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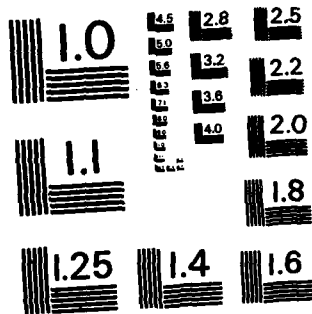
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**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania**

**US OPTIONS IN IRAN AND
SAUDI ARABIA IN THE 1980's**

US Options: Iran in the 1980's

by

Barry M. Rubin

US Options: Saudi Arabia in the 1980's

by

Samuel F. Wells, Jr.

3 January 1983

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FOREWORD

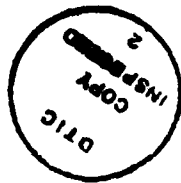
This memorandum evolved from the Military Policy Symposium, "Iran and Saudi Arabia: Problems and Possibilities for the United States in the Mid Range," sponsored by the Strategic Studies Institute in April 1982. During the Symposium, academic and government experts discussed a number of issues concerning this area which will have a continuing impact on US strategy. This memorandum, which includes two of the papers presented, considers US policy options toward Iran and Saudi Arabia in this decade.

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This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.



RICHARD D. LAWRENCE
Major General, USA
Commandant



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US OPTIONS: IRAN IN THE 1980's

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The problem for future US-Iran relations can be simply stated. Objectively, Iran continues to be of great importance for the United States; this seemingly dictates cooperation. Subjectively, in the minds of Iran's leaders, the United States remains the Great Satan and the key enemy; there is no willingness to rebuild any bilateral relations. To a lesser extent, it should be mentioned, there are domestic political pressures in the United States against rapprochement with Tehran. → [to page 9]

For obvious reasons, Washington considers Iran a lost cause and emphasizes instead the defense of the Gulf's Arab side against Soviet invasion, surrogate subversion, or internal upheaval. The danger is that such an approach may be a self-fulfilling prophecy. By appearing to write off Iran, the United States may be creating a situation similar to that which developed in pre-1978 Afghanistan—implying that the West is indifferent and would not interfere with a Soviet invasion or an alliance of Iran with the USSR. Similarly, a North Korean invasion may have been encouraged when the United States put South Korea outside our defense perimeter in 1949.

First, it should be noted that some contingencies—a Soviet invasion of the Gulf, a policy stressing American willingness to intervene militarily in the region, the likelihood of a leftist victory in Iran, or of Iran becoming a Soviet client or ally—have been greatly, and counterproductively, overstated.

However, it should be stressed also that Iranians of every political persuasion seem to believe that the United States has “abandoned” their country. While this perception may seem amusing to Americans, the result is potentially a self-fulfilling prophecy. Historically, Iranians have tended to seek the winning great power side, since Iran, unlike Afghanistan, has a record of accommodation rather than confrontation with foreign powers. Whether Ayatollah Khomeini’s emphasis on self-reliance has changed this political culture remains to be seen.

The Iranian perception, then, is that the gap is unbridgeable—a matter of glory for the radicals and worry for the moderates. Americans seem to take the conflict for granted for the immediate future, but underestimate the amount of bitterness involved over the medium run. There is an overreliance on the “objective” factors of geopolitics and the need for arms eventually to “return Iran to its senses.” Many American analysts still seem to believe that pragmatists will come to power as if this is ordained by history, ignoring the possibility of a viable Iranian strategy of nonalignment. Ironically, this strategy may have to be guaranteed indirectly by the United States.

The very real bitterness toward America, plus the domestic political situation built up since the revolution, precludes any easy reestablishment of ties, obviously as long as Khomeini lives and probably as long as the Islamic Republican Party and the pro-Khomeini clerics wield power. The first hesitant steps of the Bazargan government in that direction led to a mobilization of the Islamic radicals and the taking of the US Embassy in November 1979. The assumption that economic difficulties or Soviet pressure, for example, will force Iran back into the Western camp is highly questionable. The Islamic republic forces, it should be added, appear able to retain power for several years to come, even after the death of Khomeini or his disappearance from the political scene.

AMERICAN INTERESTS IN IRAN

Essentially, the US interest in Iran is basically the same as it has been since 1946: Iranian independence, unity, and sovereignty, since any direct or indirect extension of Soviet influence over Iran would threaten the vital Gulf region, with its massive petroleum reserves and key strategic crossroads. Most important is not to maximize US influence but to minimize Soviet power in Iran. This holds true no matter how anti-American the Tehran government and must be pursued no matter how poor bilateral relations remain.

A secondary interest has been the continued free flow of Iranian petroleum, but given the current world oversupply and the new sources of oil elsewhere, this has become less important. Over the last three years the world largely has accommodated itself to getting along without Iranian supplies. Denial of the Iranian oilfields to Soviet bloc control is a relatively minor issue in and of itself; far more important is the continued security of the oilfields in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, etc.—in short, the security of the Gulf's southern shore. The Iranian revolution has made these countries more important.

If the revolution has not really affected the historic US interest in Iran, established at the dawn of the Cold War, it has removed and, indeed, has reversed the new set of interests established in the early 1970's. No longer was the United States eager to have a passive Iran, safe from its northern neighbor; now it wanted an active Iran which ensured the security of its southern neighbors. The Nixon Doctrine viewed Iran as a bulwark against Soviet-supported radical forces in the region and as protector of the seemingly fragile Arab states across the Gulf. Clearly, this is no longer relevant because Iran has become such a destabilizing force in its own right. Therefore, the United States must act to help the Arab emirates which now seem threatened by Islamic Iran.

This Arab concern, created by Iranian revolutionary rhetoric, was heightened by the discovery of Iran-trained revolutionaries in Bahrain; one-fourth of them Saudis seeking to overthrow Arab governments. Iran's relatively good battlefield performance against Baghdad and its threats against countries supporting Iraq are further worries. Thus, Iran has given the Arab countries an incentive for seeking Western aid and regional self-defense cooperation.

The existence of an Iranian threat is the first clear and present outside danger for the Gulf states and has had much more effect on their thinking than the seemingly more distant invasion of Afghanistan. It is clear to both Arabs and Iranians that the arms the United States is selling to Saudi Arabia and the smaller sheikdoms—and most obviously the AWACS surveillance planes—are aimed against Iran.

While the Iranians are wrong in seeing Washington behind Iraq's invasion, they are right in viewing the United States as supporting—and it has little choice in the matter—an alliance aimed against any spread of Iranian influence or of the Iranian-style Islamic radicalism to the more conservative Arab states. Both the accurate and inaccurate perceptions are mutually reinforcing in building continued anti-American sentiment in that country.

All of these factors are likely to continue into the 1980's, posing tremendous difficulties for US policy. America's desire that Iran oppose—even for its own Islamic radical reasons—expansion of Soviet power southwards is in direct contradiction to American efforts to prevent the strengthening of Iran's regional position.

The hostile relations between Washington and Tehran and the Iranian tendency to view both superpowers as evil, but the United States as the greater evil, means, at best, noncooperation between the two—even if both are opposed to Soviet efforts—and at worst some parallelism of Iranian and Soviet objectives. To best understand this last danger, one need merely consider Iran's world view as the exact opposite of that held by the People's Republic of China. Peking's equation of the USSR and the United States has not prevented it from tilting toward the latter as the lesser evil.

The best safeguard against this is the very real Iranian xenophobia, preference for nonalignment, and mistrust of the USSR—on the basis of long and painful experience. The United States lacks leverage in Iran except, it seems, through possibly pushing Iran into Soviet arms by helping its enemies or denying Iran the goods it needs.

On the Iran-Arab front, the United States is strongly committed to countries that Iran perceives as enemies. Even if the Iran-Iraq war ends, this is likely to continue in the form of a Cold War. On this issue, Iranian nationalism and Iranian Islamic revolutionism are in full agreement. While the Soviet problem impels the United States toward trying to rebuild relations with Iran, the Arab problem pushes it in the opposite direction.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ACTION

The United States must carefully define the line between these two considerations. America's Arab allies should be supported, but that assistance must not go too far in convincing Iranians that they need to ally with Moscow against an American-Arab entente. (The USSR, of course, has its own constraints in this respect since it wants to avoid further erosion of its links with Iraq or its standing in the Arab world.)

This dictates, for example, that the United States avoid entanglement on the Iraqi side of the war even if making some inroads in Iraq's own hostility to the United States seems possible. Iran is the greater prize and, since it is contiguous to the USSR, its "defection" is likely to be less reversible.

Two influences shaping Iranian policy toward the great powers in the 1980's will be the patterns of trade and arms purchases. Iran's commerce with the United States remains limited but, in terms of maintaining Western links to Iran, trade between Tehran and Western Europe or Japan is in the US interest since it provides an alternative to dependence on the Soviet bloc.

Iranian trade with the USSR and its friends has been increasing, but the Iranian nonalignment sentiment is so strong that the Islamic Republic prefers to deal with the Eastern European states. The distinction may seem a small one to Americans, but it is an important indicator of Iranian thinking.

Similarly, in purchasing arms, Iran has gone to the international weapons market, Syria, Libya, and North Korea. Significantly, however, the equipment bought—mostly the light arms on which the Iranian war effort depends—is Soviet-made. The former Shah era army has been decimated and the influence of ideologically-motivated revolutionary guards has increased. Hence, a military coup per se could produce a leadership with some vested interest in links to the East as well as to the West.

One obvious question is whether the United States should combat the worst case scenarios of Soviet influence in Iran by threats or promises. The use of the former, however—given Iran's existing sensitivity to American conspiracies and enmity—would have the effect of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Since Iranians already expect the worst from the United States, such threats against a contingency that may well not occur could only be viewed by them

as a clear and present danger necessitating a sharp change in policy. The United States should encourage, not undermine, Iranian nonalignment.

More useful would be public and private assurances wherever possible to Tehran that, in the event of Soviet pressure or aggression, the United States would respond favorably to Iranian requests for assistance. This would give the Tehran leaders an additional card in their hand and an incentive to resist such pressures in preserving their Islamic nonalignment. There is even a Soviet precedent for this in Brezhnev's warning against US intervention in 1978. Obviously, the Iranians would angrily reject the idea that they need a US guarantee, but this would not change the impact of this statement on Moscow or, indeed, on the Iranians themselves. Unfortunately, given the lack of US leverage, having an Iran which would play off the United States and USSR would be a step forward from Washington's standpoint.

Does an unstable Iran serve the US interests? Essentially, the answer is no, for the USSR is far more able—given its proximity and internal political connections—to benefit from such a situation than is the United States. The only variant would be if a period of struggle would lead to a stable Iran which is friendlier to the West—an unlikely scenario, given the volatility of Iranian politics and the weakness of middle class and emigre elements. At the same time, the current situation—a regime fairly in the saddle in Tehran but with little direct control in the provinces—may discourage Iran from foreign adventures.

Given the small prospects of the emigres—divided and out of touch as they are—for regaining power, it would be a mistake for the United States to actively support their efforts to subvert the existing government. Obviously, it is important to maintain contacts and to gain information, but the limited gains set against serious potential losses do not make worthwhile a great expenditure of resources. Besides, the emigres would be likely to publicize and overstate any commitment they were to receive.

These, of course, are meant as responses to a continuation of the present situation. A scenario of continued power of an IRP government steering a nonaligned course and the absence of any sharp rise in Soviet influence or of Iranian aggressiveness in the Gulf is most likely at least for the first portion of the coming decade. The United States must play a low-key role, awaiting

opportunities and strengthening Arab friends in the Gulf, primarily structurally and politically and then militarily.

Worst case developments would call for different responses. A full-scale Soviet invasion of Iran, unlikely as it is, must be considered by military officers. This would probably lead, unless under the clearest of Iranian invitations, to World War III. The Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force would function as a tripwire in such a case. It would be equally difficult to cope with a "Polish solution" inside Iran. However, it should be noted that, should the pro-Moscow left or unpatriotic IRP elements try such a sharp turn, it would alienate such wide sectors within the country that the United States would find many potential allies in struggling against such a move.

Direct Iranian aggression against Gulf states is unlikely and would in some ways only further tighten the latter's cooperation with the United States. Washington's existing commitments to these states is probably sufficient to cope with such an eventuality and, given the limited forces Tehran can employ, it would probably be dealt with better by local forces, aided and supplied by the United States.

The United States can do little to help end the Iran-Iraq war, which continues to raise tensions in the region. While the United States is on neither side, to some extent the USSR has managed to be on both sides. The possible destabilization of Iraq is also worrisome. Yet, it should also be stated that, by tying up both states and by ensuring Iraqi good behavior toward the other Gulf Arab regimes—which it has frequently threatened in the past—the continuation of the war at a relatively low level is not necessarily in direct contradiction to US interests. At the same time, the United States does not want to see the other side crippled. Like the Gulf Arabs themselves, a victorious Iran or a victorious Iraq could pose problems for the weaker states.

Surprisingly, time may be on the side of the United States in relations with Iran. The longer the span before a major internal Iranian crisis erupts, the more likely it is that Iran will have gotten over its bitterness toward what it perceives as past American behavior. Time will also be necessary for Iranians to see that their break with the United States has brought real costs for them. The regime's continued self-confidence and its relatively good performance in the war has scarcely dented this confidence. If

Soviet advisors are increasing in number and there are greater trade links with the East bloc, there are also opportunities for Western States to fill the gap left by the destruction of US influence.

Yet, important as it is to plan for worst case scenarios, one should not confuse these with the most likely future. Iranians distrust the left and the USSR and do not want Soviet domination any more than Washington would wish it on them. While the United States has suffered a real loss in Iran's switch from the friendly to the neutral category in East-West conflict, a further transformation into the other camp is not inevitable.

US OPTIONS: SAUDI ARABIA IN THE 1980's

[From page 2]

➤ In analyzing possible policy choices for the United States in its complex relationship with Saudi Arabia, one must strive to be precise without oversimplifying, to separate long-term from short-term issues, and to be clear about ends and means. To give you a sense of my conceptual map of the region, this memorandum initially summarizes my position on many of the key questions that must be addressed before policy options can be discussed reasonably.

PREMISES

US interests in the Middle East are extremely important, ranking behind only the physical defense of American territory and our interests in Western Europe and Japan. Although disagreeing with some lines of the Reagan Administration's Middle Eastern policy, I basically accept the definition of interests set forth by Richard Burt, Director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs in the Department of State, before a House subcommittee on March 23, 1981. Stating that the Administration viewed "the Middle East,

including the Persian Gulf, as part of a larger politico-strategic theater, the region bounded by Turkey, Pakistan, and the Horn of Africa," he identified four basic interests in the region:

- Demonstrate the ability to counter the influence of the Soviets and their allies.

- Insure continued Western access to the oil of the Persian Gulf in adequate quantities and at a reasonable price.

- Insure the continued existence and strength of our friends in the region; and

- Continue to work toward peace among Israel and her neighbors.

Whatever the conflicts among these interests and the domestic constraints in pursuing them, the United States cannot avoid significant political involvement in the Gulf, including a serious policy relationship with Saudi Arabia.

The nature of the Soviet threat to the region is subject to wide-ranging debate, and the shift in leadership in Moscow could lead to new patterns of policy. But past experience indicates the Soviet Union will not take large risks in the Middle East at a time when it is heavily involved with difficulties in Poland and Afghanistan and in its domestic economy. A Soviet invasion of Iran or Pakistan would be the most severe form of the threat, but it is widely viewed as the least likely to occur. The most probable forms are military aid and advisers to client states such as South Yemen and efforts to expand influence in Syria and Iraq as well as Iran. The Soviets will also seize opportunities to support with rhetoric, funds, and supplies dissident revolutionary groups of possible use to their interests. But the likelihood of a Soviet military attack or direct intervention in Saudi Arabia is very small as long as the United States maintains the demonstrated capability and resolve to resist such a challenge by force in the region and elsewhere with all available and appropriate means.

The principal threats to Saudi Arabia come, not from the Soviet Union, but from neighboring states such as Iran, South Yemen, and Israel. While the threat from South Yemen is not militarily serious and the chances of an unprovoked Israeli attack are small, Iran would pose a major threat to Saudi Arabia and all the Gulf states after a successful counterattack against Iraq. The Iranian threat then would come more in the form of political destabilization than as a direct military challenge. Indeed, the most serious problems stem from the ability of unfriendly states like

Iran, Libya, and South Yemen to exploit domestic discontent such as that reflected in the Mecca incident of November 1979, the Shiite revolts of December 1979 and February 1980, and the preempted coup in Bahrain in December 1981. The Saudis have a number of reforms that are necessary before they will be able to maintain internal security and protect their oilfields against sabotage.

In the face of significant external and internal threats and the pressures of rapid modernization and social change, the Saudi regime has shown a high degree of realism regarding its problems. The evidence strongly indicates that the royal family has balanced well the demands of modernization and the needs of the traditional religious and social order. Despite a certain level of inefficiency and corruption, the regime has shown strong instincts for survival and has a good potential for stability. As recent studies by William Quandt, John Shaw, and David Long contend, the Saudi system will be able to continue its successful adaptation to the modern world if the military, during its expansion, keeps a minor political role and if sharp external pressures can be avoided. With proper policies, the United States can be highly useful in satisfying both these conditions.

From the Western perspective, the Saudi government has shown an improved capacity to play a role in regional politics and to exert leadership among the smaller Gulf states. While it would be a serious mistake to believe that Saudi Arabia can become the political kingpin of the Gulf, the nation has taken unprecedented steps in recent months in working with the United States and Syria to stabilize Lebanon, in assisting Iraq in its war effort against Iran, and in announcing Prince Fahd's eight-point plan for peace with Israel. Even more impressive is the Saudi role in the creation and development of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which has shown a pleasantly surprising capacity for cooperation and appears to be taking the first serious steps toward coordinated intelligence, early warning, and defense planning.

The Palestinian question is important to the Saudi leadership and will remain an ingredient of US-Saudi relations. While not the most salient issue for the Saudis, the Palestinian problem serves as a test of American willingness to be responsive to Arab needs. The United States cannot deal successfully with Saudi Arabia without a serious attempt to make progress on the Palestinian question specifically and on Arab-Israeli problems generally. Yet the likely continuation of Begin's policies in Israel and the prohibitive

political cost to any US administration of coercing Israel will doom any major American effort to resolve the Palestinian question. Any basis for achieving the traditional solution of trading land for peace under the terms of UN Resolution 242 is disappearing rapidly. The likely results are the gradual annexation of the West Bank and Gaza to Israel, continued stalemate on negotiations, and chronic turmoil within a basically partitioned Lebanon. Despite the small changes of success, the United States should make a sustained, good faith effort to resolve the Palestinian problem.

THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF SAUDI-AMERICAN RELATIONS

Before thinking about broad options and specific policies, another series of constraints should be introduced. In terms of political culture and operating style, Saudi Arabia and the United States are not well-suited for close and cordial relations. Americans do business in a public, adversarial, legalistic manner, while Saudis are devoted to a secret, consensual, and imprecise process of decisionmaking with heavy reliance on personal trust developed over a long series of exchanges. Further complications stem from the proud Saudi determination to avoid foreign direction and control and their preference for flexible unwritten commitments that can be adjusted to changing circumstances. The relationship is structured for conflict and misunderstanding when one recognizes the longstanding Saudi suspicion of America's deep commitment to Israel and their fear of the scathing public debate initiated by the friends of Israel whenever a cooperative step between Washington and Riyadh is contemplated.

Saudi experience in recent dealings with the United States has confirmed their suspicions. Examples abound, but a telling episode came in the border war between North and South Yemen in 1979 when the Saudi government requested US assistance. The Carter Administration provided some \$60 million in aid but did so with a great amount of fanfare and rhetoric, portraying the conflict as a great power confrontation. The Saudis, wanting to control the situation themselves, did not want direct US involvement and wanted the United States to retreat into the background. Other Arab states criticized the Saudis for internationalizing what was essentially an Arab problem, and ultimately a formula designed by the Arab League rescued the Saudis from their dilemma. Similarly

distasteful experiences occurred late in 1979 over Oman's request for American assistance in keeping the Strait of Hormuz open and in the Saudi request for airborne early warning assistance in the initial weeks of the Iran-Iraq war.

These cultural and political differences, reinforced by recent experience, place significant limitations on Saudi-American political and military cooperation. Riyadh would like to collaborate with the United States on economic development and the maintenance of regional stability, and it definitely wants a firm, consistent American commitment to keep the Gulf States independent and to ensure the steady flow of oil to the West and to Japan. But collaboration has to be quiet, unobtrusive, and on Saudi terms. Overt US leadership and a major American military presence are unacceptable to the Saudi regime. Other means will have to be found.

BROAD US OPTIONS

Within the premises and constraints previously discussed, the United States may consider three broad options for its relations with Saudi Arabia. For ease of analysis, these are starkly separated. But in practical application it may prove desirable to create a blend of elements from two or more so long as a coherent line of policy can be produced. The options, with brief allusions to their strengths and weaknesses, are:

•*Emphasize military threats to Saudi Arabia (whether from the Soviet Union or Iran) and employ a major US military presence, arms sales, and American advisers as major policy instruments.* Such a policy satisfies the Saudi desire for a firm US commitment to regional security, but it gives top priority to the wrong threat and creates too much backlash against a massive US presence while ignoring more fundamental but less obvious problems.

•*Emphasize regional and internal political and international economic instability as the main threats and rely on detailed political and economic cooperation as the principal policy tools in a campaign to help the Saudis develop the capability to assess and manage their own security problems.* This line of policy addresses the most serious threats, but would require a major adjustment of policy and public attitudes in the United States and lacks the demonstration of firmness that may be needed. It also demands a

degree of sophistication and coordination in US policy that has seldom, if ever, been achieved.

•*Emphasize domestic instability exaggerated by a large American presence and exploited by regional antagonists as the most likely threats and rely on quiet advice and economic instruments to meet the threat.* If combined with real progress on Arab-Israeli issues, this might be the right level of response to meet the most probable threat. But it does not show a strong US commitment and is not characteristic of American policy in any area of vital interest. It might also fail to meet military challenges of radical states and their client groups with serious adverse consequences for the Saudi leadership.

THE ELEMENTS OF A COHERENT US POLICY FOR SAUDI ARABIA AND THE GULF

The basic strategy which the United States should pursue consists essentially of the second option with the addition of a significant over-the-horizon Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) and carefully limited arms sales and advisers from the first option. Such a strategy would require developing a new consensus within Congress and the public for the economic and political development of Saudi Arabia. It would strive to keep a low US profile and avoid harsh debates over sophisticated arms sales and Saudi instability. Restrictions on arms sales would not seek to limit total arms sales to the region, but rather would seek to reduce US involvement in the hope of avoiding a repetition of the AWACS episode. The military dimensions would include a lean and highly mobile force of no more than 40 thousand troops, ideally from a single service and operating within the already established Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force, which could move quickly to assist in dealing with attacks from Iran or incidents such as the seizure of the mosque in Mecca. It would include large stores of prepositioned equipment in Diego Garcia, Oman, and Saudi Arabia if easily done. The RDJTF would be designed for substantial reinforcement from other services to a size of 120 thousand over 90 days on the assumption that larger military threats would almost surely follow sustained periods of political tension.

Other elements of this strategy follow:

•**Develop a coordinated program of research and training for political and economic development, including basic research on**

how to pursue stable modernization in Arab societies; training institutes for government and business personnel going to the region, including heavy emphasis on language instruction; and balanced advisory teams to ensure coherent and consistent policy.

- Establish programs to sensitize Americans dealing with the Arab world about the elements of Arab nationalism and culture which can work in the US interest and advise them about how to avoid violating the social and religious tenets of Islamic teachings.

- Make a serious attempt to resolve the Palestinian question, including strong pressure on Israel (through restrictions on economic and military assistance if necessary) to return to the support of the goals of UN Resolution 242 and the commitment to Palestinian autonomy.

- Encourage attempts at regional security cooperation such as those reflected in the Gulf Cooperation Council and quietly support cooperation for regional stability in bilateral and other combinations among Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, and Pakistan.

- Provide training programs for Saudi scientists and technicians as well as top level managers in civilian and military sectors of government.

- Assist in developing Saudi capability—on their terms and under their initiative and direction—to provide internal security through a more effective army and national guard.

- Accept Saudi purchase of military equipment from US allies as a valid effort to diversify its equipment and meet mutual objectives.

- Understand the need for the Saudi leadership to express its independence in dealings with states unfriendly to the United States on occasion and to reject American advice in some cases.

The emphasis in pursuing such a political and economic development strategy would be on developing instruments that are flexible and appropriate to the Gulf region. The creation of such policies and forces will be expensive in money and time, and to be effective they have to be pursued consistently over several presidential administrations. But, if properly designed and implemented, this strategy offers the prospects of dealing successfully with the most likely and most fundamental problems of the region. And, not least, it builds on the strength of American institutions and strikes at the weakest links of the Soviet system.

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20. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) US-Iran relations; US-Saudi relations; US policy; Soviet threat		
21. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This memorandum evolved from the Military Policy Symposium, "Iran and Saudi Arabia: Problems and Possibilities for the United States in the Mid Range," sponsored by the Strategic Studies Institute in April 1982. During the symposium, academic and government experts discussed a number of issues concerning this area which will have a continuing impact on US strategy. This memorandum, which includes two of the papers presented, considers US policy options toward Iran and Saudi Arabia in this decade.		

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