

# IN WHO'S BEST INTEREST?



## TOP TEN REASONS TO CHANGE



## THE SAUDI-U.S. RELATIONSHIP



A REPORT BY THE OFFICE OF  
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# TOP TEN REASONS TO CHANGE



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## Saudi Arabia is Producing the Majority of Foreign Insurgents in Iraq



Strong evidence indicates that a majority of the “foreign fighters” battling U.S. troops in Iraq come from Saudi Arabia. Radical Islamists have been operating websites describing suicide missions of the insurgents. Hundreds of accounts of suicide bombers are listed on these sites. U.S. military officials have said that foreign fighters in Iraq constitute a growing and deadly percentage of the Iraqi insurgency.

- According to a May 15, 2005 *Washington Post* article, Reuven Paz – an Israeli expert on terrorism – analyzed the lists of *jihadi* dead in a paper published in March 2005. He found that 70 percent of the suicide bombers named by the websites were Saudi. Specifically, he found that 154 Arabs had been killed over the previous six months in Iraq, and that 61 percent of them from Saudi Arabia, with Syrians, Iraqis and Kuwaitis together accounting for another 25 percent.
- Evan F. Kohlmann, a researcher who monitors Islamic extremist Web sites, has compiled a list of more than 235 names of the dead taken from the various websites on the Internet since the summer of 2004, with more than 50 percent of his tally from Saudi Arabia.

U.S. military estimates cited by security analysts suggest there are about 1,000 active jihadists, or less than 10 percent of the number of fighters in a mostly Iraqi-dominated insurgency. As of mid-May 2005, these officials said foreign fighters are responsible for a higher percentage of the suicide bombings.

## The Saudi Government Allows Money To Go To Terrorists



One of the core findings of the October 2002 Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) Report on terrorist financing was as follows:

*“For years, individuals and charities based in Saudi Arabia have been the most important source of funds for al Qaeda; and for years, Saudi officials have turned a blind eye to this problem.”*

(Council on Foreign Relations, “Update on the Global Campaign Against Terrorist Financing,” p. 1)

While the 2004 CFR report on terrorist financing acknowledges that Saudi Arabia has taken some steps regarding Saudi financing of terrorist organizations, CFR concludes that the Kingdom must do more:

- Although Saudi Arabia has made significant improvements in its existing money laundering laws and has announced new laws and regulations, the Kingdom has not “fully implemented its new laws and regulations... [and] financing of terrorism persists.” (p. 15)
- Saudi Arabia has not “taken punitive actions against any individual for financing terror.” Saudi Arabia has not demanded accountability from its citizens and organizations; the Kingdom has failed “to punish...specific and identified leaders of charities found to be funneling money to militant Islamist organizations.” (p. 19)
- Finally, Saudi Arabia’s greatest export is a radical, violent form of Islam. According to the updated CFR report, “Saudi Arabia has spent what could amount to hundreds of millions of dollars around the world financing extremism.” (p. 21)

The information referenced in this section can be at:

- The “Global Campaign on Terrorist Financing” Update is available at: [http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Revised\\_Terrorist\\_Financing.pdf](http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Revised_Terrorist_Financing.pdf)

## Fifteen of the Nineteen 9/11 Hijackers Were Saudis

Saudi Arabia produced 15 of the 19 hijackers that attacked the U.S. on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Twelve of 13 “muscle hijackers” (not pilots, but those who stormed the cockpit, then attacked and controlled the crew and passengers) were from Saudi Arabia.

### American Airlines Flight 11



**Waleed al Shehri:** He was from Asir Province, a poor region in southwestern Saudi Arabia that borders Yemen. This weakly policed area is referred to as “the wild frontier.”



**Wail al Shehri:** He was the brother of Waleed al Shehri, and also came from Asir Province.



**Abdul Aziz al Omari:** He also came from Asir Province. According to the 9/11 Commission Report, he graduated with honors from high school, attained a degree from the Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, was married, and had a daughter. He is said to have served as an imam at his mosque in Saudi Arabia and is believed to have been a student of a radical Saudi cleric named Sulayman al Alwan, whose mosque is located in al Qassim Province.



**Satam al Suqami:** Suqami was the only hijacker not to obtain a U.S. identification document. The 9/11 Commission Report says that al-Suqami was from Riyadh, had very little education, and trained for al-Qaida at Khaldan – a large training facility near Kabul, Afghanistan.

### United Airlines Flight 175



**Ahmed al Ghamdi:** Al-Ghamdi was from the al Bahah province of Saudi Arabia, and shared the same tribal affiliation with fellow hijackers Saeed al-Ghamdi, Hamza al-Ghamdi, and Ahmed al-Haznawi. Al-Ghamdi quit school to fight in Chechnya against the Russians in 2000.



**Hamza al Ghamdi:** Al-Ghamdi was also from the al Bahah province, and shared the same tribal affiliation with fellow hijackers Ahmed al-Ghamdi, Saeed al-Ghamdi, and Ahmed al-Haznawi.



**Mohand al Shehri:** Al-Shehri came from the 'Asir province, as did several other 9/11 hijackers, including Waleed and Wail al-Shehri, two brothers who share his last name. Mohand al-Shehri began college, but his growing devotion to Wahhabiism distracted him from earning a degree.



## American Airlines Flight 77



**Hani Hanjour (pilot):** Hanjour was born in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, and was the first of the 9/11 hijackers to enter the U.S. (October 1991). He was a passionately religious Muslim who studied English at the University of Arizona. After receiving his pilot qualifications in the U.S., he went back to Saudi Arabia.



**Nawaf al-Hazmi:** Nawaf al-Hazmi has been called an "al-Qaeda veteran" by the CIA. According to the CIA, al-Hazmi was born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The 9/11 Commission Report says that al-Hazmi and al-Mihdhar (mentioned below) were two of the first four terrorists hand-picked by Osama bin Laden to participate in a U.S. terrorist operation using hijacked planes. (They were originally slated to be pilots, but since both proved to be poor students, other pilots were eventually found.). Al-Hazmi then travelled to Karachi, Pakistan where Khalid Sheikh Mohammed instructed them in English, Western culture, and aviation.



**Khalid al-Mihdhar:** He was one of the six participants known as the organizers of the attacks, and was most likely involved in the USS Cole bombing. He was born in Mecca. In 1995 he went to Bosnia to join the fight between Muslims and Serbs.



**Majed Moqed:** Moqed was born in Annakhil, Saudi Arabia, near Medina. He dropped out of university, and was apparently recruited by al-Qaeda in 1999.



**Salem al-Hazmi:** Much of al-Hazmi's history is unknown, but he was Nawaf al-Hazmi's younger brother and was born in Mecca. Both al-Hazmi brothers were al-Qaeda veterans by the time they were selected for participation in the 9/11 attacks.

## United Airlines Flight 93



**Saeed al-Ghamdi:** Al-Ghamdi came from the al Bahah province of Saudi Arabia, and shared the same tribal affiliation with fellow hijackers Ahmed al-Ghamdi, Hamza al-Ghamdi, and Ahmed al-Haznawi.

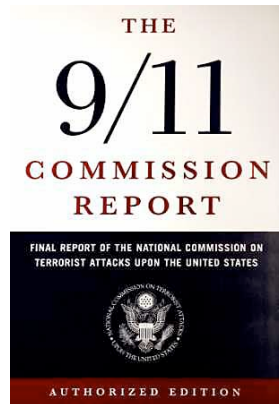


**Ahmad al-Haznawi:** Al-Haznawi also came from the al Bahah province of Saudi Arabia, and shared the same tribal affiliation with fellow hijackers Saeed al-Ghamdi, Hamza al-Ghamdi, and Ahmed al-Ghamdi.



**Ahmed al-Nami:** Born in Saudi Arabia, al-Nami studied Islamic law, or shariah, at King Khaled University in the city of Abha, in the southern Saudi Arabian province of 'Asir.

## The 9/11 Commission Called for Change in the U.S.–Saudi Relationship



According to the final report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (“The 9/11 Commission”), which was released in July 2004, the “problems in the U.S.-Saudi relationship must be confronted, openly.” The report describes Saudi Arabia as a “troubled country” and “problematic ally in combating Islamic extremism,” stating that al Qaeda “raised money directly from individuals and charities” to fund terrorism. The report also pointed out that Saudi Arabia “produced 15 of the [9/11] 19 hijackers”

The 9/11 Commission recommended the following regarding the U.S.-Saudi relationship:

*“The United States and Saudi Arabia must determine if they can build a relationship that political leaders on both sides are prepared to publicly defend—a relationship about more than oil. It should include a shared commitment to political and economic reform, as Saudis make common cause with the outside world. It should include a shared interest in greater tolerance and cultural respect, translating into a commitment to fight the violent extremists who foment hatred.”*

(The 9/11 Commission Report, p. 374)

The information referenced in this section can be found on the following websites:

- The entire 9/11 Commission Report can be downloaded at the following address: <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/index.htm>.
- Section 12 on Saudi Arabia can be accessed through this link: [http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report\\_Ch12.htm](http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/911Report_Ch12.htm).

## Saudis Teach Anti-American Radical Islam to Children

The Saudi royal family has been allowed to promote its radical version of Islam – Wahhabism – through a worldwide system of *madrassas*, or Islamic schools. Religious education is compulsory in Saudi Arabia, and *madrassas* teach the Wahhabbi ideology to young Muslims in Afghanistan, the Balkans (particularly Bosnia-Herzegovina), Chechnya, Kosovo, Indonesia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the troubled Kashmir region, Yemen, and parts of North America, to name a few. Most of these schools are financed by Saudi sources.



The following examples illustrate the extremist nature of Wahhabi teachings across the world:

- Typical 9<sup>th</sup> grade boys in *madrassas* around the world are taught using a book called *Hadeeth*, that is printed by the Saudi Ministry of Education. This book discusses the victory of Muslims over Jews:

*"The day of judgment will not arrive until Muslims fight Jews, and Muslim will kill Jews until the Jew hides behind a tree or a stone. Then the tree and the stone will say, 'Oh Muslim, oh, servant of God, this is a Jew behind me. Come and kill him.' Except one type of a tree, which is a Jew tree. That will not say that."*

- In a number of Afghani Wahhabi-inspired *madrassas*, young boys are taught that “Americans are killing Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq, and they are busy trying to poison Muslim minds everywhere with films, music, and television,” inciting them to enlist in the *jihad* against Americans.
- Western authors are banned and all reading is strictly controlled.

The information from this section is from the following sources:

- The Council on Foreign Relations “Global Campaign Against Terrorism Financing”: [http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Revised\\_Terrorist\\_Financing.pdf](http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Revised_Terrorist_Financing.pdf)
- The Freedom House Report available at: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/religion/publications/Saudi%20Report/FINAL%20FINAL.pdf>
- PBS “Frontline Specials on Madrassas and Wahhabism, available at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saudi/analyses/madrassas.html>



## The Saudi Government Persecutes Christians and Other Religious Minorities

The government of Saudi Arabia engages in systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of the right to freedom of religion or belief. Christianity and churches are outlawed in Saudi Arabia. Ruled by a Wahhabi theocracy, Saudi Arabia has made it nearly impossible for Christians, Jews, Hindus, and other dissenting Muslims to practice their religion in the Kingdom.

The following examples of anti-Christian, anti-Jewish, and anti-Muslim activities are from the [U.S. State Department's International Religious Freedom Report of 2004](#) and the [Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom of May 2005](#):

- The Bible is banned in Saudi Arabia. As a matter of official policy, the Saudi Government either burns or dumps Bibles, crosses, and other Christian objects.
- In late April 2005, Saudi security forces destroyed a makeshift church in Riyadh and arrested approximately 40 worshippers. The security officials responsible said the Christians “are trying to spread their poisonous religious beliefs to others through the distribution of books and pamphlets.”
- Earlier in April 2005, approximately 40 Pakistani Christians were detained, some for several hours and others for two days for holding a religious worship service in a private home in Riyadh.
- The Saudi government, as it has in the past, banned Americans and other Christians living in the Kingdom in December 2004 from celebrating Christmas. The Government also bans Christian and Jewish Americans from any public expression of their faith or American culture.
- In February 2004, a resident Christian was deported after providing a Bible to a Saudi citizen.
- In April 2003, two Christian foreign workers, Eritrean and Ethiopian, were arrested for worshipping privately. In June 2003, the Ethiopian was deported, followed by the Eritrean in July.
- There were frequent instances in which mosque preachers, whose salaries are paid by the Government, called for the death of Jews and Christians, including from the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina.

The information referenced in this section can be found on the following websites:

- The U.S. State Department “International Religious Freedom Report of 2004” is available at: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2004/35507.htm>
- The full report of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom is available at: <http://www.uscirf.gov/countries/publications/currentreport/2005annualRpt.pdf#page=1>

## The Saudi Government Oppresses Women

In Saudi Arabia, women are 57% of the total population. However, they are considered “minors” according to Saudi law. In the Kingdom, women are banned from civic and professional activities, severely restricted in their movement, and require the consent of men to participate in everyday life.

The primary reason for this prejudice against women is the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. According to the December 2004 Freedom House Report on Religious Freedom, to Wahhabi Muslims, “women are considered a perpetual source of potential *fitna* or discord in a social and moral sense.” (p. 63)

- In Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to vote. Saudi elections also bar women from participating as candidates. Saudi Arabia’s exclusion of women from the voting process is in direct violation of the UN’s Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was signed by the Kingdom in September 2000. [CEDAW defines discrimination against women as any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex.] The Kingdom’s decision also violates the 1968 UN’s Declaration of Human Rights.
- Saudi Arabia prevents women from studying law and engineering, directly selling or buying property, and attending court (even when accused of murder).
- Saudi Arabia bans women from driving.
- Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world that requires women to cover their faces. In fact, women must be covered from head to toe in black sackcloth. If women do not follow this rule, they can be arrested and jailed indefinitely, beaten or even killed.
- In Saudi Arabia, women cannot be treated at a hospital or examined by a doctor without male approval.
- In Saudi Arabia, women cannot leave the house without the permission and/or company of an immediate male family.
- In Saudi Arabia, women cannot accept a marriage proposal without male approval.
- In Saudi Arabia, women cannot purchase a mobile phone without male approval.
- In Saudi Arabia, women cannot work except in women’s education and healthcare. The unemployment rate of women in the Kingdom is over 70 percent.

The information from this section is from the following source:

- The Freedom House Report on “Saudi Publications on Hate Ideology Fill American Mosques,” available at:

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/religion/publications/Saudi%20Report/FINAL%20FINAL.pdf>

## Saudi Arabia's Dictators Oppose Democracy

*"Freedom is the birthright and deep desire of every human soul and spreading freedom's blessings is the calling of our time. And when freedom and democracy take root in the Middle East, America and the world will be safer and more peaceful."*

– President Bush, March 5, 2005

According to the U.S. State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, Saudi Arabia's record on human rights is "poor overall with continuing serious problems, despite some progress."

The Government of Saudi Arabia has continued to severely restrict freedoms of speech and press, assembly, association, religion, and movement:

- In March 2004, the Saudi Government arrested 13 leaders of the country's democracy movement after authorities learned they planned to establish an independent human right committee. The eight pro-democracy leaders initiated the drafting of at least three national petitions signed by thousands of citizens demanding national elections, elected parliament, human rights, women rights, and freedom of the press and religion. According to the U.S. State Department's recently released report on Saudi Arabia's human rights practices, "most were released after reportedly signing statements promising not to speak publicly or to agitate for reform; however, three remained imprisoned at year's end." (The Saudi Institute: <http://209.197.233.93/content/view/21/39/> )
- On November 6, 2004 the lead attorney for the arrested reformers, Abdul Rahman Al-Lahem, was arrested. No charges were entered against Al-Lahem, and he remained imprisoned and without access to his family or lawyers at year's end. In December, journalists for the national newspapers the *Saudi Gazette* and *Al-Madina* were arrested and later released at the trial of the reformers arrested in March. (U.S. State Department's Country Report on Human Rights: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41731.htm>)
- Throughout 2003, the Government sanctioned several journalists for articles and commentaries critical of the religious authorities and conservative Muslim theology, particularly after the May 2003 terrorist attacks in Riyadh. (U.S. State Department's Country Report on Human Rights: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2004/41731.htm>)

The President's March 2005 Radio Address can be accessed at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/03/20050305.html>

## The Saudi Government Vilifies Israel and Jewish People

While the Saudi Government acknowledges the existence of the state of Israel, it continues to rail against Israel and Jews worldwide. Unlike several other Arab countries, Saudi Arabia has not established diplomatic or commercial channels for communication with Israel. The following examples illustrate the virulent anti-Israel, anti-Semitic character of the Saudi Government:

- Following a May 2004 terrorist attack in Yanbu, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah said in remarks broadcast on Saudi TV that *“Zionism is behind terrorist actions in the Kingdom...I am 95 percent sure of that.”*
- Several days later Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal reaffirmed Crown Prince Abdullah’s remarks, stating that *“It is not hidden from anyone that extremist Zionist elements are engaging in a vulgar campaign against the Kingdom by espousing and disseminating lies and incitement against the Saudi government ...The terror operations taking place today serve the interests of the extremist Zionist elements...”*
- Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz, asked whether there was a contradiction between these statements and his own statements attributing attacks in the Kingdom to al-Qaeda, reportedly said, *“I don’t see any contradiction in the two statements, because al-Qaeda is backed by Israel and Zionism.”*

At a February 2005 Saudi-sponsored “International Counter-Terrorism Conference” in Riyadh, Saudi Cleric Aed Al-Qarni stated that *“The first to kill and use terrorism in the world were the Jews”* (as translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute, or MEMRI). Prior to and during the conference, various Saudi clerics noted that *“Jews and the Christians are Allah’s enemies,”* and that *Jihad* – including attacks by insurgents in Iraq – is appropriate. In a poem read before Saudi Defense Minister Prince Sultan, the poet said Osama bin Laden *“was sent by the Jews.”*

Official and semi-official anti-Semitic statements emerging from Saudi Arabia are numerous. A sampling can be found at the following site:

[http://www.adl.org/Anti\\_semitism/arab/saudi\\_as\\_print.asp](http://www.adl.org/Anti_semitism/arab/saudi_as_print.asp)

The information referenced in this section can be found on the following websites:

- The Freedom House Report:  
<http://www.freedomhouse.org/religion/publications/Saudi%20Report/FINAL%20FINAL.pdf>
- The Council on Foreign Relations “Global Campaign Against Terrorism Financing”:  
[http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Revised\\_Terrorist\\_Financing.pdf](http://www.cfr.org/pdf/Revised_Terrorist_Financing.pdf)
- The Middle East Media Research Institute’s website offers translation of official and semi-official statements from Saudi Arabia: <http://memri.org/>

## **The Saudi Government Controls the OPEC Oil Cartel That Keeps Gas Prices High**

While claiming to be a friend of the United States, Saudi Arabia effectively runs the OPEC cartel, driving up oil and gas prices for American families and hurting the American economy.

OPEC is a cartel, controlling approximately 75% of known reserves. Under the leadership of Saudi Arabia, OPEC sets quotas on oil exports, thus driving up prices in both the short-term and long-term.

In the short-term, OPEC increases or cuts production to adjust world oil prices to its whim, resulting in windfall profits – profits that in many cases go to fund terrorism. For example, most of Iran's government funding comes from oil, and recent spikes have left it flush with cash to give to terrorist groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

In the long-term, OPEC's quotas lead to a chronic shortage of supply. Since OPEC nations do not produce to their capacity, they have no reason to invest in new production capabilities and develop new oil fields. Indeed, despite controlling 75% of the world's reserves, OPEC produces just 40% of the world's oil. Especially with booming demand from China, the U.S. is falling farther and farther behind in supply, and prices are skyrocketing.

Indeed, since 2002, gas prices have skyrocketed from \$1.14 to \$2.16 per gallon. Oil has jumped from less than \$20 per barrel to solidly above \$50. Goldman Sachs predicts the U.S. could see a spike of \$105 per barrel by the end of this year. Some energy experts, like Edward L. Morse – Executive Adviser at Hess Energy Trading, and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Energy Policy – estimated in an October 13, 2004 article in *The Washington Post* that in a truly open market (without OPEC), oil prices would be as low as \$10 per barrel. In other words, because of OPEC, Americans are paying \$150 billion extra for imported oil.

Saudi Arabia is the lead producer of OPEC. The Saudis have the largest oil reserves in the world and are the largest producers in the world. Without Saudi Arabia's leadership and participation, OPEC would be unable to exercise control over world oil markets.

Worse yet, the cartel is likely in violation of international law. Many OPEC members are also WTO members, and export quotas are illegal under WTO rules. In other words, the way OPEC sets prices puts half its membership in violation of international law. Saudi Arabia is now in talks to ascend to WTO membership. At the very least, the U.S. cannot let Saudi Arabia join the WTO while it leads an organization that flouts its rules.

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