91% Arab and 9% Jewish. Approximately half of the Jewish population consisted of new immigrants. The United States backed the Balfour Declaration and publicly announced its support for the creation of a Jewish 'homeland' in Palestine.

On May 27, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson announced that, 'every people has a right to choose the sovereignty under which they live' (Ahmed, 1990, p. 1). In his address to the U.S. Senate on January 8, 1918, Wilson stated his Fourteen Points regarding the issue of self-determination. In point five, Wilson said, 'The interests of

the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined' (Ahmed, p. 2). Point twelve stated, 'The other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development' (p. 2). Of course, Palestine was one of the nationalities under the Turkish rule.

The first direct intervention by the United States was made by President Wilson in 1919. He demanded a leading role for the United States in the Middle East after the First World War. The Zionist lobbies in both England and America sought to gain support for a Jewish state in the Palestinian land. The drafting of the Balfour Declaration was the product of mutual efforts by Zionist leaders in America and Britain. President Wilson sent the 'King-Crane Commission' to Palestine to find out about the wishes of the Arab people for 'self-determination.' The Commission recommended against the creation of a Jewish state as it would interfere with the national rights of the Arabs in Palestine. The legal adviser to President Wilson, David Miller, told the President that 'self-determination' in Palestine would fail if a Jewish state was created because the Jewish people constituted only 10% of the population (Ahmed, 1990). On March 2, 1919, after a meeting with the delegation of the Jewish Congress in Chicago, President Wilson denied any commitment to the 'self-determination' of an existing population in the land of Palestine. Moreover, he announced that he was 'persuaded that the Allied nations, with the fullest concurrence of our own government and people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish commonwealth' (Ahmed, 1990, p. 15). On June 30, 1922, the



U.S. House of Representatives passed the Fish Resolution, advocating for the Balfour Declaration. Several months later, on September 11<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Congress passed Resolution 322 in favor of the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. This was then approved and signed by President Warren Harding (Ahmed).

On September 29, 1922, the League of Nations approved the British mandate over Palestine. The Palestinians opposed this action. On December 3, 1924, during the Anglo-American Convention, the United States announced its recognition of the British mandate over Palestine. Most importantly, it was agreed (as stated in article seven) that Britain would consult with the United States in regards to the status of Palestine. Later, in the 1940's, U.S. policymakers referred to the Anglo-American Convention of 1924 as a legal basis for the U.S. involvement regarding the Jewish emigration to Palestine and the creation of the Jewish state (Ahmed, 1990).

During the large Jewish migrations of the 1940s, many wanted to migrate to America. The U.S. Department of Labor announced that 400,000 immigrants could be absorbed, but Jewish people were excluded. A Jewish U.S. Congressman, Chaplain Klausner, backed the exclusion, saying that they 'must be forced to go to Palestine' (Bennis, 2003, p. 31). The United States paid \$130 million for the costs of the Jewish migration to Palestine. These two actions, excluding Jewish immigrants from the United States and financing their relocation to Palestine are indicative of America's crucial role in creating the Jewish state in Palestine (Bennis, 2003).

At the beginning of the Second World War, and as a consequence of the Palestinian Arab uprising in 1936, the British government declared in a White Paper in 1939 the termination of the Jewish migration and land purchases in Palestine. In

reaction, Zionist organizations helped Jewish immigrants to get into Palestine illegally (Berger, 1991).

In opposition to the British shift, Israeli and Zionist terrorist organizations like Irgun (whose leader Manheim Begin, later became a Prime Minister of Israel) and Stern began to launch attacks against British targets in Palestine. The King David Hotel was bombed on July 22, 1946, causing the deaths of 91 people, including 28 British officials. Lord Mayone, British Minister of State was assassinated in Cairo in 1944. U.N. special envoy, Count Folke Bernadotte, was killed in 1947, and there were other attacks and kidnappings against British troops.

Israeli terrorist organizations also attacked Palestinian villages and suburbs. Irgun massacred the unarmed people of Deir Yassin on April 9, 1948, causing the deaths of approximately 250 people, including women and children (Dumke, 2005). As a result of the escalated violence and the high cost of casualties, the British government announced on December 3, 1947 its plan to end its mandate over Palestine by May 15, 1948. It asked the United Nations to take over its responsibilities in resolving the conflict (Habib, 2003).

During these times, American political intervention in the Middle East was increasing. Immediately after the Second World War, during the Potsdam meeting, President Truman sent a memorandum to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, where he asked for a meeting to discuss the issue of Palestine. In the memorandum, Truman said the following:

There is a great interest in America in the Palestine problem. The drastic restrictions imposed on Jewish immigration by the British White Paper of May, 1939, continue to provoke passionate protest from Americans most interested in Palestine and in the Jewish problem (Truman, 1956, p. 143).

On April 2, 1947, the British Government presented a request to the U.N. General Assembly to resolve the Palestine problem. On May 14<sup>th</sup>, the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) created in response to the British request, 'agreed' that the British mandate over Palestine should be ended before declaring the independence of two separate states (Arab and Jewish). The committee also agreed to keep Jerusalem under the 'trusteeship' of the United Nations (Truman, 1956). After British withdrawal from Palestine in 1948, the United States replaced the British as guardian and supporter for the establishment of a Jewish state. It backed U.N. Resolution 181, dividing the land of Palestine into two states, 55% to become a Jewish state, and 45% to become a Palestinian Arab state. At that time, Jews owned only 7% of the land of Palestine (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). President Truman's support for Israel was opposed by Secretary of State George Marshall, who believed that a biased role would negatively affect the U.S. image in the region and its relations with the Arab regimes (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998). According to Bennis (2003), in November 1947, President Truman ordered the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations to ensure that countries who received U.S. financial aid voted for the resolution. Among those countries was the Philippines, which, through its representative in the United Nations, opposed the proposed resolution.

We hold that the issue is primarily moral. The issue is whether the United Nations should accept responsibility for the enforcement of a policy which is clearly repugnant to the valid nationalist aspiration of the people of Palestine. The Philippines Government holds that the United Nations ought not to accept such responsibility. (Bennis, p. 32-33)

Within two days of that statement, 'a phone call' from the U.S. President to the head of the Philippines government resulted in their being called home and the

Philippines government backed the U.N. partition resolution on November 29, 1947. The Philippines government was dependant on economic aid, and the United States used that leverage. In his memoirs, *Years of Trials and Hope* (1956), President Truman complained about the heavy pressures exerted on him by Zionist leaders.

I do not think I ever had as much pressure and propaganda aimed at the White House as I had in this instance. The persistence of a few of the extreme Zionist leaders— actuated by political motives and engaging in political threats— disturbed me and annoyed me. Some were even suggesting that we pressure sovereign nations in favorable votes in the General Assembly (Truman, 1956, pp. 168-169).

In May 1948, the Jewish people in Palestine declared Israel to be an independent state. Eleven minutes after that proclamation, the United States was the first country to recognize the newborn state with full diplomatic relations (Truman, 1956). Since then, the United States has been considered by some Arab leaders as an 'enemy' and by other leaders as the holder of the key to solving the conflict. The United States remains to this day in the paradoxical position of being part of the problem and part of the solution (Pipes, 2001).

Arab leaders in Egypt, Syria, and Jordan reacted to Israel's declaration of independence by sending their armies to Palestine. Also, many Arab states sponsored and financed groups of Mujahidins from the Arab world. The Arab armies faced the Israeli army, which was more advanced and better armed, and the Arabs lost the war. As a result of the 1948 War, the Israeli army occupied 78% of the Palestinian lands, not 55% which was part of the original plan. This forced 750,000 Palestinians to leave their homes land. Most of the displaced Palestinians still live in refugee camps (Bennis, 2003).

After the war, U.N. Resolution 194 declared the 'right of return' and compensation for the 750,000 Palestinian refugees. The Israelis did not accept the 'right of return' or withdrawal to the boundaries of the U.N. 55% plan. In 1949, (a year after the Arab-Israeli War), the U.S. government allowed tax-exempt status for donations to the state of Israel, encouraging the American people to donate generously to Israel (Bennis, 2003).

The creation of the Israeli state in Palestine created a geographical partition between the Arab states. It became a barrier between the Arab states of Asia and the Arab states of Africa, undermining any effort to unite the Arab states, like the unity between Egypt and Syria 'The United Arab Republic' that was created in 1958 and dissolved in 1961 (Heikel, 1990).

#### The Cold War and Its Impact on the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Coincidentally, the Arab-Israeli conflict (which was virtually a response to the creation of Israel) and the Cold War began in the same period. In 1992, the Madrid Conference was the first direct negotiations that gathered all parties of the Arab-Israeli conflict (all the Arab neighbors of Israel) and witnessed the collapse of the Soviet Union before the end of the conference. That is to say that, for any reader, the issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict would not be understood without the appreciation of the impact that the Cold War had upon the conflict. Therefore, it is important here to discuss both issues together, as they are, closely correlated.

The Cold War actually played a major role in shaping American foreign policy in the Middle East. During the Cold War, the Middle East was subject to the influence

of both the United States and the Soviet Union. Both superpowers sought to have great influence in the region (Garthoff, 1994). In opposition to the U.S. position, the Soviet Union supported many Arab countries in the region— Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and the Palestinians— against the Israelis. Their support was financial and military (Al-Tayeb, author's interview, 2004). In response, U.S. strategies used in the region comprised the so-called 'polarization policy.' That policy was used to bring friendly governments in the region under the American umbrella in order to limit the expansion of communism (Merdad, author's interview, 2004). The Cold War required the United States to look for allies, especially in the Middle East, to contain communism and limit Soviet influence in the region.

Israel adopted a (*i-hisdahut*) 'non-identification' policy at the beginning of the Cold War. Since its creation in 1948 and until after the British-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1956, Israel did not align openly with the United States or the Soviet Union. However, after 1956, Israel established 'close alignment' with the West. The USSR joined with the United States in supporting the U.N. resolution for the partition of Palestine. After its creation, Israel sought to maintain good relations with the USSR in order to maintain the flow of Jewish immigrants from the USSR and eastern Europe and because the Israeli Army was using Soviet weapons (Shlaim, 2004). Israel had used its 'non-identification' policy to exploit support from both the United States and the Soviet Union. However, when it came to the point that Israel had to align with the United States, it abandoned the 'non-identification' policy. In the early 1950s, the numbers of Jewish immigrants from the USSR had dropped and the Israelis feared losing American sympathy as the Cold War tensions escalated (Shlaim, 2004).

The first sign of Israel's readiness to abandon the 'non-identification' policy was its support for the United States during the Korean War in 1950. Since that time, the Soviet Union began reshaping its policy toward Israel, leading to a decline in relationship and a temporary disconnect for several months in 1953. Relations resumed after the death of Stalin in the same year (Shlaim, 2004). The decline in relations between the USSR and Israel occurred as a long and strong relationship between Egypt and the USSR was developing. The USSR became a major weapons supplier to Egypt, especially during the War of 1973, in which Egypt was able to recapture parts of the Israeli-held Sinai with the use of the Soviet weapons.

In 1954, the United States was instrumental in Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Turkey joining together in a mutual defense alliance which became known as the Baghdad Pact (Pinto, 1999). Eisenhower believed that the alliance of the largest states in the Middle East would prevent a Soviet presence in the region and secure the oil fields in the Gulf. However, it was not long before the Iraqi monarchy was overthrown by Abdulkarim Qasim and the Iraqi Arab Nationalists. They came to power with an anti-American and anti-British agenda. While the Qasim regime was pro-Soviet, it was not Communist, but the Iraqi Communist party was very powerful and imposed its influence upon Qasim (Slater, 1990). With the backing and influence of the Soviets and the Arab Egyptian Nationalist President Jamal Abdunasser, Iraq withdrew from the pact (Pollack, 2003). In 1963, Qasim was killed and his regime was overthrown by the Ba'ath party led by Abdulsalam Arif. King Hussein of Jordan mentioned later that he and the CIA backed the Ba'athist coup d'etat (Ali, 2004).

The Baghdad Pact was not the only American defensive structure against Soviet expansion in the region. Indeed, for the United States, Israel was more reliable and effective than the members of the Baghdad Pact. Professor Edward Said of Columbia University in New York described Israel as ‘a device for holding Islam– and later the Soviet Union, communism – at bay’ (Edward Said, quoted in Pipes, 2001, p. 27). Indeed, the United States had multiple strategies in the Middle East and a number of allies.

During the period of the Shah’s regime, Iran was considered by the United States to be a first line of defense and a barrier against any Soviet expansion threatening the Gulf region. The United States benefited from Iran’s strategic location for monitoring the Soviet Union. In exchange for the American support needed to sustain his regime, the Shah of Iran allowed the United States to set up and use intelligence facilities in the northern part of Iran for the purpose of monitoring the Soviet Union. During the era of the Shah, Iran was also one of the U.S.’s largest sources of oil and one of the world’s largest markets for the U.S. weapons industry (Leonardo, 2003). The Shah’s regime also established relations with Israel. The Israelis trained the suppressive Iranian intelligence service (SAVAK), while the United States provided training to the Iranian police to protect and sustain the Shah’s regime from ongoing internal turmoil in Iran. Iran was also a major oil supplier for Israel. In fact, Iran was the only Muslim state to have such relationship with Israel (Leonardo).

The Shah’s relationship with Israel was one of the factors that led to the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The relationship with Israel created support for the Shah



within the U.S. Congress, boosted by the pro-Israeli lobbies (Habib, 2003). The Shah received advanced U.S. weapons, ranking Iran the second military power in the region after Israel. The Shah was described by the Nixon Administration as the 'policeman of the Gulf' and by President Carter as a 'pillar of stability' in the region. However, the Shah's regime was plagued by internal unrest (Gerges, 1999). After 1971, SAVAK members began to receive intensive training courses from the CIA and the Israeli Mossad, seeking to sustain the Shah's control. In September 1978, the CIA predicted that the Shah's regime would remain in power for at least another decade, but the prediction was invalidated a few months later when the Shah was sent into exile and replaced by the Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic Revolution in early 1979. He came to power with anti-American foreign policy and oil prices increased thirty to forty percent (Kolko, 2002).

Not wanting the United States to go unpunished, 52 diplomats from the American Embassy were seized as hostages. They were held hostages for 444 days and not released until a secret deal was made between the Reagan Administration and the Khomeini regime. In what became known as 'Iran Contra,' the CIA secretly sold weapons to the Khomeini regime through the Israelis and used the money from the sale to aid the Contra rebels in Nicaragua (Berger, 1991). In an interview in the Boston Globe in 1982, the Israeli Ambassador to the United States confirmed 'that Israel's arms shipment to Iran . . . coordinated with the U.S. government at almost the highest of levels' (Quoted in Berger, 1991, p. 5).

In reaction to the Khomeini revolution, the Carter Administration created the 'Rapid Deployment Force' to counter a potential Iranian threat against the other Gulf

states. All U.S. administrations since Carter have refused to normalize relations with the revolutionary regime in Iran. Saudi Ambassador Mohammed Al-Tayeb (author's interview, 2004) speculates that the United States will never normalize relations with the current Islamic regime in Iran because the ambition of this regime is to improve its military capabilities (including its nuclear program) and to export the revolution. Since 2002, the Iranian nuclear program has been subject to conflict with the United States and Europe. The Iranian government has asserted that the program is only to develop the capacity for peaceful nuclear power generation. On April 11, 2006, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadi Nejad announced that Iran had successfully enriched uranium. Washington believes that the Iranian ambition threatens U.S. interests in the region and threatens Israel.

Before the peace agreement Israel was considered by Egypt as the major threat to its existence. Thus, the Israeli government sought to influence American-Egyptian relations in the early 50's. For example, when the U.S. Information Service at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo was bombed in 1954, the Egyptian government announced that the attack was orchestrated by Israelis. The Israeli government denied this and accused the Egyptians of being anti-Semitic. Later the same year in Israel, the Lavon Affair scandal (referring to Defense Minister Penhas Lavon) forced the resignation of Lavon as he was accused of authorizing the terrorist attack on Egypt. The Israeli Intelligence Service admitted its responsibility in the bombing (Habib, 2003).

On February 28, 1955, the Israeli Army launched 'Operation Black Arrow' against the Egyptians military headquarters in Gaza City, causing the deaths of 38 Egyptian soldiers and wounding 31. The attack put pressure on Nasser's regime,

leading to a September 1955 arms deal with the Czech government. This was done after the U.S. refusal to sell 'defensive' weapons to Egypt. According to Shlaim (2004), the Israeli operation in Gaza unintentionally led to a new special relationship between Egypt and the USSR. The Egyptians realized that they were in 'indirect confrontation' with the United States, who was supporting Israel. Thus the USSR became Egypt's inevitable source of weapons and power against the United States. This served the Soviets, who were seeking to extend their influence in the Middle East against the United States.

In response to the Egyptian deal with the Czechs, the U.S. government withdrew its financial support for building the High Dam at Aswan. In reaction to the decision, the Egyptian President Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company. The Egyptian decision to nationalize the Suez Canal Company prompted the British, French, and Israelis to invade Egypt in 1956 (Pinto, 1999).

In 1956, the British-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt was condemned by the United States and the Soviet Union. They demanded a ceasefire and quick withdrawal from the Egyptian territory. The Soviet Union threatened to engage militarily, using air missiles. British motivation for the attack was to prevent the Egyptian government from nationalizing the Suez Canal Company because both Britain and France were major shareholders. The French government was motivated by the desire to put an end to Egyptian support of the nationalist revolutionaries in French-controlled Algeria. Israel took advantage of the British-French military intervention in order to gain victory against Egypt. In his reaction to the invasion, President Eisenhower was the first and only U.S. president to take a strong position against Israel in the United

Nations (Shlaim, 2004). He threatened to suspend Federal Internal Revenue tax-free status to donations that pro-Israeli and Jewish organizations sent to Israel if the Israeli government refused to comply with U.N. demands to withdraw from the Egyptian-occupied lands. The Americans may have taken this position because the Soviets threatened to intervene and, more importantly, because the United States wanted an end to the British and French hegemony in the region.

After the war in 1956 war, the United States developed explicit pro-Israeli and anti-Arab and Muslim policies, especially in regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Gendzier (2002) indicates that the turning point in American-Israeli relations came in 1958 when the Israeli lobbies began to have a direct affect on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Before the 1956 Suez war, the Israeli government tended to look with dissatisfaction toward Jews who preferred to live in America rather than migrating to Israel. However, post-1956, the policymakers in Israel realized the influence of Jewish-American lobbies and that they could be utilized in the interests of Israel. In one year, the contribution of world Jews to the state of Israel increased 5-fold– from \$100 million in 1956 to \$500 million in 1957 (Heikel, 1990).

President Kennedy was the first U.S. president to describe the ‘special relationship’ that existed between America and Israel. He told Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir that the ‘special relationship with Israel is comparable only to that which it has with Britain over a wide range of world affairs,’ and added that ‘in case of invasion the United States would come to the support of Israel’ (President Kennedy quoted in Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998, p. 1, 3). President Carter confirmed the ‘special relationship’ and added, ‘It’s absolutely crucial that no one in our county or around the

world ever doubt that our number one commitment in the Middle East is to protect the right of Israel to exist' (President Carter quoted in Reich, 2003, P. 233). Bar-Simantov believes that the American-Israeli relationship has 'soft' and 'hard' factors. The soft factor is based on what Jewish-American and pro-Israeli lobbies in the United States tend to describe as mutual values and ideas between the people of United States and Israel. The hard factor is based on 'strategic interests,' mostly in favor of the security of the Israeli state. The hard factor was consolidated after Israel's overwhelming victory against the Arabs in the Six Days War in 1967. After that war, the United States began to look at Israel as a reliable U.S ally in the region, in a 'patron-client relationship,' and a powerful base against the expansion of communism in the Middle East.

In 1967, the Six Days War was launched against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The Israeli government action to invade Sinai was in response to Egypt prohibiting of Israeli ships from passing through the Red Sea. As a result of the war, Israel occupied East Jerusalem (home to Islam's Third Holiest), the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip (which constituted all of the remaining unoccupied Palestinian territory), the Golan Heights (from Syria), and Sinai (from Egypt). The Israeli invasion and occupation of East Jerusalem intensified the conflict, moving it from an Arab-Israeli issue to one that engaged both the Arab and Muslim worlds (Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem is the Third Holiest spot in Islam). After a ceasefire agreement was reached, the United Nations passed Resolution 242, demanding Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories (Gerges, 2003).

According to Heikel (1990), U.S. President Lyndon Johnson knew about Israel's plan to launch a war against its Arab neighbors. Before the 1967 War, communications between the White House and the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) referred to the action using the code-phrase 'hunting the turkey' (the 'turkey' being Egyptian President Nasser). The Johnson Administration believed that the Nasser regime in Egypt was a threat not only to Israel but to U.S. interests in the region. On May, 25<sup>th</sup>, ten days before the war, the United States sent a battalion of Marines to the Sixth Fleet for military support of the Israelis. By June 4<sup>th</sup>, while a U.S. delegate was in Egypt, President Johnson telegraphed the Israeli Defense Minister, giving him the green light to start. On June 5<sup>th</sup>, the Israeli Army began the war. After the war, a State Department memo noted:

Israel has probably done more for the US in the Middle East in relation to money and effort invested than any of our so-called allies and friends elsewhere around the world since the end of the Second World War. In the Far East, we can get almost nobody to help us in Viet Nam. Here, the Israelis won the war single-handedly, have taken us off the hook, and have served our interests as well as theirs (State Department quoted in Bennis, 2003, p. 39).

Since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict and up until Six Days War in the 1967, the United States was committed to an arms embargo of both parties. However, according to Bar-Siman-Tov (1998), the United States supplied Israel with what it called 'defensive weapons,' and helped them obtain weapons from France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. This shifted after the Israeli success in the 1967 war. In January 1968, the United States began to look at Israel as a major reliable ally in the region, recognizing Israel's military capability to stand up against the dual threat of communism and the Arab national movement in the Middle East. The United States abrogated its embargo and began to supply Israel with advanced weapons, such

as Phantom jets (Bar-Siman-Tov). At the same time, U.S. economic aid to Israel was increasing. General U.S. aid to Israel in the four years after the 1967 war was ten times more than the aid total from 1947 to 1967. Yearly U.S. aid to Israel reached \$600 million in 1971, over \$2 billion in 1973, and \$3 billion at the present time (Kolko, 2002). According to Mearsheimer and Walt (2006), between 1948 and 2003, Israel received over \$140 billion in U.S. aid.

The 1967 War was a turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Between 1948 and 1967, all the Arab states opposed recognition of the state of Israel. They demanded the return of all Palestinian land and the deportation of the Israeli immigrants back to the states from which they had come. After 1967, some Arab governments realized that such demands were unattainable and began to demand Israeli withdrawal to the pre-war borders of 1967. The Arab-Israeli conflict concerning the borders and the land is very complicated. For example, some Zionists and Israelis seek an expansion of the land of Israel, defining Greater Israel as the area between the Nile in Egypt and the Euphrates in Iraq (Habib, 2003).

On October 6, 1973, the Egyptian and Syrian armies launched swift attacks, Egyptian army crossing into Sinai and the Syrians regaining parts of the occupied Golan Heights. U.S. support to Israel during the 1973 War (\$2.2 billion of military aid) had significantly repaired the coasts and boosted the Israelis. The United States provided an arms airlift to Israel, sending the weapons that the Israeli government had requested (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). In his book *Does America Need a Foreign Policy* (2002), former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said that without the airlift in the 1973, 'Israel's position would have been much more precarious' (p. 180). In his

memoirs, *In Search of Identity* (1978), former Egyptian President Anwar El-Sadat stated that during the war, the United States used the Ariesh base in Sinai to supply Israel with tanks filled with fuel and ammunition. He also said that the United States supplied Israel with satellite pictures, enabling it to launch counterattacks to re-seize the Golan Heights and break through the west side of the Suez Canal.

After American and Soviet intervention on the Israeli and Arab sides, a ceasefire agreement was reached. U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger put pressure on Israel to accept the terms after his crucial negotiations with the Egyptians. The Israelis sought to recapture the land liberated by the Egyptians before a ceasefire was reached, but the United States, wanting to prevent further Soviet intervention, applied heavy pressure upon the Israelis to accept the ceasefire (Kissinger, 2002). The Israeli Defense Minister, Moshe Dayan, admitted that Israel had acquiesced to American pressure to sign the ceasefire, saying, 'How can you oppose a country that sends you ammunition in the morning that you fire in the afternoon?' (Bennis, 2003, p. 44)

As a consequence of the war, the Israeli economy suffered, and the American government offered an increase in economic aid to Israel totaling \$8 billion over the next four years. Total U.S. aid to Israel between 1948- 1973 had been only \$3 billion (Bennis, 2003). America's siding with Israel during and after the war provoked the people of the Arab and Muslim countries. In reaction to the U.S-Israeli 'alliance,' the Arab states launched an oil embargo against the United States and the other countries that supported Israel during the war. Immediately, oil prices jumped from \$3 a barrel to \$12, leading to economic recession in the United States and Europe. Also, the Arab



states (Arab League) launched a boycott against goods produced and sold by companies that dealt with Israel (Fennell, 2002). Because of the U.S. support for Israel was unconditional, which negatively impacted upon American interests in the region, President Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger were convinced of the necessity of alleviating the conflict in the Middle East by playing the role of 'mediator.' The goal was to prevent the Soviets from extending their influence in the region and to convince the Arabs to lift the oil embargo against the United States (Bar-Siman-Tov, 1998).

The 1973 War revived the Palestinian problem within the United Nations. In November, 1974, the United Nations voted 105 to 4 (only the United States, Israel, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic opposed the resolution) to recognize the Palestinians' right to 'self-determination' and to give the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) an observer seat in the United Nations (Bennis, 2003, p. 45).

In a surprising move in 1977, Egyptian President Anwar El-Sadat announced in a speech at the Egyptian Parliament that he was willing to go to Israel 'for the sake of peace.' In his memoirs, *In Search of Identity* (1978), El-Sadat said that he did this to break what he called the vicious circle 'الدائرة المفرغة' of the conflict and to prove to the world that not only Israel seeks peace, but Arabs as well. That was the first and most significant breakthrough in the Arab-Israeli conflict by any Arab leader engaged in the peace process. The Israeli government immediately responded by inviting President El-Sadat to Israel. In 1978, President Anwar El-Sadat and the Israeli Prime Minister, Manheim Begin, accepted an invitation to peace negotiations at Camp David in the United States. A peace agreement was signed in the White House in

Washington, D.C. in 1979 (Jimmy Carter Library, 2003). All the Arab states opposed the treaty as it was a unilateral, not a multilateral, agreement between the Egyptians and the Israelis. El-Sadat was opposed by many of his people who felt that Egypt had been neutralized in the Arab-Israeli conflict by signing a separate peace agreement with Israel instead of a comprehensive one between all of the Arab states and Israel. Many Egyptians believed that the wars in 1948, 1956, and 1967 were over the land of Palestine, not the Sinai Peninsula (a main issue in the peace agreement between the Egyptians and the Israelis) that has been occupied in 1967. On October 6, 1981, El-Sadat was assassinated by military members affiliated to an Islamic militia during a parade memorializing the 1973 war (Crockatt, 2003). The assassination of El-Sadat led to years of unrest in Egypt, which witnessed a trend of terrorism by radical militants between the 1980's and 1990's. Several terrorist operations took place during these years, such as the assassination of Parliament Speaker Rifaat Al-Mahgoub in 1990 and the assassination attempts on former Prime Minister Atif Sedky, Minister of Information Safwat Al-Sharif in 1993, and several former interior ministers (Al-Nabawy Ismael, Zaki Badr, Hassan Abu Basha, and Hassan Al-Alfy).

In 1978, the Israeli Army occupied parts of southern Lebanon, to secure its territory against attacks by Palestinian militants, mainly the PLO. In reaction, U.N. Resolution 425 was passed, demanding 'an immediate and unconditional withdrawal' from the occupied lands. Israel did not withdraw until the year 2000, after an exhausting guerilla war with Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon (Bennis, 2003).

In 1982, the Israeli Army, using American tanks, aircraft, and missiles, invaded Lebanon and devastated its capital city, Beirut. Despite an American law

forbidding any country to use American weapons for other than defensive purposes, the United States continued to supply Israel with weapons, increasing their supply 50% (Bennis, 2003). Bar-Siman-Tov (1998) stated in his article, *The United States and Israel Since 1948: A 'Special Relationship?'* that Israel had actually received a green light from the Americans 'after sharing its plans' with them (p. 11). The Israeli Government claimed that this invasion was an act of self-defense against the PLO leadership that was leading the resistance from the Lebanese territory. According to Robert Fisk, (Middle East correspondent for the British newspaper The Independent) who was there at that time, nearly 17,500 civilian were killed in that invasion (Fisk, quoted in Findley, 2002).

After the horrible and prolonged bombing of Beirut, a ceasefire agreement was reached by the United States, which guaranteed safe passage for the PLO from Lebanon to another Arab state (Tunisia). The PLO accepted the offer, stipulating American surety for the safety of Palestinian civilians in the refugee camps in Lebanon. On September 11, 1982, two weeks before the agreed time, the United States withdrew its troops from Lebanon, breaching its agreement with the PLO. Five days later, on September 16th, the Israeli Defense Army shelled flash bombs and allowed the Christian Phalangists (the most anti-Palestinian militants) to move into the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps in the west suburbs of Beirut. The Phalangists killed between 2,000 and 3,000 Palestinians, mostly women, children, and elderly people. Most of the Palestinian leaders and fighters had left Lebanon according to the agreement reached with the United States. The Red Cross announced

that 'it would be impossible to know the exact number who died.' (The Red Cross quoted in Bennis, 2003, p. 53)

Spurred by international condemnation and outrage within the Arab and Muslim worlds, the Israeli government formed a 'high-level' commission (Kahan), which found that Israeli Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, was 'indirectly responsible' for the massacre. The United States denounced the massacre but voted against a U.N. resolution condemning the massacre. The United States was indirectly blamed for the massacre as it had pulled out its troops earlier than the agreed upon time. On September 19, 1982, President Reagan decided to send American troops back to Beirut to mend the mistake. Approximately one year later, a truck bomb in Beirut destroyed the U.S. Marines headquarters and the French Paratroop center, killing 241 Americans and 58 French paratroopers (Pincus, 1994). Three months later, the United States pulled out its troops, ending its mission in Beirut.

In 1981, the Israeli Air Force bombed the Iraqi Osirak nuclear power reactor. Israel justified the attack, claiming that the reactor was used to produce nuclear weapons that would be used against Israel. After the attack, the United States announced that it would veto any U.N. resolution to impose sanctions on Israel, but accepted a U.N. resolution to condemn the attack (Bennis, 2003). Merdad (author's interview, 2004) described Israel as the 'U.S. long-hand in the region,' noting the U.S. endorsement of Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor (Osirak) in 1981. The Israeli attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor was one of a series of Israeli actions against Iraq. Iraq was targeted as it constituted the only potential threat against the state of Israel once Egypt signed the peace agreement with Israel in 1979. Another of Israel's

operations to destabilize Iraq was Mossad's (Israeli Intelligence) support of the Kurdish fighters seeking to gain independence in the northern province of Iraq. In 1988, senior Israeli official Moshe Arens said, 'Israel, in principle . . . will continue in the future to support the rectification of the grievances of the Kurdish people [against Iraq]' (Moshe Arens quoted in Berger, 1991, p. 5).

In December 1987, the first Palestinian Intifada (uprising) broke out. Started by a group of children who stoned an Israeli patrol, it turned into a widespread uprising all over the Palestinian-occupied territories. The Palestinian Intifada accomplished what the PLO had sought to gain for forty years— international attention. Television networks broadcasted pictures of Palestinian children who rose up against the Israeli occupation. They also broadcasted pictures of Israeli soldiers using stones to break the bones of those children. This was the strategy adopted and announced by Israeli Defense Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. According to 'Save the Children' Organization in Sweden, among the children who were injured in the first year of the Intifada (estimated between '23,600 to 29, 900') one-third of the injured children had broken bones, and one-third were under the age of eleven (quoted in Mearsheimer & Walt, 2006). A year after the beginning of the Intifada, the Israeli Army Research Institute advised the Prime Minister and Defense Minister that the Intifada required a political solution, not a military response. When Rabin acknowledged that his strategy had failed, he told the Israeli cabinet that he did not want to turn the Israeli Army into a police force with the duty of running after children in poor cities in the third world.

After the beginning of the Palestinian Intifada, the PNC (Palestinian National Congress) met in exile (Algeria) and declared the independence of the state of

Palestine, a state that included East Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank. Many countries around the world responded to the declaration by offering full diplomatic relations to the Palestinian state. This included all the Arab states. The United Nations, on the other hand, invited the former Palestinian leader, Yasir Arafat, to address the U.N. General Assembly, but the United States refused to provide a visa. American Secretary of State George Shultz justified his decision based on evidence of PLO engagement in terrorist activities. As a result of the American refusal, the U.N. General Assembly decided to meet in Geneva to give Arafat the opportunity to address them. In the General Assembly, Arafat announced, for the first time, the Palestinian recognition of the state of Israel, the acceptance of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, and the condemnation of all kinds of aggression and terrorism. In response, the United States announced that it would establish a channel of dialogue with the PLO (DiGeorgio-Lutz, 2003).

On October 31, 1991, an international conference took place in Madrid. It included all parties involved in the Middle East conflict: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine (under the Jordanian delegation), and Syria (Reich, 2003). The conference was, sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, but during the conference, the Soviet Union collapsed (November, 6, 1991).

It is interesting to discuss the wider debate over who serves who in the Israeli-American relationship. Mohammad Al-Hulwa (author's interview, 2004), member of *Ash Shura* (Parliament) in Saudi Arabia and member of its Foreign Affairs Committee, described Israel as 'the head of the U.S. spear in the region.' Daniel Pipes (2001) sees a duality in the relationship between the two countries. In his article, *Israel American*

*and the Arab Delusion* (2001), he indicates that American-Israeli relations have been characterized as either a relationship to serve U.S. interests in the Middle East region or as a relationship influenced by powerful Israeli lobbies in the United States. However, many experts in American foreign policy, like Saudi Ambassador Mohammad Al-Tayeb (author's interview, 2004) argue that the United States and Israel serve the interests of each other. The United States exploits its influence in the Middle East to support Israel, which it considers the only constant U.S. ally in the region. On the other hand, Israel is committed to serving U.S. interests in the region based on actions taken during the years of conflict war, the Cold War, and the rise of anti-American regimes like the Khomeini regime. Another point of view is held by Mohammad Eid (author's interview, 2004) from the Prince Naif University for Security Science in Riyadh and former Deputy Minister of the Interior in Egypt. He states that the interests of Israel are actually American interests because, from the American perspective, Israel represents Western civilization and also acts as a policing agent in the region and protector of U.S. oil interests. Israel also has its own national interest that America appreciates— that is the security of Israel. The United States has insured Israel's superiority over its Arab neighbours by supplying it with advanced defensive and offensive weapons.

### The Arab Israeli Conflict in the Post Cold War Era

Even though the Madrid Conference in 1991 did not accomplish any peace agreement between all the parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, it had brought all of them to the same table for the first time. As a consequence of the Madrid

Conference, several channels of negotiations between the Arabs and Israelis were established (Al-Tayeb, author's interview, 2004). One was a general channel between all the Arab states on one side and Israel on the other. There were three separate channels between the Israelis and Jordan (the Palestinian delegation under the Jordanian delegation), Syria, and Lebanon. In the same year, after the European Commission (EC) sessions in Brussels, the Europeans began to call for a major role in the peacemaking process in the Middle East (Berger, 1991).

For the first time, the Israeli government started negotiating with the PLO through 'secret channels' in the United States. The main obstacles in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations involved the issues of the land, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, Jerusalem, and the status of Israeli settlements in occupied territories in the West Bank (a Palestinian territory captured by the Israeli Army in 1967 and home to approximately 400,000 Israeli settlers). While the Israeli and Palestinian delegates were negotiating in Washington D.C., another secret channel of negotiation was established in Oslo, Norway in 1993. In Oslo the approach was different, both sides agreed to start with the minor issues and then move forward. Some of the minor issues involved security, Palestinian prisoners, creating a Palestinian authority, and economic aid (Heikel, 2000). In September 1993, as a result of the work done at Oslo, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Leader Yasir Arafat signed a peace treaty at the White House with the sponsorship of U.S. President Bill Clinton.



The Oslo treaty did not provide a full and final solution to all problems but made a significant start. A year later, in October 1994, Rabin and King Hussein of Jordan also signed a peace treaty at the White House (Reich, 2003).

Unfortunately, not everyone embraced the peace process. In 1995, a right-wing Jew killed Yitzhak Rabin, violently registering opposition to the peace agreement with the Palestinians. Unlike Rabin, right-wing Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu came to power with an anti-Oslo agenda which included expanding Jewish settlements in the occupied territories (Reich, 2003).

In August 1996, the Israeli Air Force bombed a shelter in Qana, Lebanon, killing approximately 200 women, children, and old people (Findley, 2002). The attacks were widely condemned, and the United Nations sent an investigation team. They reported that an Israeli drone plane was in the air before the attacks, confirming that the Israelis knew that civilians were in the target area. The United States sought to keep the report from being released, but U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali did release it. In reaction, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Madeline Albright, launched a campaign to thwart a second term for Ghali (Bennis, 2003).

In July 2000, President Clinton called for a summit between the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, and the Palestinian leader, Yasir Arafat at Camp David. The goal was to break through the main issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and arrive at some kind of resolution. Unfortunately, Camp David failed. Barak presented an Israeli proposal, giving back 95% of the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, and a partition of the outskirts of Jerusalem (Kissinger, 2002). Arafat rejected the Israeli proposal. The Clinton Administration and U.S. media blamed Arafat for the failure of

Camp David, claiming that the Israeli 'offer' was unprecedented in relation to any previous Israeli peace proposal. In his memoirs, *My Life* (2004), former President Bill Clinton said, 'Arafat's rejection of my proposal after Barak accepted it was an error of historic proportions' (pp. 944-945). Of course, most of the Arab states had announced earlier that they would accept and support any Palestinian alteration to the status of the final issues but would not accept any cession of Arab sovereignty over East Jerusalem (Habib, 2003).

Arafat was blamed by both the United States and Israel for rejecting Barak's offer. But what is the 'standard' for the negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians: Was it a choice between Barak's offer or the U.N. resolutions? Barak's offer denied the right of return and compensations to Palestinian refugees in accordance with U.N. Resolution 194. The Israeli offer also gave Israel the right to retain 70% of the settlements in the occupied territories. It also denied the borders of 1947 that had been mandated by U.N. Resolution 181 or even the borders that existed in 1967. According to Mearsheimer and Walt (2006), a member of the U.S. team at Camp David said after the failure of the summit, 'far too often, we functioned . . . as Israel's lawyer' (p. 3).

In his book *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?* (2002), Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger described the U.S. position after the failure of Camp David as the 'worst' it could be. He felt the Clinton Administration was more desirous of reaching a conclusion to the conflict than either the Israelis or Palestinians. He felt this made the United States look more like one of the involved parties instead of a mediator.

In the last week of September 2000, after the failure of Camp David, Ariel Sharon walked inside the square of the Abraham Mosque Sanctuary, the Third Holiest spot in Islam. This was a boldly provocative act. More than 1000 Israeli soldiers came with Sharon to guard him from the expected outrage. Six Palestinians were killed in a clash with police inside the square, and, this sparked the Second Palestinian Intifada, (Bennis, 2003). Shortly after the beginning of the Intifada, Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister, putting the last nail in the coffin of the Oslo peace process. Former U.S. diplomat in the Middle East, John Habib (2003), assessed the Arab reaction to the Second 'Intifada.'

Nothing in my long and close association with the Middle East prepared me for the depth of anger that I witnessed in the Arab world from Morocco to Saudi Arabia, starting with the first weeks of the second Palestinian uprising, intifada, in September 2000 to the Israeli re-occupation of Palestinian cities in 2002. While the Arabs were deeply sympathetic with the plight of the Palestinian, they also felt that the humiliation that Israel and the United States inflicted on the Palestinian was directed at them, collectively and individually, as Arabs and as Muslims (Habib, 2003, p. 167).

Many Middle Eastern commentators attribute anti-Americanism in the Arab and Muslim world mainly to an accumulation of negative perceptions of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East since the Second World War. A policy that supported the creation of the Israeli state in Palestine, backed Israel in its wars against the Arab states in 1948, 1967, and 1973, and adopted pro-Israeli policies in the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, anti-Americanism in the Middle East as a theme will be discussed in chapter five (roots of anti-Americanism).

The United States was not the only superpower involved in the Middle East. The Soviet Union also sought to influence Middle Eastern politics, and to have in the region regimes that were sympathetic towards Moscow. Thus, the Middle East

became the site of American/Soviet great power rivalry. This was particularly the case in Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and the subsequent American support for the Afghan Mujahidin, form part of the background to the current U.S. 'war on terror.'

#### A Proxy War: 'The Soviet-Afghan War'

The Cold War was a long drawn out encounter for the Soviet Union. During these tension-field years, the two 'super powers' sponsored a number of 'proxy wars' against each other. Soviet involvement in Cuba sparked the U.S.-Cuban missile crisis, and the U.S. backed the Mujahidin in Afghanistan in the period of the Soviet invasion of that country (Merdad, author's interview, 2004). The United States and the Soviet Union also sought to overthrow various regimes that did not adhere to their philosophies or support their agendas. The overthrow of the Hela Selasy's regime in Ethiopia in 1974 by the Marxist pro-Soviet revolutionist Hela Merriam is an example of a Soviet-sponsored coup d'etat, and the U.S. support of the Ba'ath party's overthrow of the Qasim's regime in 1963 is an example of American-sponsored coup d'etat (Merdad).

Afghanistan was one of the scenes between the United States and the Soviet Union in the third world. Other confrontations took place in other parts of the world, even though to lesser degrees, like Angola and Yemen. However, the invasion of Afghanistan as the Carter Administration was complained brought the Soviets closer to the Persian Gulf (Garthoff, 1994). The war began a few months after the fall of the Shah's regime in Iran, making the geo-strategic location of Afghanistan more crucial

to U.S. interests. In reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the collapse of the Shah's regime in 1979, President Carter 'declared the Persian Gulf and Southwest Asia to be the third security zone of the West' (Hartman, 2002, p. 471).

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on December 25, 1979 provided the United States with the opportunity to weaken the Soviet Union while avoiding a direct confrontation. The United States sought to ensnare the Soviet Union in a quagmire like the one America had experienced in Vietnam, exhausting the USSR financially and militarily. Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski confirmed in an interview in 1998 that the Carter administration was aiming 'to induce a Soviet military intervention . . . I wrote to President Carter: we now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War' (Kolko, 2002, p. 47). The reason for the Soviet invasion was to support the communist government against Islamic militants.

The USSR was aware of the Islamic revolution in Iran and did not want a repeat in Afghanistan. The Soviet leadership was concerned that the Islamic revolution might extend from Afghanistan to the Muslim provinces of the Soviet Union, which would seek to imitate the Afghani version. The Soviet government invaded Afghanistan to prevent the Islamic militants from gaining power. The United States, on the other hand, wanted to protect its interests in the Gulf region and diminish Soviet aid to revolutionary movements in the third world (Hartman, 2002).

U.S. involvement in Afghanistan actually started eight months before the Soviet invasion when the United States supported the rebels fighting against the communist government. Immediately after the Soviet invasion, U.S. President Jimmy Carter ordered the CIA to funnel more military supplies and humanitarian aid to the

rebels through Pakistan (Hartman, 2002). More importantly, the CIA opened and financed camps in Pakistan to train the Mujahidin (Muslims who were willing to defend the Muslim state). During the Afghan-Soviet War, over 35000 Muslims from all over the world were recruited and trained by both the Pakistani military intelligence and the CIA to fight in Afghanistan. For many Muslims from around the world, the 'Jihad' in Afghanistan was not only a defense of Afghani soil but also defense of Islam against 'the infidel Soviets' (Hartman). In the month following the invasion, at an Islamic Conference in Pakistan, thirty-five Muslim states condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Garthoff, 1994).

According to Garthoff (1994), Brzezinski said that he 'consulted with the Saudis and the Egyptians regarding the fighting in Afghanistan' (p. 1051). Saudi Arabia, which had been a key player in the Muslim world since the Second World War, was ready to do every possible to support the 'Muslim state' of Afghanistan against the communist Soviet. Saudi Arabia, considered in the Muslim world as the cradle and defender of Islam (home of the two Holy Shrines of Mecca and Medina), had actually played a major role in financing and supporting the Mujahidin in Afghanistan in coordination with the United States and Pakistan. The Saudi decision to support the Mujahidin in Afghanistan led many Arab and Muslim states to do the same (Peterson, 2002).

Osama Bin-Laden, who later created the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization, was the leader of the Arab Mujahidin. Bin-Laden was aided by the United States in building facilities and training camps for the Mujahidin in Afghanistan. The 'Khost tunnel complex' was built in 1981 under Bin-Laden's supervision. Before he came to

Afghanistan, Bin-Laden's business was in constructional engineering as a shelter, armory, and training camp (Crockatt, 2003). Bin-Laden also had the money to finance camps to recruit and train the Arab Mujahidin (Mosili, 2004). In the United States, there were thirty recruiting offices among the ones that Bin-Laden had all over the world during the war in Afghanistan. Some of these offices had, in a 'blowback,' played a major role in recruiting Al-Qaeda members when the organization was created in 1989 (Kolko, 2002). According to Crockatt (2003), during the war in Afghanistan in 2001, U.S. forces found 'CIA training manuals,' including instructions in 'a variety of terrorist techniques,' at some of the Al-Qaeda training camps (p. 103). (Ramzi Yousef and his accomplices, who were all convicted of the World Trade Center bombing in New York City in 1993, had received their training during the war in Afghanistan).

Even though there was an increase in the defense budget during the Carter Administration, the Southern Conservatives of the Democratic Party had labeled him weak on defense, and left the Democratic Party. In his article, *'The Red Template': US Policy in Soviet-Occupied Afghanistan*, Andrew Hartman (2002) argued that the Cold War had given the ideological conservative policymakers the opportunity to make foreign policies that enabled the United States to control the world.

Unlike Carter, Reagan started his term with a hard-handed policy toward the Soviet Union, which he described as the 'Evil Empire.' Reagan vowed to back all the countries around the world which were resisting 'Soviet-supported aggression.' This became known as the 'Reagan Doctrine' (Hartman, 2002).

According to Kolko (2002), the CIA spent \$3 billion during the 1980's to aid the Mujahidin in their battle against the Soviet Union. The Reagan Administration sought to prevent any diplomatic solution for a withdrawal from Afghanistan, wanting to keep Moscow embroiled in a war of attrition. During the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in the United States in 1987, Reagan maintained his full commitment to support the Mujahidin in Afghanistan, saying that the summit has nothing to do with the U.S. attitude toward the war, 'our conduct at the summit and the framing of its results must in no way complicate our efforts to maintain a strong defense budget . . . and support of the Contras and the Mujahidin' (Hartman, 2002, p. 477). In 1988, the Soviet Union was defeated and began to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. After 10 years of war, the death toll stood at 14,000 Soviet soldiers and approximately the same number of 'non-combatants.' Of course, it was the billions of dollars of military expenditures which exhausted the Soviet economy (Crockatt, 2003).

After the end of the Second Gulf War 'Desert Storm' and during the Madrid Conference, the Soviet Union collapsed. This ended approximately forty years of Cold War. Afghanistan proved to be the last (indirect) battleground of confrontation between the two superpowers. The War in Afghanistan was one of the so-called 'proxy wars' that both countries sponsored against each other. The war in Afghanistan relates to Middle East policy as some Middle Eastern states were indirectly participating in the war. After 9/11, Afghanistan became the first stage of the U.S. war against terror with American troops attacking its ex-allies (the Mujahidin) and the Taliban regime, the reactionary ruling group, described as a backlash against the United States.



## The End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War had a wide-ranging impact on U.S. foreign policy. It has been argued that the world became more destabilized after the end of the Cold War (Crockatt, 2003). The notion of this destabilization has generated theses like Francis Fukuyama's 'The End of History' and Samuel Huntington's 'The Clash of Civilizations.' Both have generated wide debate inside and outside of America.

The end of the Cold War had evoked demands within Europe to review its foreign policy and redefine its relation with the United States. After the EC sessions in Brussels in 1991, the Europeans began to call for a major role for Europe in peacemaking in the Middle East (Berger, 1991). However, the 1990's witnessed an increase in American influence, with most of the Eastern European regimes gradually falling under the American umbrella. The 1990's also witnessed military intervention by the United States in the Balkans. During the first stages of the Balkan problem, it appeared that the Europeans were not able to deal with the crisis. The bloody conflict and the massacres came to an end only when the United States decided to intervene militarily (Kagan, 2003). The war in the Balkans provided an opportunity for the United States to prove that an American role in Europe was still needed, even after the end of the Cold War.

In recent years, many Eastern European regimes, formerly Warsaw Pact nations, became NATO members and subject to American influence. Some of these nations became more pro-American than some of the Western European regimes, especially during the U.S. war on terror. For example, during the U.S. war against Iraq in 2003, many Eastern European regimes (former Communist countries) like

Ukraine, Poland, and Hungary supported the United States, whereas Western European countries like Belgium, France, and Germany refused to participate in the war against Iraq without explicit authorization by the United Nations. As argued by Ambassador Mohammed Al-Tayeb from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs (author's interview, 2004), this is a clear example of how the end of the Cold War has impacted the world's balance of power and attitudes about U.S. hegemony. For the most part, Eastern European regimes have sought to align with the United States for the purpose of gaining American aid to bolster their weak economies.

After the end of the Cold War, the nature of the American-European relationship (especially with the western European states) became the subject of wide debate. The previous basis involved the U.S.-USSR power struggle, but that no longer existed. In his book, *Paradise and Power*, Robert Kagan (2003) argued that American and European foreign strategies vary in accordance with their international interests.

It is time to stop pretending that Europeans and Americans share a common view of the world, or even that they occupy the same world. On the all-important question of power--the efficacy of power, the morality of power, the desirability of power--American and European perspectives are diverging. Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. (p. 3)

For the United States, power is the necessary mean for upholding international stability and the security of the United States; Europeans believe on giving international organizations a major role in upholding world security. It appears that the Europeans are interested not in an arms race with the United States, but with economic competition. The European efforts to restrain the excessive use of U.S. power and unilateralism is derived from its own view of a world of laws and rules.

Kagan (2003) attributes this view to Europe's inability to carry out unilateral actions, and their desire to restrain others from doing it.

There is an alternative that needs to be considered. Some Europeans and Americans, like Samuel Huntington, look positively at Europe as a potential superpower. In his article *The Lonely Superpower*, (1999), Huntington argued that a superpower Europe would restore 'multi-polarity' in the world arena.

According to Kagan (2003), intellectuals in Europe entertain the notion that the so-called 'common strategic culture' shared by America and Europe has vanished as the national entities look at the world from different points of view. Americans, seem to look at the world as a struggle between 'good and evil.' Since 9/11, American officials, especially President Bush, have referred to this notion when explaining America's 'war on terror' and the threat facing America. Europeans, having suffered from the woes of bloody wars in the past century, have their own definition of 'intolerable threats' to international security. Their concerns are differently defined. Modern Europe prefers diplomacy over the use of power and multilateralism over unilateralism. This is basically the difference between the Europeans and the United States regarding world security. This difference between Europeans and the United states, which evolved after 9/11, has opened up gaps between them.

Steven Everts listed what he called 'challenges' that Europeans are concerned about like 'ethnic conflicts, migration, poverty and environmental degradation' (Everts 2001, quoted in Kagan, p. 32). The Europeans disagree with concepts and terms used by the United States to define threats, such as 'rogue states' and the 'axis of evil.' Iraq provides a clear example of the American-European disagreement over the definition

of 'threats.' The Europeans, especially France and Germany, believed that the consequences of the American war in Iraq constitute a greater threat to world security than the one posed by Saddam Hussein when he was in power. Indeed, European fears about post-war Iraq have proved to be genuine up until the time of this writing (April, 2006). It appears that the aftermath of the American war in Iraq will leave Iraq a center of terrorism, anarchy, and chaos. According to the Lancet study released in October 2004, the estimated number of deaths among Iraqi civilians exceeds 100,000 people. This is a very controversial figure, but the British government has promised to investigate this figure (BBC, October, 2004).

#### The Shift of American Foreign Policy in the Middle East after the Cold War

In the late 1970s and the early 1980s, Soviet influence and communism began to decline in the Middle East (Slater, 1990). On the other hand, the United States started to recant from supporting many repressive regimes that had become a burden upon the United States, such as the Moboto regime in Congo and Marcos in Philippines. Gradually, the United States began to raise human rights issues against repressive regimes, of whom some had been close allies during the Cold War.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the United States changed its foreign policy and strategies (Al-Hulwa, author's interview, 2004). The end of the Cold War weakened and in some cases ended the strategic importance that some U.S. allies had. No longer relying on their allegiance, the United States began to pursue a heavy-handed policy against some disliked regimes in the region (Al-Fayez, author's interview, 2004). The United States abandoned the use of

containment and appeasement strategies with countries like Syria, Yemen, and Iraq, and used what Abdullah Al-Otaibi (author's interview, 2004), from the King Saud University in Riyadh, called an 'accommodation' strategy with the Gulf States. The United States no longer needed to conciliate regimes it disapproved in the region. Instead, some governments in the Middle East sought to court U.S. favor, like the Libyan regime. In 2004, Moamar Qadaphi agreed to abandon Libya's nuclear program and consented to pay compensation to the families of victims in the Pan Am airplane bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988.

There are experts in American foreign policy, like Abdullah Al-Ghamdi (author's interview, 2004), from the King Saud University in Riyadh, who argue that the United States was not ready to assume the role of unipolar power in the world after the collapse of the Soviet Union. U.S. policymakers were in a dilemma because, logically, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the armaments race meant that the United States should be able to decrease military expenditures. That would certainly be unacceptable to the weapons lobby in America. There were also questions, as described by Daalder and Lindsay (2003), regarding 'how the United States should engage the world' (p. 12).

The Clinton Administration came to power with its own ideas on the post-Cold War era. It focused attention on the international economy, forming economic conglomerates and activating globalization. According to Ambassador Merdad (author's interview, 2004), the Clinton era had impact on rules and concepts in international relations, especially in the Middle East where, for example, the Gulf states (including Iran and Iraq) were experiencing economic recession as a result of

the First Gulf War (the 10-year Iran-Iraq war which lasted until 1989) and the Second Gulf War (Desert Storm 1990-1991, which was economically devastating for Iraq and the Gulf states which helped finance the war). The political landscape in the Middle East had also changed. For example, Palestinian Leader Yasir Arafat was isolated by the Gulf States (major political and economic supporters of the Palestinian leadership) because Arafat had sided with Saddam Hussein during the Second Gulf War when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. Before the International Conference in Madrid in 1991, Arafat was considered a terrorist by all of the previous U.S. administrations. However, after the conference, Arafat became the recognized negotiator for the Palestinians and later a man of peace during the Clinton Administration. Ultimately, he won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1994 (Gendzier, 2002).

The Madrid Conference took place after the overwhelming victory of American and coalition forces against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq in the Second Gulf War (the liberation of Kuwait). The war resulted in an American military presence in the region, consolidating its political hegemony in the Middle East. In order to fully understand the consequences of the Second Gulf War, it is necessary to understand the effects and consequences of the First Gulf War.

### The First Gulf War

In 1980, the First Gulf War broke out between Iran and Iraq after a border conflict over Shat Al-Arab. When the Iranian Islamic revolution gained power in 1979, Saddam Hussein (the former Iraqi president) expected to have a better relationship with the Khomeini revolutionary regime than he had had with the Shah.

That was not to be, though, as one of the most important principles in the doctrine of the Iranian Islamic revolutionaries was the exportation of the revolution to the entire Gulf region, beginning with Iran's closest neighbor, Iraq. In a breach of the Iran-Iraq border agreement signed in Algeria in 1975, Iraq sought to regain half of Shat al Arab, an area given to Iran during the Shah's era in an effort to appease its more powerful neighbor (Ali, 2004). War began in 1980 after what the Iraqi government called a number of provocative acts of by the Khomeini regime— stirring up unrest among the Shiite Muslims and encouraging the Kurdish population to revolt against the Iraqi regime. It also played a role in the assassination attempts made against senior Iraqi officials.

In reaction to the Iranian threat and the Khomeini doctrine of exporting the revolution, many countries, including the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, gave Iraq strong and public support. For Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states, Iraq was considered the 'eastern gate' that stood solid against Iranian ambitions to 'export the revolution' to its Arab neighbours (Ehteshami, 2002). The United States supported Iraq to counter the threat posed by the Khomeini regime in the Gulf region, on area containing more than 60% of the world's oil reserves. The United States wanted both sides to engage in a war that would exhaust their military capabilities, but realized that the Iranian army was more advanced and more powerful than the Iraqi army. Therefore, the United States provided Iraq with intelligence and target information. Also, the United States provided Iraq with goods worth more than \$5 billion. In addition to receiving weapons from the United States, the Gulf states, mainly Saudi Arabia, realized the threat Iran posed to their security and stability and

generously supplied the Iraqi Army with advanced weapons. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait alone loaned Iraq \$95 billion (Kolko, 2002).

During the Reagan Administration, the United States sold the Iraqi government seed stock for biological weapons (Anthrax, West Nile virus, and Botulinal Toxin) which were used against the Iranian Army and the Kurdish minority in Iraq (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2003). U.S. Defense Minister Donald Rumsfeld was one of the U.S. officials sent to 'court' Iraq, even after Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons against the Iraqi Kurds. Rumsfeld was Reagan's special envoy to the Middle East at that time. In 1989, a year after the Kurdish genocide, the first President Bush signed a national security guideline stating that 'normal relations between the United States and Iraq would serve our longer-term interests and promote stability in both the Gulf and the Middle East' (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2003, p. 6). At the time, the United States turned a blind eye to the issue of the genocide. However, fourteen years later, the issue was resurrected in 2002-2003 as part of the U.S. campaign to wage war against Iraq.

In August 1988, after eight years, the war ended without a 'winner.' What was accomplished was at least one million casualties and financial costs of around \$600 billion for each country. In 1989, a few months after the end of the war, Iran's Khomeini died diminishing the revolutionary regime in Iran and the doctrine of exporting the revolution (Kolko, 2002). In December 1990, the United Nations named Iraq the 'aggressor' state in the Iran-Iraq War, and, Iran made claims for 'reparations' (Ehteshami, 2002).



The end of the First Gulf War in 1989 began the countdown to the Second Gulf War in 1990. At that time, Saddam Hussein decided to invade Kuwait and take control of the oil fields. This power grab was all the more untenable as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were considered major supporters of Iraq during the war against Iran.

#### The Second Gulf War (Desert Storm) and U.N. Sanctions against Iraq

The Second Gulf War in 1991 was a turning point for politics in the Middle East, as the United States secured its sustained hegemony in the region. American foreign policy in the region changed after the end of the Second Gulf War due to the U.S. military presence at several bases in the Gulf region and the collapse of the Soviet Union that followed shortly thereafter. The previous strategies of 'appeasement' and 'containment' began to decline. Indeed, it was the beginning of the 'New World Order' announced by the first President Bush. This vision of a 'New World Order' had been declared during the Second Gulf War, and was defined by him as 'a big idea: a new world order where diverse nations are drawn together in common cause to achieve the universal aspirations of mankind- peace and security, freedom, and the rule of law' (U.S. Department of State, February 1991).

Saddam Hussein provided the impetus for the major shift in the Gulf region. On August 2, 1990, two years after the end of the First Gulf War, Iraq invaded Kuwait after the failure of diplomatic efforts sponsored by Saudi Arabia to resolve the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait over the repayment of Kuwaiti loans made to Iraq to fight Iran. The Kuwaiti government had refused to waive the Iraqi debts, and the Iraqis claimed Kuwait was dumping oil on market by exceeding the quota that had been set

by OPEC (the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2003). The financial issue, however, was only part of the problem between Iraq and Kuwait.

Historically, Iraq has long claimed that Kuwait was actually a district of the Basrah province of Iraq and should be annexed to Iraq. King Ghazi of Iraq (1933-1939) was the first Iraqi ruler to speak publicly about re-annexing Kuwait, but the British Empire prevented him from doing so before he died. A few years after the toppling of the Iraqi monarchy in 1958, Iraqi President Abdulkarim Qasim began to demand the re-annexation of Kuwait. In reaction to Qasim's demand, the Kuwaiti ruling family immediately declared the independence of Kuwait. However, three decades later in 1990, the Kuwaitis were confronted by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein who dared to invade Kuwait (Ali, 2004).

On July 25, 1990, during 'verbal conflict' between Iraq and Kuwait, the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, April Glaspie, told Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that the United States was aware of the problem between Iraq and Kuwait. '[W]e have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your broader disagreement with Kuwait.' (Quoted in Mearsheimer & Walt, 2003, p. 3) Bennis (2003) and Ali (2004) considered the statement by the U.S. Ambassador to be a green light for Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait, which he did a week later. As a result of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, approximately 6% of the world oil supplies became unavailable, causing oil prices to jump from \$18 to \$40 a barrel (Sterner, 1990).

Of course, it is important here to emphasize that the relations between the United States and the Gulf states are mainly based on the American need of oil

supplies, which is considered an influential factor on the U.S. economy. On the other hand, the United States in its turn provides security for the Gulf States (Al-Hulwa, author's interview, 2004).

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait violated Article 51 of the U.N. Charter (Ali, 2004). After intensive efforts within the United Nations, the United States and the Gulf states succeeded in passing two resolutions; the first one condemned the invasion, and the second authorized the use of force against Iraq.

In order to expel Iraq from Kuwait, the United States had to convince Saudi Arabia to allow U.S. troops to launch the war from Saudi land. The U.S. goal was two-fold: the liberation of Kuwait and the defense of Saudi Arabia. For Saudi Arabia, allowing U.S. troops to land on Saudi soil and attack Iraq was a difficult and very critical decision to make, given that Saudi Arabia is considered the cradle of Islam and is home to the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Islam does not allow non-Muslims to enter the Holy Land of Mecca. U.S. troops and coalition forces were stationed in the north east province of Saudi Arabia, at least 1000 miles away from the Holy Lands located in the west with the specific mission of liberating Kuwait and defending Saudi Arabia.

For Osama Bin-Laden, who publicly opposed allowing U.S. troops to land in Saudi Arabia, the idea of having any non-Muslims troops in the Arabian Peninsula was completely unacceptable. To quell debate on the issue, the Cleric's Supreme Committee (Ulama: a widely respected group of clerics) in Saudi Arabia met and issued an advisory opinion, legalizing the decision to ally with non-Muslims troops to liberate Kuwait and defend Saudi soil against Iraq. This decision had a major impact

on relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia on one side and Osama Bin-Laden on the other (Niblock, 2006). In opposition to the presence of non-Muslim troops in the Arabian Peninsula, Bin-Laden took \$250 million of his wealth and escaped from Saudi Arabia to Afghanistan (Sammon, 2002).

After the Desert Storm war against Iraq was launched, Saddam Hussein ordered the Iraqi Army to attack Israel with Scud missiles in an attempt to force the Israelis to engage in the war. The United States prepared Israel for a potential attack by distributing Patriot anti-missile batteries. The United States put heavy pressure on the Israelis not to retaliate, in order to prevent a crisis within the international coalition and a massive uprising in the Arab and Muslim world (The United States eventually paid the Israelis \$650 million as compensation for losses caused by the Iraqi attacks (Berger, 1991). After six weeks of air attacks and a few days of ground engagement, Kuwait was liberated.

The Second Gulf War (Desert Storm) resulted in two significant changes. After the defeat of Saddam Hussein, the United States gained military bases in the Gulf region in agreement with some Gulf States. This was the realization of a long-sought U.S. geo-strategic goal. Troops on the ground provide the United States with the ability to act quickly and directly against any threat to its interests in the region, instead of relying on Israel as the guardian of American interests in the Middle East. Second, as a consequence of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Arab states were split into two blocs. The first bloc included countries (Algeria, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen) that stood by Saddam or refused to support military action to expel him from Kuwait. The second group included countries

(Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria, and United Arab Emirates) that opposed the invasion of Kuwait and backed military action to expel Iraq from Kuwait. As a result of his support for Saddam Hussein, the PLO leader Yasir Arafat was isolated from most Arab States who were against Saddam's invasion of Kuwait. The PLO was financially cut off by major financier: the Gulf States mainly Saudi Arabia. Hence, Arafat had no option but to leave isolation by engaging in a peace process, which was explained (in the section of the Arab-Israeli conflict) earlier in this chapter (Kissinger, 2002).

As a consequence for the invasion of Kuwait, the United Nations imposed sanctions on Iraq and created 'no-fly zones' over the south and north of Iraq. It also stipulated the disarmament of what was believed to be Iraqi WMD before sanctions could be removed.

In 1996, an agreement was reached between Iraq and the United Nations in the so-called 'Oil for Food Program.' Iraq was allowed to export oil for food, medicine, and other necessary items only through the United Nations and under its supervision. The 'Oil for Food Program' reduced Iraqi purchasing power parity from \$3000 to \$500 per capita, making Iraq, with the world's second largest oil reserves, one of the poorest nations in the world (Ali, 2004). The 'Oil for Food Program' was a failure, even though the amount of purchases went from \$2 billion to \$6 billion and, finally, to an unlimited amount. According to former Congressman Paul Findley (2002), U.N. sanctions against Iraq 'are widely believed to have caused the death of 500,000 children' (p. 2). In 1996, when the former U.S. Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, was asked by Leslie Stahl on the CBS show '60 Minutes' to comment about the

number of Iraqis who had died as a result of the sanctions, she said, 'We think the price is worth it' (Quoted in Bennis, 2003, p. 101).

As a result of the sanctions, a lack of food and medicine caused the death of many children (Findley, 2002). The sanctions and frequent American-British air strikes caused the Iraqi people great suffering. The U.N. General Secretary assistants in Iraq, Denis Halliday and Hans Von Sponeck, resigned (Halliday in 1998 and Sponeck in 2000) as directors of the 'Oil for Food Program' in Iraq. Justifying his resignation, Halliday claimed that the sanctions caused the death of up to one million Iraqis. His successor, Hans Von Sponeck, resigned a year later, asserting 'that every month Iraq's social fabric shows bigger holes' (Ali, 2004, p. 139). The resignations revealed the inhumane aspect of the sanctions, grabbing the world attention, which led to an international outcry against the sanctions, mainly among Arabs and Muslims. After the resignation of Halliday and Von Sponeck, the sanctions were widely challenged by Arabs and Muslims and countries around the world began to send relief to the dying people of Iraq.

The 'oil for food program' became a scandal after the war in Iraq in 2003, where investigation has showed that executives from the United Nations including Kojo Annan (the son of the U.N. Secretary) were actually involved in the corruption of Iraq's 'oil for food program' (CBC, March 2005).

Iraqi hatred toward the United States was intensified as the people felt the sanctions were punishing them, not Saddam Hussein. Internationally, the United States was blamed for the sanctions and the resulting Iraqi tragedy (Ali, 2004). In his assessment of the American position, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said,

'the United States has maneuvered itself into a position where, in major parts of the world- especially in Europe- America, not Saddam appears as the obstacle to easing tensions in the Gulf' (Kissinger, 2002, p. 194). Kissinger's assessment of the world's reaction, especially in Europe, revealed how American experts and intellectuals were aware of international opposition and condemnation of U.S. foreign policy, preceding the events of 9/11. Unfortunately, Kissinger failed to address the tragic aftermath of the sanctions and consequences on Iraqi people described by many commentators as punishment of the people of Iraq, and not Saddam Hussein's regime. Instead, he focused on the future of the sanctions to weaken the Iraqi regime and suggested America should support internal resistance and covert operations inside Iraq.

U.N. sanctions against Iraq were widely criticized. Especially so as after 10 years of Iraqi suffering and intensive work of searching by U.S. experts since 2003, the WMD case turned to be inaccurate. In Saudi Arabia (Iraq's adversary in Second Gulf War), the majority people were convinced that ten years of sanctions had heavily affected the Iraqi people without any significance upon Saddam's regime (Peterson, 2002).

Part of the post-war monitoring of Iraq involved U.N.-led weapons inspections. In 1998, United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) Chief Richard Butler confirmed that there were no nuclear weapons or long-range missiles in Iraq and was about to confirm that Iraq had no chemical or biological weapons. However, allegations that some UNSCOM inspectors had passed 'intelligence materials' to the United States and Israel led the Iraqi government to suspend the inspections. According to Bennis (2003), some of the 'top officials' of the Clinton Administration

confirmed that the United States knew about Butler's secret report before it was submitted to the Security Council. In response to the Iraqi decision, the United States and Britain launched the Desert Fox air strikes against Iraq. The action lasted for four days and resulted in 144 civilian deaths.

Sanctions were not the only major cause of death of Iraqi civilians. The United States used depleted uranium weaponry during the Second Gulf War, causing a severe increase in the occurrence of cancer. Also, the Pentagon Office of the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses (2004) referred to a document titled *Iraq Water Treatment Vulnerabilities* that was issued by the Defense Intelligence Agency dated January 22, 1991, but not released until 1995. It speculated that as a result of the proposed sanctions, 'Iraq will suffer increasing shortages of purified water because of the lack of required chemicals and desalination membranes. Incidences of disease, including possible epidemics, will become probable unless the population were careful to boil the water.'

The end of the Cold War meant the end of the threat of communist expansion. The Gulf Wars, both the first and second, shifted the focus of the international community, and especially the United States, to the oil-rich Middle East. The economic and political importance of the region gained significance. As a result of the Second Gulf War, the United States gained a military foothold in the region. While the presence of American troops in the Middle East enables the United States to act swiftly against any threats toward the region, it has created animosity in the Arab/Muslim world, intensified anti-American sentiments, and led to complex



relationships with some of the Arab states. The relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia is a case in point.

### Soft Power and Hard Power

In 1990 Joseph Nye, Dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, introduced a concept in describing American foreign policy: soft power and hard power. In May 2004, Nye wrote an article in the journal *Foreign Policy* titled 'The Velvet Hegemon: How Soft Power Can Help Defeat Terrorism.' In it, he sought to clarify what he called a 'misunderstanding' of the concept. At first he defined power as 'The ability to produce the outcome you want' (p. 1). Then he explained 'hard power' as 'When someone does something he would otherwise not do but for force or inducement, that's hard power-the use of sticks and carrots' (p. 1). 'Soft power' is 'The ability to secure those outcomes through attraction rather than coercion. It is the ability to shape what others want' (p. 1). Nye argued that soft and hard power can be used together where they sustain and replace each other.

U.S. 'soft power', as argued by Nye (2004), is based on its predominant culture with all the products that it exports around the world, its values of democracy and human rights, and foreign policies that show appreciation for the welfare of other cultures. The United States uses both 'soft power' and 'hard power' in its foreign policy. In deed, not less than 'hard power,' 'soft power' annoys some governments, whom some are even considered American allies (Crockatt, 2003). Nye agrees with historian Niall Ferguson, author of 'Think Again: Power' published in *Foreign Policy* in January/February 2003, who stated that soft power heavily depends on what he

called 'credibility and legitimacy.' Nye asserts Fergusson's point of view, exemplifying that whereas people in China like Hollywood, Saudis look at it with suspicion. The problem is not all cultures and countries share the same perspective on values and moral issues.

### The United States and Unilateralism

According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2000), 'unilateralism' is defined as 'A tendency of nations to conduct their foreign affairs individualistically, characterized by minimal consultation and involvement with other nations, even their allies.'

The U.S. use of unilateralism as an approach in foreign policy started after World War II, but has become the main approach used since the first Bush Administration. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in November 1991 gave rise to the beginning of American unilateralism (Dumbrell, 2002).

After the end of the Cold War, the United States was the remaining superpower state in the world. It became more important and difficult for the United States to insure and sustain its predominance. The United States has sought to maintain its superiority by attempting to create a world with balanced lesser powers. The current excessive use of unilateralism by the Bush Administration is a sign of the substantial transformation that has taken place in U.S. foreign policy and the power gap that exists between the United States and the rest of the world (author's interview with Deputy Minister of Information in Saudi Arabia, Saleh Al-Namlah, 2004). Raed Gormoly (author's interview, 2004) from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs

believes that the mighty U.S. force and the incidents of 9/11 have provided the excessive unilateralism of the Bush Administration, restoring to the use of multilateralism only when it does not contradict U.S. interests.

The nature of the unilateral approach in U.S. foreign policy was clearly expressed in a U.N. speech by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. She addressed the U.S. threat to bomb Iraq in 1998, saying 'If we have to use force, it is because we are Americans. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see further into the future' (Albright quoted in Smith, 2002, p. 57). While previous U.S. administrations had mostly used a multilateral policy, a unilateral policy was used in some cases when needed. Albright said, 'We will behave multilaterally when we can and unilaterally when we must' (Albright quoted in Booth, 2002, p.159). In his book *Paradise and Power*, Robert Kagan (2003) argued that American multilateralism during the Cold War was 'more instrumental than idealistic in its motives' (p. 78).

The increasing use of unilateralism by the United States has been highlighted by some world leaders. Former French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin referred to the United States as a 'hyper-power.' He said that the unilateral approach of the United States is 'a new problem on the international scene' (Bennis, 2002, p. 9). French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine called for 'a system both multilateral and multipolar associating all or part of the 185 countries of the world' (p. 9) to challenge Washington's 'dominant power with its means of influence' (p. 9).

When the United States moved toward unilateralism has been the subject of debate. Dumbrell (2002) claimed that the U.S. move towards unilateralism began before the second Bush Administration.

The US, of course, was not exclusively unilateralist; that was never an option, and was certainly not one after the 11 September attacks. Rather, the US under Bush seemed committed to a new mixture of unilateralism and multilateralism defined and pursued almost entirely on American's terms (p. 285).

Dumbrell (2002) argued that the new trend toward unilateralism actually started during the second term of the Clinton Administration, exemplified by U.S. actions in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Iraq, and Sudan. While Bennis (2002), Byers (2002), and Dumbrell disagree on when the move toward unilateralism started, they all agree that the excessive use of unilateralism by the current Bush Administration is unprecedented.

Byers (2002) argued that the Bush Administration's unilateral approach did not stem from the events of 9/11, but was adopted by the administration before that time. One need consider other examples of 'unilateralism' to see the trend—rejections of the Ballistic Missile treaty, the Kyoto Protocol, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, a protocol for Biological weapons, and a protocol for the sale and transfer of small arms. Bennis (2003) agreed with Byers, asserting that unilateralism has been excessively adopted by the Bush Administration since the first day in office. 'From their first moment in office, Bush officials brought to the White House an aggressive brand of unilateralism, characterized by disdain for global opinion and contempt for international law and institutions' (p. 1). However, Bennis considered Bush's excessive use of unilateralism as part of a 'pre-existing trend' that was not created by the G.W. Bush Administration, exemplifying the U.S. use of unilateralism before this Administration, such as the U.S. invasion of Panama during the Bush senior Administration in 1989. What supports this vision of a 'pre-existing trend' of unilateralism are the statements that were made by French officials in 1999,

expressing dissatisfaction to what they believed to be an excessive use of unilateralism by the United States at that time (during the Clinton Administration).

An examination of American-Saudi relations will shed light on Arab perceptions of America and American policies. A review of Saudi Arabian culture, religion, and society provide needed background for explaining the multi-faceted relationship between east and west. It also creates a better understanding of the basis of Saudi foreign policy. The relationship with Saudi Arabia has been long and strong, and it cannot be denied that oil has been the central interest in that relationship. There have been other interests, thought, that have shaped the American-Saudi relationships like security, especially during the Cold War. In the following section, I will explore the history of this relation, following a brief history of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Then, I will discuss the tension that the relation has witnessed after 9/11 and the war on terror based, mainly, on Saudi perceptions.

## CHAPTER THREE

### AMERICAN-SAUDI RELATIONS AND THE OIL FACTOR

The contemporary Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, founded by King Abdulaziz Ibn-Saud, was unified in 1932 after a series of battles beginning in 1901. Ultimately, the scattered tribes inhabiting the peninsula came together to form the largest state in the Middle East. The government is a monarchy, and the King's title is 'Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques,' referring to the Two Holy Mosques in Mecca and Medina. The Arabian Peninsula, of which Saudi Arabia is the largest part, covers over 3 million square kilometres. According to the American Central Intelligence Agency (2006), the size of Saudi Arabia is 1,960,582 sq. km. The latest census lists a total population of 27,019,731 (including 5,576,076 non-nationals). Virtually 100% of the people are Muslim. Saudi Arabia has borders with 11 countries: Iraq, Jordan, and Kuwait on the north; Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates on the east; the Arabian Gulf (also known as the Persian Gulf) is shared with Iran; Oman and Yemen bound Saudi Arabia on the south; and, on the west, the Red Sea is shared with Egypt, Sudan, and Eritrea.

Located on the Arabian Peninsula, Saudi Arabia has a strategic geographic location on the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Saudi Arabia is one of two key states (the other is Egypt) in the Arab world and one of the most influential states in the Muslim world. Saudi influence in the world's political arena is based on its huge oil resources, its position in the Arab and Muslim world as the heart of Islam and Arab

identity, and the fact that it is the home of the two Holy Shrines of Mecca and Medina. In his book *Does America Need a Foreign Policy*, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (2002), mentioned Egypt and Saudi Arabia as major leaders in the Arab world. The United States should invite these influential nations to play 'a moderating role' in the peace process, but with appreciation for their internal pressures.

Saudi Arabia has been a key player in the Muslim world since the Second World War. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Saudi government took a strong position of support for the 'Islamic state' of Afghanistan against the 'infidel Soviets.' Saudi Arabia provided financing and support for the Mujahidin in Afghanistan in coordination with the United States and Pakistan. The Saudi decision to support the Mujahidin in Afghanistan prompted other Arab and Muslim states to also offer support (Peterson, 2002). During the Afghan-Soviet War, over 35,000 Muslims from around the world were recruited to fight the invaders (Hartman, 2002).

Saudi Arabia's leadership position has led to a variety of obligations and to responsibilities in Middle East matters. For example, on September 30, 1989, the Saudi government succeeded in gathering together 62 of the 72 members of the Lebanese parliament that had been elected in 1974, before the beginning of that country's civil war. After a month of intense negotiations, 58 of the elected members signed the Al-Taif Agreement in Saudi Arabia on October 22, 1989. The Al-Taif Agreement for national reconciliation provided framework for the distribution of power in Lebanon between the Christian and Muslim parties (paper presented by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Counter-Terrorism International Conference in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, February 2005).

When Egypt signed its peace agreement with Israel in 1979 and was neutralized in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Saudi Arabia became the leading state among the bloc of Arab states that persisted in refusing any kind of normalization with the Israeli state. To date, Israel has failed to break through and normalize relations, especially with the Saudis. In April 2002, King Abdullah (who was Crown Prince at that time) presented a Saudi initiative that was approved by the Arab League at a summit in Beirut. The initiative clearly stated the condition which had to be met to achieve normalization (withdrawal to the borders of 1967). After the Saudi initiative, the U.S. media, which is generally believed to be subject to the influence of pro-Israeli lobbies, launched a series of attacks on the Saudi regime (Al-Jahni, author's interview, 2005).

While Saudi Arabia has the largest economy in the Middle East with a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$338 billion, it is considered a developing country. There has been slow improvement in the realm of political freedom, but the six five-year development plans that began in 1970 have, as former U.S. diplomat John Habib (2003) described, 'changed the face of the kingdom beyond recognition' (p.154). The 2005 U.N. report on world human development ranked Saudi Arabia 32<sup>nd</sup> among 103 developing countries (United Nations Development Program, 2005). The Saudi economy faces some major challenges. Saudi Arabia's rate of population growth is among the highest in the world, with than 45% of the population under 15 years of age. As this group matures, they will need jobs.

One of the most crucial challenges for the Saudi government is diversifying its sources of income as the country depends so heavily on oil revenues. In recent years,



the Saudi government has taken steps to diversify sources of income—the laws of investment and ‘privatization’ for the purpose of encouraging foreign investment in Saudi Arabia, which became a Member of the WTO on December 11, 2005 (Political and Economic Reform in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2005). Saudi Arabia does have one of the 10 largest stock exchanges in the world.

The constitution of Saudi Arabia is based on The Holy Book (Koran), the revealed word of God, and the sayings and deeds of Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be upon Him). As stated in The Holy Koran, Muslims must abide by the teachings of the Holy Koran and Prophet Mohammad’s sayings and deeds (Sunna). As an Islamic state, Saudi Arabia applies The Holy Koran-based Islamic law (Sharia). Failure to do so would undermine the government’s credibility among Muslims true believers (Bahgat, 2004). It contains the rules by which the Muslim nation is governed (or should govern itself) and forms the basis for relations between Muslims and God, between individuals, (whether Muslim or non-Muslim).

The Sharia rules are not only in regards to religious practices but address all aspects of life: economy, politics, personal behaviour, and etc. The Islamic law (Sharia) is applicable at any time and gives the right to the ruling government to regulate unprecedented issues. It, also, gives the government flexibility in the appliance and interpretation of Islamic law. Saudi Arabia and other Islamic states were granted some exceptions from some of the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that contradict Islamic principles. However, Islamic law (Sharia) does guarantee human rights according to The Holy Book (Koran) and the Prophet Mohammad’s sayings and deeds (Sunna).

Islamic law is often misunderstood by Westerners. In America, especially, many people do not know about Islam and its basic principles. Denny (2002) suggested providing educational programs for American citizens that include a background on Islam and Islamic culture ‘We need to encourage and support effective educational programs that will inform our citizens about the beliefs, hopes, ideals, achievements and aspirations of Muslims and other minorities in our society . . . ‘ (Denny, 2002, p. 38).

Saudi Arabia has adopted a slow, gradual approach to political reform. That is also the approach of the Saudi foreign policy, which seeks to avoid rashness and precipitancy (Bahgat, 2004). The first municipal elections in Saudi Arabia took place in late 2004. The right of women to vote has been considered as part of the political development of Saudi Arabia, and some Saudi officials have announced that women will be allowed to vote in the next elections. Any political development must be in cultural and religious compliance with Saudi society. While the Saudi approach is gradual change, it should be noted that the women’s right to vote was not acquired in the United States until 1920 and in France in 1947.

In 1992, King Fahad Bin Abdulaziz issued a Royal Decree, revitalizing the Consultative Council (Majlis Ash-shura). It started out with 60 members, expanded to 90 members in 1997, and grew to 120 members who serve a four-year term. The Consultative Council (Majlis Ash-shura) is an essential constituent in any Islamic state. Prior to 1992, the Consultative Council was inactive (Political and Economic Reform in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2005). The Consultative Council’s duties are as follows:

(a) Discuss the general plan for economic and social development and give view (b) Revising laws and regulations, international treaties and agreements, concessions, and provide whatever suggestions it deems appropriate (c) Analyzing laws (d) Discuss government agencies annual reports and attaching new proposals when it deems appropriate (Majlis Ash-shura, 2006).

Ash-shura members are chosen by the King to represent various sections of Saudi society. However, some Saudi officials have announced that the Saudi government ultimately aims to have an elected Consultative Council (Parliament) after a partial election. This would give the Saudi people some role in policy making. This is part of the gradual political reform started in Saudi Arabia, beginning with the creation of the Consultative Council and the successive expansion of the number of its members.

One of the traditional ways of communication between the rulers and the people of Saudi Arabia is at public salons where Saudi citizens can discuss Saudi internal and external affairs. Any Saudi citizen can attend and express his opinion. The public salons are held on specific days every week by the king, royal prince, princes of provinces, and ministers (Peterson, 2002). Saudi citizens are also allowed to present oral or written petitions to the King or other ministers and principals in the Saudi government.

U.S. foreign policy is majorly concerned, along with support for Israel, with the continuation of a smooth supply of oil from the Gulf region. These contradictory national interests have been challenging and provocative for every post-World War II administration in Washington, D.C. Oil has given the Arab states leverage and has been used as a weapon by Arab states against the U.S. for supporting Israel. The

following section addresses oil as factor that has affected U.S. foreign policy in the region.

### The Oil Factor

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United States was the largest supplier of oil to Europe. Approximately 90% of the total European oil consumption was imported from the United States. In 1948, the United States imported oil, for the first time, due a rapid increase in consumption. The United States started to import oil from the Middle East: this was possible because of the explorations of the oil fields in Saudi Arabia that began in 1933 (Leonardo, 2003). The United States was importing 31% of its oil by 1970. This percentage doubled to 62% in 1996. American imports of oil from the Gulf region, mainly from Saudi Arabia, went from 10.1% of its total oil imports in 1983 to 23.8% in 2000. The Gulf region contains 65% of the world's oil reserves and, as many experts argue, seems to be the only region capable of guaranteeing oil supplies for the increasing world market. Between 1998 and 2020, U.S. consumption of oil is expected to increase from 18.9 to 25.8 million barrels per day (Kolko, 2002). An example of the Gulf states' capability to provide oil markets was during the second half of 2004 when oil prices soared along with shortage in oil supplies. During that time, Saudi Arabia was the only oil producer to have the capability of producing 1.5 million barrel daily extra to the oil market. Saudi Arabia increased its production to ensure enough oil supplies for the world market. The Saudi government attributed the increase of oil prices to speculations and the shortage of oil refineries in the United States.

In 1933, the Saudi government granted California Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC) exclusive rights to explore for oil in Saudi Arabia (in 1944 CASOC changed its name to Arabian American Oil Company, ARAMCO). In the same year, vast oil reserves were discovered in Saudi Arabia. Now, Saudi Arabia possesses about 25% of the world's oil reserves (Aramco, 2003).

Since the explorations of oil fields in the Middle East in the first half of the twentieth century, oil became one of the most important pillars of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East (Aramco, 2003). After the Second World War and the discovery of the oil in the Arabian Peninsula, the Middle East became an increasingly vital region to the United States. In 1948, the Truman Administration passed U.S. National Security Council Resolution (138/1), which sought to secure oil for 'the Western world' (Leonardo, 2003).

In 1951, the Iranian Democratic Nationalist, Mohammad Mosaddeq, came to power with a national agenda that included nationalizing Iranian oil, which was owned by the Anglo Iranian Oil Company (now British Petroleum). The British government asked the United States to help remove Mosaddeq from power (Leonardo, 2003). In 1953, with the authorization of President Eisenhower, the CIA masterminded a coup to topple Mosaddeq and restore the Shah, Reza Bahlevi. The United States replaced the British as guardian of the Shah's regime, enabling four of the largest American oil companies to own 40% of the new oil company in Iran. Restoration of the Shah's regime (which lasted for 35 years) and foreign profiteering from Iranian resources generated hatred toward the Shah and strong anti-Americanism as the United States struggled to keep the Shah in power. He employed a repressive intelligence agency

(SAVAK), against his own people, especially after 1963 when the Shiite religious leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, began to gain wide popularity and support among the Iranians as an opponent to the Shah's regime (Kolko, 2002).

The economic pillar of oil is a substantial factor in U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East (Al-Hulwa, author's interview, 2004). The United States has tried to separate its policy regarding oil and its policy toward the Middle East, but it has failed. The United States has become more concerned about the accessibility to Gulf oil, especially after U.S. support for Israel in the 1973 War which led to an Arab oil embargo against those countries that supported Israel in the war. The 1973 War proved that the policy of oil and the policy of the Middle East can never be separated (Al-Rawaf, author's interview, 2004). The embargo caused an oil crisis in America and an increase in world oil prices from \$3 to \$12 per barrel. At that time, oil consumption in the United States was triple what it was in 1948, and the shock waves of the oil embargo rocked the U.S. administration and the American people as oil had become so vital to U.S. economy (Leonardo, 2003).

The Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 introduced a second period of soaring oil prices after the Arab oil embargo in 1973. The oil prices jumped from \$14.3 per barrel to \$37.9 (Niblock, 2006). In 1980, a year after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the First Gulf War broke out between Iran and Iraq, causing oil prices to reach unprecedented levels.

During the Second Gulf War in 1991 (the liberation of Kuwait), oil prices reached \$40 per barrel. Even though, the first President George Bush 'won' the war, the high oil prices contributed to a recession in the American economy. Ultimately,

this cost him the elections in the 1992 presidential race against Bill Clinton (Fennell, October, 2002).

### American Saudi Relations at a Crossroads?

Since 9/11, Saudi American relations have been the subject of debate inside the United States, especially because 15 of the hijackers were from Saudi Arabia. Osama Bin Laden seems to have chosen 15 of the 19 terrorists to be Saudi citizens for the purpose of spoiling American-Saudi relations. This belief was asserted by King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz on May 13, 2003, when he said, 'The target of Al-Qaeda terrorists is Saudi Arabia and the United States and the 70-year relationship that has benefited both our people' (Public Statements by Senior Saudi Officials Condemning Extremism and Promoting Moderation, February 2005, p. 16)

Al-Hulwa believes that the American-Saudi relations does not have any political or economic problem, but a cultural gap, where the U.S. media, for instance, has portrayed the Saudi Arabian culture as intolerant. Since 9/11, the U.S. media, some members of Congress, and some in influential circles in the United States have accused Saudi Arabia of being 'soft on terrorism,' portraying the Saudi culture as a culture that produces terrorism, is tolerant of terrorism, and does not support democracy and human rights (Bahgat, 2004). There have been demands for a review of the American-Saudi relationship— a relationship that has stood solid for 70 years and been described by both sides as 'a special relationship.'

In his book, *Saudi Arabia and the American National Interest*, Professor John Habib (2003) of the University of Maryland, and former diplomat at the American

Embassy in Saudi Arabia, explained in depth the nature of relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia. In 1931, the United States recognized Saudi Arabia but did not establish full diplomatic relations until 1940. The beginning of the 'special relationship' between America and Saudi Arabia began in 1945 when U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and King Abdulaziz (founder of the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) met aboard the USS Quincy in waters of Egypt. The meeting mainly focused on the convulsions involving the Palestinian land and Jewish emigration. At that time, there was a large wave of European Jews emigrating to Palestine with the political and financial support of the United States. As a result of the Jewish emigration, clashes started between the Arabs and Jews in Palestine. King Abdulaziz expressed his concern and dissatisfaction with U.S. facilitation and support of the Jewish emigration as it undermined U.S. relations with the Arab states and U.S. interest in the region. King Abdulaziz insisted that the Jewish immigrants had to be helped by the United States to return and resettle in their homes in Eastern Europe. According to John Habib, this meeting did affect Roosevelt's attitude regarding the Palestinian problem. According to the memoirs of President Harry Truman, *Years of Trial and Hopes* (1956), President Roosevelt promised King Abdulaziz that he 'would make no move hostile to the Arab people and would not assist the Jews as against the Arabs' (p. 141).

On April 5, 1945, a week before his death, President Roosevelt sent a letter to King Abdulaziz, confirming his promise. Based on the expansive exploration of the oil fields in Saudi Arabia, Roosevelt sought to consolidate the partnership between the United States and Saudi Arabia for the sake of the oil industry. Shortly thereafter, President Roosevelt died. When Vice President Harry Truman became President of



the United States, he pursued policies radically different from Roosevelt and subject to the influences of pro-Zionist lobbies (Habib, 2003). He was the first world leader to recognize Israel and offer full diplomatic relations on the second day after the state of Israel was declared in 1947 (Truman, 1956). He shipped weapons to Israel as the Arab states were moving toward Palestine in reaction to the declaration of the new Jewish state (Heikel, 1996). Saudi Arabia was among the Arab coalition forces that participated in the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948. Despite the pro-Israeli policies pursued by Harry S. Truman, King Abdulaziz believed that a relationship with the United States was necessary for regional stability. It should be noted that all U.S. administrations since President Roosevelt have been committed to the 'territorial integrity' of Saudi Arabia (Habib).

Oil has been a crucial factor in the American-Saudi relations for decades. In 1933, the Saudi government granted California Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC) an exclusive right for oil exploration in Saudi Arabia. In 1944, CASOC changed its name to the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO). According to former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia John C. West, King Abdulaziz chose the Americans, not the British or the French, because the United States had no 'history of colonial exploitation' (Habib, 2003).

The economic importance of Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states is not only based on oil. Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states are among the world's major consumers of U.S. products. Also, Saudi Arabia is one of the U.S. top trade partners in the world (Bahgat, 2004). Of significance is the fact that Saudi investors own between 5% and 6% of the U.S. stock market (Habib, 2003).

At the beginning of American-Saudi relations, the United States was perceived by the Saudi government and Saudi citizens as a moral state with more credibility than the European colonial states. However, this image has changed. In Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arab and Islamic world, the shift began in the 1940s when Israel became an issue and intensified in the 1960s, perhaps in relation to Arab-Israeli conflict and the 1967 War. Many Arabs believe that U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East is unjust and biased (Habib, 2003).

Since its unification by King Abdulaziz, Saudi Arabia has stood against all anti-Islamic ideologies. When the Egyptian leader, Jamal Abdunaser (Naser), adopted socialism in Egypt and sought to export the ideology to other Arab states, this led to a schism in the Arab world with one group led by Naser in Egypt and the other led by Saudi Arabia (Gerges, 1999). Ideology aside, when it came to matters of Arab national interest, both Egypt and Saudi Arabia were united—note their position after the Six Days War in 1967. At that time, all the Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, held an Arab summit in Sudan and declared the ‘Three Nos:’ no to peace, no to negotiation, and no to the recognition of Israel.

In the 1973 war, Saudi Arabia financed a large portion of the Egyptian and Syrian weapons purchases and rallied political support for them within the United Nations. As a consequence of the war, Saudi Arabia and the other Arab states imposed an oil embargo against the United States and the other countries that supported Israel during the war. The embargo decision was based on Arab national interests and was made for the purpose of punishing the United States for its public support of Israel with word and weapons. The oil embargo made it clear to U.S.

policymakers that America must maintain agreeable relations with Saudi Arabia or bear negative economic consequences (Habib, 2003).

During the Cold War, the United States sought to contain and diminish the spread of communism in the Middle East. That was one of the major pillars of U.S. foreign policy in the region. Saudi Arabia played a major role in resisting and confronting the threat of communism, advocating for and sponsoring the creation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in 1969, which had as one of its objects the prevention of communism. Saudi Arabia, also, supported the Mujahidin in Afghanistan against the Soviet invaders from 1979 to 1988. The Saudi anti-communist position was not taken to appease the United States, but was based on the tenets of Islam. Thus, American and Saudi national interests actually joined in a mutual alliance against the threat of communism. Crockatt (2003) described Saudi Arabia as an example of country that is politically 'aligned' with the United States but maintains a 'cultural distance.'

Othman Al-Rawaf (author's interview, 2004), former member of the *Ash Shura* (Parliament) in Saudi Arabia, asserted that after the collapse of the Soviet Union some in influential circles and some theoreticians in the West, mainly in America, started to speak out about Islam as a threat replacing the collapsed Soviet Union. Saudi Arabia was (and still is) considered the heart of the Islamic world, and the United States sought to utilize the Saudi position in the Muslim world against the threat of communism. The collapse of communism and the beginning of U.S. hegemony in the Middle East have had an impact on the nature of the American-Saudi relation. American-Saudi relations had lost one of the two pillars that consolidated and

strengthened the alliance between the two countries (Niblock, 2006). The only pillar left was oil. There was, however, the geopolitical importance of Saudi Arabia for the United States. Without Saudi Arabia as a major ally in the region, 'the geopolitical and military problems confronting the United States would be far greater,' as argued by Kolko (2002, p. 73).

In 1990, King Fahad made one of the most crucial decisions of his era. He agreed to host over 500,000 American soldiers for the liberation of Kuwait and defence of Saudi Arabia against any potential Iraqi threat (satellite photos showed Iraqi troops massing on the Saudi border). After the liberation of Kuwait, the United States convinced the Gulf States, mainly Saudi Arabia, of the importance of maintaining an American presence in the region. Saddam Hussein's threat had not been eliminated. Saudi Arabia accepted reluctantly. The Saudi Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Prince Khaled Bin-Sultan had wanted American support to enlarge the Saudi Army and supply it with advanced American weapons, but pro-Israeli lobbies in the U.S. Congress objected to the proposal to sell Saudi Arabia \$28-\$30 billion worth of weapons (Berger, 1991).

1991 witnessed the conduct of Second Gulf War and the end of the Cold War. This was a turning point for American power in the region and a new trend in terrorist operations against U.S. targets, mainly in the Middle East. Terrorist operations were carried out against the United States in an effort to force it to pull its troops out of the Gulf region. Saudi Arabia was one of the states where U.S. targets were attacked. On November 13, 1995, a car bomb with 200 pounds of TNT exploded at the American-run National Guard training center in downtown Riyadh, causing the deaths of five

Americans, two Indians and injuring over 30 people. Eventually, four people were arrested and convicted of the bombing. They admitted that they were influenced by the ideas of Mohammad al-Mas'ari (a Saudi dissident operating from London, UK) and Osama Bin-Laden. They confessed to having been trained in Afghanistan. The four culprits were executed on May 31, 1996 (Mandaville, no date) (Peterson, 2002).

In 1996, seven months after the Riyadh bombing, a new bombing occurred in Al-Khobar city, in the East Province of Saudi Arabia. Ten times stronger than the Riyadh bomb, the explosion caused the deaths of 19 Americans and injured 386 Americans, Saudis, and Bangladeshis. While American investigators believed that the two bombings were related, Saudi investigators claimed there was no relationship between the two incidents. The Saudi Minister of Interior confirmed that they had sufficient evidence against the culprits (Grant, 1998).

Later, the United States issued an indictment based on undisclosed evidence, accusing the Iranian government of sponsoring the Al-Khobar bombing (Stern, 1999). This accusation gained more credence when the Canadian government arrested a Saudi citizen from the Shiite sect (some Shiites in the Gulf States have a religious allegiance to the Shiite regime of Iran). The suspect, Hani Al-Sayegh, was assumed to be an accessory in Al-Khobar bombing. The Canadian government handed him over to the U.S. government which turned him over to Saudi Arabia (Grant, 1998), (Mandaville, no date). The Al-Khobar bombing investigation was never publicized or brought to light and news headlines again after 9/11.

It is important here to mention that Saudi Arabia had no experience with terrorism prior to the Riyadh and Al-Khobar incidents. The whole country was

shocked by the incidents. Saudi Arabian society and government define terrorism in accordance with Islamic Law, which calls such acts 'Heraba' (overt or random acts that cause public harm and/or financial damage). Saudi beliefs and attitudes toward violence, crime, and wrong-doing are born out of the religious and cultural heritage (Bin-Odah, author's interview, 2002). These were the first two terrorist operations committed by some of the Afghan Mujahidin who had been supported by the United States and Saudi Arabia against the Soviets. The incidents have been described by some American and Saudi intellectuals as a backlash against the two countries.

The incidents at Riyadh and Al-Khobar did not have a negative impact on the strong relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia, but there were complaints about a lack of Saudi cooperation in the investigations (Bahgat, 2004). The first serious tensions in the American-Saudi relationship occurred after the second Palestinian uprising (Al-Aqsa Intifada) in 2000. At that time, the Saudi Crown Prince, now King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz, sent a message to President Bush alerting him that the special relationship between the two countries was at a 'crossroads' due to America's position of support for Israeli actions against the Palestinians. The Crown Prince urged the U.S. administration to fulfil its obligation to be an honest broker in the conflict (Habib, 2003). A year later, there was an incident that caused even greater tension between the two countries, the attacks of September 11, 2001 (Peterson, 2002).

It has been argued that 9/11 harmed the special relationship between America and Saudi Arabia as 15 of the 19 alleged hijackers participating in the attacks were Saudis (Niblock, 2006). However, Saudi Arabia condemned the attacks and warned against any attempt to associate Saudi culture with terrorism as the U.S. media and

some American commentators did. The portrayal of the Saudi culture as a breeding ground for terrorism contradicts the facts as Saudi soil itself became subject to a series of terrorist attacks after 9/11 (Peterson, 2002). In response to attacks against the Saudi culture and its association with terrorism, on June 12, 2003, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz (who was Crown Prince at the time) said,

I believe that no society is immune from deviants and extremists. This situation exists in every country, in every society and in every faith. These individuals do not represent their societies. They do not represent the prevailing thinking of a society. (Public Statements by Senior Saudi Officials Condemning Extremism and Promoting Moderation, February 2005)

At the religious level, the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of the Council of Senior Religious Scholars stressed that 'Terrorism has nothing to do with Islam . . . Islam should not be blamed for the acts of other people. People should be held responsible individually for their own acts' (Public Statements by Senior Saudi Officials Condemning Extremism and Promoting Moderation, February 2005, p. 11).

It seems that the United States and Saudi Arabia have been 'co-victims' of Al-Qaeda's operations. The Riyadh attacks of May 12, 2003, were a blow for most Saudis who thought that their country would never be a target of Al-Qaeda. According to a study conducted by Salwa Al-Khateeb (2005), from King Saud University in Riyadh, over half of the 26 terrorists wanted in Saudi Arabia for the attack at the Al-Muhaya compound in Riyadh in 2004 were trained in Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. After the attacks, the Saudi government and people became more aware of the Al-Qaeda threat and more determined to fight it. The threat of terrorism was also highlighted by the Grand Mufti who said, [it is] 'forbidden to justify the acts of these criminals . . . You have to be vigilant and have strong will in

defending the religion and Muslim country against these people' (Public Statements by Senior Saudi Officials Condemning Extremism and Promoting Moderation, February 2005, p. 4).

The U.S. Ambassador in Saudi Arabia at that time, Robert Jordan, described American-Saudi cooperation in combating terrorism after May 12<sup>th</sup> as 'superb.' The American-Saudi partnership in the war against terrorism 'is indispensable and must continue to flourish, rising above nuanced counter-terrorism cultures and techniques, choosing to emphasize the common concern of security for its citizens rather than the religious traditions that distinguish them' (Ranstorp, 2003, p. 1).

Since 9/11, oil prices and the demand for oil have increased tremendously (over \$70 a barrel in August 2005), and the United States has become more dependent on the Saudi role in the world oil market. This dependency has intensified since Saudi Arabia has become the only oil producer with capacity for surplus oil production of up to 1.5 million barrel per day. This is very important to meet unexpected world demand. Saudi Arabia has played a major role in OPEC to keep oil supplies reasonably priced as it increased oil production by almost 25% in 2003-2004. The Saudi effort to bring oil prices down succeeded after debate with other OPEC producers, like Iran and Venezuela, which opposed the Saudi plan to increase oil production.

Immediately after the 9/11 attacks, Crown Prince Abdullah ordered the Saudi Oil Minister to contradict a pre-September 11 decision made by OPEC to cut oil production and ship an extra 9 million barrels of oil to the United States within two weeks. This was done to insure stability of world oil prices and keep America



supplied at reasonable prices. The decision was also meant to bolster the Saudi position against the terrorist attacks. In May 2002, Crown Prince Abdullah met with President Bush and assured him that Saudi Arabia would not use oil as a political tool. This positive move by Saudi Arabia, which went beyond verbal condemnation to practical support, was not publicized or appreciated by the U.S. media (Habib, 2003).

In the era between the end of the Cold War and before 9/11, U.S. interests in Saudi Arabia were limited mainly to oil, weapons sales, and trade. After 9/11, the American-Saudi alliance against terrorism added to the strength of the partnership as both countries had been victims to terrorist attacks on their soil. Both countries have shared intelligence and attempted to liquidate the financial resources of Al-Qaeda. While many leaders and members of Al-Qaeda have been killed and captured by the United States and Saudi Arabia, the alliance of the two countries excludes the U.S. war against rogue states or state-sponsored terrorism. Saudi Arabia has refused to participate in the war and occupation of Iraq.

Some people in the United States look at Saudi Arabia as a state that finances and supports a culture of terrorism. This is due, in large part, to the way Saudi Arabia and Arabs, in general, have been portrayed by the U.S. media even before 9/11. *The New York Times*, for example, accused Saudi Arabia of being tolerant of terrorism, describing the relationship between America and Saudi Arabia as 'untenable and unreliable.' This accusation by *The New York Times* is an example of a series of attacks against Saudi Arabia by the U.S. media and some members of Congress, which have described Saudi Arabia as being soft in the war against terrorism. The White House has denied such accusations asserting that America had 'excellent co-operation

with Riyadh' (Peterson, 2002). Moreover, the *Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States in 2004* has found no evidence that the government of Saudi Arabia funded Al-Qaeda. The report also confirmed that the Saudi government was pursuing Bin-Laden and his Al-Qaeda network. It also mentioned full cooperation with the United States before the 9/11 attacks, noting the Saudi government's revocation of Bin-Laden's Saudi citizenship in 1994 and its negotiations with the Taliban regime to hand over Osama Bin-Laden in September 1998.

Saudi Arabia together with Pakistan and United Arab Emirates the only three countries who recognized the Taliban regime in 1997 before it decided to break the relation after the Taliban's refusal to handover Bin-Laden in 1998 (Bahgat, 2004).

Former U.S. Diplomat John Habib (2003) asserted that most of the people in the United States 'have only a vague idea about Saudi political, religious and social culture and much of that is inaccurate' (p. 5). Habib attributed this distorted image about Saudi Arabia to some members of the U.S. Congress and U.S. media who

. . . spread misconceptions and express inaccurate remarks about the Kingdom even though they do have access to factual information. Very often they leave the impression of being less interested in serious reporting about the Kingdom and more concerned with promoting the agendas of special interests that are unfriendly or hostile to it (p. 6).

One of the consequences of 9/11 that has caused tension in the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States is the lawsuit filed by the families of 600 people who were killed in the attacks. The suit names Saudi banks, charities, wealthy Saudis, and members of the royal family, 'accusing them of financially sponsoring the Al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama Bin Laden' (Bahgat, 2004, p. 2). The list included

all organizations and people who have made generous donations to poor Arabs and Muslims around the world. The list was regarded with contempt as it included, for example, Saudi Crown Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz and Prince Turki Al-Faisal, the current Saudi Ambassador in Washington and former chief of Saudi Intelligence. Such accusations were considered insulting by Saudis, especially since Saudi Arabia had been a victim of terrorism before and after 9/11. On February 5, 2005, Saudi Arabia (Riyadh) hosted the International Conference in Countering Terrorism (which was attended by the researcher) to ‘discuss’ the ideology and roots of terrorism. Also, over a year earlier, in 2003, Saudi Arabia organized a national forum for intellectual dialogue entitled ‘Extremism and Moderation: A Comprehensive Approach’ (Public Statements by Senior Saudi Officials Condemning Extremism and Promoting Moderation, February 2005).

Former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Wyche Fowler, who served there from 1996 to 2001, refuted claims by some Americans that accused Saudi Arabia of being a financial resource for terrorism. Fowler asserted that Saudi Arabia and its officials ‘are not in the business of funding terrorists against their friends—the United States’ (p. 5). The Saudi government refuted these claims, saying that the Kingdom hosts more than six million foreign workers and professionals, who send billions of dollars to their countries every year, and for which the Saudi government has no responsibility. The Saudi government also has made it clear that the Zakat (tithing) which Muslims pay annually (2.5 of their net worth goes to specific categories of poor people) is one of the five pillars of Islam (Initiatives and Actions Taken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Combat Terrorism, February 2005).

In a personal interview with Hamad Al-Sayari (2005), the Governor of the Saudi Monetary Agency (SAMA), it was confirmed that full cooperation does exist between the United States and Saudi Arabia regarding the prevention of terrorism. They share a common goal of cutting off financial support of terrorism using an American-Saudi list of organizations and people who finance terrorism. He described the attacks of some influential Americans as attempts to distort the facts in order to poison the American-Saudi relations. According to Al-Sayari, their attempts contradict statements made by U.S. officials which have praised Saudi efforts to combat terrorism. In April 2004, Ambassador J. Cofer Black, Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism at the U.S. Department of State said,

I would cite Saudi Arabia as an excellent example of a nation increasingly focusing its political will to fight terrorism. Saudi Arabia has launched an aggressive, comprehensive, and unprecedented campaign to hunt down terrorists, uncover their plots, and cut off their sources of funding (Quoted in paper presented by Saudi Arabia at the Counter-Terrorism International Conference in Riyadh titled *Initiatives and Actions Taken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Combat Terrorism*, February 2005, p. 12).

Al-Sayari (2005) spoke of the attacks on Saudi Arabia as ‘invisible hands’ inside America seeking to distort the image of Saudi Arabia by frequently fabricating issues and cases about the Kingdom. He pointed out how the U.S. media falsely portrayed the Saudi ‘break-fast’ aid to Palestinians during the month of Ramadan as military aid. Al-Sayari added that after 9/11, all Saudi foreign aid has had to be checked by a central board, with all charitable organizations subject to ‘audit,’ using ‘draconian measures’ to prevent any leak of Saudi foreign aid to terrorists. According to the paper presented by Saudi Arabia at the Counter-Terrorism International Conference in Riyadh (*Initiatives and Actions Taken by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

to *Combat Terrorism*, 2005), Saudi efforts to eliminate financial resources for terrorism began before 9/11. For example, the Saudi government froze the assets of Osama Bin-Laden in 1994.

It was no surprise that a series of negative U.S. foreign policy moves and attacks on Saudi Arabia by the U.S. media caused Saudi attitudes toward the United States to deteriorate. According to the *Report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World* submitted to the Committee on Appropriations in the U.S. House of Representatives (2003), a survey conducted by Gallup in 2002 had found that only 7% of the people in Saudi Arabia had a 'very favorable view' of the United States. In reaction to attacks by the U.S. media and some members of the U.S. Congress, King Abdullah stated that the special American-Saudi relationship may become hard to maintain, asserting that the two states were at a 'crossroads,' and each country may have to act in its own best interest regardless of the 'special relationship' (Habib, 2003). Ali Al-Jahni (author's interview, 2005), from the Prince Naif University for Security Science in Riyadh, believed that the United States has 'blindly' supported Israel without any consideration for American political, economic, and technological interests in the Middle East in relation to its other major allies in the region, like Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states.

John Mearsheimer from University of Chicago and Stephen Walt the Academic Dean at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University questioned in their paper '*The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*' (2006) why the American foreign policy in the Middle East is devoted to serve the interests of the state of Israel in contradiction to American national interests in the region.

This situation has no equal in American political history. Why has the United States been willing to set aside its own security in order to advance the interests of another state? One might assume that the bond between the two countries is based on shared strategic interests or compelling moral imperatives. As we show below, however, neither of those explanations can account for the remarkable level of material and diplomatic support that the United States provides to Israel (p. 1).

Peterson (2002) diagnosed the tension in relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia. He speculated about the long-and short-term effects of this tension in the American-Saudi relationship. Regarding Saudi Arabia, he said,

It has found itself the target of American hostility on a scale never seen before, leading to the real possibility that the 60-year American-Saudi alliance (the kingdom's closest bond outside the Arab world) will be jeopardized. While the long-term damage may be limited, the more immediate impact on Saudi policy-makers and general population alike may be to rethink their overwhelmingly pro-Western and pro-American attitudes. (p. 7)

In Saudi Arabia, the U.S. media has been publicly and officially accused of being anti-Saudi (Al-Hulwa, author's interview, 2004). Some influential U.S. circles, the U.S. media and pro-Israeli lobbies, like AIPAC, have pursued an anti-Saudi agenda. According to Habib (2003), their reasons for being anti-Saudi include the firm Saudi position against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands and Saudi efforts to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. Another reason has been related to the rapid economic advance of Saudi Arabia (the largest economy in the Arab world). The economic power of Saudi Arabia has made it more influential in international politics and its independence from American financial aid which has weakened the policy making and regional influence of other Arab states like Egypt and Jordan. 9/11 has provided an opportunity for anti-Saudi circles in the United States to attack Saudi Arabia.

American stereotyping of other cultures present in American society, as well as other cultures around the world has been an ongoing phenomenon. It has fostered simplistic attempts to solve complex problems. The U.S. media and some American intellectuals have fuelled intolerance and misunderstanding by spreading stereotypes. An example of some erroneous ideas was found in *Breaking the Real Axis of Evil* by Mark Palmer (2003). The author has claimed that women are not allowed to work in Saudi Arabia but have to stay at home in 'a sexist prison' (p.15). Such a claim contradicts the fact that literacy, for example, is higher among women in Saudi Arabia than men. The report of the Saudi Department of Statistics in 2002 indicated that 93.2% of Saudi women and 89.2% of Saudi men are literate (quoted in the report of Political and Economic Reform in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2005). It was also stated in that report that females constitute a half of students in Saudi schools and more than half the students at Saudi universities. Moreover, Palmer claimed that women are not allowed to work when, in fact, they are.

The attack against Saudi Arabia has been considered by most Saudi elites to be an indirect attack on Islam. Saudi Arabia has assumed the role of defender of Islam against the attacks that have been launched by Western institutions. Peterson (2002) said, 'Given its perceived role as the protector of Islam, the kingdom will find it necessary to deal with the increasingly pessimistic mood throughout the Islamic world that Islam is under attack from the West' (p. 7). Since 9/11, the Gulf Operative Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates) has sponsored several educational programs against terrorism in the media and the press, clarifying that Islamic religion deals with terrorism in harsh terms. This

campaign was launched in response to what the Gulf Operative Council considered the misleading agenda of the U.S. media to portray Islam as a religion that fosters terrorism (Al-Jazeera, March, 2004).

Arabs and Muslims are often labeled terrorists and illiterate by the U.S. media. Hollywood has produced movies, before 911, in which Arabs are portrayed as terrorists. The images used to represent Arabs have been negative or unattractive or morally suspect: wealthy sheiks, terrorists, men with many wives, ignorant, and rich with oil money (Gher & Amin, 2000). In the movie 'The Siege,' Arabs and Muslims were presented as terrorists who were rounded up by the U.S. government and put in camps in order to counter terrorism. Children's television even portrays Arabs as evil, silly or thieving lawbreakers. In reality, Arabs have contributed to many aspects of civilization, including but not limited to medicine, mathematics, and geography. Shusta et al. (2002) addressed that issue saying that some people believe that 'Arab- and Muslim-Americans are more prone to violence' (p. 222). The former president of the American-Arab Anti-Defamation Committee, Albert Mokhiber, said that Arabs are not known to be terrorists but rather victims of terrorism and hate crimes. In the aftermath of the TWA flight crash in 1996, a man on the television said, 'I hope to God it was the work of people from the Middle East' (Gher & Amin, p. 63). Many people in the United States perceive terrorism as automatically involving Arabs and Muslims.

Since 9/11, some Americans have focused their attacks against Saudi Arabia on what they call 'Islamic Wahhabism,' which they consider a threat to the United States. The term 'Wahhabism,' a stereotypical term used in the early 1960's by



Nasser's regime in Egypt during the years of conflict between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. It refers to Sheikh Muhammad Bin-Abdulwahhab (1703-1792), a revivalist who sought to 'purify Islam from alien innovations and to recreate the original community of the prophet' (Habib, 2003, p. 257). He did not create a new version of Islam but sought to dispel ignorance that had spread among Muslims on the Arabian Peninsula, causing them to stray from the right path of Islam. The Saudi Minister of Interior, Prince Naif Bin-Abdulaziz, said in an interview with the daily *Middle East* newspaper that Saudi Arabia has been targeted by the American media since the 9/11 attacks, especially for its adherence to Islamic Law. He added that they think that (we) adopted (an) Islamic version that belongs to Saudi Arabia only, which is absolutely incorrect. There is only one Islam, Prince Naif said. Finally, he concluded that they need to learn more about our system, religion, and culture instead of prejudging (Al-Banyan, 2001, p. 1).

'Wahhabism' has been used by the U.S. media as a reason for the violent attacks of 9/11. Many Saudi commentators believed that this was done in an effort to distract the American people from the real cause of 9/11— U.S. foreign policy. While U.S. policymakers tend to portray 9/11 as an action, people in the Middle East condemn the 9/11 attacks which they consider a reaction to negative U.S. foreign policy position in the Middle East. The American media and U.S. quasi-officials speak in public about the Islamic threat to the security of the United States, but many intellectuals and commentators from the Middle East are alert to what they consider an 'unholy alliance' between Jewish radicals and Christian Evangelicals in the United States and their influence on U.S. foreign policy. For religious reasons, they support

the Israelis to sustain the Jewish state as it is required for the return of the Christ 'peace be upon him' (Khazen, 2005).

The attacks by the U.S. media against Saudi Arabia have negatively inputted attitudes in the Saudi government and among many Saudi elites, some of whom were once considered pro-Americans. Many of those elites were among thousands of Saudis who received their higher education in the United States. Ali Al-Jahni from the Prince Naif University for Security Sciences and Mohammad Al-Hulwa, Ashshura member (the Saudi Parliament) and member of the Foreign Affairs Committee (author's interviews, 2004- 2005), are among these Saudi elites who appreciated the American culture, values, and people. Al-Jahni differentiated between the condemnation of U.S. foreign policy and the admiration of the American ideals. Al-Hulwa considered U.S. media attacks on Saudi Arabia with suspicion, believing that the hostile U.S. media is against the Saudi ruling government and the religion, culture, and people of Saudi Arabia. Behind the attacks are anti-Saudi circles and pro-Israeli and Zionist lobbies in America.

There are two perspectives in both America and Saudi Arabia toward the relationship between the two countries. In the United States, moralists described the Saudi regime as undemocratic, lacking human rights principles, and inconsistent with American principles and values; American realists believe that the relationship is necessary and serves the interests of the United States regardless of any conflicting principles and values between the two countries. In Saudi Arabia, moralists have stated that America, which condemns other nations for violating human rights, has itself committed series of violations to human rights principles, to international law,

and even to the U.S. constitution. Saudi realists consider the relationship with the United States as an important alliance with the most powerful state in the world (Habib, 2003).

John Habib (2003), has asserted that thousands of these Saudis who obtained their higher education in America and were considered pro-American are now 'among the most disenchanted' with the American model as they have observed what they believe to be unjust and harsh U.S. foreign policies toward Arabs which, in the long-term, undermines the interests of the United States. They also have a lack of respect for U.S. media and the American administration. While the U.S. media has considered criticism of U.S. foreign policy by the Saudi media to be act of 'incitement,' calling on the Saudi government to prohibit such criticism, the American government looks at U.S. media criticism of the Saudi government, religion, and culture as freedom of the press and speech. This American double standard contradicts the basic values and ideals that Saudi intellectuals learned and experienced while studying in the United States. Many Saudi elites and intellectuals have been very critical of U.S foreign policy in general, and of the American role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, in particular. They believe that the United States has been dishonest regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict, supporting the Israelis against the Arab states militarily, economically, and politically. America's commitment to the support of Israel has been evident at the United Nations, where the United States vetoed 35 times resolutions condemning Israel for the illegal occupation of Palestinian lands and the killing of Palestinian civilians (BBC, March, 2003).

Internal American pressures to end the special relationship with Saudi Arabia have been countered by Saudi pressures to review and reshape the relationship in accordance with Saudi national interests. Many Saudi elites believe that the United States has failed to fulfil its commitment to Saudi Arabia and the other Arab states as it continues to pursue a biased policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indeed, all U.S administrations, and the Bush Administration in particular, have been subject to pressure by pro-Israeli and Zionist lobbies. Those lobbies use their power to promote pro-Israeli policies as if they were America's national interests. As a result, many Saudi elites demand a revival of Saudi policies that will serve Saudi national interests.

The next chapter will discuss the U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East during the G.W. Bush Administration with a focus on the U.S. war on terror; specifically it will try to tie together issues of how we understand the emergence of the war on terror and the contours of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Also, the chapter starts by reviewing the main themes in the Bush war on terror and what has been written about this war, but it also looks at the literature on terrorism.