# THE US, THE UK AND SAUDI ARABIA IN WORLD WAR II

## The Middle East and the Origins of a Special Relationship

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*This one is for my wife, Tanja, and our son, Samuel,*
*with love and the deepest gratitude*

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# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| AIR | Air Ministry |
| AACFC | American Air Corps Ferry Command |
| ABC | American British Staff Conference |
| AAWPG | Anglo-American War Planning Group |
| AIOC | Anglo-Iranian Oil Company |
| ARAMCO | Arabian American Oil Company |
| AUML | Arkansas University Mullins Library |
| BPC | Bahrain Petroleum Company |
| BDFA | British Documents on Foreign Affairs |
| BL | British Library |
| BOAC | British Overseas Airways Corporation |
| CAB | War Cabinet Records |
| CW | Cable & Wireless Limited |
| CASOC | California-Arabian Standard Oil Company |
| CO | Colonial Office |
| CCS | Combined Chiefs of Staff |
| CIPP | Committee on International Petroleum Policy |
| EOC | Enemy Oil Committee |
| FO | Foreign Office |
| FRUS | Foreign Relations of the United States |
| FDRPL | Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library |
| HAN | Hansard |
| HMG | His Majesty's Government |
| JCS | Joint Chiefs of Staff |

| | |
|---|---|
| IPAA | Independent Petroleum Association of America |
| ICS | Indian Civil Service |
| IOR | Indian Office Records |
| IPC | Iraqi Petroleum Company |
| LL | Lauinger Library |
| LC | Library of Congress |
| MESC | Middle East Supply Centre |
| NARA | National Archives and Records Administration |
| NEA | Division of Near Eastern Affairs |
| OSS | Office of Strategic Services |
| PAN-AM | Pan American Airlines |
| PAW | Petroleum Administration of War |
| PRC | Petroleum Reserves Corporation |
| PPS | Policy Planning Staff |
| PREM | Prime Minister's Office Records |
| PRO | Public Records Office |
| RG | Record Group |
| SAMEC | St Antony's Middle East Centre |
| SA | Saudi Arabia |
| SAMS | Saudi Arabian Mining Syndicate |
| SWNCC | State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee |
| SML | Seeley Mudd Library |
| SOE | Special Operations Executive |
| TVA | Tennessee Valley Authority |
| TAPLINE | Trans-Arabian Pipeline |
| TWA | Trans World Airlines |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| US | United States |
| USAFIME | United States of America Forces in the Middle East |
| WO | War Office |

# INTRODUCTION

Our modern-day picture of Anglo-American relations during World War II is one of powerful contrasts. One vision of the alliance between Great Britain and the US portrays a relationship bound by a kindred history, political beliefs, culture and language, featuring the two allies fighting against a common enemy in which the stakes were nothing less than world domination – in short a 'Special Relationship'. Sweeping and straightforward, such tropes have produced an enduring legacy, leaving behind an indelible imprint on the popular imagination. A formidable counter vision however, commonly associated with the scholarly world, has emerged during the past 40 years. Historians have done their best to search for more sophisticated, exact interpretations. Now the 'Special Relationship' that once saved the West is commonly portrayed as something far less grandiose; instead it has been characterised as an 'alliance of a kind'.[1] This dramatic dichotomy is apparent when observing the twists and turns of the Anglo-American experience in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia between 1941–5.

In Saudi Arabia, as in so many other parts of the world, efforts to strengthen the Allied position vis-à-vis the Axis powers had led the US and Britain to be – in the words of Winston Churchill – 'mixed-up together'.[2] Preceding the war, Britain and the US forged their own bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia, which were markedly different in emphasis and scale. From the beginning London's relationship with the Kingdom had been built on strong, political, strategic and economic foundations reaching back to the re-emergence of the Al-Saud dynasty in 1901.[3] In the years that followed, Britain enjoyed the advantage of being the predominant foreign power in the

Arabian Peninsula, a state of affairs that caused the Anglo-Saudi relationship to oscillate between the amicable and the contentious.[4] By the time of the 1927 Treaty of Jeddah, Britain's recognition of the 'complete and absolute independence' of Saudi Arabia had guaranteed the future security of the new state's defence under British aegis.[5] Saudi Arabia was at no time officially part of the British Empire, but London's commitment to the Kingdom sprang from the desire to promote regional stability, which in essence meant protecting British suzerainty in the Middle East.

Compared with Britain, the US government's relations with Saudi Arabia were far less comprehensive, but possibly more momentous. American influence mainly came by way of the privately owned Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO), which had since 1931 held a 360,000 square mile concession in Saudi Arabia.[6] Oil in the Kingdom would not be discovered until 1938, and it would be eight more years before it was exported commercially. The US was the world's leading oil producer during World War II and American domestic oil reserves were rapidly channelled towards the Allied war effort. This did not stop policy makers in Washington from casting their eye on the Kingdom's oil potential, anticipating that the extra foreign reserves might offer a safety valve for the country's postwar national security.[7]

The roots of American and British spheres of interest in Saudi Arabia were markedly distinct, but the vicissitudes of World War II meant that ultimately each would merge together in an unprecedented way. Although distant from the famous battlefields of the Pacific and Europe, what this book shows is how the wide-ranging strategic influence of Saudi Arabia, an attribute notably overlooked, bound British and American interests, not just within the country, but taking a more panoramic view, throughout the entire Middle East. When US Secretary of War Henry Stimson said in 1944: 'The US has considerable interest in a sovereign nation [Saudi Arabia] which is also of undeniable importance to the British Empire', he perceptively speaks of a reality that swung not between competition and co-operation, but of an Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia moored by an unmistakeable degree of interdependence.

Here, Stimson's words echo loudly as a leitmotif which runs through this book. It seeks to not only uncover how, why and to what extent Britain and the US became mutually involved in Saudi Arabia, but how they managed and defined their relationship in a place that in the words of one American official at the time was 'probably the largest little-known unit

area in the habitable world', which was situated to become a crucial part of the strategies and policies of the wider Anglo-American wartime alliance.

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A.J.P. Taylor once said that sound scholarship is based on 'the ruthless dispelling of myths', and therefore it is necessary for this study to first make sense of the mythology surrounding the Anglo-American wartime alliance.[8] Starting in 1942, it was Winston Churchill who coined the phrase 'Special Relationship', and in later years, his six-volume history of World War II helped carve into the public consciousness the idea that the two countries shared common values and a familial affinity for one another.[9] Given the sacrosanct aspects of the 'Special Relationship', it is no wonder that those historians who have expounded the Churchillian attitude have been categorised as 'evangelicals'.[10]

Out of the post-Suez era arose a new generation of historians ready to tear apart the engrained folklore of the 'Special Relationship'. Previously classified information from World War II had by the early 1970s become available, uncovering a reality that was far more problematic, showing little resemblance to earlier rose-tinted interpretations.[11] Given access to these documents, scholars accentuated the role of national self-interest in developing their analysis. The historiography soon became more sophisticated through the seminal work of historians like David Reynolds and Christopher Thorne, in which the former introduced the concept of 'competitive-co-operation' to explain the 'undercurrent of transatlantic rivalry', while the latter debunked the 'realms of mythology' celebrating Anglo-American harmony.[12] Others took the combative angle to its outer edges, like John Charmley, who calls Great Britain's wartime advocacy for the 'Special Relationship' another 'Dardanelles', a poorly conceived strategy laid out by Churchill, which unwittingly diminished British power.[13] Equally, there are a number of recent works by scholars such as Warren Kimball, highlighting the unifying traits of the wartime alliance: 'Whatever Anglo-American quarrels persisted [...] the British and Americans maintained a remarkably close, relatively candid, and extraordinarily cooperative relationship throughout the war.'[14]

When honing in on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia directly, despite the absence of a specialised in-depth study, scholars have tended to see the subject as a microcosm of the wartime alliance during World War II. David Reynolds, for instance, has applied his idea of

'competitive-cooperation' to argue that the two allies worked together most effectively in Saudi Arabia when the Axis powers were at their most threatening.[15] The fact is, though, that as the Axis threat waned between 1943–5, this same period saw Britain and the US at their most determined in their diplomatic efforts to co-operate in Saudi Arabia. Wm. Roger Louis focuses on the idea of a hegemonic transfer of power, a scenario in which Britain's top spot in the Middle East was under threat from American economic and cultural imperialism taking root in Saudi Arabia.[16] Louis concludes that if there was ever a prime instance illustrating the mutual wartime distrust and apprehension between the two allies 'the case of Saudi Arabia might serve as an example'.[17] This book sharply disagrees with Louis' harsh assessment, but it does build upon his assertion that to understand both British and American perspectives of Saudi Arabia, one must take into account the strategic importance of the Kingdom and its capacity to influence regional politics.

W. Taylor Fain runs with the notion of Pax Britannica's slow recession and the advent of Pax Americana, but by comparing the magnitude of Anglo-American rivalry in Saudi Arabia with the enmity that existed between the Allied and the Axis powers, all sense of historical proportion is lost. The same can be said for Simon Davis who has most recently dealt closely with the topic.[18] Describing the relationship as a 'Darwinistic paradigm', the thrust of Davis' argument is that in ideological terms a larger socioeconomic battle was taking place in Saudi Arabia, pitting 'neo-corporatist British guided development' against 'American New Deal internationalism'. American authorities, according to Davis were 'intolerant of any vestigial British primacy' and considered it to be on par with 'totalitarianism' and 'indigenous revolution'.[19] To make such an uneasy comparison, Davis overstates his case and exaggerates the reach of American power while ignoring the interdependent aspects of Anglo-American relations in the Kingdom.

Barry Rubin treats the subject far more squarely than most, claiming that the sense of rivalry surrounding the wartime alliance comprised 'a certain amount of farce'. The British, according to Rubin, in their desire to retain close relations with Washington, were generally unwilling to participate in such a contest. Rubin separates himself from the rest of the historiography by placing greater emphasis on the role of Saudi Arabian officials, who he argues planted the seeds of Anglo-American discord.[20] Nonetheless, Rubin's approach does not give account to the far greater role

that the Kingdom's geopolitical significance had in shaping the Anglo-American relationship.

There are many works that fall outside the traditional Anglo-American framework, but still have contributed in significant ways to the subject's literature. Two recent histories of Saudi–American relations by Thomas Lippman and Rachel Bronson include sections dedicated to the World War II period, yet they make no mention of the fact that the British served as an important backchannel for American officials, giving them new points of access to Ibn Saud and his inner-circle of advisors.[21] By not giving the British role its due respect, a major historical dimension is missing from these two studies. As national histories go, Alexei Vassiliev's *The History of Saudi Arabia* contains an entire chapter detailing the Kingdom's interaction with British and American officialdom during World War II, but it offers no final comment on the state of Anglo-American relations.[22]

Although Donald Cameron Watt's 1963 article 'The Foreign Policy of Ibn Saud 1936–1939' is not focused on Anglo-American relations, its arguments are still vitally important to this book.[23] It lifts Saudi Arabia out of the shadows and puts the country's wider strategic influence in the spotlight on the eve of World War II. Watt asserts that in his dealing with Britain, Italy and Germany in the late 1930s, Ibn Saud carefully manipulated the Western powers equally for his own advantage. Historians have subsequently used this characterisation and applied it to their claims about the wartime behaviour of Ibn Saud, believing that he handled the Americans and the British in the same way, fomenting inter-allied rivalry for his own ends.[24]

One also sees the diplomatic cultures of Britain and the US as being distinctly at odds with one another as a polarising theme within the subject's historiography. The idea, for example, that the growing influence of the US during World War II was morally inferior to that of Britain can be read between the lines of the record left by British 'men on the spot' who were intimately involved with the everyday running of Pax Britannica in the Middle East.[25] These works show little sign of Churchill's 'evangelicalism' about Anglo-American relations and are more nostalgic for, and saddened by, Britain's lost place in the world. A prime example of this motif is John 'Pasha' Glubb who claims that Saudi Arabia's 'own peculiarly Arab culture was suddenly swept away by the flood of mechanized materialism' that came courtesy of the Americans.[26] What Glubb fails to mention is that by the end of the war, Britain had set up its

own modernising technocratic agenda for Saudi Arabia under the auspices of the British Council. Writing in a similar vein, but from an opposing American perspective, Colonel William Eddy in his monograph *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud* extols America's enlightened views while saving some choice words for 'Perfidious Albion'.[27] Having served as the American minister to Saudi Arabia from 1944–6, Eddy's gripe that London's thirst for empire endangered the sovereignty of Saudi Arabia only betrays his own short-sightedness. For more than a generation, the Kingdom's independence had been a fixed plank of Britain's Middle East policy.

This type of 'memoir literature' holds importance in that it helps to showcase the evolution of the subject's historiography.[28] A common theme shared by the texts is their varying degrees of national chauvinism and the stress that they placed on the differences in style that characterised British and American diplomatic cultures. To say that British authorities in Saudi Arabia were cynical and conservative while their American counterparts were naive and lacking in subtlety is however a misguided assessment, a faulty paradigm that will be explored in this book.

Unsurprisingly, oil has contributed to the sense of American triumphalism that imbues the subject.[29] The notion that the 'Special Relationship' between the US and Saudi Arabia was somehow predestined has been further boosted in part by what Robert Vitalis has called 'mythmaking on the Saudi oil frontier'.[30] The once American-owned oil company, ARAMCO, through its powerful public relations network has been accused of having a hand in burying the critical role that Britain played in the rise of Saudi Arabia.[31] As Irvine Anderson has however pointed out, the company by no means functioned as an arm of the US government, but existed as a separate institution with its own bottom line.[32] On several occasions during World War II, such as the Petroleum Reserves Corporation controversy, ARAMCO's interests laid with John Bull, not Uncle Sam.[33] That being said, ARAMCO's subsequent influence on the historiography has indirectly elevated the status of the Saudi–American relationship, while leaving the British role in the drama either downplayed or simply ignored.

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Building on the variety of historiography laid out above, this book sets out to challenge the subject's dominating orthodoxy. As noted, a long list of scholarly works has examined the Anglo-American wartime alliance, with

the subject attracting diplomatic, international, political, social and military historians alike. Over the past 40 years, scholars have rightly moved past the Churchillian notion of an Allied victory bringing forth a collective historical memory in which the US and Great Britain were seen as one in all. Yet, on the occasions that the topic has been studied, the scholarly balance of the 'competitive-cooperation' paradigm has oscillated to a point where the emphasis on competition has disallowed any alternative and more nuanced reading of the subject. Why then have historians of Anglo-American relations come to characterise the bilateral relationship in Saudi Arabia as one laced in rivalry and polarisation, a harbinger of the eventual triumph of Pax Americana over Pax Britannica?

Firstly, the 'determinist' tendency to superimpose the wider power structure of the wartime alliance on to the one that existed in Saudi Arabia is understandable, but nonetheless deeply problematic. Indeed during World War II, the rise of American influence in Saudi Arabia was by no means inexorable as it seems from the modern vantage point. Washington's relationship with Riyadh may best be characterised as moving from infancy to puberty. As this characterisation implies, considerable uncertainty and insecurity marked the extent and depth of Washington's influence in Saudi Arabia. Standing on the precipice of the 'American Century', some US officials were not ready to accept this without feeling somewhat uneasy. Among themselves they whispered that their country's policy in Saudi Arabia amounted to being 'rudderless', belying the optimism associated with FDR's famed meeting with the Saudi Arabian king in February 1945. London, by stark contrast, had carefully crafted a highly intricate, yet fruitful relationship with Riyadh that had been fostered over a 40-year period. Repeatedly during World War II, American officials leaned on the diplomatic influence of their British counterparts to ensure the US had a voice in Saudi Arabia.

If we can explain why a semblance of parity marked British and American power, we will arrive at the second key point of this book and begin to understand the true hallmark of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. It is not a story of two powers irreconcilably clashing in their quest for hegemony, but a story far more nuanced and subtle. The vast scale of British and American interests attached to Saudi Arabia, while not always in lock step, allowed for a balanced interdependent relationship to develop, which presented a powerful incentive for inter-allied co-operation. By merging the long-term experience of the Britain with the ascendancy of American power, both allies found that instead of falling into competition,

collaboration would more effectively offset their respective strategic weaknesses. In other words, in unity there was strength, allowing the two powers to enhance their influence in Saudi Arabia, whereas individually they may have failed. It is therefore logical that precipitating the steep decline of postwar British power, an Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia solidly balanced by the principles of interdependence was seen as a project that had many advantages for both London and Washington.

This is not to suggest that British and American strategic, political and commercial interests were always symmetrical. Indeed, the very idea of two countries meshing their policies at times came with inherent tensions, especially when perceptions of national interests evolved over time. Part of the purpose of this study however is to demonstrate that the interdependent structure underpinning Anglo-American relations had the capacity to bridge national interests that seemed at times in direct competition in Saudi Arabia. When looked at more closely, a clear case of symbiosis between Britain's continued political presence in Saudi Arabia and the safeguarding of American commercial stakes can be detected. Equally, one finds that Washington's growing political involvement in the Kingdom squared smoothly with London's own grand strategy of seeking to add an extra layer of security to its own position in the Middle East. These instances revealed that the diversity of British and American interests, tangled as they were, could be reconciled and strengthened by virtue of their underlying interdependence.

Seen from this perspective, interdependence is a useful term that puts into greater context the co-operative and competitive elements that informed, shaped and characterised the Anglo-American relationship. Drawn together by emergency conditions, the US and Britain redoubled their efforts to co-ordinate policies in Saudi Arabia even once the Axis threat became less of a concern in the Arabian Peninsula. Each country however favoured their own methods incumbent on their own unique set of national interests, foreign policy cultures and domestic pressures. For these reasons, the continuing pursuit of co-operation proved frustrating and difficult at times. Nevertheless, this should not detract from the fact that the continuous imaginative attempts on the part of both the US and Britain to find a collaborative approach is a crowning testament to the importance each attributed to the value of interdependence in its various forms. Viewed from within this prism, Saudi Arabia during World War II had been considered to be a testing ground for wider Anglo-American co-operation,

pioneering a type of collaboration that would ideally branch out and become a mainstay of the region's geostrategic landscape.

The third and final objective of this book is to demonstrate the immense importance of Saudi Arabia's own dynamism and the extent to which it acted as a ligature for British and American strategic interests. In the company of Arab states, Saudi Arabia was relied upon as a beacon of stability. Under the rule of Ibn Saud, while the country had yet to become the power in material or military terms that it later would be, its presence was crucial to Allied interests in the Middle East at a time when not only were they under attack by the Axis, but also by indigenous turmoil. Saudi Arabia and its decision to remain neutral in World War II need not be perceived as an 'immoral, short-sighted conception', as was once pointed out by John Foster Dulles.[34] Instead, British and American officials actively encouraged Saudi Arabia's neutrality as they took it to be a kind of 'benevolent neutrality', serving to cloak the Kingdom's quiet assistance to the Allied cause.

It is important never to lose sight of the fact that the wartime Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia took shape against the backdrop of the emerging postwar liberal international order. In this era, the British Empire had transformed into the British Commonwealth, while American global strategy contained an unmistakable strain of 'New Deal internationalism'. This had no less been the case in Saudi Arabia, with the independent Arab kingdom giving form to what had been decreed in the Atlantic Charter, 'the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live'.[35] British and American officials knew that to a large extent their country's interests hinged on Saudi Arabia remaining a sovereign Arab state and perhaps, more importantly, being *perceived* as such. Yet the allies at times differed in their interpretations of how best to burnish the outward image of the Kingdom's sovereignty. Any policy that made Saudi Arabia look like a client of the allies rather than their partner could tarnish the legitimacy of the Al-Saud regime and by extension weaken those British and American interests that depended on it. Britain and the US, in this respect, had to maintain a permanent balancing act that ultimately proved impossible to perpetually sustain. They not only had to pursue their own separate as well as mutual interests within the framework of the wartime alliance, but they also had to be mindful that any decisions that they came to would not infringe on Saudi Arabia's sovereignty.

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To gain a more detailed understanding of these themes, it is important to delve deeper into why Saudi Arabia was a driving force in moulding Anglo-American relations, not only as it related to the Kingdom, but also throughout the Middle East.[36] In this respect, it is crucial to acknowledge that the strands of the Kingdom's influence reached beyond its borders.[37] On a geo-strategic level, the country's location was well suited. In the eyes of the British and American authorities, Saudi Arabia emerged as a key geostrategic cross-junction linking the Mediterranean, North African and Asian wartime theatres during World War II. No one described the significance of Saudi Arabia's location more succinctly than Ibn Saud himself, when on 2 January 1939 he wrote the following to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain: 'Our country is the important central point of a circular area of the world's surface'.[38] Saudi Arabia, in the minds of Allied war planners, could have multiple uses given its central location between the key Allied supply routes, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, as well as given the country's vastness and its being one quarter of the size of the continental US. This was not least the case in terms of providing air routes or functioning as a supply depot and staging post to launch future military operations.

Coupled with the strategic importance of its location, the *sui generis* stature of Saudi Arabia within the Muslim and Arab world impacted greatly on British and American thinking in terms of the continuing propaganda against the Axis powers. Although not reaching the heights of Caliphate, as the 'Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques' of the Islamic faith, a large concentration of religious and political influence rested firmly with Ibn Saud. His appeal to millions of Muslims from Casablanca to Batavia might swing popular support to either the Allied or the Axis cause.[39] In this respect, having the king in their ranks was vital to British and American officials. As this book will show, for all intents and purposes Ibn Saud *was* the Saudi Arabian government at this stage in the Kingdom's state development. Holding such absolute power, the British feted Ibn Saud and even nicknamed him 'Napoleon of the Desert'. After meeting King Ibn Saud in person the first time in 1945, President Roosevelt boasted: 'I learned more about that whole Jewish–Moslem problem by talking with Ibn Saud for five minutes than I could have learned in the exchange of two or three dozen letters.'[40] In the words of Donald Cameron Watt, for British and American officials, the venerable Ibn Saud was 'all things to all men'.[41]

This combination of religious authority and political autonomy went hand in hand with Ibn Saud being regarded as a mainstay of regional stability. A policy of non-revisionism guided Saudi Arabia from its founding, as is still largely the case today. During the war however, Britain and the US wanted to mould Ibn Saud into a type of Allied–Arab arbiter. In this role, the king would position Saudi Arabia as a regional counterbalance against threats to Anglo-American interests, whether these took the form of Axis intrigue, the rising tide of Arab nationalism or the hazard that Soviet encroachment into the Middle East posed.[42] Conversely, Ibn Saud also looked to the Allies in helping to secure his own regime. His embrace of Pax Britannica leading up to and during World War II gave his country financial support and military protection, while the American entry into Saudi Arabian affairs would provide extra defensive safeguards, and just as importantly, money.[43]

British and American officials both recognised that in some ways Saudi Arabia struck a surprisingly modern tone, despite the country's feudalistic portrayal. This resonated with the prevailing zeitgeist of the time by virtue of its independence as a sovereign Arab nation. Having the British and Americans play their stereotypical roles, the former 'reactionary', the latter forward thinking and 'progressive' does little to further our understanding of their relationship in Saudi Arabia. Sometimes, the Americans seized the notion that the Kingdom was irredeemably antiquated. At other stages, British officials would argue that policies constructed for Saudi Arabia should be more contemporary, worthy of the country's dynamic status as a fully independent Arab state. The diplomatic historian Gaddis Smith has suggested that what all American policy makers wanted to ask their British counterparts during World War II was a simple, but burning question: 'What have you been planning for the more liberal postwar world, which is what this war is ultimately all about?'[44] Based on Smith's hypothetical question, it is easy to fall into the trap of believing that in Saudi Arabia, the US looked towards a bright future, while Britain gazed back at past achievements, hoping that the country would enjoy its pre-war status after the war. British officials in Saudi Arabia were in fact on the same page with their American colleagues. They too realised that to remain a relevant actor, Britain would need to institute policies within the framework of the liberal postwar international order that it had helped to create.

One of the salient aspects of British foreign policy that features prominently during this era was the country's search for security. Although

by the end of World War II, 2,00,000 British troops presided over the Suez Canal zone – a stronghold roughly the size of Wales – the troubles of maintaining such a substantial military presence, coupled with economic woes, meant that the British government could not carry on as the Middle East's sole regional policeman.[45] From London's point of view, inducing closer Anglo-American collaboration in Saudi Arabia was part of addressing this strategic problem. Having established a formative presence in the Kingdom, Washington could now shoulder some of the burden of meeting the many requirements of the Saudi Arabian government, with British interests being by extension reinforced and protected. Moreover, Britain supporting the US commitment to Saudi Arabia was yet another measure to encourage the Americans not to revert back to isolationist policies.

At the same time, suspicion existed on the British side with regard to Washington's proposal that both countries should be equally committed to subsidising the Kingdom, even after 1944, when the Axis threat in the Middle East had virtually disappeared. Not having the economic resources to match what the wealthier US was willing to dole out, Britain's Foreign Office started wondering aloud if American advocacy for greater largesse was meant to be calculated exclusionary ploy. A far greater concern however centred upon whether this burst of American activity would have negative repercussions on Saudi Arabian society and ultimately destabilise the Al-Saud regime as well as Britain's Middle East *Imperia*. With these misgivings in mind, British policy makers in their final conclusion accepted the trajectory of American policy, believing it to be worth the price of the wider benefits of Anglo-American co-operation.

The incentive the US had in developing an Anglo-American partnership in Saudi Arabia deserves fuller attention as well. Up to this point the US only had experience as a hemispheric, not a global power, despite being a rising superpower.[46] Washington lacked confidence in its ability to firmly act in places that were largely unfamiliar, such as Saudi Arabia. After years of neglect, the State Department had only managed to establish a legation in the country in May 1942. Having access to Britain's seasoned statecraft and agency was therefore considered instrumental in elevating America's own influence inside the Kingdom. Even with regard to the perception that Britain may try to take over the American monopoly on Saudi Arabian oil, in reality it was always a contrived crisis. Nationalist outcries were brushed away in favour of dealing with the issue from a point of inter-allied co-operation. In the end, the prevailing consensus among a range of policy

makers on the American side held that the sustained British influence in Saudi Arabia was an upshot to American oil security.

Numerous studies however still primarily point to those examples showing British and American authorities embattled and divided. One episode in particular that is held up as a snapshot portraying the relationship in turmoil took place in the summer of 1944. The American minister to Saudi Arabia, Alexander Kirk, announced that he feared that Saudi Arabia was turning into an active ideological battleground between American and British world systems competing for a 'stable world order'. Even if widely cited, this fiery quotation has been equally misinterpreted.[47] Kirk did not say that Anglo-American competition was unavoidable in Saudi Arabia. Rather, his statement served as a prescient warning to American officials, imploring them to work more closely with their British colleagues so that avoidable misunderstandings would not lead to greater recriminations.

Indeed, two months after Kirk's assessment, the American legation advocated strongly saying that Saudi Arabia presented: 'the best test case for concrete cooperation with the British in the Middle East and we should succeed in making it work here.'[48] In London, the head of the Near East Department (NED) at the Foreign Office, C.W. Baxter, also made the same point: 'To some degree Anglo-American cooperation in Jedda has become a test of the possibility of Anglo-American cooperation in the Middle East as a whole.'[49] The message in this context is clear; Saudi Arabia shone brightest as a place where Anglo-American co-operation could take full flight.

It is also important to note that co-operation did not solely emerge as an unwilling wartime necessity. Indeed, more attention needs to be paid to the fact that British and American policy makers revamped their efforts to co-ordinate policies even after the Axis threat dissipated in 1943. The compacts agreed to by the two wartime allies illustrate this, culminating in the Anglo-American 50–50 Agreement, the Anglo-American Oil Agreement and the Stettinius Declaration, which were all concluded in 1944. The objective of the allies to align policies in Saudi Arabia was in all probability overly ambitious. The US desire to strengthen the Saudi Arabian government ran parallel to its efforts to solidify its own position in the Kingdom. The expansion of Washington's interest in postwar Saudi Arabia delineated more clearly the chasm separating British and American policy priorities. One cannot however

downplay the fact that in many instances throughout this period in Saudi Arabia, the US and Britain subordinated their own national agendas for one that was in fact Anglo-American in nature.[50]

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Chapter 1 of this book serves as a prologue, framing the respective engagements of Britain and the US in Saudi Arabia prior to World War II. The analysis of this period will be cast with an eye to answering larger questions of how the sovereign Arab Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was linked to British and American foreign policies and by extension with Allied wartime strategy. The chapters that follow are set up chronologically and pursue the theme of the complexion and extent of Anglo-American co-operation between 1941 and 1945.

Although scholars have often neglected the 1941–2 period, early examples of close Anglo-American collaboration during this time are as numerous as they are profound. Analysing this neglected era is crucial to understanding why and how the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia would be both comprehensive in its scope and character in the years to come. Taking this into account, Chapter 2 examines a period when the threat of the Axis advancing was most felt in the Middle East. As wartime conditions crippled the Kingdom's main source of income – money generated by the annual Hajj – a dedicated group of Anglo-American officials based in London, Washington and Jeddah entered the picture.[51] They pressed for action to come to the aid of King Ibn Saud as a means of shoring up the Allies' own position in the region. Working hard to circumvent US neutrality laws, the two Atlantic powers came to an understanding on how to share the burden; London would directly subsidise the Saudi Arabian government, while Washington quietly sent an agricultural mission to the drought-stricken kingdom.

Chapters 3 and 4 develop the theme of Anglo-American collaboration, examining its early incarnations. Chapter 3 looks at the circumstances that rendered Saudi Arabia an integral part of the wider Anglo-American wartime strategy in the Middle East. This includes the Allies' successful acquisition of air and landing rights and the ambiguity that lay beneath the protracted attempt of Britain and the US to guard Saudi Arabia's oilfields in 1942. Chapter 4 examines the Anglo-American endorsed Hoskins Mission, which explores how Ibn Saud was slated to be a kingmaker with regard to the perilous issue of Palestine in 1943. Though in many respects a forgotten

piece of history, the Hoskins Mission illustrates the extent to which the subject extends beyond the limits of the Arabian Peninsula. As will be shown, all of these individual episodes were links in a complex chain of events that set into motion a concerted attempt by the allies to expand Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 deal with the latter period of World War II from 1943–5, when British and American officials were formulating how best to define and implement a Anglo-American collaboration that would work effectively in the interest of both parties. Chapter 5 examines the US's growing preoccupation with oil in Saudi Arabia and the founding of the Petroleum Reserves Corporation and the ramifications that this had on Anglo-American relations. Although concerns over oil at different stages were clearly felt, what is fascinating to discover were the lengths to which the British and American governments were willing to conciliate, culminating in the signing of the Anglo-American Oil Agreement in August 1944.

In searching for a deeper source of inter-allied friction, the subject of oil found itself eclipsed by issues that have been far less studied, but are no less important. How to best subsidise Saudi Arabia and reform its poor fiscal management branched out to the larger questions of each countries' long-term objectives in Saudi Arabia and how they intersected with the persistent aim of preserving the Kingdom's sovereignty. A larger part of this story however had been the extent to which the governments on both sides of the Atlantic saw the ruptures not as borne from incompatible interests, but rather having arose from an unfortunate clash of ministerial personalities. Underscoring just how important each side prized the Anglo-American partnership in Saudi Arabia, leading policy makers, including the Secretary of State Edward Stettinius and the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, eventually took the dramatic step of removing these men from their posts.

The important role that the interaction of personnel representing Britain and the US respectively played is further explored in Chapter 6. The British authorities interpreted the arrival of the new American minister William Eddy in the autumn of 1944 as a signal that the US sought to expand its presence in Saudi Arabia. Sometimes the advantages and pitfalls of collaboration during this period were difficult to discern. Both countries debated regularly over the level at which they would be willing to continue to co-operate. Subjects that will be examined in detail in Chapter 6 include

the shared responsibility for subsidising the Saudi Arabian government, the joint Anglo-American military mission, the construction of the Dhahran airfield as well as critical commercial issues concerning postwar aviation and telecommunications. On the positive side, these seeming signs of drift were not wholly negative. In grappling with them, both countries were able to absorb anxieties and in the process their relationship in Saudi Arabia found itself on a more practical and firmer footing. Through trial and error, consensus was reached over accepting differences that lay between the two countries as hopes for the Anglo-American relationship no longer plummeted when outsized expectancies fell short.

Chapter 7, the final chapter, goes on to describe the postwar dynamics that were already beginning to have a profound effect on Anglo-American relations by 1945. When the towering figures of the wartime alliance, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, met with Ibn Saud in February 1945, the occasion has been considered a watershed historical moment dramatising American ascendancy and the flagging power of Britain. These conclusions are in need of a reappraisal seeing as American domination in Saudi Arabia was by no means assured at this stage. British political influence in the Kingdom was still very much a reality, and as a result, both countries' relationships remained strategically relevant, especially as signs of an emerging Cold War came into view. Disturbed over signs that Moscow sought to escalate the Soviet Union's presence in the Middle East, from London's perspective, the US establishing a foothold in Saudi Arabia furnished British regional interests with an extra layer of security, a precursor to HMG's 'Northern Tier' policy of the late 1940s and early 1950s. As for the US, although American policy had been less apprehensive of Soviet designs, if Saudi Arabia and the Middle East had the makings of a postwar hot zone, how far could Washington rely on London? British agency – in both political and military forms – would quickly become a critical commodity in this area.

This book chronicles the diplomatic interaction between Britain and the US within Saudi Arabia as it played out against the global backdrop of World War II. In understanding the multi-faceted relationship between the Americans and the British in Saudi Arabia, the work ahead primarily views its subject matter from a traditionalist perspective of history. As such, it emphasises national interest, security and influence, but also considers more subtle elements outside of the purview of power politics, such as culture and ideology. Recognising the contributions made by the upper echelons of

British and American officialdom in shaping policy, this book will also explore the role played by individuals who were not in the upper tier of government, but rather were the 'boots on the ground', putting policies into action.

The research on which this study is based has been drawn from a variety of different archives. In the US, these include the National Archives in College Park, the Library of Congress, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library and the libraries at Princeton University, Georgetown University, George Washington University, Virginia University, and Arkansas University. In Britain, the bulk of the research was undertaken at the National Archives in Kew, but also at the British Library, and the libraries at the London School of Economics and the Middle East Centre at St Antony's College in Oxford. From these repositories that hold private papers, reference has further been made to an assortment of published primary resources, which include Foreign Relations of the US, Documents on British Overseas Policy, Documents on British Foreign Affairs, Hansard, The Aramco Handbook and Foreign Office Lists. Finally, a number of private papers and memoir-related sources from key British, American and Saudi Arabian officials have been consulted to bring further insight to the study.

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This book offers a fresh interpretation of Anglo-American relations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the period from 1941 to 1945. Taking a more reflective starting-point than the traditionalist view of the relationship as a symptom of the wartime alliance's competitive undercurrent, this book seeks to uncover how, why and to what extent Britain and the US became mutually involved in Saudi Arabia in World War II. As an important ancillary objective, the strategies and politics of the wider wartime alliance are considered, including how the strategic influence of Saudi Arabia – beyond its oil dimension – impacted on relations between the two allies. Often neglected by historians, Saudi Arabia stood out as a strategically relevant country in its own right, a fact that its central geographic location as well as its religious significance within Islam made manifest. One final ingredient, and one that was most compelling to British and American authorities, was that Saudi Arabia was endowed with a distinct brand of political influence. It was a kingdom in the most traditional sense, but under the leadership of Ibn Saud, Saudi Arabia served as a bulwark against wartime

instability. At the same time however, the country also happened to be on the cutting edge of political modernity owing to its rare status as a sovereign Arab state. It is therefore not improbable that Britain and the US each felt that if carefully harnessed the range of strategic assets that the Kingdom possessed, it could serve the Allied cause in a multiplicity of ways.

It is therefore far too simplistic to think of Saudi Arabia as an arena of simmering hostility in which Pax Americana scored a victory against Pax Britannica. In reality, a distinct equilibrium marked the manner in which the different forms of British and American influence in the Kingdom operated. A complex interdependent relationship emerged in Saudi Arabia drawing in equal measure on the wealth of British diplomatic experience and the rise of American power. Drawn together, this kind of entanglement between British and American interests and policy inevitably came with its own pressures, but it did not reflect a deep-seated hegemonic struggle. Rather, it was part of an underlying strain that had textured Anglo-American involvement in the Kingdom since 1941, a dimension that has hitherto received little attention. As the course of international politics increasingly charted an anti-colonial path during World War II, the question quickly emerged as to how far an integrated Anglo-American policy could proceed without damaging the notion of Saudi Arabian independence, and by extension, those British and American interests that depended on it. This, in itself, is indicative of the way in which London and Washington welcomed Saudi Arabia's official position of neutrality as a form of 'benevolent neutrality'. Under the banner of neutrality, the sovereignty of Saudi Arabia was reinforced, giving Ibn Saud greater political latitude to serve more effectively as an auxiliary to Allied interests, without him being perceived as an Allied pawn. In trying to strike the right balance, Britain and the US at times came into conflict over how to best engage with and secure Saudi Arabian influence. Conceding that relations between the two powers could be tumultuous and flawed, this book explains why the two powers nevertheless continued to pursue the objective of close partnership, and what this pattern of resilience infers.

Against the dark shadow cast by the Axis powers, even William Eddy, no fan of British power as the American contingent goes, could still firmly avow in 1945, after viewing with his own eyes the bombed out ruins of London, that Britons were a 'very brave people at war. *We can thank God we are Anglo-Saxons.*'[52] Immeasurable as it is, Eddy's poignant observation distils so much. It reminds us that before all else Britain and

the US were allies, bestirred into action in an existential fight and that Saudi Arabia in its own significant way, was indelibly part of that struggle. Sentiments such as these manage to breathe pathos into a form of realism already at work. Recognising the interdependent features of their relationship, the two allies viewed Saudi Arabia in similar terms – not as a lone-standing theatre – but foresaw something far more tantalising; an enduring contribution that would set off greater Anglo-American accord ranging throughout the Middle East during and beyond World War II. The character of the Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, after all, is one of contrasts and for this reason defies easy categorisation and will be the subject of closer scrutiny in the chapters to follow.

# CHAPTER I

# OASIS: ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND IBN SAUD PRIOR TO 1941

## Introduction

The origins of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia can be best found when charting the pathways through which British and American influence took hold in the Kingdom preceding 1941. Before Britain and the US began their collaborative involvement in Saudi Arabia during World War II, their experiences in the country had largely existed independently from one another, with the British more heavily engaged than their American counterparts. In many respects, their attitudes toward Saudi Arabia matched the priority that each country had placed on the Middle Eastern region in general. For policy makers in London, the Middle East was one of the most important dimensions of British foreign relations. Throughout the region, Britain's unrivalled network of military installations, diplomatic posts, and commercial holdings effectively amounted to an 'informal' empire that secured London's imperial link to India, Southeast Asia and the Antipodes. Britain, in turn, took a keen interest in the rise of Saudi power, which was sweeping the Arabian Peninsula. Occasional political differences aside, the Anglo-Saudi relationship, dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century, was one of the foundations upon which the established order was built.

Paling in comparison, the US government in the years prior to World War II had little to do with Middle Eastern affairs, or for that matter,

Saudi Arabia. Instead, non-governmental actors worked as the main conduits that fostered a viable American presence in the region. In this respect, the success of personal diplomacy, philanthropy and private commercial ventures were indirect, yet powerful areas of American influence, which helped formalise nascent Saudi–American relations. Oddly enough, the lack of experience coming from the US government actually stood it in good stead. Though no match compared with the influence of their British counterparts, American standing in Saudi Arabia gained parity principally as a result of the fact that Washington was still new and a great unknown to Riyadh unlike the more familiar European imperial powers.

Looking at the assorted nature of their experiences in dealing with Saudi Arabia, British and American interests there were bound inextricably less to a country, but more specifically to a person, the founder of the Kingdom, Ibn Saud. As a result, another objective of this chapter is to explore the Saudi king's reputation as a skilled statesman, his position within the context of the international crisis leading up to 1941, and what this meant for Britain and the US. Both countries were acutely aware of Ibn Saud's regional role, a role also realised by the Axis powers. From the perspective of the Axis powers, particularly Germany and Italy, Saudi Arabia was one of the few Arab states not to be under the official sway of either the British or French Empires. In this respect, the Kingdom was an open opportunity for the Axis countries to demonstrate their respective influence in the Middle East; a region where their influence was still only marginally felt. As Seth Arsenian, the scholar who worked in the Office of War Information (OWI) during the war, makes clear: 'to Germany, Italy and Japan, the destruction of British and Allied Power in the Middle East, or the winning of their side of any of the Middle Eastern state would have immeasurably increased their chances for success.'[1] Therefore, this chapter argues that Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia was in part a reaction to block the revisionist powers from further forging diplomatic links with the Kingdom. Providing much-needed stability in a region beset by turmoil, Ibn Saud's rule in Saudi Arabia, teamed with his status as an independent Arab ruler, made him an ideal candidate for combating the flood of Axis propaganda that targeted an Arab population already sceptical of British and American motives.

## Britain, the Middle East and Saudi Arabia: Pre-World War II

From the perspectives of British and American official thinking, each was prone to believe that it was held in greater favour when compared with other nations, especially as it pertained to the Middle East, where this prevailing sentiment of national 'exceptionalism' tended to run especially high. Looking first at Britain, the Pax Britannica long-established in the Arab World came affixed with a popular mythology that generations of Britons had relished. Reflecting on the belief that Britain enjoyed an intrinsic connection with the region and its people, the historian Geoffrey Moorhouse writes:

> Though it had never been part of her Empire, no other European country had ever had the same patronizing connection with the Arab countries of the Middle East. No one else's history has produced such a long string of figures to compare with Burton, Doughty, Stanhope, Lawrence, Thomas, Stark, Philby or Thesiger: men and women with a mystical and romantic feeling of kinship with the Bedouin and the desert.[2]

Similarly, in political terms, British influence in the Middle East predominated. Nominally independent, Egypt was still essentially a holding of the British Empire, under the thumb of a large contingent of British troops stationed in the Suez Canal zone.[3] Similarly, Palestine, the Hashemite Kingdoms of Transjordan, and Iraq were League of Nations mandates that had been transformed into key pillars of Britain's imperial defence strategy.[4] Lastly, arcing the Arabian periphery, the Crown Colony of Aden, the Trucial Coast and Kuwait had been bound by treaty to the British government since 1839, 1853 and 1899 respectively.[5]

Given Saudi Arabia's location in the heart of Britain's 'informal' Middle Eastern empire, Britain's close relationship with Ibn Saud leading up to World War II was an established fact. Speaking to the British minister in 1939, Ibn Saud claimed that there were two kinds of relationships between countries. At one end, there was the 'the relationship of fear, fear of subjugation for the conquered', and at the other end of the spectrum, there were associations like the one between Britain and Saudi Arabia, 'based on mutual interest and co-operation'.[6]

The initial British response had been mixed when Ibn Saud started to consolidate his power in the Nejd in 1902. Those British officials who dealt with Ibn Saud directly viewed him favourably, but the opinions of Percy Cox, political resident of the Persian Gulf, and later Captain William Shakespear, political resident of Kuwait, ultimately pertained to British security in India rather than the wider Middle East. For those back in Whitehall at the Foreign Office, Ibn Saud continued to be observed as a peripheral figure in Arabian politics, a significant step below his rival, the Hashemite Sharif Hussein of Mecca.[7] Famed Arabist D.G. Hogarth, while working at the Arab Bureau, expressed the widespread view at the time of World War I: 'It should not be forgotten that of the two, the Sharif and Ibn Saud; Ibn Saud is [...] the less powerful potentate and far less able to influence the present general Eastern situation in our favour.'[8] The British government finally ended up backing Hussein to lead the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire, but it is worth remembering that concurrently Britain also saw the potential strategic dividends of improving relations with Ibn Saud. Under the terms of the Anglo-Saudi Treaty of 1915, London recognised Ibn Saud's authority in the Nejd and promised to protect him from foreign threats, while also offering a yearly subsidy and deliveries of modern weaponry.[9] In return for British assistance, Ibn Saud would exploit those Arab *vilayets* under Ottoman authority by waging battle against his Eastern Arabian rival, the House of Rashid, a tribe in alliance with the Porte. Years later, a reminiscent *quid pro quo* would be patterned into effect during World War II, which saw British largesse exchanged for Ibn Saud's support of Allied interests.

In the long run, the effort to court Ibn Saud during World War I proved to be a more valuable strategy than London's well-known alliance with the Sharif.[10] As relations with the erratic Hussein deteriorated in the early 1920s, Ibn Saud began to emerge as the more reliable regional ally. In this respect, the decision made in September 1924 not to intercede in the war between the Sharif and Ibn Saud was evidence of Britain's tacit approval of the Al Saud gaining control over the Hedjaz.[11] Almost three years later in May 1927, Britain concluded the Treaty of Jeddah with Ibn Saud, a benchmark moment in Anglo-Saudi relations, which was characterised by relative political equality.[12] Under the treaty's terms and conditions, Britain recognised the complete independence of the Kingdom of Hedjaz, Nejd and the Dependencies hoping to eliminate any colonial resentment, which with their inequalities, had marred

London's diplomatic relations with surrounding Arab states.[13] In this way, Ibn Saud's political independence distinguished him as a willing associate to British paramountcy rather than a vassal subjugated by it. This emphasis on the issue of sovereignty as outlined in the Treaty of Jeddah would become a recurrent theme in British policy making for Saudi Arabia during World War II.

After the treaty was signed, Ibn Saud's close co-operation with the 'infidel' British sparked internal unrest among his most hardcore Wahabbi followers, the Ikhwan.[14] In 1929, Britain's timely military support – armoured cars and planes courtesy of the Royal Air Force – allowed Ibn Saud to crush an Ikhwan-orchestrated coup, which had up to that point posed the most serious threat to his regime.[15] Nonetheless, amid the vexed world of Middle Eastern politics, Britain and Ibn Saud naturally ran into conflicts of interests in the interwar period. Issues such as Britain's relationship with the Hashemite kingdoms, Palestine and contested territorial claims in the Arabian Peninsula in the 1930s were at times areas of contention. These examples do not however diminish the reality that Anglo-Saudi relations throughout the decade stayed active and close.[16]

## The US, the Middle East and Saudi Arabia: Pre-World War II

Given that the US involvement in the Middle East up to World War II remained meagre, the historical narrative to some degree has been cast in quixotic fashion; much of it based on what one scholar has called a shibboleth of 'power, faith and fantasy'.[17] Wartime officials like William Donovan, founder of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), valued a certain paradox in which American influence arose from a policy of non-interference. The US, according to this viewpoint, was distinct from other countries such as Britain thanks to the fact that its avowed aims in the region ranged beyond the thirst for power.[18] In full self-congratulatory mode, Donovan confidently told the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) in 1942:

> American prestige and influence in the Near East is still probably as high as ever. This results from a realization by the peoples of the Near East that the US has no territorial or vested economic interests in the area. Furthermore, since actions speak louder than words, this widespread goodwill toward the US has become what might be

> described as a deep-seated conviction on the part of the peoples in this area, due mainly to a century of American Missionary educational and philanthropic efforts that have not been tarnished by material motive or interest. No other member of the United Nations is in such a position.[19]

The historian Fawaz Gerges perfectly captures the belief of American officials from Donovan's generation who took it for the granted that the US 'established dynamic and cordial relations with Arabs and Muslims, who viewed America as a progressive island amid European reaction.'[20] If the US having this sort of altruistic interest in the region was indeed the case, it is still difficult to pinpoint a specific and coherent American foreign policy in the Middle East before World War II. Overall, in the 1930s the diplomatic apparatus of the US functioned on a far more insular basis, grouped with other nations that, according to B.J.C. McKercher, were 'regional powers with regional interests'.[21] The US possessed nothing akin to the network of military bases or diplomatic stations in the Middle East that Britain controlled. The paucity of the official American presence can be judged by the fact that the State Department, as late as 1944, had only three officers who specialised in Middle Eastern languages.[22] Against this backdrop, the few mainstays of interwar American policy that did exist in the region, centred largely on commercial trade, monitoring the Arab–Jewish conflict in Palestine and fostering what was then referred to as 'Arab goodwill'.[23]

Looking at the origins of the Saudi–American relationship, when the US government was considering whether to formally recognise the Kingdom, Wallace Murray, the chief of the Near East Division of the State Department, was told by the well-known Arab-American intellectual Ahman Rihani that: 'Ibn Saud might be regarded as the greatest Arab since Mohammed himself.'[24] Highlighting the interdependent ties between the US and Britain, before extending diplomatic recognition to 'the Government of King Ibn Saud' in February 1931, it is noteworthy that Washington first asked permission from London to do so.[25] Understood to be a sphere of British sphere of influence, early American interest in Ibn Saud and the Kingdom derived little from the State Department, but had rather been fostered by the 'personal diplomacy' of an American citizen named Charles Crane.[26]A former diplomat during the Taft and Wilson administrations, as well as one of America's premier philanthropists, Crane

had been closely involved with Arab affairs for decades.[27] In the Arab world, he had a well-known public profile owing to his work on the Crane–King commission in 1919, an American commission that had been highly critical of British and French policies towards the Arab territories of the former Ottoman Empire.[28]

Crane emerged as a de facto representative of the US, despite visiting Saudi Arabia on his own initiative. The role that Crane took on was a success in that he managed to forge a close personal bond with Ibn Saud. Once given an audience with Ibn Saud, the two men discussed ways in which Saudi Arabia's natural resources could be developed and put to commercial use. One of Crane's engineers, Karl Twitchell, who years later would be one of the key individuals to help initiate Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia during World War II, was given the task of surveying the Hedjaz for water and mining deposits.[29] Based on the work of his geological surveys, Twitchell was later hired by the California-Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC) to assist Lloyd Hamilton, the president of the company, in negotiating the purchase of oil concessions with Ibn Saud in 1933. Scholars led by Robert Vitalis are however sceptical of Crane's motives, believing that his philanthropy was a means by which to gain the rights to explore oil deposits in Saudi Arabia.[30] Thomas W. Lippman takes the opposite point of view, contending that Crane's offer showed Ibn Saud that Americans were 'willing to help him and asked nothing in return'.[31] In reality, Charles Crane's motives probably fell somewhere in-between these diametrically opposed interpretations. Undoubtedly however, Crane played a crucial role in creating an American identity in Saudi Arabia, raising the US's profile as a distant and neutral benefactor.

Nevertheless, during the 1930s, the American government's contact with Ibn Saud remained limited. The fact that in 1936, the American Consul General in Alexandria was sent to the coastal port city of Jeddah, the entrance point for the Hajj, to report on the potential advantages of opening an American legation, and came away concluding 'that the development of American interests [in Saudi Arabia] does not warrant the establishment of any sort of official representation' highlights the disconnect between the two nations.[32] The more important and influential relationship during this time was the one that emerged between the American oil company CASOC and Saudi Arabia. Aaron David Miller has pointed out that the subject of Middle Eastern oil in the 1930s was

'primarily a story of the oilmen themselves – of risks, maverick companies and potential profit'.[33] Given the US's status at the time as the world's largest exporter of oil, the development of a source of commercially viable oil in Saudi Arabia received relatively scant attention from officials back in Washington in 1938. As will be shown in Chapter 5, only after 1943 would the JCS, Navy, Department of Interior and State Department link the CASOC oil concession directly to the US's long-term national security. The Division of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) at the State Department undoubtedly tracked the progress of the oil concessions, yet it would not be until 1939 – under looming war clouds – that an American official would recommend naming a diplomatic minister to Saudi Arabia.

## Ibn Saud during the Early Years of World War II: 1939–40

Besides being the premier independent Arab statesman, Ibn Saud's reputation at the outset of World War II grew from the fact that he had almost single-handedly formed a nation in a place whose nomadic population, said one historian, lived for centuries in a state of 'barbaric independence'.[34] When Ibn Saud emerged as the head of the Wahhabist tribal dynasty, the House of Saud, which remains the core political power structure of the modern-day kingdom, the concept of the nation state had not yet arrived in the territories constituting modern-day Saudi Arabia. Geographic remoteness, harsh climate, and religious singularity had set the area apart from the rest of the Middle East. The strong-willed people living there, the Bedouin, knew of no governmental authority. They existed within a small community of disparate autonomous families or tribal organisations, in which the *ghazzu* (the raid) was a way of life. Even at the height of the Age of Imperialism, the two great foreign powers of the region kept away from the Arabian hinterland. Britain maintained a policy of non-intervention in the Arabian interior, while the Ottoman Empire – having laid claim to this domain since the reign of Salim I in the sixteenth century – exercised little tangible control over the area and the local emirs who held sway there.[35]

Given these conditions, Ibn Saud's triumph of forging a modern nation state appears all the more remarkable. Beginning with his capture of Riyadh in 1902, over the next 30 years, Ibn Saud – in a series of military campaigns, along with shrewd political manoeuvring – unified a land

divided by cavernous geographic, religious, ethnic and economic differences. Under his leadership, the territories of the Nejd, Qasim, Hasa, Ha'il, Hedjaz and Asir became annexed into a single political entity, which would come to be known as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.[36] Whereas his Wahhabi predecessors had been deemed as notorious due to their 'fundamentalist' views, Ibn Saud gained a reputation for moderation in outlook towards friend and foe alike.[37] The British explorer and diplomat, Gertrude Bell, who had witnessed his rise to power firsthand, spoke for many of her British contemporaries when she praised Ibn Saud's *sangfroid*, calling him a 'statesman', which to her was the 'final word of commendation'.[38] As the famed Arab historian Philip Hitti exclaimed, 'not since the days of the Prophet' had the region enjoyed such stability, public order and a sense of cohesiveness as it did during this time, and it was all a result of Ibn Saud's 'Pax Saudica'.

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When the British War Cabinet received a 'top secret' memorandum on 20 May 1940 from the Foreign Office – five days before the Anglo-French evacuation at Dunkirk – the memo warned that in the Arab world 'doubt was [...] becoming more widespread in recent weeks that the Allies will not win the war'. The collapse of the Anglo-French military alliance meant that the Allied position in the Middle East would come under greater threat from the Germans, Italians, colonial Vichy and internal Arab unrest. Making matters even worse, the Anglo-American wartime alliance was still in its initial stages as the US remained effectively neutral, which seemed to rule out any chance of American armed forces coming to Britain's aid. For all of the strikes against the British strategic position in the Middle East however, the report closed by highlighting one piece of good news: 'Ibn Saud remains friendly to the Allies.'[39]

Over the course of World War II and in the years afterward, British and American officials alike continued to recognise Ibn Saud's loyalty to the Allied cause. In his meeting with the Saudi Arabian king at Great Bitter Lake in February of 1945, President Roosevelt praised Ibn Saud: 'At a time when we had hardly dreamt of victory [...] you kept the Arabs peaceful, when your hopes of Allied victory were slender. By associating yourself with us, you showed the Arabs the right road that God is one'.[40] Like Roosevelt, in a similar sentimental vein, Churchill recalled: 'My admiration for him [Ibn Saud] was deep because of his unfailing loyalty to us. He was

always at his best in the darkest hours.'[41] Examining the record, what scholars have found is that belying the president and prime minister's rhetoric, Ibn Saud's allegiance to Britain and the US although strong, was not necessarily preordained or exclusive.

The historians Donald Cameron Watt and Lucasz Hirskowicz have fully detailed the growth of German–Saudi ties right up to the hostilities of September 1939. Both historians stress that the two countries shared a bond due to their sympathy for the Arab Rebellion in Palestine.[42] In 1937, Ibn Saud had sent Saudi representatives to meet with German officials to discuss purchasing 15,000 rifles, but this transaction was likely less related to Palestine's struggle, and more to do with the King's lasting goal of establishing a modern Saudi Arabian army.[43] At the same time, Berlin began pursuing an active German commercial presence in Saudi Arabia. Companies such as Krupp and Siemens competed directly with British and American firms for infrastructure contracts handed out by Riyadh to install water supply systems, electricity and telegraphs.[44] Fostering relations with Saudi Arabia from the perspective of Berlin was part of a Middle East strategy designed to ensure that in any future Anglo-German confrontation, Arab leaders like Ibn Saud would be either compelled to endorse the Axis position or at least take a stance of neutrality.[45]

With its calm harbour dotted with dhows, Jeddah, the 'Bride of the Red Sea', had by January 1939 found itself increasingly in a midst of a diplomatic storm. Nazi Germany had become the first country not affiliated with the Hajj to install its own diplomatic representative there. When word of Minister Dr. Fritz Grohba's arrival in Jeddah reached London, almost immediately it was perceived as 'an anti-British move on the part of the German Government'.[46] In the opinion of Grohba, beneath Saudi Arabia's apparent friendship with Britain, something darker and more sinister lurked, as summed up by the Bedouin proverb: 'Kiss your enemy, if you cannot kill him.'[47] A German press report at the time of Grohba's visit hailed the dawn of Saudi–German accord:

> A new era in the relations between Ibn Saud and Germany starts just at the moment when the Empire of Ibn Saud, thanks to the vast petrol and gold discoveries in the Arabian Peninsular [*sic*], is heading towards a period of economic progress to which Germany thanks to her ever closer relations with Arabia will contribute to the full extent of her powers.[48]

Germany attempted to open up more channels with Saudi Arabia, but the scholar Massimiliano Fiore claims that for years Italy had been 'waging a war by proxy' against Britain's hegemonic standing in the Arabian Peninsula.[49] In his posture as 'protector of Islam', the Arabian Peninsula held a special allure for Benito Mussolini in his drive to create a new Roman Empire.[50] After the Abyssinian crisis of 1936, Italian and British lines of imperial communication came into greater conflict in the Red Sea.[51] What gave British officialdom cause for concern had been Ibn Saud's pragmatic approach with respect to Italian imperialism. Having been one of the first countries to recognise the Italian annexation of Abyssinia, Saudi Arabia also exported foodstuffs, sheep and camels to Italy.[52] In the summer of 1939, Riyadh had received a shipment of Italian arms at a minimal rate, which it was allowed to pay for in nine instalments.[53] Fearing Italy's growing influence, the British minister to Saudi Arabia, Reader Bullard, grumbled that at a time when Rome supplied Saudi Arabia with more than 80,000 pounds of materiel, London made limp excuses to Ibn Saud that there was not 'a chip of cartridges to spare'.[54]

As much as these examples of German and Italian manoeuvring were alarming, it was Japan's attempts to establish a diplomatic legation in Jeddah that would eventually redirect American policy towards Saudi Arabia. Throughout the 1930s, a commercial relationship between Saudi Arabia and Japan had inched its way forward.[55] As early as 1934, Japan had practically become the sole exporter of cotton piece goods in Saudi Arabia since Japanese items were 50 per cent cheaper than British goods.[56] In the spring and early summer of 1939, an official Japanese delegation went to Saudi Arabia with terms to purchase oil concessions that according to the American geologist Karl Twitchell were 'as tempting as they were fantastic'.[57] On 30 June 1939, Cordell Hull informed the president that the Japanese were seeking an oil concession agreement lasting a 'period of sixty years covering practically all of Saudi Arabia'.[58] In Riyadh, Twitchell had advised Ibn Saud to turn down the Japanese offer, figuring it to be masking Japan's true motives, which were to gain 'territorial concessions' from Saudi Arabia. Based on local intelligence gathered by the British Foreign Office, Ibn Saud had however demanded too high a price, and it was the Japanese who rejected the transaction.[59]

As if Japan's concession hunting and the role that it played in the Saudi Arabian economy were not sufficiently disquieting, the fear that the Japanese were somehow working in-step with German and Italian interests raised

serious concerns in Washington. In May 1939, director of CASOC, Patrick Lenahan, notified the American minister in Cairo, Judge Bert Fish that coupled with Grohba's visit and the Italian propagandising in Jeddah, the latest Japanese diplomatic overtures clearly indicated that: 'the Empire of the Sun [was] jointly working with the Germans and Italians.'[60] Fish reported to the State Department that no less than Ibn Saud held that the revisionist countries had been nursing territorial ambitions in Saudi Arabia.[61] Only five months earlier, the Japanese Minister to Egypt, Ohno, had half-jokingly remarked to the British Ambassador in Egypt, Lord Killearn: 'With Yemen under Italian influence – the Hedjaz [Saudi Arabia] under German influence, we will be able to check the French and British in the Red Sea.'[62] Disturbed by the potential dangers posed by the future Axis powers infiltrating the Arabian Peninsula, on 26 July 1939, the State Department decided to accredit the American minister to Egypt to Saudi Arabia as well. Once notified of the State Department's decision to make Minister Fish the first American diplomatic representative to Saudi Arabia, the president wrote to Cordell Hull, 'Excellent Idea-OK FDR'. [63]

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On 17 June 1939, a Saudi Arabian emissary named Khalid al-Wud Garghani had been granted a personal audience with the German Chancellor, Adolf Hitler. On one level, the meeting resulted in diplomatic success from the Saudi Arabian perspective. With regard to Ibn Saud's lasting determination to establish a standing Saudi Arabian army, the Reich offered Saudi Arabia a gift of 4,000 rifles, and 2,000 cartridges for each piece, and a future credit for arms valued up to £125,000.[64] Whether Ibn Saud was ready to fully commit his country to an alliance with Germany and turn against Britain is an entirely different matter. Saudi–German ties during this era arose from one of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy priorities. Establishing diplomatic contacts with countries outside the yoke of British influence was most importantly, a way for an emerging state like Saudi Arabia to assert its sovereignty, not only to itself, but also to the rest of the world.

In its aftermath, the Garghani mission ended up turning into a valuable source of intelligence for British officials. Garghani's reports were shared with the British minister to Saudi Arabia, Reader Bullard. Although known afterwards for his pro-Axis sympathies, Garghani had cabled that the German people showed a 'secret dissatisfaction with the policy of their

Government and its declaration of enmity towards England'. If war was declared Garghani maintained, German officials feared internal revolt against the government.[65] From this point forward Saudi Arabia began to distance itself from the Reich. Once Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939, Ibn Saud refused the establishment of a German legation in Jeddah, and would not permit Grohba to return to Saudi Arabian soil.[66] There were other factors weighing on Ibn Saud's mind as well that summer. Most notably, Lord Killearn had pressured Egyptian authorities to withhold the $750,000-worth of Saudi Arabian money banked in Cairo if the king became an ally of Germany.[67]

As the summer of 1940 progressed and the fortunes of the Allies were at low ebb, events in Saudi Arabia were carefully watched. For instance, British Naval Intelligence kept a close monitor on all wireless communications between Riyadh and Germany. Even though Ibn Saud's position was clearly pro-Ally, the British legation in Jeddah knew that some of his key advisors were not. It was whispered that Al-Garghani and Fuad Hamza, the Saudi minister to Vichy, continued to be in contact with German officials.[68] Furthermore, British agents working for the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BPC) identified the German-educated Salah Islam, the radio station announcer for the Saudi Arabian government, as a local distributor of Axis propaganda.[69]

In July 1940, the American Vice-Consul in Cairo, Raymond Hare cabled Washington, going so far as to say that Saudi Arabia had turned pro-Axis. Hare told his colleagues that an American informant who visited the Kingdom at the behest of British Overseas Airways Corporation had 'gained the impression that King Ibn Saud is pro-German in sympathy and that he might even enter the war against Great Britain'.[70] It was however hard to question Ibn Saud's allegiance after the Saudi authorities worked alongside British officials to arrest St John Philby, the King's long-time Western advisor on 25 August 1940. This was a major coup for the new British minister to Saudi Arabia, Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, who had complained that Philby, for years the bête noire of the British establishment, had been 'openly indulging in disloyal and defeatist talk in both Allied & Neutral company'.[71] Under restraint by the Defence of India Rules Act, Philby was detained in Karachi before he left for the US on an anti-British and pro-isolationist lecture tour.[72]

At a time when the Allied grip on the Middle East hung in the balance, regardless of earlier reports, London still considered Saudi Arabia to be a

country friendly to British interests. In October 1940, Arab nationalists with pro-Axis sympathies menaced British airbases in Habbinaya, oil installations in Mosul and Kirkuk, along with the Baghdad-Haifa.[73] With this in mind, Lord Wavell, who as commander-in-chief of British forces in the Middle East, reasoned that the construction of the new Amman to Kuwait route would be safer if it went through Saudi Arabia rather than the 900 miles through unfriendly Iraqi hinterland. The British Ambassador to Iraq, Basil Newton, strongly backed Wavell as he also saw the advantages of Britain shifting its focus to Saudi Arabia when it came to regional strategy. Newton said that: 'Ibn Saud fears the support which we at present give to Iraq [...] he must wish that some of the money which we have spent on the development of Iraq as now with the Baghdad-Haifa Road could have accrued to Saudi [Arabia].'[74] That same month, London ordered Colonel Gerald de Gaury, an army specialist in Arab tribal related matters, to Riyadh to take stock of Ibn Saud's views on the war. He came away with the sense that the king had no intention of re-orienting Saudi Arabia's foreign policy in favour of the Axis. In fact, de Gaury requested to be withdrawn early from his mission after he found the King's support for the Allied cause 'entirely satisfactory'. He later briefed the American officials in Cairo, praising Ibn Saud as 'absolutely first-class' and 'the perfect intelligence officer' with a firm eye on all local intrigues taking place in his Kingdom.[75]

Still, historians like David Howarth put forward the argument that Ibn Saud acted less than heroically in the face of the Axis menace. 'Even the least critical of his admirers', states Howarth, 'could not have found anything glorious in his conduct in Hitler's war. He simply did nothing.'[76] Robert Lacey takes a similar line, asserting that that the king excelled as a statesman during World War II in his 'advances towards Hitler and Mussolini, behind the back of his British and American friends'.[77] Yet, accepting Ibn Saud's behaviour during this time as self-serving and disingenuous lacks subtlety and fails to take into account a number of issues. Firstly, the man in charge of Britain's engagement with Saudi Arabia during the 1930s, George Rendell, strongly opposed such a notion. He observed years later that it was 'misleading and mischievous' to say that Ibn Saud viewed Britain and the US no differently than Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy. In the case of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy, Rendell contended that 'obviously any weak country [Saudi Arabia], jealous of its independence, will to some extent play off its potential enemies against each other'.[78]

Secondly, Britain and later the US perceived the true meaning behind Ibn Saud's actions and saw it in a positive light. As will be discussed more fully in Chapter 2, the stance of neutrality that Ibn Saud took was in actuality a form of 'benevolent neutrality', which leaned heavily toward the wartime alliance rather than the Axis powers. Furthermore, if Ibn Saud had decided to fall into line and join the Allied cause as an ill-equipped belligerent, it might have courted ridicule because he would have been perceived as a stooge of the Allies. He would have aroused the ire of many of his co-religionists, the same people that the British and American governments sought to influence through him. Under the banner of neutrality however, Ibn Saud as one of the rare independent Arab leaders appeared resolute and influential. The King shrewdly understood the value of appearances. British and American officials used this awareness, and considered it to be of paramount importance in the battle of propaganda that was so critical during World War II.[79]

Indeed, drawing Ibn Saud into the Anglo-American orbit was part of further engraving the distinctions between the friends of the Allies and their 'pagan' Axis adversaries. Explaining how the king separated Saudi theocracy from the authoritarianism associated with fascism, Reader Bullard, always an acute observer, wrote to the Foreign Office: 'To him [Ibn Saud] there is a fundamental difference between the theocracy of Saudi Arabia and the despotism, tempered neither by the fear of God nor readiness to listen to human advice, of a man like Hitler.'[80] Looking back to the fateful day of 1 September 1939, the Ministry of Information in London stressed the import of Saudi Arabia in the conflict that lay ahead, or more precisely the influential reach of Ibn Saud:

> The main lesson to be learnt from the experiences of 1914–1918 is the importance of gaining the sympathy and help of the Leaders in each region and working as far as possible through them. Arabia is as whole, still largely tribal and there is little enlightened and independent opinion amongst the masses. What Ibn Saud thinks, for instance, the rest of the Nejd and the Hejaz thinks too.[81]

This point would be particularly relevant when it came to the Allies' delicate position regarding Palestine. An Allied victory ensured the creation of some form of a Jewish state in Palestine against the will of the local Arab majority, despite the assurances provided by the British

Government's White Paper of 1939. By this time, the German wireless station *The Voice of Free-Arabism* reached Saudi Arabian listeners and gave full expression to Axis support for Arab nationalism and Arab aspirations in Palestine.[82] The British Legation became anxious at the inroads that German propaganda had already made with the more febrile segments of the Saudi Arabian population. Although in his recent study, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, Jeffrey Herf claims that Ibn Saud welcomed the content of Berlin's message, the King's personal intervention in muzzling the influential Ulema of Mecca, who were reported to be 'solidly pro-German', was greatly appreciated by British officials.[83] Six weeks after Britain declared war on Germany, Bullard reported to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, that 'having taken up an attitude of neutrality so benevolent towards the Allies, it is natural that Ibn Saud should desire that Palestine should cease to be a cause of irritation to the Arab world'.[84] As an indication of things to come, Bullard's words augur what would draw the wartime alliance further into the Kingdom's affairs, namely transforming Ibn Saud's influence and 'benevolent neutrality' into a viable strategic asset.

## Conclusion

This chapter's aim has been to present the different approaches that Britain and the US took in their evolving relations with Ibn Saud before 1941. These histories are instructive for understanding how the wartime alliance carried out its policies towards Saudi Arabia in the years ahead. Britain's hegemonic rise in the Middle East ran parallel with Ibn Saud's consolidation of his own power in the Arabian Peninsula. The lessons that can be drawn from this era are that unlike the British government's attitude towards other Arab states, it did not act in an imperious manner towards Ibn Saud. Instead, the predominant trend observed in Anglo-Saudi relations can be considered to be the opposite; a strategic partnership noted for its mutual respect. British power indirectly facilitated and strengthened the hand of Ibn Saud's rule, while the Saudi Arabian king's moderate leadership contributed to the stability of Pax Britannica. Conversely, before World War II, on a formal level between governments, the relationship between the US and Saudi Arabia had been minimal, but the contacts made with Ibn Saud by individual American nationals in the 1930s, such as Charles Crane and the oil company CASOC helped cement an association between the two nations.

When World War II arrived in 1939, Ibn Saud by virtue of his independent position appeared as the premier Arab leader. Indeed, the Allies and the Axis realised that the 'Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques' could be a major asset when it came to the propaganda war that was being waged between the two sides. Although Germany and Italy made a substantial bid to gain Ibn Saud's friendship, in the critical early stages of World War II, the king decided to distance his kingdom from the enticements of the Axis. He realised quickly that Saudi Arabia could be a more influential presence in the region's dangerous political climate by remaining officially neutral, while at the same time tacitly siding with Britain and her allies. The advantageous exchange apparent in Anglo-Saudi relations, the unofficial, behind-the-scenes personal contact marking Saudi–American relations alongside Ibn Saud's position of 'benevolent neutrality' towards the Allied war effort, would all at once emerge in 1941 as key features of the early phase of Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia.

# CHAPTER 2

# STORM: ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA, 1941

## Introduction

In the spring of 1941, it can be said that Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia began in earnest as Axis influence in the Middle East grew in scale. From the perspective of British and American officials, Ibn Saud shared their interest in keeping the Axis powers at bay. The weight given to Saudi Arabia in terms of Allied strategy was however at odds with the country's anaemic economic state. Foremost, wartime conditions had a crippling effect on the Saudi Arabian economy, undercutting the institution that generated the Kingdom's greatest and most dependable source of income, the Hajj. 'Since the rise of Islam', Philip Hitti noted, 'the Hajj formed the principal link between Arabia and the other outer world.' In 1941, this to a great extent still rang true in cultural, political and economic terms.[1] Up to this point the Hajj kept the Saudi Arabian government solvent, but the dangers of wartime travel severely curtailed the pilgrimage, thereby shrinking the revenue raised from it. Unless Riyadh received timely financial aid to offset this situation, Ibn Saud's own authority would be undermined, and as a result, his position as an important regional ally would be lost. Moreover, if Britain or the US did not act promptly, an even darker state of affairs might come to pass; the Axis powers would fill the void by coming to Saudi Arabia's aid.

When the White House and the State Department considered offering Lend-Lease aid to Saudi Arabia, it appeared logical to policy makers that the provision of subsidies to a country located in the heart of Pax Britannica would naturally need the logistical assistance of the British. When questions arose as to whether Lend-Lease aid overstepped the wartime neutrality of both Saudi Arabia and the US, British and American officials found indirect ways to effectively assist Ibn Saud. Already at this early stage in 1941, the interdependent workings of Anglo-American relations were in full view. In time, the British government came to the aid of the Roosevelt Administration by offering a series of subsidies to Ibn Saud that the US's official position of wartime neutrality would not allow. Achieving American policy aims in Saudi Arabia, at this juncture, was to a large extent left to the Foreign Office in London. Later in the autumn of 1941, the two allies however reversed roles. Circumventing the country's neutrality laws, Washington dispatched an American agricultural mission to Saudi Arabia, a step that dovetailed neatly with the British policy aim of boosting the Al-Saud regime, which translated into enhancing Saudi Arabia's inestimable sovereign status. In the propaganda war waged against the Axis powers, London welcomed the US's growing involvement in Saudi Arabia in part because it meant that other countries would not view the Kingdom as a creature of British imperialism. Additionally, to protect the Kingdom's wartime neutrality, it was far less contentious for a fellow neutral state such as the US to set up a mission on Saudi Arabian soil than for a belligerent power such as Britain to do so. Here, wartime strategy had an overriding influence on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. As a result strategic circumstances merged formerly separate British and American agendas in Saudi Arabia in 1941, hinging on the desire to align Ibn Saud firmly within the Allied camp of nations.

## The Hajj and Wartime Economics in Saudi Arabia

Britain and the US were drawn to Ibn Saud's leadership in the early years of World War II, but the structural weakness of Saudi Arabia's economy jeopardised it. When the *New York Times* reported on Bert Fish's appointment as the first American minister to Saudi Arabia in 1939, the newspaper observed sharply that 'dates and Arab clocks' kept the country's economy afloat.[2] Saudi Arabia held no modern industry, according to the scholar Michael Stoff, except for the 'manufacture of ornamental swords and

knives, rudimentary leather making and some rug weaving'.[3] Likewise, with virtually no agricultural sector, the Saudi Arabian government depended on acquiring cheap foodstuffs such as rice, wheat, sugar, tea and textiles from the country's primary trading partner, India, which by extension meant the British Empire.[4]

Nothing in Saudi Arabia remotely resembled the financial system that normally came with being a modern state. Indeed, the historian Philip Khoury claims that during this time 'there was no real differentiation between public and private purses' although Riyadh had in place a poorly structured state exchequer, *bait-al-mal*. Speaking about the Kingdom's finances, one British official wrote that Saudi Arabia was 'not unlike the England of King Charles II, with the pleasing difference that the king does not have to ask parliament for money'.[5] Yet unlike the English king, who enjoyed the bankroll to live an extravagant lifestyle, at the start of World War II, economic hardship marked Ibn Saud's rule.

More than anything else, the annual Hajj was what balanced the books for the Saudi Arabian treasury. When Ibn Saud was still an Amir of the Nejd in the early 1920s, his annual revenue hovered near a total of £100,000. After he conquered the commercially rich Hedjaz territory where the Islamic Holy Cities were located, Ibn Saud's wealth rose to between 4 to 5 million pounds. This substantial income boost gave the Al-Saud the economic clout to initiate a complicated system of patronage that helped incorporate its authority throughout the rest of the Arabian Peninsula.[6] On the back of revenues from the Hajj, tribal sheiks were subsidised with monies and gifts in return for their allegiance to the Al-Saud. According to Hafiz Wahba, the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to London, Ibn Saud housed more than 10,000 permanent guests in Riyadh during the 1930s, including chieftains, prisoners and Bedouins.[7]

With the outbreak of wartime hostilities, deteriorating travel conditions worldwide adversely affected the Hajj, shaking the Kingdom to its roots. Ibn Saud had become deeply concerned over the damaging impact that German propaganda might have on the Hajj. German wireless stations bombarded messages of propaganda, broadcasting that the British government had forbidden Indians to make the pilgrimage because of an Allied quarantine set up in the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea.[8] These claims were false but the annual number of pilgrims making the journey to Mecca did indeed fall by 80 per cent in the first two years of the war.[9] Being one of the nation's few generators of wealth, a now-reduced Hajj meant that

the Saudi Arabian government had little foreign exchange at its disposal to purchase basic food imports. As one report from the British legation in Jeddah detected at the time, the Hajj anchored the country's overall stability: 'If there is no pilgrimage, the Hejaz starves and becomes even more discontented than usual.'[10]

With wartime conditions now making the passage to Mecca and Medina more problematic than ever, the Saudi Arabian government faced another daunting challenge. A severe drought, which began in 1939, still inflicted the entire Nejd region and eastern part of the country.[11] Local transport ground to a halt, and food was scarce as grazing pastures all but perished. Writing in his diary about the drought, H.R.P. Dickson, now the British political agent of Kuwait, reported that 200 miles south of Hail '[. . .] sheep and camels which have died of starvation are being regularly eaten by the hungry everywhere, though forbidden by religion'.[12] Having no modern state infrastructure, Saudi Arabia and its dispersed populations depended on a single supply route stretching 1,000 miles of desert separating the Red Sea and Persian Gulf.[13] These irritations, alongside the truncated Hajj, meant that Saudi Arabia's stability, and by extension the Allied presence in the Middle East, were at risk.

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Before the British and American governments decided to step in and subsidise the Kingdom, the American oil company CASOC had already taken bold action. When hostilities broke out in the autumn of 1939, CASOC loaned the Saudi Arabian government $1,500,000 followed by approximately $4,000,000 in 1940, which constituted the country's annual budget. The oil company's loan provided was to be repaid by the Saudi Arabian government through revenue accrued from future oil discoveries. Not ready to be saddled with subsidising Saudi Arabia at this stage, CASOC went on to limit the total loan for 1941 to $3,500,000.[14] Even then, officials in Washington and London were not satisfied with such an arrangement. Taking a wider view of things, Ibn Saud's new financial dependency had the correlative effect of overtaking his image as a self-reliant and sovereign leader, and undermined his capacity to play a substantial role in regional affairs.

Consequently, the British government – the only body that possessed the institutional capacity to make a true difference at the time – came to the quick conclusion that the deteriorating situation in Saudi Arabia

needed to be resolved. After meeting with one of Ibn Saud's closest advisors, Shaikh Yussef Yassin, Gerald de Gaury offered a telling description to the Foreign Office of how the Saudi official was quietly confident that the country's financial problems could be fixed by playing up the Kingdom's serviceability to the Allied cause. Spelling out what he assumed to be Yassin's thought process, de Gaury wrote, 'I believe that it is his [Yassin's] intention to plant in our minds something like the following idea':

> Iraq is unreliable, the French are mismanaging things in Syria, Palestine is troublesome. The only strong man, Ibn Saud, the 'friend of Britain' who can put this right and bring the Arab States into line, so that they can make a stand against our enemies is powerless because he has no modern army and insufficient money. If we give him $1\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds a year and some modern equipment he would save the day for us when the time comes.[15]

Given this analysis, it is no surprise then that the size of the subsidy that de Gaury presented covered the Saudi Arabian government's deficit for the upcoming year.[16] In 1940, London offered £300,000 and more importantly 10,000,000 newly minted riyals at a face value close to $3 million.[17] Crucially, minting riyals combated the currency hoarding that took place throughout Saudi Arabia at the time. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the experiences of World War I served as a very similar model for Anglo-Saudi relations in World War II. With this historical precedent firmly established, British largesse in exchange for Ibn Saud's tacit sympathy for Allied interests manifested itself as a compelling quid pro quo. Heading into 1941, Saudi Arabia's budget would however have a deficit of $6,000,000, even with the combination of British funds and CASOC loans.[18] With this bleak economic situation having become a fact, and Britain hamstrung by already financing the costs of fighting a global war, now was the hour for the US government to act decisively in Saudi Arabia.

## The US, Karl Twitchell and Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia

Surveying the strategic landscape of early 1941, David Reynolds writes that for Britain and the US, 'the cords that bound the two countries were

becoming thicker, more tangled and more secure', highlighting the interdependent quality of Anglo-American relations.[19] In secret, over the course of two months stretching from 29 January to 29 March, British and American war planners convened in Washington to discuss strategic priorities and contingency plans relating to overall Allied strategy. These 'American–British Conversations' – also known as the ABC talks – had confirmed that by the spring of 1941 Anglo-American relations had fully grown into a global affair.[20] This by extension meant that in the fight to secure Allied standing in the Middle East the unfolding financial crisis in Saudi Arabia had transformed into an Anglo-American dilemma.

Yet, the historical narrative dealing with the earliest stages of wartime Anglo-American co-operation centring on 1941 has been mainly built on studies concentrating on the subject of Middle East oil.[21] Barry Rubin, one of the few historians who has singularly focused on Anglo-American relations in the Kingdom during this time, claims that the impulse that drew the allies together was the fact that 'London was trying to increase American political involvement in Saudi Arabia against the will of the State Department and the White House'.[22] Though Rubin is correct in pointing out the wartime resentment felt by Americans over having to be a guarantor for British imperial interests, his observation as it relates to Saudi Arabia is overdrawn and unconvincing.[23] For one thing, the State Department did not have a singular stance, but rather held multiple strands of thinking given the institution's bifurcated structure. In fact, the officials who headed the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA), which was responsible for American relations with Saudi Arabia, Wallace Murray – chief since 1929 – and his deputies Paul Alling and Gordon Merriam pressed for closer co-ordination with their British counterparts. Indeed, one sees at this early phase in the war American policy makers matching British officials in their conviction that Ibn Saud was a crucial player for the Allied cause in the Middle East. When the entire Allied position in the Middle East hung in the balance, Murray spoke of the magnitude of the situation, urging the Assistant Secretary of State, Adolf Berle, that the US should team up with Britain to act quickly in Saudi Arabia.[24]

With regard to the White House's interest in joining Britain in subsidising Saudi Arabia in 1941, it had been the American oilmen working outside Wallace Murray's NEA who piqued the president's attention. The most notable one, James Andrew Moffett, was a well-known oil industry insider and a prominent New Dealer, who had also been a

long-time friend of Roosevelt.[25] In April 1941, working on behalf of CASOC, Moffett appealed directly to the President to consider having the US government subsidise Ibn Saud's regime. If the King's regime collapsed as a result of continuing economic troubles, Moffett warned glumly, such a doom-ridden scenario would mean that 'perhaps the entire Arab world will be thrown into chaos'.[26]

Also central to Moffett's thinking, which he emphasised to the President, were the wider strategic implications that came with assisting the Arab leader. Such an approach meant that in the future, the US and Britain could count on Ibn Saud, especially as it related to the Palestine issue and obtaining his influential political backing for the creation of a postwar Jewish state. This came at a time when the American minister in Palestine, George Wadsworth, concluded that 80 per cent of the Arab populace wished for an Axis victory, with Germany continuing to do everything in its power to exploit the schism.[27] Besides these preoccupations, Moffett also stressed the fact that supplying Saudi Arabia with funds went hand in hand with protecting the American petroleum interests that were found in that country. With Lend-Lease having been enacted a month earlier, Moffett pressed the President to use the same legislation to offer a helping hand to the Saudi Arabian king on 11 March 1941.[28]

It is however the overlooked role of another American, Karl Twitchell, that deserves greater attention when analysing the early years of Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia. A geologist who once led Charles Crane's survey of the Hejaz, Twitchell was one of the early American pioneers to settle in Saudi Arabia.[29] By 1941, he had many contacts with the State Department, but his main job was as a consultant for the American Smelting and Refining Company (formerly known as the Saudi Arabian Mining Syndicate), a company owned, interestingly enough, by both American and British business interests.[30] At this stage, Twitchell can be best described as a quasi-official of the American government, who, like J.A. Moffett, was able to comfortably jump back and forth between government and the private sector, thereby blurring the line between his personal business interests and the national interest of the US.[31]

The contributions that Twitchell would make in terms of spearheading Anglo-American co-operation were incumbent on him having been a fixture of the expatriate community in Jeddah during the decade preceding the war.[32] During this time he had also gained the trust of Saudi Arabian

officials through his privileged relationship with Ibn Saud.[33] Whether it was true or not, Twitchell had often been told by the king that he was not considered a 'foreigner'.[34] What is also striking is how Twitchell's interaction with Ibn Saud's inner circle served him well in his dealings with members of the British legation in Jeddah. Over the years, he had become a close confidant of the British minister to Saudi Arabia in 1941, Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, as well as Gerald de Gaury and Brigadier General Stephen Longrigg.[35] Speaking of Stonehewer-Bird, Twitchell would write in his diary: 'If all English abroad were like him there would be no-anti British feeling.'[36] Likewise, his British counterparts considered him to be that rare American, one who was truly knowledgeable in the affairs of Saudi Arabia. In his time, Twitchell could rightly claim that no American knew more than he about the country. It's not hard to see why Twitchell proceeded to become a leading point man for Washington. In the process, he helped to transform Saudi Arabia into an Anglo-American issue.

Having returned Stateside in May 1941 with a mix of verve, acumen and a dash of recklessness, Twitchell in coming months would use his own version of shuttle diplomacy to make the case that the US should follow Britain's lead by supporting the Arab king. Travelling from his home in Long Island to Washington, Twitchell on his own accord met with the Lend-Lease advocate, Senator Warren Austin, the Vice-President Henry Wallace and Henry Field, the famed 'Anthropologist to the President', all well-known personalities whom he felt could rally the American government's support behind the Kingdom.[37] It was Field who told Twitchell at a luncheon that same month that Roosevelt had personally expressed a great interest in the current situation in Saudi Arabia.[38]

On 14 May 1941, Twitchell – still acting as a private citizen – met with Gordon Merriam, a State Department official, who from his post, would go on to handle the NEA's Saudi Arabia portfolio throughout the World War II. The two men discussed the continuing political trouble in the Middle East, and both were in agreement about 'the present importance of keeping King Ibn Saud pro-British or at least neutral'.[39] That month, British forces alongside Pasha Glubb's Arab Legion were fighting in Iraq to stamp out a pro-Axis coup led by the Arab nationalist Rashid Ali-Gaylani.[40] At the same time, on a wider scale, the entire British position in the region was under further duress after Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps had pushed British forces out of Libya and was preparing to invade Egypt.[41]

Considering options that would help ease the strained British war effort in the Middle East, Twitchell put forward an idea to the effect that the US government should bankroll Ibn Saud, which would provide a degree of additional insurance by preserving the king's friendly attitude toward the Allies. At first, Twitchell proposed granting a subsidy in excess of 10,000,000 gold dollars to Saudi Arabia along with funds for an agricultural mission that would be organised by the State Department.[42] The idea of an agricultural mission originated from Ibn Saud himself, who had discussed the issue personally with Twitchell back in August 1940.[43] For the time being, Twitchell saw the mission clearly in terms of wartime strategy, believing that it 'might be very beneficial in terms of nullifying German efforts' in Saudi Arabia, while providing further proof to the Arab peoples of Allied beneficence.[44]

At the same time that Merriam and Twitchell were advancing the Saudi Arabian cause, in Washington, negotiations over the terms of the Lend-Lease programme had hit a rough patch. The iconoclastic style of John Maynard Keynes – representing the views of the British Treasury – did little to smooth things over with his American colleagues.[45]Against this testy political backdrop, although the sentiment of the State Department was 'favourable' to some type of loan being offered to Saudi Arabia, Merriam let Twitchell know that it would be politically advantageous if: 'the British should increase their subsidy showing evidence of concern before USA govt. would make loan.'[46] Such a move would silence those American critics who felt that London was casting the US as a character in its plot for another one of their imperial adventures.

At the end of May, Twitchell, now with the State Department's backing, made a visit to the British Embassy. He knew firsthand that logistically speaking the only way that American assistance to Saudi Arabia could be put into effect was by working in collaboration with the British authorities. Neville Butler, the British Counsellor, gave Twitchell a warm welcome. On this occasion, Butler found an American who virtually echoed his own sentiments. Twitchell told him that 'Ibn Saud was leader of 200,000,000 Moslems and 80,000,000 being in India [...]' and if this mass of people stretching from the Maghreb to China '[...] turned pro-Axis they could do immense harm'.[47]Attesting to this evidence, the recent Iraqi revolt, thought to be the handiwork of a pro-Axis underground that operated in the country, was still been fresh in everyone's mind. Considering the Allies'

troubles in the Middle East, the provision of additional aid for Ibn Saud was considered vital.

Even in the face of these compelling reasons for providing aid, Butler however insisted that Twitchell should further justify why Ibn Saud sought out these 'simple presents'. Providing the king with direct financial aid, Twitchell insisted, would allow for 'regular government [Saudi Arabian Government] maintenance' and the extra amounts of cash would 'keep down any internal disturbance fomented by Germans, plus policing Transjordan, Irak, Kuwait frontiers and Yemen borders where the Italians were working hard to make trouble between Imam Yahia and Ibn Saud.'[48] Rapidly gaining confidence in his role as a pseudo-diplomat, Twitchell tactfully, but forcibly, presented his request to Butler. If Washington was to issue a loan and fund an agricultural mission, the pertinent question was whether London would augment its own subsidy, an act that would show American sceptics why it was so necessary to help a far-flung kingdom that most in the US knew little about. Butler listened intently and gave his word that he would forward a message to the Foreign Office outlining the American request. To show good faith, Butler would go on to share the content of the cable with Gordon Merriam at the State Department.[49]

## Efforts to Aid Saudi Arabia: June to September 1941

Following Twitchell interceding, the British kept up their end of the bargain. On 4 June 1941, the British minister Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, aware of his friend Twitchell's efforts in America, announced that London was committed to lending Ibn Saud an extra £200,000 in the upcoming year.[50] In Jeddah, Stonehewer-Bird had been pleased to see the US's new focus on the Kingdom as greater American intervention would alleviate the tension of Ibn Saud being solely dependent on British handouts.[51] In this respect, the US had an opportunity to play a pivotal role serving as a buffer between Pax Saudia and Pax Britannica. From Stonehewer-Bird's perspective, the entry of the US onto the Saudi Arabian political stage created a win–win game for all three parties involved. The US could build up its association with Ibn Saud, while from London's view, greater American involvement helped to dispel concerns in the Arab world that Britain nursed imperialist ambitions towards the Kingdom. Meanwhile, by diversifying its relations with another power such as the US, Saudi

Arabia could maintain its pretences of sovereignty and independence on which its legitimacy rested.

To match Britain's renewed commitment, efforts to expand American aid to Saudi Arabia continued to move apace. Back in Washington, a week later, on 11 June 1941, Twitchell met face to face with James Moffett. According to Twitchell's diary, Moffett claimed that Harry Hopkins told him that a decision from the White House to aid Saudi Arabia would come in '48 hours', and that he 'could short circuit and rush this matter as the president said "go ahead"'. The American aid, according to Hopkins, would likely consist of an estimated cash loan of $4 million, with $2 million earmarked for goods and equipment and $50,000 a year for the cost of the agricultural mission.[52] At the end of two days, Moffett still had no news from the White House, but even a week later, Moffett remained confident enough to insist to his colleagues that the president had given the 'green light'. He had been told that Jesse Jones, the Secretary of Commerce and Federal Loan Administrator, was nudging it through the bureaucratic machine.[53]

In the weeks that followed, Alexander Kirk, whose duties as US Minister to Egypt also applied to Saudi Arabia, was besieged by requests from Riyadh for American assistance. Cabling the State Department, Kirk urged greater American action, stating that: 'the importance of insuring the sympathy of the Arab world at this time cannot be too strongly emphasized and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the logical field for American endeavour in that regard.'[54] The Saudi Arabian question reached a crescendo on 1 July 1941 when the British Ambassador to the US, Lord Halifax, who was accompanied by Neville Butler, met to exchange views with Cordell Hull. During their discussion, Hull made the suggestion that Britain should further increase its financial assistance to Ibn Saud upfront, while the State Department would quietly furnish the Kingdom behind the scenes. In considering Hull's plan, Halifax knew that having the US Government intervening in the affairs of Saudi Arabia – no matter how little – served as an entrée towards London's larger objective of loosening Washington's own wartime neutrality. Indeed, Lord Halifax went as far as to suggest to Hull that any financial assistance given to Ibn Saud should be equally shared, an early harbinger to the 1944 Anglo-American Agreement, a landmark that would constitute *the* highpoint of London and Washington's collaboration in Saudi Arabia.[55]

A day after the talks between Hull and Halifax, Neville Butler met with Wallace Murray to discuss in further detail arrangements to assist the Kingdom. Butler informed his American colleague that the British authorities in India were now prepared to mint ten million riyal coins worth £1.58 million, which would be allocated to the Saudi Arabian government. Again, Butler needed to show Murray that this policy was 'further evidence of the desire of the British Government to assist the King'.[56] Recognising that the US position of neutrality limited American action, Butler advised Murray that it might be in Washington's best interest to purchase Saudi Arabian petroleum to raise the Kingdom's revenue, rather than going ahead with the politically contentious policy of doling out subsidies or loans.[57] Here was an example of a British official encouraging the US government to become more tangibly involved in the Saudi Arabian oil business. No matter how small it may have been in scale, the US purchasing oil was still deemed politically as well as practically unfeasible. The oil near Dhahran contained too much sulphur for American warships and aircraft.[58] Nevertheless, Butler trusted that the US government would still 'see its way clear and offer financial assistance to Saudi Arabia putting aside the issue of neutrality'.[59] The stakes were too great for Britain or the US to think that the problems in Saudi Arabia could be cordoned off from the rest of the region. It was time, Butler implored, for the State Department to show that Ibn Saud did not just have British friends, but that the king 'could also count on his American friends across the Atlantic'.[60]

It is evident that although Butler's plea did not fall on deaf ears, assisting Saudi Arabia remained politically precarious. No matter how clearly American policy sustained Britain's war effort, the US in the words of David Reynolds was still at 'war in masquerade' against the Axis.[61] For the Roosevelt Administration, maintaining the illusion of the country's wartime neutrality was a factor that encompassed all facets of American policy making.[62] Isolationist sentiment persisted shown by the fact that Congress was only able to re-enact the Selective Service Act by a slim margin of just one vote, despite the war's progression.[63] How then, would the State Department convince those on Capitol Hill that American security hinged on Saudi Arabia, a neutral country no less, when many of these Congressmen and Senators fought tooth and nail against Lend-Lease appropriations for Britain, a country that was arguably fighting the US's war? This was why on 18 July 1941, President Roosevelt concluded that

coming to the aid of Saudi Arabia '[. . .] was a little far afield for us!' and hoped that instead, the British would continue to 'take care of the King'.[64]

Hemmed in by the political obstacles of trying to conceal the country's growing involvement in World War II, it was finally made official on 22 August 1941 that Lend-Lease aid for Saudi Arabia would not be granted.[65] The scholar Lloyd C. Gardner has gone to great lengths to show that Washington sought to use Lend-Lease as a 'wedge' built specifically to separate Ibn Saud from the existing British sphere of influence.[66] Simon Davis, too, follows a similar trajectory stating that in the midst of debating whether or not to provide aid for Saudi Arabia, the US's relationship with Britain contained a great deal of 'American unease'.[67] Such assessments miss the mark because they underplay how the issue hinged on wartime exigency, while paying little attention to mounting domestic political pressures. These played a predominant role in why American plans to make Lend-Lease available in Saudi Arabia were scuppered.

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Karl Twitchell was given a murky explanation for the administration's decision to turn down aid for Saudi Arabia. The man who had done so much advocating for Ibn Saud was told by Paul Alling that – along with the concerns related to preserving American neutrality – the president and Secretary Hull had agreed that the Kingdom had not been integral in the same way that American interests were in the cases of China and Latin America.[68] On one level, Hull's argument rang true. China was at war against Japan and in light of geographic proximity, Latin America practically represented the backyard of the US. Looking beyond such factors however, the Secretary of State continued to remain sceptical of British motives. As Warren Kimball once remarked: 'Hull never accepted the fact that Britain could be short of dollars while still operating a vast colonial and economic empire.'[69] Mistrustful of the imperial gloss that clung to British policy, Hull played his part in advising the president that direct American aid for Saudi Arabia was unnecessary and should remain a province of Britain.

With Lend-Lease aid for Saudi Arabia deemed politically unworkable, Karl Twitchell felt that there still was an answer that fell under an Anglo-American umbrella. 'Requirements of King Ibn Saud' said Twitchell 'should be given to him by the British Government out of the $425 million loan being made to Britain by USA.'[70] Using British agency in

this context worked as an effective diplomatic tool, helping to streamline American policy in Saudi Arabia. Foremost, by Britain taking on a lead role, the recurrent issue of US aid for Saudi Arabia running against American neutrality would turn into a moot point. Secondly, from a pragmatic point of view, it made sense for the US to lay low behind the scenes, especially in areas in which the US government lacked diplomatic experience. 'The British', Wallace Murray observed in August 1941, 'have a long background in the field of political loans, and are used to advancing money without any great expectations of getting it back, whereas the US does not have any tradition of this sort.'[71] Already, a bureaucratic arm of the British government had been dedicated to this kind of work, the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation (UKCC), which had organised the 1940 subsidy for Saudi Arabia, including for other neutral countries perceived as friendly to Allied interests, such as Portugal and Turkey.[72] Consequently, an Anglo-American arrangement emerged in which Britain – a country that had liquidated $1.5 billion of her overseas assets during 1940–1 – would be overseeing the task of supplying subsidies to the financially depleted Kingdom.[73]

The negative side of relying on Britain from the American perspective was that London might employ its own Lend-Lease aid as leverage to topple US oil interests in Saudi Arabia. Many American oilmen, including Lloyd Hamilton, general manager of CASOC, supposed it to be naive to think that Britain's future policy towards the Kingdom emanated only from wartime emergency. By this time, the British government held no qualms about using its political influence to protect a range of national investments within Saudi Arabia, most notably Gellatly Hankey, a premier shipping company, but also the American Smelting and Refining Company in which Britons held a substantial financial stake.[74] At any rate, a day before Washington's rejection of Saudi Arabian aid came to light, the British government delivered the Eden White Paper, virtually a binding Anglo-American agreement, which gave assurances that: 'HMG have (has) not applied and will not apply any Lend-Lease materials in such a way as to enable their exporters to enter new markets or to extend their export trade at the expense of the US.'[75]

In the end, American officials who dealt with Saudi Arabia continued to be of two minds. They were torn between Ibn Saud's need for immediate

financial assistance, but if Britain solely took charge of subsidisation, would American interests in Saudi Arabia suffer as a result? An awkward situation might arise in which Britain – on the back of American largesse no less – would be the beneficiary of a disproportionate amount of credit for assisting the beleaguered Arab country. Therefore, a show of American commitment to Saudi Arabia needed to follow direct British assistance. Should this fail to materialise, Karl Twitchell forewarned that American prestige inside the Kingdom would end up being worth 'nil'.[76]

## The US Agricultural Mission to Saudi Arabia

In September 1941, recent Axis successes on the battlefield put Saudi Arabia back into the strategic spotlight. The Germans' 'Kiev offensive' had raised the spectre of a Russian military collapse, and with the Third Reich pushing eastward, the British historian Ashley Jackson has commented that during this 'touch and go' period, 'Britain's Middle Eastern strategic jigsaw appeared to be threatened'.[77] After hearing about Allied reversals, Karl Twitchell wrote in his diary that this turn of events gave the Axis a greater hand in forcing Ibn Saud to declare 'jihad and stir up Moslems to make trouble in India and Egypt'.[78]

For the time being, Britain's subsidies to Ibn Saud was effective, but the US refusal of the Lend-Lease terms necessitated some sort of display of commitment to win back the king's trust. In a last ditch-effort, thinking of countermeasures that 'may offset or neutralize' Riyadh's disappointment, Twitchell returned to a key part of his original scheme, stating that: 'everything should be done to make a firm offer of a [agricultural] mission.'[79] That summer, the US government also planned to send missions to the Iranian government as well as the Kingdom of Afghanistan in a bid to reduce Axis influence in those countries.[80] Keeping in mind these wartime considerations, the NEA's Paul Alling agreed with Twitchell. Writing to his superior, Sumner Welles, Alling urged that during this difficult stretch of Allied losses, it was vital to 'overcome any feeling he [Ibn Saud] may have that we are abandoning him completely'. An agricultural mission organised and led by American officials certainly complemented Britain's own subsidisation policy, but for the State Department it represented another step in the right direction towards repairing the damage that the Lend-Lease rebuff had caused.[81] Speaking of the agricultural mission's larger goal, Adolf Berle wrote to Karl Twitchell:

> The [State] Department is convinced that the personal relationships which the Mission's personnel establish with SA officials and individuals in civil life can play an important part in the success which the Department sincerely trusts will attend the Mission's work, and believes that these relationships should be carefully cultivated.

After acquiring the influential endorsement of Berle, the US Agricultural Mission began to take shape. On 18 September 1941 in Washington, Karl Twitchell met with a group of American officials from the agricultural sectors of the government, which included members of the Office of Indian Affairs, Department of Interior, Office of Foreign Agriculture Relations, Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Plant Industry. A consensus had been reached between these bodies that appropriations for such a venture could be covered under the umbrella of 'Emergency Funds Available for the President'. Backed by presidential approval, the Department of Agriculture was granted $50,000, and Twitchell in return for his efforts was given the important task of supervising the mission.[82]

The project, located 58 miles south from Riyadh in Al Kharj, amounted to three American officials teaching Saudi Arabians to grow staple crops like dates, wheat, alfalfa and green vegetables.[83] In addition, Twitchell's team would help form the Al-Saud regime's own agricultural department in which American advisors would work with their Saudi Arabian counterparts on such skills as animal husbandry, irrigation practices, and even basket weaving and photography.[84] In this respect, the agricultural mission addressed an immediate wartime predicament. If Saudi Arabia could be agriculturally self-sufficient, valuable wartime shipping space that was normally taken up by foodstuff imports sent to Saudi Arabia would be made available.[85] The agricultural mission further accomplished its goal of agitating the Axis powers. Later in 1942, Italy's propaganda machine in the Middle East, *Radio Badi*, claimed that the Americans wanted more influence over Ibn Saud than the British, while wireless reports from Berlin reminded Arab listeners that the 'Mission was sent by President Roosevelt who is maintained in power by Jewish Capitalists'.[86] With the exception of materials from the US being sporadically delayed as well as Twitchell's deputy, F.G. Hamilton, contracting a bad case of malaria, the American Agricultural Mission was overall deemed a diplomatic success.[87]

Taking into account Anglo-American relations, British officials in Washington were pleased by the US Agricultural Mission from the outset. Hugh Stonehewer-Bird had relayed a message to Twitchell back in June that he 'thoroughly approved of the proposed Mission', which focused on 'agriculture, water development, and roads' as a means of strengthening the Allied position in the Kingdom.[88] On 20 September 1941, the British Foreign Office requested through the NEA that the US government do everything in its power to 'keep the operation going'.[89] At its core, London did not see the agricultural mission as a threat to Britain's long-term interests in Saudi Arabia, but as a timely wartime measure that also chipped away at American neutrality.

Looking at the mission more broadly, Al Kharj was a sign of things to come. The actions taken by the US and Britain in Saudi Arabia were a clear departure from the pre-war international system in which colonialism and 'gunboat diplomacy' were the diplomatic norm.[90] Long before the French demographer Alfred Sauvy coined the term 'the Third World' in 1952, Saudi Arabia during World War II fitted the profile of a developing country and was treated as such by officials on both side of the Atlantic.[91] Paul Alling pointed out to Sumner Welles that simply by helping the Saudi Arabian government and its 'agricultural and water resources' US interests were successfully met, without the unwanted attention. In the process, Washington had circumvented its neutrality constraints and demonstrated its commitment to Ibn Saud.[92] In fact, Karl Twitchell had with Ibn Saud's consent, arranged for one of the most high profile journalists in the world, Edgar Snow, to visit Al-Kharj, so that he could report and see first-hand this new kind of diplomacy in action.[93] The American scholar Daniel J. Boorstin would later term this kind of statecraft based on development and aid as 'Samaritan Diplomacy'.[94] By then, writing to President Roosevelt, Karl Twitchell came up with a different name, referring to the US Agricultural Mission as an example of a 'very far reaching branch of *practical diplomacy*'.[95]

Regardless of the accusations made by the Axis, eschewing imperial pretensions was a pivotal part of strategic thinking that went into formulating the agricultural mission. In hindsight, the future American minister to Saudi Arabia, Colonel William Eddy, would write in June 1945 that the mission had been successful due to the US allowing it to become: 'an enterprise of the Saudi Arabian Government, sponsored and protected by the King, with personnel ultimately responsible to him.'[96] Eddy's

rationale for being 'hands off' was not solely an American idea, but also reflected the traditional considerations of British policy makers who had for years successfully protected British interests through engaging with Saudi Arabian officials instead of lording over them.[97]

Although Britain was a designated imperial power, it should be remembered that in 1940 Parliament enacted the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, a forward-thinking measure that one scholar described as a catalyst for multilateral institutions like the United Nations' specialised agencies, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund.[98] Later in 1943, as will be shown in Chapter 6, the British Council of Anglo-Arab Cultural Relations would organise a branch in Saudi Arabia tasked with passing on the many virtues of modern Britain.[99] Rather than dividing the two allies, initiatives akin to the agricultural mission often reinforced a similar thrust of thinking when it came to the way that British and American diplomats viewed Saudi Arabia during World War II. Indeed, a soft touch could go a long way.

## Anglo-American Relations and Saudi Arabia: Autumn 1941

The US's growing involvement in Saudi Arabia matched the expansion of American activities in the Middle East region as a whole. In October 1941, American policy makers edged closer to war by planning a regional military command centre later to be known as US of America Forces in the Middle East (USAFIME) in Cairo, headed by General R.L. Maxwell.[100] Like the agricultural mission in Saudi Arabia, the scheme adhered to the US's position of neutrality, while it indirectly shored up British policy in the region. Following the lively debate surrounding the Lend-Lease question and the agricultural mission, American officials at this time re-evaluated their early collaboration with the British in Saudi Arabia. On one hand, with the wartime alliance coming to fruition in 1941, Britain and the US working in closer conjunction had undeniably bolstered the Al-Saud regime. Yet, on the other hand, the American decision to allow Britain to take full control of the provision of subsidies still came with the possibility of negative repercussions. Ibn Saud enjoyed the consistency and commitment that the British government had shown in Saudi Arabia to the point where Washington feared that this staunchness might give London an insurmountable advantage as a competitor in the future.

In a memorandum that circulated within the State Department in October 1941, Gordon Merriam warned that: 'the possibility must be squarely faced that if the British, alone and by themselves, get Ibn Saud through his present difficulties they may seek a future recompense at the expense of American interests in that country.'[101] According to the American minister in Cairo, Alexander Kirk, Ibn Saud, angered by Washington's decision to refuse direct aid to Saudi Arabia, almost rejected having an American agricultural mission sent to Saudi Arabia.[102] To understand the US's role in Saudi Arabia, Merriam stressed how Ibn Saud's relationship with the British government in some respects played into American hands. An unsaid strategic *quid pro quo* kept Anglo-Saudi relations balanced; there was a Rubicon that Ibn Saud would not cross. Allowing the British government to gain a strong foothold in the country was not an option because it might risk creating the inevitable perception of Saudi Arabia falling under British control. Merriam felt strongly that American involvement in Saudi Arabia helped Ibn Saud in counteracting the excesses of British power, despite the trouble over Lend-Lease aid. Similarly, Merriam considered this to be the reason why the Saudi Arabian king had welcomed the idea of financial assistance coming from an American source and had granted oil concessions to an 'an American company' rather than a British one in the 1930s.[103] Merriam seems however to either ignore or be unaware of the fact that in 1936 the king had in fact awarded oil concessions to a subsidiary of the British owned Iraq Petroleum Company in the Hedjaz and Asir provinces, albeit no oil had yet been found.[104]

Nevertheless, what Merriam fails to further point out is the fact that assuring Saudi Arabian independence had always been a key aim of British foreign policy. Now more than ever, British officials appreciated the exhibitive power of a sovereign Arab state that was friendly toward the Allies, without inducing the perception that the Saudis were under the sway of the British in the region. This is why the British Legation in Jeddah had warmly greeted news of the US playing a greater role in Saudi Arabian affairs precisely because such an event would undermine the perception of Ibn Saud being at London's mercy. Likewise, Ibn Saud knew that after dealing with the British government since the turn of the century, London held no real designs of incorporating his kingdom into the British Empire. British policy makers were far more concerned with implementing policies that would do everything to dispel this myth.

Certainly, Merriam gave credit to Britain's political influence over the Kingdom, but he makes no mention of the dominant financial position that it had accumulated. Regardless of CASOC's growth potential, British capital dwarfed American investment. Long-established British trading houses, such as Gellatly & Hankey and Mackenzie Gray & Company, were the main importing channels that kept Saudi Arabian finances functioning.[105] Moreover, British agency in the form of the Government of India still remained Saudi Arabia's greatest trading partner.[106] It is also worth remembering that annually Delhi organised the travel logistics of the Hajj, providing the bulk of steamers that were responsible for the safe passage of pilgrims from the Asian subcontinent, a service that only British know-how could supply.[107] Deeply embedded in Merriam's somewhat imperfect analysis, one can spot some of the apprehension and misunderstanding that would later make itself manifest with regard to Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia during the latter war years.

With the US without a diplomatic mission in Jeddah, during that same eventful October, the American legation in Cairo led by Alexander Kirk met with a team of British officials who were based in Saudi Arabia to discuss the current situation in the Kingdom. This group included Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, his vice consul, the Arabist John Wall, and Colonel Charles de Gaury. In terms of monitoring events in Saudi Arabia, the State Department by this time was nowhere in the same league as the British Foreign Office. American officials listened carefully as the British contingent shared with them a glimpse of what was going on in the Kingdom. First, Stonehewer-Bird informed the Americans that for the upcoming year of 1942, the British government would likely raise the subsidies earmarked for the Kingdom because of the continuing decline in the revenue generated by the Hajj. The King had recently told the British minister that:

> Great Britain is my friend and always has been. Great Britain is the friend of the Arabs and has so shown itself in the past. The Arab countries need a powerful European friend and Great Britain is undoubtedly preferable to any other country to fill that role. Therefore it is the duty and in the interest of all Arabs (Syrians, Iraqis and Palestinians) not to embarrass the British Government in any way in the prosecution of the war.[108]

American officials who were observing the situation in Saudi Arabia did not regard the British minister's statement to mean that Ibn Saud was exclusively under British influence. Wallace Murray relayed this impression to high-ranking policy makers like Adolf Berle and Sumner Welles who took this as positive news because they were pleased to hear of the King's allegiance to the Allies' regional interests as opposed to the Axis powers. Stonehewer-Bird further made clear that in Saudi Arabia, despite having advisors who were sympathetic to the Axis cause, Ibn Saud's opinion was the only one that mattered. The king was an independent and well-informed leader. He had a team of people at his disposal whose only job was to listen to radio broadcasts and transcribe them so that he would be up to speed on world events. When Ibn Saud learned from these reports that Nazi Germany had invaded the Soviet Union, he contended that the Germans violated the Arab rules of friendship by attacking a country to which they were bound by treaty. This betrayal had a tremendous impact on Ibn Saud convincing him and Saudi Arabian officials, especially those who may have formerly been leaning towards the Axis one thing. Germany could not to be trusted. If this was the way in which Hitler dealt with the Soviets, what type of aggression would the Germans mete out to a struggling and emerging state like Saudi Arabia?[109] The message was clear that in Ibn Saud, they had a man of his word, someone whom the wartime alliance could trust and vice versa. It was this strongly held belief that helped form the contours of the Anglo-American engagement in Saudi Arabia in 1942.

## Conclusion

The early Anglo-American relationship was guided by the strategic premise that by helping the Al-Saud regime to remain economically solvent, the larger Allied objective of keeping Axis influence at bay, not just in the Arabian Peninsula, but also in the wider Middle East, would be met. In 1941, it can be argued that Saudi Arabia evolved into an Anglo-American concern as a result of British and American officials realising that their interests in that country were interdependent. Rather than seeing American interest in Saudi Arabia as a prospective threat, British authorities viewed it more as a strategic opportunity. Expectations that the US would go ahead and directly subsidise Ibn

Saud fit nimbly within the Anglo-Saudi paradigm based on the perception of Britain not acting as a domineering power in its dealings with the Kingdom. Moreover, the rise of US influence in Saudi Arabia should be measured alongside the broader motivations of British wartime diplomacy, which were designed to harness American power precisely at a time when the European war became global. By this token, American involvement in the Kingdom, from finding ways to finance the Saudi Arabian government to offering an agricultural mission, was helped along and co-ordinated with the assistance of British officials based in Washington, London and Jeddah.

The Roosevelt Administration's decision to scrap a plan to finance Ibn Saud directly was not however a symbol of American indifference to Saudi Arabia or to its British ally. In 1941, Ibn Saud's kingdom had not yet fully crystallised into becoming a beacon of American influence in the Middle East. It remained politically crucial for the administration to maintain its wartime neutrality to outsiders. Moreover, without the proper official agency inside the country, the State Department wisely deferred to the British to take control of the financial emergency faced by Saudi Arabia. In a province that had primarily been a British sphere of influence, this made perfect political and strategic sense. Britain – with all of its intimate knowledge of the Middle East – could assist the process of getting the US government involved in Saudi Arabia in a more operative manner, a stratagem most notably held by Karl Twitchell, the unsung figure who laid the foundations for closer Anglo-American co-operation in the Kingdom. Likewise, Twitchell's efforts to establish an American agricultural mission, a policy that gave priority to what he called 'practical diplomacy', would in the years to come greatly influence how the US and Britain would fashion their policies with regard to Saudi Arabia.

The two allies successfully kept Axis propaganda at bay in Saudi Arabia. On the whole, studies on this subject have however treated 1941 as an afterthought or used the period to contextualise their arguments as to why discord and antagonism undermined the bilateral relationship later in the war. Certainly, evidence of Britain and the US holding different perspectives over the extent of influence that they wielded inside the Kingdom foretold areas of future conflict. It might be said that the propensity of American officials to believe that their country possessed a singular connection with Saudi Arabia as an 'anti-imperial power' did not

bode particularly well for preserving inter-allied cohesion. Yet, for the time being, these slight fissures gave way to a mutual emphasis of the British and American governments reaching for a far greater goal of making sure that Ibn Saud and Saudi Arabia resided firmly within the Allied fold. With World War II expanding in scope after 7 December 1941, Chapter 3 will show Anglo-American collaboration in Saudi Arabia was to deepen. With it began a new phase in which the two allies would be more tightly bound together than ever before.

# CHAPTER 3

# THE EMPTY QUARTER: ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA AND WARTIME STRATEGY, 1942

## Introduction

Donning traditional Arab dress, the American minister to Saudi Arabia, Alexander Kirk, presented his diplomatic credentials to King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud at the royal encampment in Dhurma on 12 May 1942.[1] After an exchange of pleasantries, the topic of discussion turned toward the pressing matter of the war. The American minister confidently reassured Ibn Saud that the US and its ally, the British government, were determined to 'eliminate the destructive forces of Hitlerism'.[2] Although neutral, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as we have seen had a meaningful role to play in the fight to turn back the Axis tide in the Middle East. A period of time that has generally been discounted by historians, this chapter examines how and why Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia in 1942 ushered in a new age when both allies grew more interdependent as the Kingdom assumed a new level of geostrategic importance in the conflict.[3]

On the surface, there were episodes that seem to fit with the 'competitive' leitmotif of the subject's historiography, particularly the debate over which one of the allies should be responsible for the defence of Saudi Arabia's oil installations.[4] Certainly, a substantial part that clinched the argument stemmed from the fact that both Britain and the US were reluctant to deal with a nightmarish scenario in which the German army

had reached the doorstep of the Persian Gulf. In this case, much of the inter-allied tension instead arose from a source different from the frictions associated with national rivalry. Both countries were quick to realise that protecting the oilfields through a show of force might do more harm than good by casting the shadow of colonialism, which would only engender resentment among the local population. Moreover, as a further detriment to British and American interests, such activities would cast more than a twinge of doubt on Ibn Saud's legitimacy as an independent ruler. Once again, officials from both countries found themselves undertaking a precarious balancing act, simultaneously wanting to increase their involvement in Saudi Arabia without abrogating the Kingdom's sovereignty in the process.

Similar unease was also present when the two allies envisaged that air routes over Saudi Arabia could augment Allied supply lines to Asia and the Soviet Union. In this instance, after the failure of the US to obtain access to air routes, trans-Atlantic co-operation proved to be pivotal. As a result of the effective diplomatic collaboration between British minister Hugh Stonehewer-Bird and the recently arrived American chargé d'affaires, James Moose, air routes and landing rights in Saudi Arabia were acquired. What is most telling about this episode is that Ibn Saud only decided to grant air routes once the issue became a joint Anglo-American concern. Often glossed over, this prime example of Anglo-American partnership set an important precedent. It highlights that despite obstacles, London and Washington had come to see that a unified Anglo-American front worked far more effectively as a tool of diplomacy than trying to implement British and American policies unilaterally.

## Saudi Arabian Oilfields: A British or American Burden?

At the start of 1942, Hugh Stonehewer-Bird had confidently cabled the Foreign Office to say that regardless of Allied reverses, Ibn Saud was 'wholeheartedly on our side'.[5] An Arabic proverb says that 'the beauty of a man lies in the eloquence of his tongue', and Ibn Saud undeniably had a way of using his picaresque Bedouin idioms to ease any British or American anxieties over where his loyalty may lie.[6] Ibn Saud likened Hitler to:

> A man who has stuffed himself with much and varied food (the countries of Europe) in the belief that he will derive great strength

> from his meals. But he has swallowed, not nourishing food, but a number of vipers and scorpions and whilst they tear at his vitals, the lions, Britain, America, Russia, attack him.[7]

Earlier in November 1941, in a top secret and lengthy telegram between Ibn Saud and his minister to Vichy France, Fuad Hamza, the king censured his minister for communicating with Nazi authorities, warning him that: 'were we to write to Hitler, cajoling him, we would do as you desire and renounce our present acts, and we would become liars, and the proof against us would become manifest.'[8] Saudi Arabia declaring war on the Axis was however an entirely different matter for the king. Foremost, he was acutely aware of his country's own military limitations. At the end of 1940, Saudi Arabian armed forces numbered between 1,000–1,500 trained troops, with an addition of 70,000 irregulars. These men were comprised entirely of Arab Bedouins, who were no longer the battle-tested warriors that they once were when they were fighting for the Al-Saud in the 1920s.[9] Furthermore, Saudi Arabia had no navy, despite being situated between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.[10]

Earlier, London had briefly entertained the idea of establishing a formal military alliance with Ibn Saud in late 1939 and early 1940. Although Saudi Arabia's entry into the war guaranteed access to the Red Sea port city of Jeddah, a detail pressed by the Admiralty, the dominating view emanating from London, which was not without merit given the state of the Kingdom's military, was that having Saudi Arabia as a fully fledged belligerent was more of a strategic liability than an asset.[11] The British Middle East Command, then led by General Archibald Wavell, expressed doubt over Saudi Arabia joining the Allies: 'If Ibn Saud entered the war on our side, we could not guarantee protection against Italian attacks by sea or air with the means at present.'[12] In wartime, Saudi Arabia's neutrality in this respect functioned as the country's best form of protection.

Taking in all of these considerations, in February 1942, the Foreign Office delivered a report to the British War Cabinet claiming that for Ibn Saud: 'it is neither in his interest nor in that of His Majesty's Government for him to adhere to the Twenty-Six Power Pact and to declare war on the Axis.'[13] The king's decision not to declare war made strategic sense and fit neatly with the ingrained rationale that had always guided British policy towards the Kingdom. Stonehewer-Bird had written to the Foreign Office

that if Saudi Arabia was forced to join the Allies, Ibn Saud's credibility as an independent Arab statesman would be all but lost:

> It would be interpreted not only be our enemies, but his enemies in the Moslem world as proof that he was merely the tool of the British who had betrayed Islam and exposed the Holy Land to danger in British interests only [...] Instead of an unwilling ally we have a willing and grateful friend who will use his whole influence on our side.[14]

In this respect, Ibn Saud's 'whole influence' came into play once more in the early summer of 1942 when evidence of the war reaching the Arabian Peninsula was as ample as it was distressing. The possibility was not overstated when the British defeat at Tobruk in June of 1942 is taken into consideration. Describing the loss, the British war correspondent Alan Moorehead simply wrote: 'It was defeat as complete as may be.'[15] If Axis forces attained control of both shores of the Mediterranean, all Allied shipping to port entries in the Nile Delta, Persian Gulf, India and Red Sea would be forced to travel the long route around the Cape of Good Hope to port entries. To make matters worse, as the German Army reached the foot of the Caspian Sea, and the Japanese seized the Nicobar and Andaman Islands off the coast of India, Saudi Arabia lay dangerously centred between the two Axis armies.[16] Looking back at this low period in Allied fortunes, the American Ambassador at the Court of St James, John G. Winant, wrote:

> the picture of Germany joining hands with Japan on the shores of the Indian Ocean, advancing through Spain and Gibraltar to Dakar, closing the Mediterranean, cutting off the Middle East oil, and severing Britain's life line to India and Australasia [...] would not have been a pleasant one for us or Russia.[17]

The capture of Tobruk and the German attack on the Baku oil fields in the Caucasus that same month reinforced the view offered by Winant.[18] That year, according to the US government's Enemy Oil Committee (EOC), a group made up of an array of military-related departments, the Axis ground forces consumed 5.3 million tons of petroleum products in total, 74 per cent of which was spent at the Eastern Front.[19] From the viewpoint

of Allied war planners, the new California-Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC) oil refinery at Ras Tanura near Dhahran, in the eastern part of Saudi Arabia, was regarded as insurance if the British-run refineries at Bahrain and Abadan were 'put out of action'.[20] Moreover, a German takeover of the Baku oilfields meant that the Soviet Union would lose nearly 90 per cent of its fuel resources.[21] Finally, it was beginning to dawn on the Allies that Saudi Arabia might truly loom as the next vital source for oil.

With the US now able to freely act as an Allied belligerent power in 1942, the wartime alliance debated over how best to defend the Saudi Arabian oilfields. Although the country's oil was nestled within the realm of Pax Britannica, the US government had a role to play given the fact that the CASOC oil concessions were tied to approximately 1,60,000 American stockholders.[22] A year previously Max Thornburg, an executive for a subsidiary of CASOC – the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BPC) – and later an oil consultant to the State Department who would play a major role in the development of wartime American oil policy, had raised a worrying hypothetical question with the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson.[23] If the Axis did indeed march into Saudi Arabia, which country would be responsible for demolishing the oil installations before they became a war prize for the Axis? Stimson replied that there was 'no urgent reason' to raze any of the installations, but if it became necessary, the sole action and responsibility fell on the British government as Saudi Arabia was located in the Middle East.[24]

A year later as the threat of the German army became more real, Washington took its cue from Stimson's original judgement. Although it held no clearly demarcated boundaries, the Middle East traditionally existed as a broad geographic space referring to the corridor of land and sea stretching from Gibraltar to Karachi.[25] More so than any other location in the world, the Middle East was the imperial lifeline of Britain because it housed the Empire's oil reserves while linking supplies and communications with India, Britain's Southeast Asian Empire, and the Antipodes Dominions. In other words, during World War II, the Middle East was a yardstick in measuring the reach of British influence. As a result, the onus fell on Britain to protect Saudi Arabia's oilfields, which by extension meant watching out for American interests as well.

Backed by the favour of President Roosevelt and Cordell Hull, Admiral Ernest King and Chief of Staff George Marshall sent a message to the

British JCS on 13 August 1942, stating that the matter needed to: 'be referred to the British Joint Chiefs of Staff for appropriate action, since these installations are in an area of British strategic responsibility.'[26] As a credible enemy target that required protection, especially against the threat of low-level bombing, the Americans were depending on the British to send a battery of anti-aircraft artillery to be used for the defence of the CASOC oil facilities in Dhahran, Aziz Ayah and Ras Tanura.[27]

Although CASOC was American-owned, British authorities were already involved in protecting the company's branch of operations in Bahrein, a business holding that had been incorporated in Britain. The installations there had a number of British personnel, who according to CASOC executive William Lenahan, were 'sleeping with British uniforms under their bunks, ready to put them on and carry out demolitions as British soldiers at an instant's notice.'[28] Saudi Arabia however was an altogether different matter. The Kingdom was a sovereign nation, officially neutral and did not have any special military treaty relations with the British government. During 1942, British forces had the unfortunate task of coping with the political fallout from a series of controversial oil denial programmes in Iraq, Iran and Burma.[29] These denials were successful in that they kept Britain's enemies from acquiring such oilfields, but the programme also had the negative consequence of creating a stir of anti-British sentiment and nationalist unrest within those countries.[30] Given these mixed results, Sir Vivian Dykes, the chief combined secretary of the British Joint Staff Mission in Washington, could not comply with the American request:

> In light of the relative importance and vulnerability of the works, the War Office regrets that no specific protection from British Anti-aircraft resources can be afforded to these oil installations, in addition to the protection given by the general air defense plans of the area.[31]

Instead of London offering to help Washington, the British chiefs of staff let it be known that they would welcome an American anti-aircraft detachment in Dhahran, which would be put in place with a 'self contained unit of not more than 100 strong, with its own guns, and sufficient transport for moving supplies from the coast'. The Saudi Arabian government, said Dykes, had agreed in principle to the plan of establishing an anti-aircraft detachment that would be manned by

American personnel on the condition that they would train Saudi Arabians to use the equipment.[32] Speaking in the name of the Joint Staff planners of the US, General Albert C. Wedemeyer, future author of the *Victory Plan*, put a halt to the British proposition.[33] Stating that these actions went beyond the ambit of the American military, Wedemeyer contended that if the US did go ahead and supply a small unit of troops, it would result in an 'undesirable dispersion of strength'.[34]

Viewed within the context of the summer of 1942, a period of time when the Allies were collectively on their back heels, the obvious concern of being militarily overstretched does not fully explain why Britain and the US were so eager to pass off the responsibilities of defending the Kingdom's oil.[35] For one thing, the potential importance of having control over what was to become the most powerful commodity in the postwar world was still not fully realised by the two allies.[36] Furthermore, as Daniel Silverfarb has added, plans to safeguard Saudi Arabian oil fields were further 'complicated by Ibn Saud's insistence on remaining neutral and his refusal to declare war'.[37] This is entirely true, but what Silverfarb misses in his analysis is that all parties involved agreed on the priority of Saudi Arabia remaining neutral, which fed into another dilemma facing British and American officials. How would the Saudi population, many unused to foreigners in its midst, react to Allied troops being stationed inside the realm of the Kingdom?

Rashid Ali's coup the previous year had foreshadowed the likely outcome. A group of CASOC employees of Arab origin had left their posts in Saudi Arabia to fight against the British in Iraq. This demonstration of resistance had given pause to American officials who wondered if Ibn Saud's willingness to work with the Allies was also shared by his countrymen. Paul Alling, the deputy chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA), observed at the time: 'Ibn Saud had in ordinary times, only slight control of tribesmen in the Eastern part of his territories and that, in face of such an emergency as now existed, he might well lose control of them altogether.'[38] For the British 'to meet their military responsibility' of protecting Saudi Arabia, Alling realised that the very presence of British forces might inadvertently destabilise a regime that was friendly to the Allied cause.[39] In reality, it was not just the arrival of British servicemen that might inflame the Saudi populace, but the presence of any foreign troops could be viewed as an infringement on the Kingdom's sovereignty and cause unrest. Even as British and American officials went back and

forth on the issue in Washington, British minister Hugh Stonehewer-Bird and the recently arrived American chargé d'affaires in Jeddah, James Moose, were in full agreement. Their view was that any Allied military personnel entering Saudi Arabia, should be avoided as much as possible, to ensure that there would be no cause for alarm in Riyadh.[40]

Regardless, for Paul Alling it still made better political sense for Ibn Saud to rely on the US, which was 'anti-imperial' to 'guard oil installations, manage anti-aircraft guns and to give instruction for their usage'.[41] Backing this view was F.W. Oligher of CASOC, who had felt from the beginning that since Americans 'were the most popular of foreigners in Saudi Arabia', it was only natural that they should man the equipment and undertake all training.[42] Oligher would not be the last American to make this point, and consequently such views would put a strain on the Anglo-American partnership in Saudi Arabia in the future.[43] In the end however, reaching a final decision over who would defend Saudi Arabian oilfields never had to be made. The final British victory at the battle of El Alamein in November 1942 had put a stop to the Axis advance in the Middle East. The delicate factors pertaining to the oilfield issue, mainly the preservation of the Kingdom's neutrality, would however continually influence the trajectory of Anglo-American relations.

## Saudi Arabian Air Routes: Searching for an Anglo-American Answer

No sooner had the oilfield controversy arisen, than another wartime issue shrouded in complexity rose to the surface as well. The Anglo-American attempt to acquire air routes over Saudi Arabia highlighted the fact that British and American war planners reached a new level of partnership in the Middle East to stem the Axis tide. It was here in 1942, the historian James Holland noted, that the two wartime allies were becoming versed in collaboration to create the 'strongest military alliance in history'.[44] Beyond the improving degree of Anglo-American co-operation displayed in the region, the air routes question brought into sharper focus once again the tensions associated with the concepts of 'spheres of influence' and 'areas of responsibility'. The very process of securing air rights in times of war also strengthened the civil aviation industry of a country in a time of peace. By its nature, strategic air routes and airfields were contentious issues because they touched upon one nation's influence and power.

As early as 1941, the State Department was cognisant that Britain's substantial influence in Saudi Arabia greatly affected the air routes issue. That same year, Ibn Saud denied a Pan American Airways request for experimental trans-Arabian flights. Many suspected that this decision owed to the king feeling hemmed in by British authorities seeking to protect Britain's own civil aviation industry.[45] The US government requested that Pan American Airways organise the top secret Airport Development Program, which endorsed a plan for the construction of a global network of American airfields.[46] Not to be denied, British officials had a similar idea in place for the centrally located Saudi Arabia. In October 1940, Basil Newton, British Ambassador to Iraq, had envisioned Saudi Arabia playing a featured role in Britain's growing imperial air network. Newton, speaking to the Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax, attested that:

> Saudi Arabia's value for air command may be incalculably great now that the Atlantic and Pacific have already been spanned by air-lines. We should acquire an additional and shorter line of communication between Australia, New Zealand, India, Burma, Hong Kong and Palestine and the Mediterranean, Britain, Canada and America on the other.[47]

In the heightened atmosphere of 1942 however, national competition between Britain and the US over aviation took a backseat to the exigencies of war. Their focus increasingly turned to Saudi Arabia and the question of Allied supply lines. Located in the middle of the Khartoum-Karachi supply route, Sandi Arabia found itself between a vital byway through which Allied aircraft and other war materiel was shipped to the Far East. The relevance of Saudi Arabian airspace had also grown considerably in the aftermath of Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941, when the US and Britain's new ally, the Soviet Union, was in need of greater Allied materiel in resisting the Nazi onslaught.[48] There afterwards, a new Allied supply route had quickly formed in the Persian Gulf through which aid was shipped to the Soviet Union from Basra and up through Russian Turkistan.[49]

The War Department in Washington subscribed to a view that an air route across Saudi Arabia, possibly an airfield set up near Jeddah, would add an important link in the chain for the supply route from Khartoum to Karachi, allowing for a securer alternative route than the existing one that went via Cairo. Moreover, if the Allies were able to fly over Saudi Arabian

territory, it could be in due course a prime route to ship heavy bombers to the Soviet Union.[50] As the Secretary of War Henry Stimson acknowledged: 'The importance of securing an air route across Central Arabia lies in the fact that a direct route from Khartoum across Central Arabia to Basra, a point for delivery of aircraft ferried to the USSR is 713 miles shorter than the present route from Cairo, Lydda and Habbaniyah.' As a result, the distance of the Khartoum–Karachi route would be 'materially reduced' for supplies heading to the Far East theatre if an air route crossing over Saudi Arabia could be established.[51] If the US therefore desired air rights, Stimson was of the opinion that Anglo-American co-operation would be paramount. In April 1942, he let it be known to the State Department:

> It is felt that any agreement with the Government of Saudi Arabia for the installation, operation and defense of air staging fields in that country should be negotiated by the United Kingdom, and that the British Chiefs of staff should take the action to that end.[52]

Reflecting this clear territorial demarcation, Stimson recommended that the British chiefs of staff should map out specific air routes and prospects for airfields.[53] In the summer of 1942, no British military aircraft flew over Saudi Arabian soil, but instead kept to a flight path along the periphery of Saudi Arabia's northern border between Sharjah and Bahrain.[54] In February, concern over Axis submarines in the Indian Ocean had led the Admiralty to seek routes and landing fields from Jeddah to Kuwait and Basra. Again, the War Cabinet Chief of Staff Committee, put a stop to the idea, believing that it would put needless political pressure on Ibn Saud and risk the Kingdom's neutrality.[55]

Yet, from London's vantage point, the incentive of collaborating with the US on the air rights issue was threefold. First, on an economic level, the Americans would be more willing to lend a hand in Britain's constant struggle to obtain the dollar exchanges needed to purchase supplies.[56] The wartime economic restrictions of countries attached to the Sterling bloc, particularly the Government of India, had made it difficult for the Saudi Arabian government to obtain sovereign coins, driving up the general cost of living in the Kingdom. It was hoped that greater American involvement in Saudi Arabia's economic sphere might remedy the situation.[57] Secondly, in political terms, Britain profited from working closely with the US in Saudi Arabia. The State Department said it best, considering that it would

dispel the: 'unfair criticism that [the] British are using the country's present distress merely as a means of increasing political control over Arab countries.'[58] Lastly, and arguably the most important factor, the British in their approach to Saudi Arabia, looked to encourage, not deter American activity in the Middle East, registering that American influence would be, as Barry Rubin has attested, 'an inevitable feature of the postwar world'.[59] Therefore, the air rights issue turned into a litmus test, raising the question as to whether Anglo-American partnership in Saudi Arabia could be suitably enshrined to benefit the interests of both countries.

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Simon Davis has summed up the US government's dealings with the Kingdom during this time as demonstrating 'American inhibition'; the air routes issue proved otherwise.[60] In February 1942, the American minister to Saudi Arabia, Alexander Kirk sent a cable to the State Department from his post in Cairo. He stressed how the British taking the strategic initiative in Saudi Arabia resulted in the 'indirect protection to American interests'. Here in Saudi Arabia, Kirk advised that all future American aid should work in tandem with British efforts 'without affecting British leadership or complicating steps already taken'.[61]

Like the deliberations on defending the oil installations however, some of Kirk's colleagues, such as the Assistant Secretary of State Sumner Welles, became equally concerned about the ramifications of being lumped together with British actions that might be considered, at least inadvertently, imperial in tone. To place this within a wider context, the airfield question ran concurrently with the news that Corregidor had bravely surrendered after a four-month siege against an overwhelming Japanese force.[62] Even those American officials who were noted anglophiles like Karl Twitchell, were comfortable with making the point that the Philippines had held out longer than Singapore because of the latter's long-term resentment toward British colonialism.[63] With the anti-colonial zeitgeist in full swing, the dominant American view at the time saw the US in a better position to seek out air routes from the Saudis than an imperial power like Britain. At this time, Sumner Welles wrote Alexander Kirk about the pros and cons of accepting British assistance:

> In view of the important political factors which would undoubtedly occur to the Saudi Arabs in connection with a proposed British

> military establishment in their country, the question arises whether, if the plan for obtaining airfields is to have a reasonable chance of success, should it not be put forward and worked out purely and simply as a US project?[64]

Recognising British liabilities is not to deny, though, that a large segment of the State Department still sought to expand the scope of Anglo-American co-operation. For this kind of sensitive venture however, initial apprehension over a British involvement led the US to attempt to first strike out on its own.

Although he was now in charge of the American Agricultural Mission, Karl Twitchell continued to be a presence behind the scenes. This time, he was practicing his form of personal diplomacy in dealing with the air routes matter. Making no promises, he told members of the American Air-Corps Ferry Command (AACFC) based in Cairo that he could persuade Ibn Saud to permit an airfield to be constructed in the centre of the country, either in Riyadh or at Fort Duwadamie.[65] After meeting with him in February 1942, Twitchell made it known that the king was open to the idea of allowing the US to have air routes and construct airfields, but only as long as the Americans left the mechanical equipment behind as a 'present' to the Saudi Arabian government.[66]

Building on the foundations laid by Twitchell, that spring Alexander Kirk was given orders to ascertain whether Ibn Saud would grant the use of air routes and airfields in his country.[67] Arriving in Jeddah on 11 May 1942, Kirk originally came to open up a new permanent American legation, a signal to both Ibn Saud and London that Washington now took its engagement in Saudi Arabia seriously. There he met with the Saudi Arabian Finance Minister Shaikh Abdullah Sulaiman, who according to Kirk was ready to 'volunteer the statement that there was no objection to the flight of US planes over Saudi Arabia or even the establishment of an airport'.[68] At first, Kirk was pleased by Sulaiman's initial response, but then the American minister made the mistake of overstepping his charge. In a moment of candour, he let it slip that the crux of the air rights issue had to do with the 'speedy transfer of aircraft to points from which they could be used most effectively in striking against the forces of the Axis'.[69]

Earlier in the year, Karl Twitchell had warned the State Department that if the subject of air routes was broached in any other way than head on, the Saudis would feel dishonoured. By now, it was too late because

Kirk had erroneously delivered a mixed message. If Sulaiman heard Kirk correctly, the request for air routes for Allied supplies had morphed into the establishment of bases on Saudi Arabian soil for the purpose of launching attacks against Axis forces. This made Saudi Arabian officials reconsider the American request and its effect on their country's entire position of 'benevolent neutrality'. Indeed, shortly afterwards, Ibn Saud's son, Prince Faisal would complain to Kirk that American airfields located in Saudi Arabia meant for military usage 'might constitute an invitation for certain other countries to attack, a contingency which would be particularly serious in the case of countries unable to resist such aggression'.[70]

Two weeks later, Kirk met with Sulaiman once more, and after hearing about Faisal's earlier comments, the American minister's queries this time were more specific and equally less ambitious. Seeking the king's approval, Kirk asked if the US would be able: 'to fly planes non-stop across Saudi Arabia on specified routes from Khartoum to Basra and from Khartoum to Bahrain, avoiding the restricted area in the Hejaz.' Instead of air bases, the US government sought 'forced landing fields'. After his previous obfuscation, it is not surprising that Sulaiman was 'cordial', yet 'not particularly responsive' during his talks with Kirk. Without a concrete answer to his latest request from either Sulaiman or the king, Kirk, bewildered, returned to his post in Cairo empty-handed. Later, Kirk tried to explain away his clumsy handling of the situation, making an unconvincing case that other lesser issues like Riyadh's attempt to procure rice supplies from the government of India had 'occupied his [Ibn Saud's] mind to the exclusion of others'.[71] What we have here, once more, was a plan initially thought to activate a formal American presence in Saudi Arabia, while in the end only revealing the true limitations of American influence and the importance of British diplomatic assistance.

## Hugh Stonehewer-Bird and James Moose: Agents of Anglo-American Co-operation

Reflecting the fact that official American diplomatic or intelligence presence in the Kingdom scarcely existed, the US would come to depend on its wartime ally to gain access to air routes. To put it in greater perspective, all four of HMG's ambassadors to Saudi Arabia during World War II, namely Reader Bullard, Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, Stanley Jordan and

Laurence Grafftey-Smith – the 'last of the Dragomans' – had all served in the dominions of the former Ottoman Empire and had previously held diplomatic posts in Arabia, dating back as far as 1920.[72] Rather than viewing Britain's superior diplomacy as a threat, American officials would begin to use it as an asset. This point would be made visibly clear after James Moose took his post as the new American chargé d'affaires in Jeddah.

Following the recent American diplomatic failure, Moose dined at the British legation with Hugh Stonehewer-Bird. This was one of those informal occasions that allowed for frankness, and this kind of informality and openness brought results. The serious business of the push for air rights was discussed, and by the end of the evening the issue had been transformed into one that was Anglo-American in character.[73] Fluent in both Arabic and Farsi on top of possessing a photographic memory, James Moose – the highest-ranking American official on the ground – like Twitchell before him, became one of the unlikely architects of American policy in Saudi Arabia.[74] Moose's British colleague, Stonehewer-Bird was appointed HMG's minister to Saudi Arabia January 1940 and was in many respects the personification of British power in the Kingdom. As the State Department had noted, all assistance to Saudi Arabia was overseen by the British minister in Jeddah. In the eyes of Saudi Arabian officials, he was not just a diplomat, but the man who tightly controlled the purse strings of Britain's wartime subsidies.

Shortly after their dinner engagement, both men recommended to their superiors in London and Washington that a 'joint or parallel action by the American and British in Jeddah' would be fully commensurate with obtaining rights to Saudi Arabian air routes. In the opinion of James Moose, the earlier lukewarm response from Sulaiman was a result of a 'lack of British support at the outset'.[75] Appreciating the need for swift change to remedy the failure of the American financial aid package in 1941 along with the unresolved air routes issue, Moose grew increasingly convinced that the answer lay in the collective influence of both the British and American governments.

According to Aaron David Miller, American officials in 1942 'recognized the necessity of cooperating with Great Britain for the benefit of the allied cause', but he also claims that many officials 'became staunch advocates of safeguarding interests which they believed were more national in character'.[76] It can equally be argued that rather than seen as an impediment, the alliance with Britain in Saudi Arabia was the gateway that

went on to secure immediate American interests. With London already supplying Ibn Saud with monies, foodstuffs and other essentials, greater co-operation with the British on the air routes could repair the political damage caused by the Americans' mixed diplomatic efforts of the previous year. At this time in Cairo, at a higher policy making level, Alexander Kirk and Britain's Minister of State in the Middle East Richard Casey, both agreed that gaining access to air routes in Saudi Arabia called for a joint Anglo-American course of action.[77]

So on 25 July 1942, Stonehewer-Bird and Moose met with Sulaiman to ask that he inform Ibn Saud that the air routes were no longer an American request, but had become an Anglo-American necessity. Shortly thereafter, Stonehewer-Bird and Moose received a prompt answer from Sulaiman. This time, Ibn Saud would grant the request, giving permission for his 'friends', the *British*, to use non-stop trans-Arabian flights for the Khartoum and Basra supply route. If Britain did not object said Sulaiman, the Americans could also be included in the arrangement. Three days later under the 'desert moonlight', 17 km from Mecca, a setting described by the American chargé d'affaires as more 'worthy of conspirators, rather than of foreign service officers', Stonehewer-Bird and Moose convened once again with Sulaiman, who had his fellow minister, Nagib Sahla, with him.[78] The four men sought to clarify the extent to which the request made to the king over air routes had been conveyed as a joint Anglo-American venture, or whether it had in fact been presented as separate British and American requests. The Saudi Arabian officials became noticeably evasive. Sulaiman told Moose that the air-route issue was first brought to the attention of the king informally, but that it had not been taken seriously until it was regarded to be a joint Anglo-American request.[79]

Taking note of Ibn Saud's choice of words, 'his friends, the British', Moose naturally inferred that granting the British air routes was 'a manifestation of gratitude for past favors and for present assistance'.[80] That same month, London announced that for the upcoming year of 1943 subsidies would be raised to more than £4 million, which constituted close to 80 per cent of the Saudi Arabian government's yearly budget.[81] When it came to swaying Riyadh, one can easily see how British policies in Saudi Arabia at this stage would become a primer for American policy in the future. The Anglo-Saudi relationship said Moose, had not been built upon shared ideologies or even grand declarations, but rather grew to be an

affiliation that had from its earliest incarnation been rooted in a 'practical way'. To assure landing rights, Moose affirmed that to raise the US's profile in the Kingdom, it needed to once again offer greater financial assistance to Ibn Saud. In a nutshell, advising the NEA back in Washington, Moose wrote that the: 'the King would have liked some similar assistance from the American Government in order that he could then refer to "his friends, the Americans"'.[82] As will be laid out in the upcoming chapters, the US took this lesson to heart; a lesson that would have significant consequences on the Anglo-American relationship.

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The joint Anglo-American approach opened the door to acquiring air routes, but the complexities sewn into preserving Saudi Arabian neutrality would end up delaying it. Shaikh Sulaiman's obscure assurances had yet to come to fruition, forcing both Moose and Stonehewer-Bird to raise the subject this time with Minister of Foreign Affairs Shaikh Yussef Yassin. British and American officials of the period and historians alike regarded Yassin as a *provocateur*, sowing discord among the Americans, the British and Ibn Saud. James Moose, for one, considered Yassin to be a troublemaker, describing him as: 'obstructive [...] irritating [...] and often appears to create difficulties so he will be able to acquire merit in the King's eyes by solving them afterwards.'[83]

Although Yassin complicated matters the more he became involved in the air routes issue, as a member of Ibn Saud's Privy Council, it was within his purview to discuss the specifics of the Anglo-American plans. Yassin enquired how many planes were to be flown over Saudi Arabia? How far would they pass by and miss the Ikhwan settlements? Most importantly, how would the Anglo-American air routes affect Saudi Arabian neutrality once Axis propagandists came to know of them? These questions were all relevant when, during the summer of 1942, radio broadcasts from Berlin had ominously called attention to 'American activities' in Saudi Arabia. As a result, pro-Axis advisers among the king's own entourage, Khalid Al Gargani and Beshir, were kept out of the loop over the Allied air routes request.[84] With all of these risks at hand, Moose surmised that it was 'fairly closely to fact' that the mixed signals and delaying tactics being employed by Sulaiman and Yassin reflected the cautionary attitude of Ibn Saud.[85]

Finally, on 29 August 1942, the king assented to the Anglo-American request. Given his position as the 'Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques', Ibn Saud demanded 'utmost secrecy' for the air routes and held that flights must not 'prejudice their interests nor those of the Arabs'.[86] The Anglo-American flight path would have to avoid the 'Holy Land', not just Medina and Mecca, but also the larger area defined by Omar ibn Khattab, the Second Caliph, which stretched to the Nejd in the eastern part of the country. Explaining the reasons behind the government's cautious stance, Yassin made clear to both Moose and Stonehewer-Bird that the king had to balance the requirements of Britain and the US with the knowledge that: 'agitation and dismay would be created among Moslems both in Arabia and elsewhere if they were to learn that British or American planes, or both, were permitted to fly over Saudi Arabia.'[87] Hearing of this news back in Washington, Paul Alling fully agreed with the position of the cautious king, stating that it was best for the Allies to be 'out of sight, out of mind'.[88] As Saudi Arabia's neutrality underpinned the country's sovereignty, British and American officials along with Ibn Saud were at pains to protect it. No shortage of care was given when it came to ensuring that Allied activities in the Kingdom must remain clandestine.

In the end, the air routes over Saudi Arabia, including 'emergency landing rights', came into being on 6 October 1942. British and American aircraft were given permission to fly over northern and southern parts of Saudi Arabia, avoiding the Hedjaz. Elizabeth Monroe, who at the time worked in the Ministry of Information, later to emerge as one of the premier experts on the Middle East, stressed to the British Political Intelligence Department that: 'at Ibn Saud's request, this concession will not be made public: should the news leak out, he would be compelled to deny that he granted permission.'[89]

To ensure Riyadh's own plausible deniability, Yassin had earlier demanded assurances from Stonehewer-Bird and Moose that a public apology would be made if Allied aircraft violated Saudi air space.[90] To calm Saudi nerves, Stonehewer-Bird offered a plan that was imaginative and equally cunning. The British Ambassador wryly noted that if the national identity of the plane was obscured and unable to be seen, no protest would be necessary. If planes were clearly identified to be American, for example, Saudi Arabian officials could subsequently 'protest' to the British legation where they would then be informed

that no British planes were present and, vice versa, they would complain to the American legation if seeing British planes. What this seemingly anecdotal story – the use of disinformation to deny public knowledge of the air routes – perfectly captures is the extent to which Anglo-American co-operation was tied to Ibn Saud and the preservation of Saudi Arabia's neutrality.

After it had been made official that air routes had been acquired, Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, reporting to the Foreign Office spoke glowingly of Anglo-American co-operation because it 'demonstrated the wisdom of the joint action'.[91] The abiding lesson gained by this approach however might have been more fundamentally felt on the American side. Looking back over the sequence of events of the summer, Alexander Kirk expanded on the earlier assessment of his colleague James Moose. From Cairo, he cabled the State Department and explained the way in which British subsidies, totalling £3 million a year, had accounted for the disparity in British and American influence in Saudi Arabia. For the time being said Kirk, the Saudi Arabian government was left with a large deficit of £750,000 per year.[92] The chance that the British would raise their already generous subsidy was at any rate slim. Although British subsidies came indirectly from American Lend-Lease aid, what mattered most was that Saudi Arabian officials had still not been perceived it as *direct* American aid. Would filling the gap in Saudi Arabia's finances in 1943 make amends for the reneging of direct American aid in 1941?

Certainly British policy in Saudi Arabia made an impact on American thinking. British outcomes in 1941–3 had been a master class for the Americans, showing how London used money and influence to gain its political objectives, which were at this point still commensurate with Washington. Rather than taking the view of Britain as a competitor that needed to be outdone, Kirk advised that the US should simply bring more to the table if Anglo-American co-operation was going to fully ensure American interests.[93] His proposal presages one of the subject's most important episodes, the US and Britain searching to find a solution over how to share equally the subsidy earmarked for the Saudi Arabian government in 1944. During this interim period, when American policy makers were still working out the extent to which the US government should be involved in the affairs of Saudi Arabia, Washington still felt compelled to work closely with its wartime ally.

## Conclusion

This chapter has shown that in 1942, as World War II unfolded, issues that were rooted in Allied wartime strategy such as the protection of Saudi Arabia's oil fields and the acquisition of air routes were key developments in the formation of the Anglo-American relationship in the Kingdom. These relatively neglected episodes are illuminating because they underscore the importance of wartime exigency and highlight the fact that the US and Britain were in no way constant rivals in Saudi Arabia. Indeed, when it came to guarding the oilfields, rather than fighting over who would lead such a mission – a direct indication of hegemony – winning this particular competition meant *not* being the power in charge. In part, the explanation as to why the wartime alliance acted cautiously can be found in the apprehension that an Anglo-American military presence in Saudi Arabia would be perceived as an occupation, possibly jeopardising the credibility of the independence of the Al-Saud regime Maintaining the guise of Saudi Arabian neutrality also attached itself to the search for air routes over Saudi Arabia, an effort that was designed to open up Allied supply lines. More than anything, secrecy was required so there could be no conjecture that Ibn Saud was under the thumb of either the US or Britain. Indeed, there was a tendency in 1942 of the two powers being wary of any perceptions, no matter how little, that would indicate that they were steering Saudi Arabian politics, with this trend lasting throughout the war.

Although the subject of air routes and aviation matters would later be a cause of inter-allied tension, for the moment, the successful acquisition of Allied air routes showed the makings of the two powers working in tandem as allies.[94] The teamwork shown by Hugh Stonehewer-Bird and James Moose on the ground validated the view that a combined British and American diplomatic effort could ensure the foreign policy aims of both countries. In fact, the two men would set such a promising example of Anglo-American co-operation that Washington and London would go on to believe that a good rapport between British and American diplomats in Saudi Arabia could mitigate political or strategic differences, a notion that was not always found to be true as will be seen in the following chapters. Nevertheless, as instructive periods go, this was one of them. During this time, American officials witnessed first-hand how the authority of British diplomacy could function as a fast track

to gaining influence in Saudi Arabia. Conversely, from London's perspective, working side by side with the Americans had always been a wartime policy aim, but it now also allowed British officials to have a handle in the construction of US government's nascent policy in the Kingdom. By 1943 the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia, rather than being hampered by issues of national rivalry, was in fact a relationship of growing mutual co-operation.

# CHAPTER 4

# NAHAL: ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND IBN SAUD OUTSIDE SAUDI ARABIA, 1943

## Introduction

As soon as Britain had turned back the Germans and won the decisive Battle of El Alamein in November 1942, Ibn Saud sent a message to London 'offering [his] sincerest congratulations on the magnificent success of the Eighth Army'.[1] Churchill acknowledged the upswing in fortune in the following words: 'before Alamein we never had a victory, after Alamein we never had a defeat', but British power by the beginning of 1943 ultimately gave way to American muscle.[2] Indeed, the hierarchical complexion of Anglo-American relations over the past year had undergone a profound transformation. Powered by its unrivalled financial and material wealth, the US's war production now dwarfed that of friends and foes alike as it became the backbone of the Allied war effort. As Warren Kimball noted, in 1943, when British strategists relented to the US insistence of an Allied assault in Western Europe, the wartime alliance began to function squarely on 'American terms'.[3] For the rest of World War II, this gradual shift would also exhibit itself in Saudi Arabia even as the Anglo-American relations in the Kingdom were becoming more intertwined.

Reflecting the new assertiveness in American diplomacy, on 12 June 1943, the American Ambassador in London, John G. Winant informed Winston Churchill that Lieutenant Colonel Harold Hoskins would be sent to interview Ibn Saud to explore the possibility of a Jewish–Arab rapprochement in

Palestine.[4] The Hoskins Mission has been deemed relevant to the history of the Arab–Israeli conflict, but its significance to Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia at this time has largely been lost on historians.[5]

Although starting out as an American idea, the Hoskins Mission quickly transformed into an Anglo-American initiative in part because both American and British policies in Palestine were languishing. Plans for using Ibn Saud as a broker to address the Palestinian question engendered many anxious moments for the allies, but rather than dividing the US and Britain along nationalistic lines, the issue caused internal divisions only within the respective governments. Those in the highest echelons of power, the White House and Downing Street respectively, shared a set of similar assumptions and endorsed the mission, while the branches of the State Department and Foreign Office that monitored Saudi Arabia on an everyday basis remained highly sceptical.

In the end, the Hoskins Mission failed in its main objective: attempting to reach a solution to the Palestine question with Saudi Arabia's help. The sceptics were proven correct recognising the overriding paradox that had always been fixed to the notion of Ibn Saud's 'benevolent neutrality'. It brings us to the critical question of whether it was possible for the Saudi Arabian king to preserve his political credibility as an independent Arab leader if pressed into action as some sort of Anglo-American proconsul. The episode re-underlines that Ibn Saud's influence in World War II could at times be enigmatic, most persuasive by its absence. This influence demonstrated its full potential only when it appeared to be free of British and American interference. This chapter analyses the Hoskins Mission to show once more that one needs to look beyond the Kingdom's borders to gain a fuller appreciation of the way in which the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia operated.

## Ibn Saud as Anglo-American Proconsul in Palestine

When 250,415 German and Italian soldiers laid down their arms on 12 May 1943 at the Battle of Tunis, a new dawn was imminent. World War II was changing and with it the arc of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. For the first time since 1939, the defence of the Middle East became a secondary matter for British and American policy makers who now were afforded space to turn their attention to the longstanding political tribulations that afflicted the region.[6] Bearing this in mind, as World

War II entered its fifth calendar year, not everything had changed. Ibn Saud continued to give his tacit assistance to British and American wartime objectives, but it raised the question as to whether the Saudi Arabian king could go a step further, to help solve one of the Allies' most wearisome puzzles; Palestine. A certain amount of gallows humour hung in the air among British and American officialdom in dealing with the issue. Harry Eyres of the Foreign Office's Near East Department (NED) remarked that in Palestine his American colleagues at the State Department were 'just hoping that in course of time something will turn up to solve the Jewish–Arab problem [...] not unlike HMG'.[7] On the other side of the Atlantic, in May 1943, even a staunch Anglophobe like General Patrick Hurley could inform President Roosevelt in good faith that the US and Great Britain had 'kindred problems' in the Middle East, and that both countries must 'come together and share equally in the final decision for or against the establishment of a Jewish Political state'.[8] Once again John Bull and Uncle Sam were 'mixed up together', but this time they found themselves entangled in the Gordian knot that is still intact more than 70 years later.

The British government, which had dealt directly with Palestine since the days of Palmerston, still adhered to the controversial White Paper of May 1939, a measure designed to appeal to Britain's imperial interests in the Arab world.[9] In this context, Palestine functioned for London as a strategic lynchpin, geared to protect, in the words of the Commanders-in-Chief Committee in the Middle East: 'the maintenance of sea, land and air communications throughout the Middle East and the safeguarding of our oil supplies which are vital to the British Empire.'[10] British rule in Palestine, which in the days of Allenby's triumphant entrance into the Holy City in 1917 was a force to be reckoned with, had however devolved into a rule that, by 1943, lacked conviction.[11] The historian D.K. Fieldhouse noted years later that the Mandate was 'arguably [...] the greatest failure in the whole history of British imperial rule'.[12] The violent combination of Zionist extremism in Palestine during the 1940s and the Arab Revolt in the previous decade had struck at the heart Britain's will to rule as a Great Power.[13]

From the American standpoint, Evan M. Wilson, a State Department official who served in Egypt during World War II, recalled that 1943 was the first year that the US truly 'adopted a definite line of policy' in Palestine.[14] Up to that point, American policy dwelled largely in the shadows, sometimes critical of British policy, but never intending to take on the burden of mandatory leadership in Palestine.[15] After the highly

publicised Biltmore Conference (9–11 May 1942), in which Zionists delegates demanded a 'Jewish Commonwealth' in Palestine, the fulcrum of worldwide Zionist activity swung from London to New York, and by doing so, Washington's involvement in the issue grew.[16] Returning from his diplomatic visit to the Middle East in 1943, which included a stop in Saudi Arabia, Roosevelt's special envoy, Patrick Hurley, warned the president that because of the Zionists' growing network of support in the US, the Arab populations had turned against Americans since there was a 'well defined opinion prevailing that the US, and not Great Britain, is insisting on establishing a sovereign Jewish state'.[17]

The historian Philip Baram has gone as far as to assert that at this stage in World War II, Ibn Saud was 'probably *the* major reason' for the State Department's coolness towards Zionism with respect to Palestine.[18] Indeed, Arab resentment was a little known quality in the US. It only truly acquired a human face once Ibn Saud cabled the president to voice his displeasure about Zionist political activities taking place there. On 26 May 1943, Roosevelt responded to Ibn Saud's concerns, outlining to him the highly interpretive 'full consultation formula', which stated 'that no decision altering the basic situation of Palestine should be reached without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews'.[19] Believing that Ibn Saud's influence reached Palestine, this message marked the real beginning of the president treating the Saudi king as an intermediary to communicate his views with the rest of Arab world.[20]

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The scholars Samuel Halperin and Irvin Oder have asserted that: 'for a time during 1939–1943, Ibn Saud was *the* key figure in a plan which seemed to offer the possibility of a negotiated settlement [in Palestine].'[21] The origins of the idea to capitalise on Ibn Saud's political influence had been the brainchild of none other than the king's close advisor, the controversial Briton, St John Philby. In October 1939, Philby told Chaim Weizmann – the president of the World Zionist Organization – that for the princely sum of £20 million provided by British, American, or Jewish sources, the king of Saudi Arabia would in return actively favour a Jewish state in Palestine, including the relocation of the Arab population to neighbouring Arab states.[22] Philby had conveyed to Weizmann that a solution in Palestine 'could be achieved under Ibn Saud alone'.[23] In the end, this plan never came to fruition, and scholars have since contested whether Ibn Saud

was ever made aware of the substance of Philby's actions and his discussions with Weizmann.[24] Shortly after this exchange, due to his increasingly strident anti-British sympathies, Philby became *persona non grata* in Saudi Arabia.[25] Still, Philby's efforts were soon followed up by those of the American oilman James Moffett, who put forward a similar plan in April 1941, this time in person to President Roosevelt. As covered in Chapter 2, in return for helping to subsidise the faltering Saudi Arabian economy, Moffett hinted that the king would willingly assent to a future Jewish State in Palestine.

There were British and American authorities at the time who thought quite the opposite. As far back as June 1938, Reader Bullard in his position as British minister in Jeddah had been unequivocal in his view 'that no bribe would buy the support of Ibn Saud for the proposal to partition Palestine'.[26] Also joining the chorus was the Undersecretary of State, Adolf Berle, and the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) chief, Wallace Murray, who believed that Moffett's *quid pro quo*, had been reckless from the beginning, bound only to stir up trouble. Murray later claimed that placing Ibn Saud at the front of a firestorm issue like Palestine would be a major political blunder. The king, said Murray, would 'lose face with his co-religionists in the neighbouring Arab countries'.[27] Although the schemes proposed by Philby and Moffett were ill-conceived, as ideas they curiously died hard. They held a degree of currency in part because such plans exposed the ethnocentric prejudices of the time. There existed a widespread belief that 'Oriental' potentates like Ibn Saud were far more susceptible to the lure of *Baksheesh*; a bribe.[28] Surely, to some degree Ibn Saud's position of 'benevolent neutrality' towards the Allies had materialised on a similar basis; subsidies swapped for political support. In view of this, the rationale went – that for the right price – the Desert King might consent to Jewish migration to Palestine.[29]

Examples of this perception remained a prevalent force such as when on 3 March 1943, leading Zionists figures, including Moshe Shertok (also known as Moshe Sharett, the future second prime minister of Israel) and Chaim Weizmann met with NEA officials in Washington.[30] Shertok summed up the view of his Jewish colleague, stating that he believed Ibn Saud to be the 'most important Arab alive' and that it should therefore at least be explored if the king would be interested in such an arrangement that mirrored Philby and Moffett's earlier ploys.[31]

The NEA however continued to have little faith in the plan. Parachuting Ibn Saud into the welter of Palestine came with great hazard and was

perhaps best encapsulated by officials stationed in Jeddah. Harold Shullaw, the chargé d'affaires, claimed that the three pillars of Ibn Saud's rule could be traced back to Islam, Arabism and his friendship with the British government. The first two pillars, stated Shullaw, would always trump the attachment to the British. Moreover, if he was to be regarded as the talisman of the Arab world, Ibn Saud could never agree to the establishment of a Jewish-controlled state in Palestine.[32] The American Minister to Saudi Arabia James Moose also sent a strongly worded cable to Washington, warning that if such a proposal came into being: 'the King will not be happy to have to choose between prejudicing his position in the Moslem world or [*sic*] refusing the proposals of his friends.'[33]

Regardless of their astute analysis, NEA officials would be kept out of the decision making process that summer. In June 1943, Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles met with Weizmann to tell him that the White House favoured the idea of working with Ibn Saud.[34] According to Welles, the president felt that Ibn Saud was 'purchasable'.[35] Hooked on the idea, later that same month, Roosevelt ordered Welles to 'prepare the ground', for the plan as long as it had the full consent of Winston Churchill.[36] As the First Lord of the Admiralty in 1939, Churchill had been made aware of the Philby proposal through his close relationship with Weizmann, a relationship dating back to World War I.[37] On his trip to Washington that spring, Weizmann inferred that involving Ibn Saud had behind-the-scenes support from London, to the point where the State Department referred to the plan as 'Mr. Churchill's idea'.[38] Like Roosevelt, Churchill had recognised that for domestic audiences, Zionism came with widespread political appeal.[39] Welles, therefore, cabled a message to Winant in London, communicating to him that: 'the President believes that the time has come when an approach should be made to Ibn Saud with a view to seeing whether any basis for a settlement can be found.'[40] On 7 June 1943, President Roosevelt wrote a personal letter to Ibn Saud, which included instructions for Lieutenant Colonel Harold Hoskins to discuss 'in my name certain specific matters of mutual interest'.[41]

## Harold Hoskins and Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia

In the long line of Roosevelt's own personal diplomatic envoys, like many of them Harold Boies Hoskins did not typify the conventional 'grey suits'

at the State Department.[42] Born and raised in Beirut to Presbyterian missionary parents, he came from a stock of Americans, who according to Von Joseph L. Grabill believed that the US government had a duty to 'organize [...] the old world'.[43] Speaking Arabic fluently, Hoskins had served as a Middle East expert at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. In 1941, Hoskins was sent on a fact-finding mission to the Middle East on behalf of the Office of War Information (OWI) to survey Arab attitudes toward the war.[44] The following year, he topped these activities by meeting first-hand with British officials in Cairo to discuss ways to better co-ordinate OSS-SOE operations in the region.[45] Independently wealthy and already flanked by his close friendships with Roosevelt and Sumner Welles, Hoskins felt at home within the elite circles of American power. Through these personal relationships, he managed to serve as the department liaison to the White House and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Although he was a de facto non-careerist Foreign Service Officer (FSO), Hoskins reputedly tired easily of what he perceived to be the timidity of some of his NEA colleagues. Nevertheless 'in terms of status, long-term influence, and intensity of personal involvement', observed the scholar Philip Baram, Hoskins was at the centre of forging American policy in the Middle East.[46]

On 14 June 1943, Anthony Eden informed Ambassador John Winant that although the British government was 'naturally anxious not to awaken wide public controversy', the very fact that President Roosevelt fully supported the mission meant that it had 'not the slightest objection [...] to send Lieutenant Colonel Hoskins to see Ibn Saud'.[47] The views of Eden's colleagues at the Colonial Office were similar to those of the former Chief Secretary to the Government of Palestine William Battershill, who opined that: 'if any American is to visit Ibn Saud for the purpose of discussing the Palestine problem with him I should think Colonel Hoskins is as good a choice as can be made.'[48] In his comprehensive *The Department of State in the Middle East: 1919–1945*, Baram stresses the Anglophobic bias of American officials including Hoskins who he characterises as 'anti-British', but at the time, his British counterparts thought otherwise.[49] After meeting Hoskins in Cairo during his earlier mission to the Middle East in 1942, British Minister of State Richard Casey reported that he 'made a good impression on me and showed every sign of wishing to co-operate'.[50] Months later in March 1943, a Foreign Office report described Hoskins no less a 'high minded Arabophile, fundamentally friendly and *not* anti-British'.[51] What troubled Hoskins the most was not his

relationship with British authorities in this context, but misgivings about his own mission.

Interestingly, Roosevelt had selected an envoy who felt that Ibn Saud had a limited role to play in Palestine. Placing the king in front of public scrutiny in such a fashion, Hoskins this time echoed the previous points made by his NEA colleagues. He felt that his mission ran the risk of showing Ibn Saud as an arcane Arab chieftain out of step with the modern world.[52] In this respect, Hoskins' thinking echoed British doubts. The head of the Foreign Office's NED, C.W. Baxter, opined:

> Ibn Saud should be kept completely out of all Mediterranean problems since he was not profoundly interested in them and did not get on particularly well with the Jewish State and would only complicate matters by allowing himself to be drawn in. He was getting on very amicably at the moment with his both British and American officials and nothing should be done to upset his happy arrangement.[53]

Since backing away from the recommendations of the 1936–7 Peel Commission, a trend in British policy making had been to craft a pro-Arab policy in Palestine precisely to bolster Britain's imperial position in the Middle East. This would be accomplished mainly by winning the friendship of Arab leaders like Ibn Saud.[54] Now the British authorities were beholden to backing a plan that would invite the Saudi Arabian king to endorse a policy that was overtly pro-Zionist. Moreover, it also meant that London would have to deal with a chorus of protests coming from their Hashemite allies in Jordan and Iraq, who would never accede to a Saudi-led Palestinian solution on behalf of all Arabs.[55] No doubt the British authorities were anxious to reach a lasting settlement in Palestine, but as Colonial Secretary Oliver Stanley insisted, there were limits. It was a mistake, claimed Stanley, for the British government to 'press' Ibn Saud to 'do anything which might make it more difficult for him to retain the prestige and respect which he now enjoys in the Arab World'.[56] Taking into consideration however the need to promote Anglo-American unity, the Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden reluctantly accepted the Hoskins Mission, but only as long it adhered to two specific corollaries. The first was that 'no suggestions involving territorial alterations in other Arab countries should be put forward to him [Ibn Saud]'. The second and final point was that 'his

conversations should be purely exploratory in nature and should not in any way prejudice the interests of other Arab countries; and the visit should be carried out as unobtrusively as possible.'[57]

What would however in the end prove to be the greatest roadblock of transforming Ibn Saud into an Allied proconsul was the not so small matter of the king's own strong conviction about Palestine. As early as May 1941 Sir Vivian Gabriel, former intelligence officer in the Middle East, British Air Mission representative and British attaché in Washington DC, had warned that Chaim Weizmann's Zionist politicking in the US was causing 'unfortunate repercussions' in Saudi Arabia with Ibn Saud.[58] In 1943, when *Life Magazine* published an extensive profile on Ibn Saud, it seemed to validate the king's arrival on the international stage, but the primary gist of the article had been his public condemnation over the Allied treatment of Palestine.[59] British officials had already received a disturbing report in 1943 compiled by Saudi officials revealing that the king had shared with the American envoy Patrick Hurley that he 'hated Jews more than anyone'.[60] His complete opposition to Zionism was a prominent aspect of Ibn Saud's own iconography, something that for those who were pushing for Hoskins' mission seemed to have clearly underestimated. As the British Foreign Office official R.M.A Hankey would bluntly point out afterwards: 'Anyone who thinks Ibn Saud will look at this hair brained scheme after what he has said about it [Palestine] must be quite cracked.'[61] Needless to say, once again, the US and British governments were forced to confront the obvious ambiguities of Ibn Saud's influence. Paradoxically, the political prestige that resulted from his position as independent Arab statesman and defender of Islam were the very aspects of Ibn Saud's private and public feelings and image that prevented him from taking on the role that the White House and Downing Street had envisioned for him in Palestine.

The political atmosphere surrounding Palestine was intense ahead of Hoskins' meeting with Ibn Saud in July 1943. Zionist pressure in the US went so far as to put a stop to a joint Anglo-American statement on Palestine, which was meant to further elaborate on President Roosevelt's 'full consultation' formula.[62] The fear that the US government had become too conflated with Zionist interests was at this time expressed by the British High Commissioner in Palestine, Sir Harold MacMichael. He cautioned that it would be 'undesirable that any member of the British Legation should

accompany him [Hoskins] to Riyadh, or interpret at his audiences, and that the presence of a British official would associate HMG so closely with what is intended to be a purely American initiative'.[63]

Nephew of Lord Curzon, MacMichael's expertise lay in British rule in Anglo-Sudan, which may explain why his personal history made him all the more overly concerned about the implications of the Hoskins Mission on Britain's informal empire in the Middle East.[64] All the same, MacMichael concerns were noted, but went unheeded. London instructed him to work with the Americans and to do 'everything possible to facilitate Colonel Hoskins' mission'.[65] From this point of view, a larger balance sheet was considered by British officials, measuring Allied solidarity against issues that added up in Saudi Arabia to quite a few concerns that had wider ramifications throughout the Middle East. What must be remembered however is that despite MacMichael's protestations and Britain's understandable apprehension, the Hoskins' inquiry built upon the course that had been set for the allies' relationship in Saudi Arabia. It would be undertaken as a joint effort, a stratagem that involved Anglo-American co-action.

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Arriving in Saudi Arabia in the beginning of August, Harold Hoskins was left with the difficult task of arranging a meeting between Ibn Saud and Chaim Weizmann, or a high ranking representative of the Jewish Agency.[66] In a display of Anglo-American unity, the British legation's best Arabist, John Wall, helped Hoskins with drafting the American envoy's controversial request. The Hoskins mission once reaching Saudi Arabia converted into a dual Anglo-American effort, despite the level of disquietude in both the lower strata of the State Department and the Foreign Office. Presented to the Saudi Arabian king on 11 August 1943, the letter drawn up by Hoskins and Wall stated that both the British and the American government's policy concerning Palestine was 'to postpone as far as possible until the Axis has been defeated [...] the many territorial boundary problems that exist' and that the 'most pressing objective is to win the war'.[67] To limit the possible offence caused by any suggestion that Ibn Saud had any knowledge of the Philby Plan, Hoskins let it be known that *both* 'Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt would be derelict in their duties if they overlooked any plan [...] before the end of the war to a friendly and peaceful solution of the Palestine problem'.[68]

Coming as no surprise to Hoskins, when he spoke to Ibn Saud face to face without an interpreter, the king let it be known to the American envoy that any scheme reminiscent of the Philby plan of 1939, would be considered a 'criminal affront' that would make him a 'traitor against [his] religion and country'.[69] The notion of assuming the mantle of Caliphate in the context of World War II geopolitics meant little to Ibn Saud; what he described as 'a loud voice with an empty belly'.[70] Instead of discussing Palestine, Ibn Saud shifted the topic to more local matters, ones that he believed to be of greater importance. These included how the US and Britain intended to address Saudi Arabia's currency troubles and boost the government's wayward income from the Hajj.[71] Enlisting the influence of Ibn Saud for the purpose of forwarding Allied interests evidently had its limits. Hoskins was correct in thinking that Ibn Saud would be unwilling to trade in his political legitimacy for an ill-conceived Anglo-American gambit that might possibly sow the seeds of his own downfall. In this respect, one gets the sense that Hoskins' principal motive for trekking all the way to Saudi Arabia was to confirm his own shrewd assessment of the situation. After returning home from a mission, Hoskins emphatically wrote to his colleagues at the State Department on 31 August 1943: 'I am convinced that there never was any possibility of acceptance [of the plan] and there is none today.'[72]

On the topic of Anglo-American relations, the lesson drawn from the mission by Hoskins was that it confirmed to him once more that in the Middle East, far from usurping Britain as the premier regional power, the US would at least for the foreseeable future need to depend on its wartime ally. On his return from Saudi Arabia in September, Hoskins made several recommendations regarding these plans to the president.[73] Regardless of his mission's failure, Hoskins wanted to make clear to Roosevelt that no country possessed the experience or the administrators 'required to handle the exceptionally difficult job of governing Palestine' quite like the British government.[74] When it came to drawing up policy involving individual Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Hoskins stressed that the US should emulate the actions taken by British authorities. The Kingdom, according to Hoskins, should be viewed through a regional prism, taking into account 'Muslim attitudes in neighbouring Middle Eastern states as well as North Africa, India and even Russia and China'.[75] Although America's power had risen during the war, Hoskins' final piece of advice emphasised Britain's amassed experience in the region and the

two countries' strategic interdependence, leading him to recommend that the US should seek an 'agreement on joint Anglo-American policy to be applied in [the] Middle East'.[76]

Later that same year in November 1943, Hoskins would again cross the Atlantic to meet with key members of the British policy making establishment in London.[77] He first had a prickly parley with the Undersecretary of State for the Foreign Office Sir Maurice Peterson, discussing the former's meeting with Ibn Saud. Peterson informed Hoskins that 'HMG certainly had no wish to contest the American desire to play a greater part than hitherto in the Middle East', but he had also made it very clear that the US would be venturing into a territory of the world that was unmistakably a British domain.[78] In the Middle East, Peterson asserted that there was 'already a political regime in that part of the world built by HMG'. Peterson continued: 'it had worked well during the war except for the Iraqi revolt [...] we would not wish to scrap it.'[79] For Peterson however, the trouble of Hoskins' mission was that it epitomised the dilettantism hovering over Washington's Middle East policies. He was annoyed at the way in which the Americans were putting pressure on British authorities to allow more Jewish immigration into Palestine, while at the same time preparing to equip Ibn Saud with arms, which might eventually be recycled for 'cutting Jewish and British throats in Palestine'.[80] Although there was no evidence that weapons purchased by American aid were being funnelled into Palestine from Saudi Arabia, Peterson's acerbic comments illustrate how wrestling over the question of Ibn Saud's regional influence could quickly lead to discord between the two wartime allies.

Hoskins did not completely disagree with his British counterpart. He was painfully aware of the fact that the hasty and misguided attempt to insert Ibn Saud into the Palestine equation had been the cause of some friction between the two allies. Even though a majority of British officials were however sceptical of the mission, the members of HMG that Hoskins met with were nonetheless enthusiastic about the possibilities of greater Anglo-American co-operation.

There was a growing realisation that crisis points such as Palestine drained British resources and could no longer be put aside by endless royal commissions. What was needed was further American participation to shore up Britain's flagging regional power. Hoskins went on to have a friendly exchange with Richard Law, Minister of State and Churchill's

Parliamentary Private Secretary, who afterwards spoke for many British officials at the time, when he told the prime minister that: 'it would be a tremendous advantage to us to invoke the Americans as association in our policy towards Palestine.'[81] Another British official, Colonial Secretary Oliver Stanley, consoled Hoskins, telling him that the 'plan of using Ibn Saud was one that had come from the prime minister' and his mission had been useful in that it finally 'cleared up the matter'.[82] Before heading back to the US, Hoskins was able to meet with Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary. It gave him the chance to explain that in respect to the Anglo-American relationship in the Middle East, American activities in the region could be thought of in terms of 'a junior partnership, but definitely of a partnership'.[83] In the larger context, the lasting effect of the Hoskins Mission had shown British and American policy makers that working in concert, be it Palestine or in Saudi Arabia, held the promise of promoting the long-term national interests of both parties. As will be seen in the upcoming chapters, Saudi Arabia therefore progressively became a sketch for an Anglo-American diplomatic approach coming to realisation in the Middle East.

## Conclusion

The story of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia cannot be fully told without investigating the Hoskins Mission and the proposal to place Ibn Saud at the heart of the Palestine problem.[84] There are three key observations that can be made about this episode, which help explain more fully how the wartime alliance operated in the Kingdom. First, the Hoskins Mission shows the extent to which the conduct of the wartime alliance with regard to Ibn Saud was interwoven with Allied interests that stretched well beyond the Kingdom. The second important observation to take from the Mission was that Ibn Saud's prestige and persona carried only so much weight. The Hoskins Mission exposed the enigma of Saudi Arabia's 'benevolent neutrality'. Asking the king, whom the journalist Drew Pearson described in 1943 as the 'most powerful of the Arabs', to support the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine under a cagey *quid pro quo* would have forced Ibn Saud into an untenable political position.[85] On a policy making level, the Foreign Office and the State Department shared a similar view. Involving the king in such a daring scheme would only succeed in jeopardising regional stability. Certainly, Ibn Saud had a political role to

play in the region, but Arab arbiter over Palestine was not one of them. From this perspective, seeking to exert the extraterritorial influence of Ibn Saud, which had originally drawn the two powers to Saudi Arabia, in reality turned out to be decidedly double-edged.

The third and final point is that although the Hoskins Mission failed to solve the political crisis in Palestine, what it did was to underscore the interdependent facets of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. As the US rose from its junior partner status, relations between the two wartime allies in Saudi Arabia were however becoming more formalised, and also more complex. Following the military victories that had largely swept away the Axis threat in the Middle East, Britain and the US now had to jointly construct a bilateral partnership without the rallying point that comes with wartime exigency. The next chapter analyses Anglo-American relations inside the Kingdom in the context of this change and will examine conditions on the ground, where British and American officials faced the sizeable challenge of constructing a partnership that balanced the separate national interests of the two countries.

# CHAPTER 5

# SHIFTING SANDS: ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS INSIDE SAUDI ARABIA, 1943–4

## Introduction

As we have seen, the initial stages of the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia had been built largely on wartime exigency and the need to procure the influence of Ibn Saud. Having done so, by 1943 clear issues began to emerge that would also raise questions of whether Britain and the US were beset by hegemonic rivalry. This chapter starts out by examining what one scholar has labelled Washington's 'crude diplomacy', a set of initiatives designed to consolidate American oil interests in the Kingdom and its impact on Anglo-American relations. The combination of the US decision to grant Lend-Lease aid to Saudi Arabia and to establish the Petroleum Reserves Corporation (PRC) at different points of time strained relations between the two allies. Comparatively however, British and American officials only lightly skirmished, while American officials in Washington and the American oil industry were engaged in a full-blown battle over the issue of Saudi Arabian oil. In fact, contrary to conventional wisdom, government authorities in Washington and London were largely united in their belief that it took close collaboration to bring order to the 'frontier' that was the Middle East oil bonanza.[1] The truth is that, despite its reputation, Saudi Arabian oil would be instrumental in bringing about the ambitious Anglo-American Oil Agreement in the summer of 1944, a measure calling for the co-ordination of British and American oil policies throughout the region.

Taking a far greater toll overall, was the far more prolonged Anglo-American debate over how to repair Saudi Arabia's broken finances. British and American officials had been trying to answer this pressing question since 1941, and over the elapsed time debate had grown progressively more heated. With the danger that the Axis posed having abated in the region, the time had now come for action, and both parties were committed to implementing a plan to address the problem in earnest. Both powers agreed that the Saudi Arabian government needed to first mend its currency system, except that the thornier question of who would oversee these reforms lingered. Another economic concern that was interrelated, was the fact that the British, who had been the major provider of wartime subsidies, were now sensing that the expansion of largesse had inadvertently been undermining the stability of Ibn Saud's sovereign rule.

The newly appointed British minister in Jeddah, Stanley Jordan, came out strongly against raising subsidies. He argued that they had mutated into something more corrosive, and that Saudi Arabian officers perceived Britain and the US as nothing more than 'milch cows'.[2] Acknowledging the merits of the British arguments over subsidies, the Americans came away with a dramatically different conclusion. On balance, they thought that the subsidies were effective because they benefited the Kingdom's current economic conditions, and more importantly, contributed to cementing Saudi–American relations moving forward. Although the subsidy question would remain a source of tension, in the summer of 1944, Britain and the US took steps to further meld their policies by finding a joint 50–50 agreement in which each country would come to terms acceptable to both parties, and equally provide subsidies to the Kingdom.

The subject of oil and Saudi Arabia's finances to some degree sowed the seeds of disharmony, but there is a question that historians have yet to sufficiently acknowledge or address. Why were British and American officials at this moment able to overcome these schisms? Well for one thing, the timing saw the wartime alliance, in the words of Warren Kimball, in a state of 'suspended animation' in the spring of 1944. On the eve of Operation Overlord, reconciling differences between the two powers became something of a vocation.[3] This was a period when US official, Harley Notter of the Division of Special Research, delivered blueprints for a permanent Anglo-American military alliance.[4] It was during this time too, that Whitehall was laying out the 'Essentials of an American policy', which carefully spelled out how the 'the Special Relationship' would be a leading

pillar with respect to Britain's postwar foreign policy.[5] This mandate for co-operation can be seen in such bilateral efforts as the Stettinius Mission and the Anglo-American oil talks in April and May that year, which would end up bearing strongly on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia.

The Kingdom was still eyed as an anchor for greater regional co-operation between Britain and the US. Whereas interpersonal relationships had once been a strongpoint of Anglo-American collaboration in Saudi Arabia, highly placed officials acknowledged that the 'lack of liaison' witnessed on the ground in Jeddah, specifically between Stanley Jordan and James Moose, needed to be ironed out. A legitimate concern had emerged on both sides of the Atlantic that the disagreements between Britain and the US sprang – not from an incompatibility of ideology or interests – but rather had to do with a clash of personalities; a reality that forces one to rethink the conception of Saudi Arabia as strictly a playing field for competing Anglo-American interests.

## Anglo-American Relations, the US and Saudi Arabian Oil

To come to grips with how Saudi Arabia's oil reserves impacted Anglo-American relations, one must first look to the events of 18 February 1943. On that day, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8926, which declared that Saudi Arabia was eligible for Lend-Lease.[6] Earlier, concerned with preserving the neutrality of the US as well as Saudi Arabia, Washington had withheld Lend-Lease aid in 1941, a decision made easier by the fact that Britain continued to subsidise Ibn Saud to keep the king inside the Allied fold. By 1943 however, the previous calculus had dramatically altered. The US had been now fighting as a belligerent power on a global scale for more than a year. This is where the Kingdom fitted into a framework of policy outlined by a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) report from that year. It stressed that the US primary objective was: 'to conduct a strategic offensive against the Axis in European-Mediterranean Theatre, employing the maximum forces consistent with maintaining and extending unremitting pressure against Japan.'[7] Taken from this view, Admiral William Leahy, Chief of Staff to President Roosevelt, observed in 1943 that in the future, Saudi Arabia would be 'practically essential to any successful [military] campaign by the Americans' in that he foresaw it as a kind of way station that would allow for the conveyance of troops and

materiel, while its oil installations provided a safeguard against fuel shortages.[8]

In this respect, as World War II pressed on, American policy makers worried that wartime oil consumption had unalterably reduced the country's domestic reserves. By 1943, the US incredibly accounted for roughly 70 per cent of the world's oil output. 'It require[d] four to five tons of petroleum to drop one ton of bombs on Berlin', proclaimed the Truman Committee, an influential Senatorial body that investigated waste in the US war effort. Looking towards the postwar world, in peacetime, the average American consumed thirty times as much petroleum as the world average, six times as much as an average Briton and nine times as much as the average Russian.[9] In May 1943, a memorandum prepared by the Department of the Navy for the JCS caused alarm by announcing that the proven oil reserves of the US were only 20 billion (42 gallon) barrels and dwindling at a rate faster than new sources were being found.[10] As early as January 1941, British officials in London began to take note of the 'heavy strain imposed by the very high level of U.S.A consumption', holding it to be imperative that its wartime ally start developing the 'high promise of the petroliferous areas in the Middle East'.[11]

In June of 1943, the Roosevelt Administration established the PRC, which was to be chaired by the Secretary of the Interior and Petroleum Administrator, Harold Ickes. In many respects, by creating the PRC, the US emulated the so-called 'British model'.[12] Ever since the British government had become the majority stakeholder of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1913, London had openly owned direct interests in oil companies and provided them with diplomatic and military support.[13] Emphasising the importance of state control, the PRC's first order of business would be to secure oil resources outside the continental US. Given that the proven oil reserves in Saudi Arabia at this time were estimated to be in excess of 22 billion barrels, and that an American company, California-Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC), held the concession, the PRC's attention quickly turned to the oil situation in the Kingdom.[14]

Leading up to the announcement of the PRC, the dominant question in Washington can be summed up by Max Thornburg, who was serving as a special consultant on 'oil matters' for the State Department. Writing to his colleague Herbert Feis, chairman of the Committee on International Petroleum Policy (CIPP), Thornburg noted: 'Our facts tell us that if we recognise a national interest in Saudi Arabia's oil development, we

ourselves need to see to its well being – through the British if they wish – otherwise despite them.'[15] With wartime considerations ensuring the close alliance of the two powers, the Anglo-American War Planning Group (AAWPG), which included the JCS, approved a scheme to construct an oil refinery in Saudi Arabia. Its purpose was to produce 130 octane aviation fuels 'based on anticipation of military supply needs in the Southwest Pacific'.[16] In addition, the Foreign Office at the time also appreciated the strategic value of CASOC 'whose operations are in themselves of some importance to the war effort'.[17]

With this wartime dimension at play, most American authorities dealing with the Saudi Arabian oil issue did not view the British as a menacing presence lurking the shadows. Speaking with a group of senators in Washington, Cordell Hull confirmed that even the management at CASOC never truly 'intimated [. . .] that they feared the British were trying to steal the concession in that territory'.[18] Herbert Feis, an American official who arguably kept an eye on the issue closer than anyone during World War II, understood that the accusations that Britain was trying to usurp American oil concessions in Saudi Arabia were built on sensationalism and were in reality entirely 'baseless'.[19] Indeed, much of the 'deliberation in Washington surrounding the PRC at this time, according to him had been 'to get [the] correct public presentation in the eyes particularly of the British [Government]', so as not to upset the US's closest wartime ally.[20]

Still, there continued to be a group of American officials who harboured doubts regarding British intentions in Saudi Arabia. No American figure acted in as paranoid a manner as the roving American Ambassador William Bullitt, who in 1943 was practically baying to Harold Ickes that 'he wouldn't put it past the British to have King Ibn Saud assassinated if necessary and set up a puppet who would see the oil situation through their eyes'.[21] Although not nearly as hyperbolic, to Harold Ickes the creation of the PRC had been necessary to 'counteract certain known activities of a foreign power which presently are jeopardizing American interests in Arabian oil reserves'.[22] The unspoken threat that Ickes referred to was according to Barry Rubin 'America's closest wartime ally, Great Britain'. Using this example, the scholar makes Ickes the centrepiece of his argument that 'nowhere else [. . .] did the conflict of [Anglo-American relations] reach the heights it attained in Saudi Arabia'.[23] Without question, Ickes was an influential figure in the Roosevelt Administration,

but as a measuring stick to gauge the state of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, he falls short.[24]

To understand Ickes' role in the Anglo-American oil drama, it is important to realise his overarching modus operandi. Known for his brash personality, during the war Ickes received acclaim and notoriety for writing a book called *Fightin' Oil*, in which he portrayed himself as America's first oil czar. He would later go as far as to tell the president that the idea of the US government getting involved in the oil business was 'his baby'.[25] From this angle, true or not, the idea that Britain was somehow a threat in Saudi Arabia was exploited by Ickes as a means to compel the US into playing a greater role in that country's oil sector. Only a year later, he would maintain to the Undersecretary of State Edward Stettinius, that co-operation with British officials over oil issues in the Middle East was 'essential'.[26] For an ardent New Dealer like Ickes, to safeguard the US long-term oil security, it was in the government's best interest to keep a closer eye on the manoeuvres of private oil companies, not Britain.

A Foreign Office report written earlier in the war characterised oil as 'almost a controlling factor in determining future British policy in the Middle East', but still London's perception of Ibn Saud's kingdom was not measured by barrels of oil, but rather how it fit in terms of maintaining British influence in the Middle East and other Muslim dominated areas of the British Empire.[27] The scant oil concession that Britain actually possessed in Saudi Arabia was located on the Farasan Islands in the Red Sea, which had already been abandoned by 1942. Instead British oil interests in the Middle East instead lay elsewhere, focusing on Iraq, Kuwait and Iran; the latter containing the world's largest oil refinery at the time in Abadan. For that matter, London felt confident that it could do without Saudi Arabian oil.[28] Even the State Department acknowledged the same thing, noting in a report that Ibn Saud would not offer Britain an oil concession. To protect its own oil interests in Iraq and Iran, the British sought 'to prevent its [Saudi Arabian oil] immediate development [rather] than to stimulate it', a move that would in the process benefit other independent American oil companies that were competing in opposition to CASOC.[29]

Yet in October 1943, trouble soon came to a head. The American legation in Jeddah accused the new British minister Stanley Jordan of pestering Saudi Arabian officials to see if they held copies of the original oil agreement that Ibn Saud signed with CASOC. American officials in Washington wondered aloud if Jordan's enthusiasm in this regard was

'merely an aberrant reflection of coordinated Anglo-American plans', or whether it was an expression of British intent to latch on to the American concession.[30] As Stanley Jordan would later write to the Foreign Office in 1944, His Majesty's Government had deliberately left oil development to the US on purpose, hoping to extinguish any sense of oil rivalry in Saudi Arabia.[31] To adopt a 'dog in the manger attitude' towards America's long-term development of Saudi Arabia, said Jordan, would be 'disastrous' for the maintenance of sound Anglo-American relations.[32]

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What one notices when examining the controversies surrounding Saudi Arabian oil and Anglo-American relations is that the real feud took place on American soil. The battle pitched those Americans who favoured the government's intervention in the oil business against those who felt that such views ran counter to the country's laissez-faire economic approach.[33] There were many who strongly felt that the absence of governmental interference had been one of the main reasons why an American oil company like CASOC had won over Ibn Saud in the 1930s.[34] Most perceptively, the same factors that had guided the wartime alliance's policy in Saudi Arabia were also at play with regard to the oil question. Articulating the need for restraint, Alexander Kirk warned that 'overt American Government intervention in oil operation in SA would lend to tar us with the same brush' as an aggressive imperial power.[35]

Private American oil companies were also wary of Washington entering their line of work. CASOC had supported the Roosevelt Administration's decision to finally offer Saudi Arabia Lend-Lease, but the company's American ownership never warmed to the idea of selling the concession.[36] Anticipating that Ickes planned to further nationalise oil production, CASOC's competitors, such as Gulf, Socony-Vacuum and Union Oil, also put pressure on the Roosevelt Administration by publicly opposing the PRC.[37] To stem the outcry, the PRC changed tack. In February 1944, a preliminary plan was put forward in which the US government would sponsor an oil pipeline across Saudi Arabia that would connect the oil of Ras Tanura in the eastern part of the country to the Mediterranean. Such a bold scheme foreshadowed the creation of TAPLINE (Trans-Arabian Pipeline) in 1950.[38] At the time however, the pipeline programme was riven with controversy. Senators from oil producing states like Tom Connolly of Texas thought the pipeline to be adversarial to the interests of

their constituents, while Elihu Ben-Horin, speaking on behalf of the Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA), noted that such an arrangement would 'permanently depress the domestic oil industry which would in turn threaten the safety of the country in the event of future wars'.[39] Even the oilman Jay Moffett, who had tried to orchestrate Lend-Lease for Saudi Arabia in 1941, now wrote to Cordell Hull arguing that a pipeline owned by the US Government was 'a gigantic scandal of the American public and taxpayer'.[40]

These domestic forces may have been at play, but from a foreign policy perspective, the State Department took a dim view of the pipeline project as well. Edward Stettinius informed Harold Ickes that he was convinced that it would be 'disadvantageous from the viewpoint of our relations with the British'.[41] In the interval during which the pipeline proposal had come to the fore, Middle Eastern oil had become a tense topic of debate for the wartime alliance. Washington had accused the British government of manipulating oil prices in the region by bolstering oil production in Iran while cutting back in Iraq. This in turn had incensed the American consortium, which owned a 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent share of the Iraq Petroleum company.[42] Word also reached London that Roosevelt's Anglophobic envoy, Patrick Hurley, had been creating mischief. He told the president that he had secret knowledge of the British government not only opposing the pipeline option, but also any American plan to develop the Saudi Arabian oil concession. As a result, Lord Halifax hurried to meet with American officials in Washington to refute Hurley's charges, labelling them as 'entirely erroneous'.[43] Indeed, London had largely stood back from the simmering debate, precisely because of what Lord Halifax described as the 'vigorous opposition' that the pipeline project faced in the US.[44]

To account for the Allied infighting, the geopolitical situation in the Middle East had relaxed, especially once the oil shipping lanes of the region were no longer at risk to the Axis. For the upcoming year of 1945, it was estimated that the level of oil production of Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain would increase by 52 per cent as compared to 1939. Looking to a productive future, the region's total oil reserves were however conservatively forecast to hold between 15 to 26 billion barrels of oil.[45] It was only natural therefore that the prospect to develop Middle East oil reserves tensions would spill over. President Roosevelt was adamant that something had to be done to squash the unending rumours that Britain 'wish[ed] to horn in' on American oil concessions in Saudi Arabia, while

concurrently refuting British claims that the US had 'sheep eyes' for Britain's oil assets in Iran and Iraq.[46] In this climate of intrigue and innuendo, Roosevelt persuaded Churchill that the time had come to initiate cabinet-level discussions on the subject of Middle East oil.

## 1944 Anglo-American Oil Agreement

Leading up to the Anglo-American oil talks that were to begin in Washington that spring, Simon Davis has said that both countries were trying to avoid a full-out 'oil war'.[47] For those however who thought the allies were locked in a struggle for oil concessions in Saudi Arabia, the talks in Washington, which were meant to ease those tensions, in fact highlighted the interdependent qualities of Anglo-American oil relations. Earlier in 1944, the Truman Committee had been correct in its assertion that from the start of World War II 'American and British oil resources have been employed jointly' and although the two powers' 'contributions may have been unequal, they have not been inequitable'.[48] Likewise, in Britain, the Foreign Office had to try to temper the views of some members of the War Cabinet, who whispered that the Americans were pushing for the oil talks simply so they could acquire British assets. The Near East Department (NED) reminded them by drawing attention to the fact that it was Britain who would likely have to call upon US oil reserves in a future war. The dominant view, even among the British War Cabinet was that by having these talks it would put a stop to a 'hell for leather race' with the Americans for acquisition of new oil concessions.[49]

Recognising this mutual need for collaboration, American representatives led by Charles Rayner of the Petroleum Division of the State Department met a British delegation overseen by Sir William Brown, which also included officials from the Petroleum Department, Foreign Office, Treasury and Admiralty. The two parties formally concluded the Anglo-American *Memorandum of Understanding* in Washington on 3 May 1944. For Secretary of State Cordell Hull, coming to preliminary terms with the British had served as a 'material contribution' towards protecting American oil concessions in Saudi Arabia by including the principle 'that each Government and its nationals shall respect all valid [oil] concessions'.[50]

Before the talks even assembled, the *New York Times* had reported that the 'stated position of the British is that they want, not to compete with the

US in obtaining oil concessions in the Middle East, but to develop them *pari passu* with those held there by US companies.'[51] In Washington, the British delegation was able to dispel the lingering rumours that it opposed American plans for a pipeline, especially at a time when the British were seeking Lend-Lease aid for its own pipeline project between Kirkuk and Haifa.[52] An American-backed pipeline that ran through Saudi Arabia did not threaten London's interest on the basis that it still left 'ample room for the operation of British interests in the Middle East', a point stressed by the *Financial Times*.[53] Writing on the situation in Saudi Arabia, *The Times* of London charted a similar path, claiming that there was 'no cause for controversy between Britain and the US' and praised the 'spirit of the Washington discussions and the merging or defining of British and American interests in one of the most important and most controversial of all raw materials'.[54]

These bilateral discussions would serve as a platform for greater cabinet-level talks on Middle Eastern oil. In Washington, the Acting Secretary of State Edward Stettinius and Winston Churchill's trusted friend, the Lord Privy Seal Lord Beaverbrook, signed the Anglo-American Oil Agreement in August 1944.[55] The intricacies of such an agreement were not lost on American officials who had been intimately involved in the negotiations, such as Herbert Feis. In his words, the agreement had been like 'walking among the spaces and angles of an abstract painting'. Yet according to Feis, the running of British and American interests found in Saudi Arabia, also brought into focus new avenues of co-operation that enabled a determined Anglo-American 'attempt to establish an international standard of rights and obligations, an international scheme of order in oil'.[56] This is why the State Department had originally intended the Anglo-American Oil Agreement to be an executive agreement rather than treaty-based; a process that was far more fraught with difficulties seeing as it would require the US Senate's ratification. Such fears were confirmed when in the end, the agreement died a slow death on the Senate floor, but it was not caused by a wave of Anglophobia. An internecine battle waged on Capitol Hill that was won by those senators representing oil states, such as Texas, Oklahoma and California, who ended up killing the agreement, protesting that its existence was 'unfair to the American oil industry'.[57]

Nonetheless, commenting after the agreement had been signed, Paul F. McGuire, an American official working for the Office of International Economic Affairs, noted that the round of controversies that had

surrounded the PRC in 1943–4, 'convince[d] the King that he [could not] depend upon either ARAMCO or the US Gov. to protect his interests in the international petroleum poker game'.[58] Anything that can be interpreted as 'having any kinship with the ill-fated pipeline deal', opined McGuire, 'was very likely to destroy the opportunity for friendly unsuspicious discussion between nations, and create an unfavourable atmosphere of acrimonious debate in Congress and amongst our own business interests and the general public'.[59] To help repair the US's damaged credibility, McGuire saw the accumulated gain of the Anglo-American Oil Agreement. He pinpointed the similarity of British and American oil objectives while juxtaposing them with the interdependent security interests of both nations:

> I believe those who talk in terms of a battle for strategic military oil reserves between the US and Great Britain misinterpret the true nature of the struggle over oil. From a military standpoint, I feel that British and American holdings form a joint strategic reserve, since I do not foresee that any war in the predictable future will find Britain and the US on opposite sides. If the British covet control over Arabian oil, it is for strictly commercial reasons, which apply as well to the American producers who do not share in the Arabian concession.[60]

In other words, British attitudes were not chauvinistic or anti-American, but rather reflected the capitalist nature of the world oil market; an open market in which the concerns of the British government sometimes overlapped the interests of the independent American oil producers. In this way, the oil question belies those assertions that Saudi Arabia only existed as another area of 'contested space' between Britain and the US. Certainly, some scholars like Wm. Roger Louis have noted that in facing up to the oil issue, the Anglo-American Oil Agreement in effect removed 'an irritant between the two governments'.[61] Likewise, Aaron David Miller has similarly observed that although 'intentionally vague', the accord 'seemed to contain something for everyone'.[62] The fact is that Saudi Arabian oil would always cause a modicum of contention throughout the rest of World War II, and although the points made by Louis and Miller are correct, they undersell the lengths to which British and American officials sought to be accommodating.

## The Test of Saudi Arabian Financial Reform

In terms of sparking off Anglo-American tensions, there was an issue that outmatched the high drama of oil politics, and it came from an unexpected source; the question of how to deal with the Saudi Arabian government's systematic mishandling of its finances. With the new availability of Lend-Lease aid to Saudi Arabia from early 1943, it was clear that the US would play a greater role in the economic sphere of the Kingdom than it had in 1941–2. The State Department, while promoting the strategic aspects and oil components of Lend-Lease, had also stressed that the policy would also strengthen Saudi Arabia's sovereignty by helping Ibn Saud to offset the perception that he was a subaltern of British influence. An April 1943 State Department report highlighted recent examples of Britain using the pretext of wartime exigency to lord over Middle East territories, concluding that they were 'an all too obvious warning to Ibn Saud' of what would happen if the king nestled too closely to the British.[63] Over the next two years the Kingdom would receive from the US approximately $18 million of Lend-Lease aid.[64]

After strongly advocating that Washington should grant Lend-Lease to Saudi Arabia in 1941, in the event, Britain was 'suspicious' of American motives, according to Simon Davis.[65] It is not unfounded that the Foreign Office's immediate reaction had been that HMG should be the 'channel through which American influence is expressed in the Middle East', but this early lack of support for Lend-Lease entering Saudi Arabia had been largely based on the British fear that it would be saddled with the final bill. As Harry Eyres, who worked on Saudi Arabia in the NED, insightfully noted: 'our point against it is that Middle Eastern Countries are supposed to pay for Lease Lend material in the later end, and this Ibn Saud will presumably never be in a position to do except on our expense.'[66] Eventually however, Lend-Lease aid for Saudi Arabia favoured Britain's Middle East policy.[67] London sensed that in the short term, the initiative improved the Kingdom's precarious economic position, while in the long term it previewed the benefits of greater American regional assistance. Furthermore, on a logistical level, the British government would play a fundamental role in shaping the implementation of Lend-Lease aid. The US still lacked the governmental agency and therefore would need British assistance to see through such a wide-ranging policy.[68]

Regardless of Lend-Lease's arrival in Saudi Arabia, Britain and the US understood that this was no elixir for the country's economic woes. Riyadh's lack of financial oversight was the real obstacle, leaving Saudi Arabia in a continuous state of financial chaos. The first problem to tackle was Saudi Arabia's currency, the Saudi riyal. At this time, it was not a paper currency, instead solely based on coins made and minted from precious metals. Predictably, this gave the coinage a high bullion value and made it susceptible to hoarding.[69] Adding to the instability, the gold sovereign, not the riyal, was the preferred currency of choice for the Saudi government. Between October 1942 and February 1943, 95,000 gold sovereigns, which were believed to have been part of the British subsidy package for Saudi Arabia, were seized in Iraq.[70] If gold sovereigns and silver riyals were to be offered to Saudi Arabia in the future, both the American and British governments shared a common interest in Riyadh providing better financial safeguards.

Although Anglo-American discussions on ways to institute reforms began in April 1943, efforts did not gain steam until the British Treasury official, Sir Francis Rugman, was sent to Jeddah that summer. Rugman relayed to London that a paper currency needed to be introduced in Saudi Arabia, along with a currency board that would help the Saudi Arabian government manage its finances. Even before his arrival, American officials had concurred with Rugman's analysis. 'By putting into circulation a currency having no commodity value', a State Department report noted that 'the exportation of the local currency will no longer be profitable.'[71] Yet, before Washington could send its own expert to inspect the Kingdom's financial situation, the Department of Treasury's John Guenther, Stanley Jordan inserted himself into the drama. On his way to present his diplomatic credentials, Jordan had bypassed the American legation and introduced Ibn Saud to a proposal for a British-backed currency board. Hearing of Jordan's actions, American authorities from the State Department and the American Treasury Department in Washington met with their British counterparts to stress the priority of close Anglo-American co-operation on this delicate issue:

> To avoid any appearance of conflict between British and American aims, it was imperative that British officials in Washington realized that the US, desired and expected, to work jointly with the British on any plan for establishing a permanent currency system in SA.[72]

Before long, in October 1943, Stanley Jordan, this time with James Moose, jointly informed Ibn Saud of the need to replace riyal coins with paper currency. As soon as the king heard it, he rejected the proposition. As Custodian of the Two Holy Cities, he considered it to be a violation of Islamic orthodoxy, and the issue was not resolved until after the war's conclusion.[73]

The case of the currency board however was a different matter altogether since it put a spotlight on impressions of hegemony. In November 1943, American officials had come to the concrete decision that since US oil interests were going to be a significant part of the Kingdom's financial future, the riyal should not be tied solely to the Sterling bloc, but should also be linked to the dollar, silver and gold. This would mean that any foreign exchange assets that the Kingdom might acquire would be 'held or disposed of by its own currency board in accordance with the best interests of the Saudi Arabian people'. In this idealistic vein, the Treasury Department suggested that the proposed currency board should have a strong Saudi component, with a membership in Jeddah consisting of one American, one Briton and rounded out by three Saudi Arabian representatives.[74]

Accepting the US's special position, the British government agreed to the new American proposal per se, but hesitated to implement it. Given what appeared to be Riyadh's lacking desire to truly reform its profligate ways, British officials reckoned that if the Saudi Arabian authorities gained control of the 'modern potentialities of the printing press' they would bring the 'whole new banking and currency system to ruin'.[75] To the American Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury Harry Dexter White, such views perfectly exposed Britain's retrograde outlook. According to White:

> when a sovereign nation approaches the US treasury with a request for advice, it is the Treasury's policy, as stated by the Secretary himself, to give the best advise possible as to what will be in that nation's own best interest. We do not withhold knowledge on the theory that it is dangerous to teach backward nations modern methods.[76]

Still, as critical as White was towards Britain, it merits attention that he still advised that the US give credence to the long-term experience of Britain when it came to handling Saudi Arabia's financial matters.[77]

## The Question of Anglo-American Subsidies

At the end of World War II, C.W. Baxter, head of the NED at the Foreign Office, looked back to explain the purpose of Anglo-American subsidies. They were implemented to 'provide the help which his [Ibn Saud's] country so urgently needed in the critical war years'.[78] Between 1940–3, British subsidies to Saudi Arabia had reached the robust total of £8.3 million.[79] From the beginning of 1943 through to January 1944, the subsidy included supplies and foodstuffs estimated at a value of £3 million.[80] As the aggregate sum kept rising however and the Axis threat against Saudi Arabia receded, the increase in the British subsidy no longer computed.[81]

Foremost, the Hajj – the Kingdom's greatest source of income – had by 1943 rebounded to almost two-thirds of its pre-war levels and was forecast to further improve in 1944.[82] Moreover, the country's poor finances had little to do with wartime conditions and the smaller Hajj, but had instead been the result of the Saudi Arabian government having monopolised trade and taken it out of the hands of the merchants. This left the bulk of Saudi riyals out of circulation and in the hands of hoarders.[83] On top of it all, the accumulated deficit of the Saudi Arabian government reached £6 million in 1944, surpassing the country's entire gross domestic product since 1939. During the early years of the war, strategic exigencies had forged a policy that had been necessary and shrewd, but now with time, it appeared that this policy was no longer viable.

In a missive entitled *Memorandum on Extravagance of S.A. Gov.*, Stanley Jordan, gave a rundown of what he perceived to be the negative consequences of the subsidy. 'Bribery and corruption are everywhere', noted Jordan, which according to him were creating a 'new class of paupers' that had formerly not had to rely on the Saudi Arabian government for charity. When Saudi Arabian officials complained of the dire economic situation in the areas around Riyadh, Jordan was left unmoved. He believed that Saudi Arabian officials had shamelessly siphoned away the subsidy.[84] As the British political agent in Jeddah from 1925–7, he observed that 'the only improvement which I have seen in Arabia since I was here sixteen years ago is to be found in the making of palaces'.[85] How much could Britain or the US rely on if Ibn Saud's influence in the region if the Kingdom's traditional ways were systematically broken down? The king had spoken to Jordan about the parasitic nature of the subsidies and was concerned, but in the end

he claimed 'our religion and character safeguard us against the evils and dirt' associated with largesse.[86] Still, by New Year's Eve of 1943, Jordan in a revealing message sent to the Foreign Office, once again highlighted the undermining effect that the subsidies had on the Saudi Arabian government: 'I fear that it is a case of easy come and easy go.'[87]

Jordan's line of reasoning offers a window into British thinking, but from the American point of view, the subsidy issue was understood in two distinct ways. On one level, if the American slice of the subsidy remained the same, the disproportionate political influence that London held within the circles of power in Saudi Arabia would continue. Writing to his State Department colleagues back in January 1943, Alexander Kirk noted:

> I feel impelled to state that after watching the operation of the system by which American assistance to Saudi Arabia has been channelized through the British, I have gained the impression that we have thereby lost considerable prestige in the eyes of Saudi Arabia who have been given increasingly to feel that the British were their only friends in need.[88]

The subsidies, according to Kirk, were in many respects a question of hegemony in that they symbolised authority. Kirk did not advocate a new American unilateral approach, but did support policies that presented Anglo-American efforts in Saudi Arabia as an equal and mutually responsible enterprise. Failure to do so might leave American interests out in the cold. There was a 'discernible tendency toward British economic entrenchment in this area', Kirk warned, which 'might materially negate the best intentioned postwar agreements for equality of opportunity'.[89] Over the next two years, American aid to Saudi Arabia would total approximately $18 million.[90]

On the ground in Jeddah, James Moose, fell in line with Kirk. Unlike Jordan, Moose felt strongly that if the subsidies were removed, it would have an even greater adverse effect on the long-term rule of Ibn Saud. Moose viewed the hardships that the Saudis endured as palpably real. One of the worst droughts in living memory compounded the effects of austerity provoked by the war. At this time, the Nejd, the ancestral home to the ruling Saud family, faced a ten-to-fifteen-fold increase in inflation, while 75 per cent of Saudi Arabia's entire livestock succumbed to the drought.[91] No doubt, Saudi Arabia had fallen on hard times, what Moose described as the 'progressive desiccation

of Arabia'.[92] Regardless of some of the more overt examples of malfeasance pointed out by the British minister, Moose believed that continuing Saudi corruption could be brought under control. Bearing in mind all of these factors, in February 1944, Moose resisted Jordan's own assertion by recommending to Washington that the subsidy earmarked for Saudi Arabia should be increased for the upcoming year.[93]

In the spring of 1944, with London keen to scale back the subsidy, the State Department sought compromise and offered to share it.[94] In the case of Saudi Arabia, in one way, the proposition was meant to diffuse any sense of Anglo-American rivalry that the subsidy question had fomented in Saudi Arabia over the previous half year. With closer analysis however, there were other reasons besides building up inter-allied solidarity. In many respects, Washington's push for splitting the subsidy stemmed from its own fear that by continually following Britain's lead, American prestige was reduced in the eyes of Saudi Arabian officials. Entering the year 1944, direct American aid to Saudi Arabia, including Lend-Lease assistance, only amounted to one-sixth of the British total.[95] Still concerned about the nature of Stanley Jordan's influence over Ibn Saud, Secretary of State Cordell Hull warned President Roosevelt that the significant difference in the amount of the subsidies needed to end. Sharing the subsidy equally with Britain for the rest of 1944, Hull believed would 'obviate' the dangers arising from allowing Ibn Saud to rely too heavily on the British government.[96]

From the Foreign Office's perspective, the talk of a 50–50 arrangement appeared to be suspiciously ambiguous in its form. By pointedly omitting a cap on future expenditure, American subsidies could continue to increase, leaving British influence in Saudi Arabia looking parsimonious and weak. Foreign Office minutes suggest that James Moose had tried to persuade Ibn Saud to request a larger subsidy from the British government, knowing full well that London would be unwilling to meet the ample American contributions.[97]

Before a 50–50 Anglo-American subsidy could be agreed upon, on 12 April 1944, the US government planned to increase its contribution of aid to Saudi Arabia. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau extended 3,437,500 ounces of silver for the minting of Saudi riyals.[98] Dismayed, the Foreign Office believed that it would aggravate the currency question further and requested that the minting be postponed until an official Anglo-American subsidy agreement had been reached.[99]

Morganthau's minting was put on hold, but it offered a preview to Saudi Arabian officials, telling them that the US had the potential to outstrip Britain's offerings of financial aid. Hence, it was not a question of 'if', but 'when' Britain would be unable to participate on an equal financial footing with the US.

Although looking to scale back its financial commitment to Saudi Arabia, London was not ready to relinquish its influence entirely. After being notified of Ibn Saud's request for a financial advisor that spring, Cordell Hull reentered the picture. He proclaimed that in view of the United States' preponderant interest in the Saudi Arabian economy, the position should be filled by an American.[100] On hearing this reasoning, the Undersecretary of State for the Foreign Office Sir Maurice Peterson, was incredulous. Peterson snapped that on their way to the Holy Cities, pilgrims from British territories and Sterling area countries had accounted for more than 40 million riyals entering the country, a percentage that dwarfed American contributions to Saudi Arabia's revenue.[101] In Washington, the British Embassy, according to a Foreign Office report at the time, 'debunked in no uncertain terms' American claims of economic supremacy in Saudi Arabia.[102]

In the summer of 1944, before these economic questions could boil over, both sides finally reached an agreement that would at least temporarily lead to an important compromise over the question of splitting the subsidy for Saudi Arabia. On 7 July 1944, the Anglo-American joint-subsidy programme for Saudi Arabia was enacted, and it was agreed that the British government would proffer supplies and goods totalling £2,754,000, including £10,000 per month allocated for Saudi Arabia's worldwide diplomatic missions. The US would continue to subsidise Saudi Arabia through Lend-Lease and would mint 10,000,000 silver riyals worth roughly the total of the British subsidy and Lend-Lease goods totalling £292,000.[103]

## Revitalising the Wartime Alliance

So what were the factors that had ostensibly led Britain and the US to put aside their discrepancies over Saudi Arabian oil and the Kingdom's economic issues, which at times seemed to be unbridgeable? In retrospect, the prevalent political winds of the wartime alliance in the spring of 1944 had demanded the need for greater Anglo-American co-operation. Leading up to this period, a set of high-profile disputes had alienated the

two allies.[104] Most conspicuously, the events of the Tehran Conference (held on 28 November–1 December 1943) had openly wiped the sheen off the perceived intimacy of Roosevelt and Churchill and heightened tensions in the Anglo-American relationship vis-à-vis the Soviet Union.[105] Vital debates over wartime strategy at this time had also given rise to a noticeable divergence in views. The US's wartime objectives had shifted even more towards the Pacific, while Britain, thinking of ways to maximise its imperial power, continued to give special priority to the Mediterranean theatre.[106]

To rejuvenate the wartime alliance, especially in the context of the imminent Allied invasion of Western Europe, an American delegation led by Edward Stettinius, met British counterparts in London in April 1944 to try to alleviate some of the friction that had recently materialised between the two sides.[107] This visit has come to be referred to as the Stettinius Mission. Stettinius, characterised by *The Times* as a 'man of efficiency and imagination' arrived in London with great fanfare. The future secretary of state said that the objective of his mission was to create a framework that would allow disagreements between the US and Britain to be 'raised frankly, jointly examined and disposed of as soon as they arise'.[108] Backing Stettinius, the British Permanent Undersecretary of State of Foreign Affairs Sir Maurice Peterson remarked that the talks held the 'laudable object' of overcoming differences, which 'threatened to obstruct the conduct of the war and to prejudice harmony when it came to the making of peace.'[109] Once the mission had successfully concluded, Stettinius sent a message to Winston Churchill stating that 'we may look forward to a bright future of permanent harmonious and beneficial Anglo-American relations'.[110]

In the company of such high-profile issues such as dealing with the Axis powers, the Soviet Union, and postwar world organisations, during the Stettinius Mission, British and American officials also found time to press for further Anglo-American integration in Saudi Arabia.[111] Alongside pledging to combine their aid packages to Saudi Arabia in the months ahead, Britain and the US also made a preliminary vow to establish a joint Anglo-American military mission to assist Ibn Saud in training a 'modern Saudi Arabian Army', a subject that will be discussed in Chapter 6.[112]

Lord Halifax, who was at times particularly critical of the Americans with regards to their conduct in Saudi Arabia, wrote of the two countries' common interests after the Stettinius Mission. Halifax noted: 'There is nothing really predatory or sinister in American intentions toward us [*sic*]'.[113] Back in

London, his colleague C.W. Baxter put it even more straightforwardly: 'to some degree Anglo-American cooperation in Jedda has become a test of the possibility of Anglo-American cooperation in the Middle East as a whole.'[114] Taking into account this far-reaching consideration, Wm. Roger Louis holds that British officials did not judge Saudi Arabia at this point to be an area beset by inter-allied rivalry, but as an 'anchor' for greater American involvement in the Middle East, which would benefit the security of Britain's own regional interests.[115]

Baxter's opposite number, Wallace Murray, who had been a member of Stettinius' entourage and led discussions on all Anglo-American related Middle East issues, liked what he heard in London. He felt that the two powers were now on the same page and it was clear 'that British political and strategic interests and paramount US oil interests in Saudi Arabia [...] should not conflict'.[116] For the US to assert its power globally, a close working relationship with British officials had to be maintained. 'We do not wish to compete with the British in Saudi Arabia but to cooperate with them', said James Landis, the leading American representative attached to the British led Middle East Supply Centre (MESC), which had been established to meet the wartime economic and supply requirements facing the region. From 1942 onwards, the MESC had partly transformed into a co-ordinated Anglo-American endeavour, but it was still viewed as primarily an instrument of British power.[117] Seeing how the MESC had more effectively served both British interests and Arab countries, it is no wonder, then that Landis felt adamant that it was unproductive to 'compete with the British on an all-out basis in that area'.[118] In this respect, the global role of the US – in what the Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Edgar Mowrer described as the 'world madhouse' – was fragmentary and was not clearly formulated in the summer of 1944. This was specifically the case in a country like Saudi Arabia where the US government lacked diplomatic experience.[119]

## Fixing the 'Lack of Liaison' in Saudi Arabia

The relationship between ministers in Jeddah is a facet of the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia that warrants more attention than has previously been granted.[120] Given Saudi Arabia's geography, far removed from the corridors of power in London and Washington, the diplomatic representatives on the ground consistently figured highly in

shaping and implementing their nations' respective policies in the Kingdom. Sending a missive to the Foreign Office in the feel good aftermath of the Stettinius Mission, Lord Halifax discussed the importance of personnel, but this time in connection with the reasons behind what was perceived as faltering co-operation between British and American officials in Saudi Arabia. As Halifax explained:

> State Department tells me, they have lately been receiving a number of reports from their representative at Jedda criticizing our alleged lack of co-operation with the Americans in S.A. and even implying that on occasion our people there have been working against the Americans. Some of these reports have found their way to Capitol, Post [*Washington Post*], etc. and Hull [Secretary of State] is getting upset by them.[121]

In answering Halifax's comments, C.W. Baxter acknowledged problems with the Anglo-American alliance on the ground in Saudi Arabia, and suggested that communication on the 'spot' in Jeddah needed to be improved:

> Our people in Saudi Arabia have not been working against the Americans [...] many elements in the Middle East are anxious to take advantage of any lack of liaison on the spot and we share with the State Department the hope that if closer co-operation can be established this most undesirable state of affairs will come to an end.[122]

Reflecting on this, Halifax fashioned a proposal that would fix the latest glitch in Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. Seeing it as a personnel problem rather than a symptom of hegemonic rivalry, he suggested to Wallace Murray that they should look to what was happening in Egypt. 'If their [American] representatives at Jedda were on terms of close confidence with our representative as Kirk [Alexander Kirk] has been with Lord Killearn [Sir Miles Lampson] in Cairo, said Halifax, these difficulties [in Saudi Arabia] would not arise.'[123]

Afterwards, Halifax in Washington and Baxter in London summarily concluded that Stanley Jordan must 'establish relations of friendship and confidence with Mr. Moose' and 'discuss all supply and financial

questions with him [James Moose] on a joint basis, securing agreement with his recommendations wherever possible'.[124] Proposals were additionally put forth for Jordan's entire staff to work more closely with their American counterparts. The NED would later explicitly send identical instructions, *mutatis mutandis*, to Moose.[125]

Even after both ministers received these instructions, the Secretary of State Cordell Hull lodged a complaint to Halifax. Stanley Jordan was still: 'doing his level best to injure the American Government's relations with the King and, in other ways, endeavouring to undermine the American situation, and that we just could not put up with this without constant and louder complaint.'[126] That spring, the Foreign Office had warned Stanley Jordan of his conduct, explaining to him that he had not kept Moose 'adequately informed on matters of supply and finance' and that 'Washington are equally worried at lack of close liaison between you and Mr. Moose'.[127]

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In March 1944, unbeknown to American officials, Stanley Jordan had intercepted a memorandum written by the Saudi Arabian Minister of Mines and Supply Nagib Sahla, which began a saga known as the 'Sahla Affair'. In the memo, Sahla tried to convince the Minister of Finance Abdullah Sulaiman that Ibn Saud should cease his traditional association with Britain and build more formative ties with the US.[128] Sahla wrote: 'the Americans are wholeheartedly with us and wish to help but will not do it on their own accord. They want us to ask them so that they will have a say in the matter.'[129] At least one of the 'Americans' of whom Sahla believed he had the support of was James Landis, the American representative of the MESC. Based in Cairo, Landis principally oversaw many of the American economic and supply issues in Saudi Arabia in early 1944. Told by Sahla in secret that Jordan's estimates of Saudi Arabia's current financial position did not include the debts that were owed to the British government, Landis was 'amazed' to hear this information. Jordan had mentioned none of this to him when they met the previous month in Cairo.[130]

Jordan though had good reason to act in such a furtive fashion. He chose not to inform his American colleagues about the Sahla connection in the first place because he wanted to protect the identity of another Saudi Arabian official, the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Britain Hafiz Wahba, who had alerted British officials about his compatriot's behind-the-scenes

chicanery.[131] After the incident, Minister of State and Churchill's Private Parliamentary Secretary Richard Law, wrote to Lord Moyne: 'we shall not confront [the Americans] with documents which support the ideal of American encouragement of Nagib Sahla, but we can say that the latter has clearly been trying to play them off against us and point out the obvious moral.'[132] Barry Rubin has explained that unlike their British colleagues, American officials did not realise the 'provocative role of the Saudis themselves'.[133] It is fair to say however, that Rubin's claim is exaggerated because at the same time none other than Henry Stimson wrote personally to Cordell Hull warning him of 'the willingness of King Ibn Saud to play each nation [the US and Britain] against the other as a means of obtaining the assistance he desires'.[134]

The situation grew more complicated on 30 March 1944, when a new memorandum to be held in the 'strictest confidence' was sent by James Moose to American officials at the State Department. An insider within the Saudi Arabian government told Moose that Jordan had also orchestrated the removal of Najib Bey Salim, an official who was believed to be friendly to the US. Bey Salim was to be succeeded by Izzedi Neshawar, who Jordan claimed to his American colleagues, 'is now playing ball with us [the British Government]'. What proved to be so incendiary about the accusation was that the Saudi Arabian official had told Moose that Jordan was making up his own independent policy without the consent of the Foreign Office.[135] Simply put, Stanley Jordan had gone rogue.

Even if some of his colleagues conceded that at times it was 'extraordinarily hard to follow Mr. Jordan's thoughts', C.W. Baxter of the Foreign Office backed his man in Jeddah.[136] Given that Jordan sought to curtail Anglo-American largesse in the Kingdom, Baxter explained that he had fallen out of favour with Saudi Arabian officials and by doing so had 'earned the enmity of various influential persons who may well have been tale-bearers to the American minister'.[137] Although both Washington and London put the blame squarely on manipulative Saudi Arabian officials, what is clear was that Stanley Jordan would never have the same breezy relationship with his American colleagues that his predecessor Hugh Stonehewer-Bird enjoyed.[138]

With this in mind, to alleviate the mounting tensions in Jeddah, Edward Stettinius, fresh from his successful mission to London, decided to directly intervene. According to Halifax, Stettinius – backed by a consensus from the Division of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) at the State

Department – stressed that the 'good that was achieved by Middle East talks in London should not be undone by continued friction in Jeddah, which might merely be due to personalities'.[139] Another American official concerned that Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia had been put at risk owing to personnel problems was James Landis, who declared that 'the British minister in SA has been working against us, it is essential that there be someone there who will work with us'.[140] At the same time however as the Americans heaped scorn on Stanley Jordan, London harboured doubts about James Moose, wondering if he was up to the task of facilitating Anglo-American co-operation. There were some British officials who harboured a low opinion of Moose, targeting him personally, despite working well with Stonehewer-Bird. They considered Moose to be 'second rate' and a 'lightweight poorly equipped for his job'.[141] Moose's position in Jeddah had been reduced that spring by the arrival of the envoy Colonel William Eddy in April 1944. According to the chargé d'affaires Parker Hart, during the short time of his visit, Eddy had 'superimposed' Moose as the chief of the American legation.[142]

In late May 1944, Stettinius telephoned the Counsellor of the British Embassy in Washington, Sir Ronald Campbell, to inform him that the US would be replacing Moose with a new representative. Stettinius held that it was the 'personal informal feeling' of the State Department that Britain should in turn, reciprocate and replace its minister, permitting both countries to 'change horses at the same time'.[143] Stettinius' proposition indicates that, like Halifax, he emphasised the role of personnel and personality, believing that Anglo-American tensions could be eased by putting in place British and American ministers who worked well together.

On this score, Washington moved first. The first personnel change made that summer was that Eddy replaced Moose as the American minister in Jeddah.[144] The British, on the other hand, showed signs of resistance. Far more circumspect about the engineered swap, Halifax cabled the Foreign Office explaining that Stettinius' original proposal had in fact put them somewhat in a bind. 'The matter is naturally somewhat delicate since they [the Americans] imply that the fault may be that of their own man and a difficult situation would be created if he [Moose] learned of their appeal to us.'[145] Indeed, some of Moose's own American colleagues, including Eddy, had intimated that he lacked the crucial gravitas needed for his ministerial authority.[146] London was not ready to budge, despite Jordan's dimming reputation. As C.W. Baxter concluded:

'We see no reason to change our own representation there; a change which as it appears to us would be not only unjustifiable but highly inconvenient in view of the shortage of Arabic experts.'[147]

For the moment, Jordan stood pat, while that August, there was an added controversy complicating matters further. Without notifying the British legation, Moose personally informed Saudi Arabian officials that as part of the Anglo-American supply programme, the US along with Britain would be furnishing a large shipment of foodstuffs, which included tea, sugar, and cereals. Although the incident seems relatively minor, Jordan fumed. Before Moose left Jeddah for good on 18 August 1944, the British minister pointed out to his American counterpart the troubling underlying gist of his actions, especially in light of the decrees espoused from the Stettinius Mission. As far as Jordan could see: 'such communication made to the SA government without HMG's approval destroyed the whole basis of collaboration between US and UK in regard to Saudi Arabia, which had been built up so industriously over the last few months.'[148]

By the same token, the Foreign Office had its own view of the current state of Anglo-American relations. Once receiving a 'prompt' retraction from the Americans over Moose's diplomatic faux pas, the Foreign Office sent a revealing missive to Jordan that gives an insight into how British officialdom took a long-term view of its relationship with the US in the Kingdom. Alongside expressing dismay 'that Mr. Moose *has not* [their emphasis] more fully reciprocated your efforts at collaboration', they reminded Jordan that in future he was to refrain from being 'over suspicious' of US motives. 'American impulsiveness and inexperience in dealing with the Arabs may sometimes lead them to act injudiciously', the Foreign Office noted, 'but we must endeavour to persuade and guide them on the right lines, and be patient with their mistakes.'[149] Yet Stanley Jordan seemed not to have taken the order seriously, and as it turned out, London finally lost patience with him. Later that year Jordan was abruptly recalled from Jeddah after it became clear that the British minister also had trouble getting along with his new American colleague, William Eddy. This sore subject for Anglo-American relations will be examined more closely in Chapter 6.[150]

## Conclusion

In the summer of 1944, a report from the American legation in Cairo had claimed that 'Saudi Arabia presents the best test case for concrete

cooperation with the British in all the Middle East and we should succeed in making it work here'.[151] Once oil concessions in Saudi Arabia had come to be considered by American officials as vital to the future security of the US, the Anglo-American relationship in the Kingdom went through a transformative process, but it did not decay. The overwhelming line of thinking coming from both Washington and London cleanly merged together. British influence and the development of an American oil concession in Saudi Arabia did not have to be antithetical, but offered another wrinkle in their relationship. Certainly, in some American circles, suspicions were aroused that the British government was eyeing the oil concession, but this lingered as a minority view. Likewise, although London had its doubts about the US government becoming closely involved in the Kingdom's oil sphere, American critics mainly voiced the loudest complaints fearing that their government was turning into a commercial oil cartel. If one still sees the subject of Saudi Arabian oil as a cause of inter-allied tension, the efforts to alleviate this cause of friction paradoxically further enjoined the two wartime allies, culminating in the signing of the Anglo-American Oil Agreement in 1944.

Wrestling over Saudi Arabia's finances proved to be a highly contested and sensitive issue. Both powers acknowledged the need for Riyadh to overhaul its currency, but they vigorously disagreed on what shape and extent the reforms should take. With regard to the subsidy question, as far as Stanley Jordan was concerned, raising them opened up a Pandora's Box, one that would bring down the fabric of Saudi Arabian society and unravel Ibn Saud's authority and his independent image in the process. The US since the beginning of World War II shared similar concerns, yet the American minister deviated from his British counterpart's final assessment. Like many American officials at the time, James Moose saw that increased subsidies would stabilise the poor economic situation in the Kingdom and be beneficial to the burgeoning Saudi–American relationship. As Chapter 6 will show, although the subsidy question would continue to be a source of friction, the two sides made impressive headway by agreeing to subsidise Saudi Arabia on an equal level.

What one cannot overlook is the fact that the fulcrum of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia lay in the evolving strategic interdependence of the wartime allies. With the D-Day landings fast approaching, transmitting a picture of Anglo-American unity went without saying for British and American officials in 1944. Indeed, the

Kingdom had been marked out on both sides of the Atlantic as an area where both powers could effectively bind their interests and policies together into a single Anglo-American body. Finally, when trying to account for the amount of discord between the powers, an element that historians have not stressed enough is the human dimension. Again, London and Washington were largely of the same view, in which the occasional punch-up resulted from a clash of personalities rather than an actual divergence of interests between the two nations.

# CHAPTER 6

# MIRAGE: ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA AND THE LIMITS AND ADVANTAGES OF CO-OPERATION, 1944–5

## Introduction

Construction of a well-functioning Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia resumed when the new American minister William Eddy arrived in Jeddah in September 1944. In one sense, the poor communication on the ground that had been a major problem for Washington and London in the spring and summer of 1944 had improved by autumn. During those months however, while still committed to close collaboration, it became clear that the wider views held by the two allies on how to engage with the Saudi Arabian government had reached an impasse. Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia could still be advantageous, but for the relationship to work more smoothly, it also had to be more pragmatic. Certainly, British and American policies advocated for Saudi Arabia carried many similarities. Both powers sought to offer policies that kept in-line with the emerging anti-colonial consensus, designed not to diminish the Kingdom's sovereignty on which Ibn-Saud's influence as an Arab statesman was seen to hinge. Yet, some American officials felt more strongly than others about this concern, namely William Eddy. Consistently throughout his tenure as American minister, he worried about the US being openly associated with what he identified to be the imperial taint of Britain's influence in Saudi Arabia. Ironically, British officials in Jeddah and the

Foreign Office had the same concerns, but about their American ally. They grumbled that the new flurry of policies that Eddy pushed for, ones founded on the provision of rapid and excessive aid, possessed all the hallmarks of a new form of colonialism. Going forward, if the US continued to churn out projects so impulsively, it begs the question, would not only the Al-Saud regime be rattled, but also Britain's own Middle East *Imperia?*

The schisms that were developing within the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia were also in part a question of priorities. By 1944 the calculus had changed for both countries. The US government wanted to be on the 'ground floor' in Saudi Arabia and was poised to implement a stream of new policies in a bid to firmly secure access to the Kingdom's oil supplies.[1] Although Ibn Saud remained key to British foreign policy, which was stretched to the brink by other imperial concerns around the globe, London was no longer in the position to match an American policy in Saudi Arabia that was more and more driven by largesse. This was however not to say that Britain was plodding down a path towards irrelevancy in the Kingdom. On the contrary, the diplomatic influence that British officials had crafted for over a generation lived strong, despite the growing US presence in Saudi Arabia. This was a point that American officials would on more than one occasion reflect upon as they apprehensively mulled over the limits of their own national power.

The wartime alliance also encountered two further issues in late 1944 and early 1945 that reverberated with hegemonic implications. By its very nature, a project like establishing a joint Anglo-American military mission for Ibn Saud was a conspicuous symbol of power and influence, naturally inclined to prey upon the dense feelings of national rivalry and distrust. The other critical issue, the US's aim of constructing an airfield in Dhahran, was based on bolstering Allied supply routes for the Pacific theatre. Control of the skies however and the subsidiary issues that were linked to it, namely civil aviation and telecommunications, represented new spheres of power that risked fomenting inter-allied competition.

As highlighted in earlier chapters, the relationship between the two powers in Saudi Arabia nonetheless had a remarkable propensity to renew itself against all odds. Although at times the events in the Kingdom bore a resemblance to Simon Davis' description of the period as an 'enduring microcosm of Anglo-American antagonism', more often than not, the second half of 1944 entering into 1945 saw the reciprocal properties of strategic interdependence between Britain and the US develop and grow.[2]

British officials were confident that their ally's rising ascendancy in the Kingdom could still complement Britain's own position of influence, despite reservations concerning the temper of American policy. Conversely, with Saudi Arabia and its oil concerns now considered to be a fixture in American foreign policy, the pattern of Washington turning to the British to attain its own strategic objectives emerged once again. By now, even though at times Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia seemed to trudge along, one sees the bilateral relationship having gained a sounder foothold. Although their policy aims and perceptions of Saudi Arabia would not always be the same, the sheer level of interdependence entwining British and American interests meant that the relationship could not be dismissed, but had to be cultivated with care.

## William Eddy and Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia

Born and raised in Sidon, modern day Lebanon, the new US Minister to Saudi Arabia Colonel William Eddy's formative years had endowed him with an intimate knowledge of the Middle East. An accomplished Arabist, he had once taught at the American University in Cairo and was also known as the first person to translate the rules of basketball into Arabic.[3] Like his cousin Harold Hoskins, he was particularly connected to the powers of the East Coast American establishment through his past in Lebanon, growing up as part of the small, yet influential American-Protestant missionary community.[4] With Eddy's background, it is little wonder then that one scholar of American foreign policy in the Middle East has remarked that he was 'probably the nearest thing the US had to a Lawrence of Arabia'.[5]

Eddy had by then already spent time in Jeddah in the spring of 1944. On his arrival, the British legation notified the Foreign Office that this particular American held an unusual amount of influence and political clout, yet they could not ascertain the nature of his 'work'.[6] Eddy was in fact under the supervision of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), attempting to establish a US intelligence service in Saudi Arabia so that, like Britain, the US could use 'unorthodox procedures in collecting information'.[7]

On 1 September 1944, while Eddy as American minister first met with Stanley Jordan before his recall, the USS *John Barry*, cartying a shipment of 3 million newly minted riyals earmarked for the Saudi Arabian government, was

sunk off the coast of Aden. The British navy was responsible for the protection of all Allied vessels between the Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf, and the American legation in Jeddah was up in arms over what it perceived as British 'incompetence'.[8] No doubt the acrimony surrounding this episode put a damper on their first meeting and like Moose, Eddy quickly fell out with the British minister. More than anything else, Jordan's imperious attitude grated on Eddy. The first mistake that Jordan made was to lecture Eddy about 'the natural greed of the Arabs', a greed he asserted, that had been 'sharpened by his HMG's generosity and by the more recent participation of the US in the provision of supplies'.[9] Eddy held Jordan's views in contempt and complained to his colleagues about what he regarded as Jordan's 'incipient insanity'. In defence of Jordan, such an overstatement leaves the American sounding a bit unhinged.[10] Nevertheless, the notion that a change in diplomatic personnel in Jeddah might be a means in itself to coax greater Anglo-American co-operation never fully materialised as envisioned.

For their first meeting Eddy intended to make clear to Jordan his country's future objectives in the Kingdom. He started by carefully explaining that his country had little interest in Iraq, Palestine, the Levant States and Egypt – traditional areas of British influence – but it did have a substantial stake in Saudi Arabia. Eddy proceeded to give details of how the US had in mind ambitious plans to modernise the Kingdom. The US would seek to implement 'costly projects', building up infrastructure, promoting education and expanding the earlier work at the US Agricultural Mission in Al Kharj.[11] This stress on 'soft power' was made even more apparent at the time with the arrival of Nils E. Lind as a cultural attaché to the American legation in Jeddah.[12] To show his sincerity, the final point that Eddy made to his British colleague was that the US was 'prepared to force legislation through Congress, which would assure a continuity of their benevolent policy towards this country [Saudi Arabia]'.[13]

In conjunction with Eddy's message on the US objectives in Saudi Arabia, revelations that pointed squarely towards the postwar world, the British authorities took stock of their relations with their wartime ally. A Foreign Office memorandum from September 1944 tried to assess this new sense of American urgency:

> Colonel Eddy is a man of weight and experience and the account he gave of American intentions based on his recent discussions with Mr. Cordell Hull and the State Department suggests to me that it may be

> time for H.M.G. to reconsider the whole basis of Anglo-American collaboration in Saudi Arabia.[14]

Hearing this, Stanley Jordan offered a bold proposal in return. He suggested that the Kingdom should be split into two geographic spheres of British and American influence respectively. In many respects, Jordan's idea ran along the lines of the Iranian model where separate British and Soviet sectors of influence had been established during World War II.[15] Looking at the new map proposed by Jordan, the Nejd region in the eastern part of Saudi Arabia, where the oil concessions lay, would be under American influence. Meanwhile Britain, with the Empire's millions of Muslim subjects, would oversee the Hedjaz, Saudi Arabia's shoreline on the Red Sea, the home of Islam's Holy Mecca and Medina.

After further scrutiny, Jordan's plan went unheeded since it contradicted the established aims of British policy. Namely, by dividing the Kingdom in sectors, it would reverse the hard-fought 'Pax Saudica', which had taken Ibn Saud years to forge and continued to be an integral aspect of the stability of Pax Britannica in the region. Two months before his assassination at the hands of Zionist extremists, Britain's Minister Resident of the Middle East Lord Moyne, noted that if the British government was unwilling to develop the Hedjaz on a scale similar to the US, then the discrepancy between British and American power would only become further magnified. This is a charge that Jordan was ready to accept himself that from such a policy 'we might lay ourselves open to the charges of disinterestedness in the Moslem Holy Land'.[16]

From his perch in Cairo, writing to the Foreign Office, Moyne noticed the irony that the US, in their haste for action, was becoming too 'colonial' and 'paternal in their attitude to Saudi Arabia'.[17] Moyne warned 'that a fanatical Moslem population does not take the same view of the blessings of American civilisation as they do themselves'.[18] Having a similar vantage point, the Foreign Office shot back that the Americans would cease their blustering in Saudi Arabia, 'only when they themselves cry enough'.[19] At the same time, it is important to stress that British officialdom did not in any way refute the US presence in Saudi Arabia. They took it as part of a greater American commitment in the Middle East region that would benefit British security. For this chief reason, Lord Moyne was still able to overlook the US's 'somewhat ill-judged philanthropic policy' towards Saudi Arabia, believing that if Britain attempted to block such a venture, it

would be detrimental to the general health of Anglo-American relations.[20] In his final evaluation, Moyne emphasised the need to work well with the Americans:

> One cannot object to what they are doing, but I feel one might object to the way they are doing it. Would with a little consultation and cooperation be more in the spirit of the Anglo-U.S. alliance and couldn't a suggestion of this be made to Washington from FO?[21]

For other British officials, such as Moyne's Chief of Staff William Croft, the need for Anglo-American co-operation was given a lower profile. The prospect of the US being able to throw around largesse and implement such ambitious polices in the Kingdom was still viewed with a healthy amount of scepticism. Predicting the likelihood of a postwar global economic depression, any chance of large-scale American development projects would be thwarted, never mind projects launched in a hinterland like Saudi Arabia.[22] Croft declared that eventually, the Treasury in Washington, would take the reins of American policy towards Saudi Arabia, and 'the curtain will fall on the fairy godmother act'.[23]

Since Saudi Arabia's independence, Britain's policy with regard to the Kingdom had been based on the strategic premise of ensuring the status quo, but what the US was now suggesting seemed to go against that. It was one thing to subsidise Ibn Saud during difficult wartime conditions, but trying to remake the Kingdom into 'Main Street USA' was something wholly different. For their part, the British had good reason to feel this way seeing as there were signs of trouble that autumn. An Aramco employee accidently ran over and killed a Saudi Arabian in his jeep, but complicating matters was the fact that the case was controversially handled beyond the reach of Saudi Arabian jurisdiction. From the position of the American legation, this kind of extraterritoriality was potentially a diplomatic minefield. 'An American Judge' William Eddy asserted 'might seem to be another symbol of foreign ascendancy' forcing the king to be more reluctant in his dealing with the US.[24] After the event, Eddy's deputy, Parker Hart warned that: 'American relations with Arabs in this region, while cordial, are skating on thin ice.'[25]

In his searing critique of Saudi–American relations, Robert Vitalis has claimed that there was more to American policies than just extending greater aid. They were in fact a building block towards something far more

ominous, an American imperialist subculture in Saudi Arabia, in which a Jim Crow system was gradually instituted in the American treatment of Saudi-Arabian nationals.[26] From the opposite end of the spectrum, D. Van der Meulen, who at this time was the Dutch Ambassador in Jeddah, made the point that American oversensitivity towards Saudi Arabian culture caused more harm than good. It led them to make the mistake of entering 'the religious Arabia of the Wahhabis without introducing their own religion'.[27] By demonstrating no signs of religious life of their own, the American approach lent itself to accusations of being superficially materialistic or worse, irredeemably atheistic. What this meant was that a soft touch could go a long way for American officials, but putting on kid gloves helped no one.

It seems therefore that British officialdom was neither paranoid nor jealous in sensing the possibility of an impending culture clash if America continued to proceed on its hurried path. As we have seen, there were more reasons than not for London to endorse the expansion of American influence, but for the benefit of both British and American long-term interests, they wanted it done the right way.

This aside, the type of 'benign' liberal internationalist foreign policy proposed by William Eddy was not the sole provenance of the US, but was also key to future British policy in seeking to reclaim lost influence in the emerging new liberal postwar order. For Lord Moyne, unlike the Americans, HMG exercised just the right amount of nous, having set the precedent in advancing the conditions of 'backward peoples', through schemes like the British Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940.[28] An added arm of Britain's 'soft power', this time solely focusing on the Middle East, was the British Council on Anglo-Arab Cultural Relations (BCAACR). Chaired by C.W. Baxter, head of the Eastern Department in the Foreign Office, the BCAACR possessed a budget of £3,500,000 in 1944 with the purpose of setting up Arab training centres for British personnel, the formation of agricultural colleges, the organisation of archaeological activities and finally the encouragement of English as a second language in all Middle Eastern countries. The organisation functioned to strengthen Anglo-Arab relations through cultural exchange, but was also a shrewder and discreet way of maintaining British influence in the Middle East, without leaving the heavy footprint of empire.[29]

Starting in 1943, educational materials, sports equipment, English books and cartoon films were sent to Saudi Arabia through the British

legation, and rather surprisingly, Ibn Saud had openly welcomed the initiative.[30] Indeed, when it came to this kind of aid, an official working for the British Council, happily noted that Saudi Arabians were 'somewhat suspicious of the American interests and would much prefer to rely upon England'.[31] Still, Foreign Office officials like RMA Hankey impressed upon the folly of Anglo-American cultural activities of this stripe turning into a competition in Saudi Arabia. He reiterated the importance of each country's efforts to be 'complementary' to one another.[32]

In other areas, whereas once Britain had led talks about financial reform in Saudi Arabia, British authorities were now hesitant to tackle the issue to avoid acting overly imperious. For example, when Ibn Saud turned to Britain in November 1944 to finally provide him with a financial adviser, London turned down the king's request.[33] At this point in time, Neville Butler stressed the need to preserve the status quo and claimed that Ibn Saud was 'too old to change his ways at this late stage in his career'.[34] Furthermore, the resentment that would be stoked by Saudi Arabian officials having to take advice from a British financial adviser would, according to Neville Butler, 'outweigh any good achieved'.[35] It had also been found out that the whole idea of a financial adviser was the brainchild of Stanley Jordan and not King Ibn-Saud.[36] Therefore, Jordan had evidently lied when he cabled London that the king had eagerly told him that his country's financial administration was 'like date palm wood whereas I wish it to be as sound as steel and only the British can help me in this respect'.[37]

Yet the leading motive behind the Foreign Office's decision not to send a financial adviser was its aversion to alienating the US. As William Croft explained it, from the time of the Stettinius Mission, London 'began to put greater weight on Anglo-American relations than anything else and, consequently, Britain's relationship with the US altered in Saudi Arabia'.[38] By backing off from the financial advisor issue, it was sensed that this friendly forfeiture would in the long run benefit inter-allied co-operation, and more importantly from the British standpoint, serve as a 'useful stick to beat the Americans with in future'.[39]

With that being said, entering 1945, the British government was not ready to follow the US's advocacy of providing more subsidies to Saudi Arabia. Before Roosevelt and Churchill were scheduled to meet with Ibn Saud that February, the Foreign Office advised the prime minister not to

'broach the subsidy question' with the American president. In response, Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden wrote to Churchill shortly afterwards that he had come to the conclusion that continuing to subsidise Ibn Saud on a large-scale made little economic or political sense. He did not want Saudi Arabia to return to the harsh economic conditions of 1939, but at the same time he was fully aware that Riyadh's yearly income had increased and was now 'at least four times higher than immediately before the war'.[40] If that was not enough said Eden, it was wholly illogical for Britain to increase its subsidy, considering 'the view of our foreign financial problem'.[41] Sterling balances were at a tipping point. One report from December 1944 showed that to provide the pre-war level of imports needed by the United Kingdom, British exports would need to increase by 50 per cent.[42] Finally, reiterating another persistent theme of British policy, Eden fully understood that freeing the king from Allied subsidies would be the best way to strengthen 'Ibn Saud's prestige'.[43] Having continually viewed the 'Special Relationship' with a critical eye, it was natural for Eden to disagree with the Americans on the subject of Britain raising its subsidy contribution.[44]

Over the course of the spring 1945 however, the attitude of British and American policy makers toward the subsidy question began to soften. On 17 April 1945, the British Embassy in Washington sent a memorandum to the State Department, stating that it was time for a 'broad policy' regarding the subsidy question to be arrived at by both parties.[45] Shortly before the US government came to an agreement with its British counterparts, the director of the Office of War Mobilization, undersecretary of the Navy, and assistant secretary of War met with The Division of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) officials to reaffirm their commitment to Anglo-American co-operation.

Unsurprisingly, this diverse group of American policy makers took a more expansive view of the issue and looked beyond the parochial tensions existing between British and American officials on the ground. They told their NEA colleagues that British officials would: 'be delighted to have the US Government interested materially in Saudi Arabia, would welcome our cooperation, and that we have nothing to fear from the British.'[46]

By July 1945, in this atmosphere of evolving accord, Britain and the US had reached a compromise in the form of an Anglo-American joint subsidy programme in Saudi Arabia for the upcoming calendar year. Worth more than $10 million, the finer points of the programme included essential

supplies such as 50,000 tons of cereals, 6,871,000 yards of textiles, 8,500 tyres, $114,000-worth of automobile parts, 300 tons of sugar, 120 tons of tea, plus all of the expenses paid for Saudi Arabia's worldwide diplomatic missions.[47] The British contribution had fallen precipitously to almost one-half of the contribution that it made in 1944.[48] Realising that London was unwilling to participate in a joint programme that went over a threshold of $10 million, the US added its own bonus programme, which consisted of minted Saudi riyals worth more than $3 million, plus an array of supply items, such as trucks, writing paper, farm equipment, radio equipment, distillation plants, passenger cars, and additional items requested by Saudi Arabian officials.[49]

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Having succeeded Stanley Jordan as British minister to Saudi Arabia in February 1945, Laurence Grafftey-Smith was reminded by his superiors that a significant part of his modus operandi was to bridge the gap that had appeared in Anglo-American relations under Jordan's stewardship.[50] Not at all like a 'Colonel Blimp' stereotype, Grafftey-Smith had been known to be progressive given his support of the Labour Party, a rare bird in the Conservative flock of the British diplomatic corps. The American legation welcomed him openly with William Eddy happily observing: 'what an improvement over his predecessor.'[51] Shortly after his arrival, Grafftey-Smith, much like Jordan, also questioned the haste of the US approach: 'The Americans seem to be buying many friends in Arabia, and if our policy ever becomes unwelcome to the Arabs, we have little to rely on to stop American influence.'[52]

What is interesting is that while Grafftey-Smith worried about the decline of British power, throughout this period American officials thought the same thing about their own. 'Too little and too late!' claimed Major Harry R. Snyder, American military attaché to Cairo and Jeddah, lamenting what he alleged to be the incoherence of American policy in the Kingdom that had been evident since the summer of 1944. Speaking to Leonard Parker of the NEA, Snyder could not hide his displeasure, warning frantically that the 'stakes in Saudi Arabia are so great that our cousins will stop at nothing to discredit and outbid us'.[53] Suspicious of the British government's motives, Snyder's sentiment however was running counter to an NEA report that had been written by Parker. This outlined the key elements of US policy towards Saudi Arabia, in which the importance of

continuing 'to cooperate with Britain [...]' was one of the main points emphasised.[54] Snyder's frustrations were less about him being anti-British, and more about what he perceived as the lack of US nuance in the face of shrewd British diplomacy. In March 1945, Snyder insisted that it was:

> humiliating and downright infuriating to see our country outmaneuvered [*sic*] simply because our ponderous machinery in Washington grinds so slowly [...] the whole fabric of our prestige and position is breaking down, and if the United States wants anything in Saudi Arabia, somebody had better do something at once.[55]

Outbursts like these were common during the wartime period, fuelling the notion that American officials were constantly outfoxed by their wily British 'cousins'. The Division of Public Liaison compiled a report to try to gain a sense of the American public's view on the performance of the State Department. 'This country raises politicians not diplomats [...] those slick fellows across the pond [the British] can buy and sell our boys anytime', said one interviewee.[56] This notion of British superiority in matters of high diplomacy was particularly felt in the Middle East. Like Synder, Harold Hoskins also at this time noted that his visit 'made more clear [*sic*] the outstanding weakness of US foreign policy in the Middle East – its apparent lack of continuity, its uncertainty and, at times, its inconsistency.' Hoskins poignantly noted that British foreign policy, on the other hand, appeared more grounded regardless of the winds of political change back in the United Kingdom and this lent the British a sense of 'influence and prestige [...] as compared with the US'.[57]

Indeed, the British conveyed a deep sense of permanence in Saudi Arabia, which the Americans, except for the ARAMCO oilmen, were unable to match. William Eddy was of the opinion that the Saudi Arabians whispered that the few American officials inside the country would leave once the war ended 'and cannot therefore be dealt with seriously in commerce or politics'. He condemned his American colleagues at the NEA over their wariness of accepting diplomatic postings in the Kingdom. This gave Ibn Saud the impression that once World War II ended, the Americans would return to being minor players in the region, and it would be a much better policy for him to keep his long-term and tested association with the British in good order.[58]

Some of the weaker areas of American diplomacy had been made abundantly clear in April 1944, when a shipment of riyals for the Saudi Arabian government, minted in the US, had arrived in Jeddah. Although Britain had delivered its subsidies for years and proceeded without affectation, the American delivery party in contrast comprised of a detachment of no less than 21 US Army officials, including a group of photographers. Saudi Arabian officials did not appreciate the fanfare. Hearing reports about it, James Landis described the mission to Dean Acheson as 'pretty much a flop'.[59] Likewise, Kermit Roosevelt, who was visiting Jeddah on his own Middle East mission for the OSS, had witnessed this bungling and had his own choice words: 'One must remember the Arabs have been receiving subsidies from outsiders for generations.' According to Roosevelt, the objective of the shipment delivery was 'calculated to improve US relations with the Government [Saudi Arabia] and people of SA [...] the purpose should not be that of seeking to place an article or pictures in *Life* or *Time* Magazine'.[60]

As late as October 1944, the total amount of Lend-Lease extended to the Saudi Arabian government by the Americans totalled $11,100,930. Regardless of this money sent to his country, Ibn Saud never fully forgot America's failure to lend him sufficient financial aid in 1941. The king made sure that William Eddy did not forget this point either when he met the American minister. 'Whom can I rely? I cannot afford to antagonize the British', the king fumed to Eddy. The American contingent was caught unaware, taken aback by the king's force of feeling.[61] In this particular instance, Ibn Saud was upset that a shipment of minted riyals worth $2,000,000 that his government had purchased from the US on credit was behind schedule and would not arrive in time for that year's Hajj.[62] Coming to the rescue was the British legation. In collaboration with the shipping company, Gellatly Hankey, British authorities quickly organised an emergency loan for the Saudi Arabian government.[63] Although the American deliveries arrived in due time, the bureaucratic ineffectiveness and mistakes in communication gave the impression that the US was not sufficiently troubled during a time when the Kingdom's needs were so urgent.[64] In these cases, the Foreign Office realised that, despite its own doubts of losing influence to the Americans, the British government was still in a 'happy position' in that a 'cardinal point' of the king's own foreign policy was his view that Britain was the only power on which he could fully rely.[65]

## Ibn Saud's Request for a Military Mission

As American and British officials weighed the benefits of their collaboration in Saudi Arabia, the Stettinius talks in April 1944 had made sure to note that 'prompt consideration' be given to establishing a joint Anglo-American military mission to assist Ibn Saud in training a 'modern Saudi Arabian Army'.[66] Other neutral nations in the region, such as Turkey and Afghanistan, had also at this time requested military missions from the Allies.[67] Plans to jointly establish these kinds of military missions presented a host of challenges for British and American officials, namely that the martial elements attached to it offered a perception of a nation's power. Ibn Saud's request for a military mission has not been a prominent part of the subject's historiography, despite its place as major turning point in the development of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia.[68]

The plans for providing Ibn Saud with a military mission had their origins in December 1943. Major General Ralph Royce of the US Armed Forces in the Middle East (USAFIME) had travelled to Saudi Arabia to discuss the king's military supply needs.[69] That same month British and American officials preliminarily agreed to furnish the Kingdom with more than $2 million-worth of military equipment, split equally between the two powers.[70] In March 1944, Royce, alongside his successor Brigadier General Benjamin F. Giles, met again with Ibn Saud to further discuss the nuts and bolts of the Anglo-American joint supply programme. During their conversation, the king asked Colonel Royce if the US would establish an American mission that would train the Saudi Arabian army.[71] Although the generals' visit was a glaring example of American influence emerging from the shadow cast by its wartime ally, afterwards in his report, Royce stressed the upshot of the US working side by side with the British.[72] He advocated that for the upcoming mission, the US should instruct the Saudi Arabian army in the use of equipment, which was to be 'furnished on a combined basis' with British military officials.[73]

Key American officials back in Washington seconded Royce's view. For instance, Henry Stimson thought that separate British and American military missions in Saudi Arabia might give the wrong impression by suggesting Allied disunity. Dividing the mission into separate British and American entities, according to Stimson, would pose a grave risk of 'Balkanizing' the Saudi Arabian army into competing American and

British factions. Again, establishing separate missions played right into Ibn Saud's hands, as the Secretary of War saw it, pitting the two allies in opposition to the other 'as a means of obtaining the assistance he desires'.[74] Now that Saudi Arabia was starting to play a greater part in America's grand strategy, Stimson – in response to the talk of a military mission – wrote to Cordell Hull in May 1944 stating: 'It is the opinion of the War Department that it would be highly desirable to establish a definite policy of Anglo-American cooperation in affairs pertaining to Saudi Arabia, based on an understanding that the interests of both nations will be mutually respected.'[75]

A month later, the State Department approved a plan that would allow London to take part and help organise a mission that would train Saudi Arabian armed forces under joint Anglo-American auspices.[76] From the very start however, the British government was not sold on the military mission idea. On one level, helping Ibn Saud in this capacity still held a range of strategic benefits for Britain. The Foreign Office understood the advantages that came with the mission as the US would be 'heavily committed in the defence of Saudi Arabia and therefore of the Middle East generally'.[77] Furthermore, taking part in the military mission afforded Britain the opportunity to smooth over any hurt feelings with the king that may have accrued from the recent decision to decrease Britain's financial commitment to Saudi Arabia. Indeed, Stanley Jordan professed that if British officials did not participate, Ibn Saud would interpret it as Britain surrendering its influence in the Kingdom.[78] Jordan had informed the Foreign Office that shortly after Royce's visit in March, Ibn Saud had secretly told him that the 'Americans were prepared to train his army but that he looked to us for the assistance he required'.[79] Warning the Foreign Office, Jordan wrote: 'I cannot stress too strongly the importance' that Ibn Saud attached to receiving military experts, and a British refusal 'would cause him grave disappointment'.[80]

At the same time however, policy makers back in London also appreciated the intricacies that might arise from supplying Ibn Saud with a military mission. For a start, they were uneasy about the possibility of a clash between cultures. What might be the result of fielding a military mission composed of 'Christian elements' in the home of Islam? At the Foreign Office, Thomas Wikeley made this keen observation when he noted: 'we could perhaps point out that it is a question of balancing the advantage of obtaining some trained Saudi pilots against the disadvantage

of having a lot of non-Moslem pilots flying about the country and possibly violating the sanctity of the Holy Places.'[81] Moreover, such a venture would deliver a propaganda coup to Ibn Saud's Arab rivals and even the Axis powers. The king could easily be charged with handing the Holy Places over to foreign interests.[82]

These were the good reasons why British authorities assumed that Ibn Saud had been reluctant to agree to US military officials training Saudi soldiers because, unlike the British, the Americans had no Sunni Moslem officers to send at their disposal. Although Simon Davis has quoted William Eddy, praising the 'professional success' of the US military men in Saudi Arabia in an attempt to make the point of American ascendancy, during the same period Eddy had his own doubts about their ability to mingle with Saudi officials.[83] When Eddy had first visited Saudi Arabia in April 1944, he witnessed a small band of American personnel under the command of Colonel Garrett Shomber, who were in the country to deliver a small cache of military equipment to Saudi Arabian authorities. After the transaction Eddy had come to the conclusion that the local reaction to the American presence was 'not too good'.[84] It was incidents like this which led the Foreign Office to believe that only British soldiers were 'capable of establishing just that sort of informal and friendly understanding which the Arabs appreciated'.[85]

Regardless of their confidence however, British officials wanted to assist Ibn Saud militarily only up to a certain point. Under no conditions did they want to give the Saudi Arabian king the tools to act aggressively, say against other British allies in the Middle East, such as the Hashemite kingdoms. Indeed, there was a creeping awareness in London that if Ibn Saud attacked Iraq over unresolved borders issues, treaty obligations would mean that Britain would be bound to favour the former in 'active opposition to the American backing the Saudis'.[86] The Foreign Office fired off a missive to the American Embassy in London that summer articulating this view, agreeing that Ibn Saud should be sent sufficient materiel, while reiterating that military training and provision of arms that went beyond the narrow scope of internal security in Saudi Arabia would be a serious mistake:

> In the first place, it is impossible to foretell how these arms might be used in the period of political uncertainty in Arabia which is likely to follow in Ibn Saud's death. Secondly, the acquisition by Ibn Saud of

> large quantities of area might very easily have the effect of alarming neighbouring countries. Thirdly, there is the probability that the arms would be smuggled into Palestine.[87]

With that being said, the British government, still finalised the substantial Anglo-American military supply programme for Saudi Arabia in 1944 that included: 50 light reconnaissance cars, 500 light machine guns, 10,000 rifles and ammunition.[88]

The third reason for the lack of British enthusiasm towards the joint Allied military mission was that it was deemed impractical. It is true that Britain and the US had been successful in relation to Operation Overlord in the summer of 1944, a feat that the historian Max Hastings called 'the greatest organization achievement of World War II', but fighting alongside one another and assimilating each nation's military personnel to train a third party's army was an entirely different matter.[89] For this sort of assignment, the two allies had their own distinct protocols, guidelines and equipment, which were not always interchangeable. As Stanley Jordan's successor, Laurence Grafftey-Smith saw things, an Anglo-American joint military mission was a problematic proposition, largely due to the fog materialising from 'two different sets of equipment and the two, no doubt, divergent conceptions of, and what, the Saudis were to be taught'.[90]

The Anglo-American joint military mission was withdrawn largely as a result of Britain's own misgivings. It is important to note however that the fourth and final justification for opposing it was that British officials like Grafftey-Smith felt that it would have a detrimental impact on Anglo-American relations. 'The disadvantage of a joint mission, and to a lesser extent, of two separate missions', said Grafftey-Smith, 'is that there would probably be a certain amount of rivalry between the two teams'.[91] Therefore, when in November 1944, Saudi Arabia's Minister of Defence Amir Mansour (Ibn Saud's son) had requested sole British assistance in reorganising Saudi Arabia's armed forces under traditional British lines, much like the Arab Legion in Transjordan, the British declined Mansour's request highlighted the delicate political balancing act underlying the military mission issue. Much like the considerations surrounding Ibn Saud's request for a financial advisor, if the mission was supplied to the Saudi Arabian authorities, the British Legation in Jeddah was under the impression that American officials in response would react 'most violently'.[92]

Consequently, London buried its head in the sand, but a small British mission appeared outside Jeddah in the mountain city of Taif in February 1945.[93] This was largely a symbolic gesture, designed to placate the Saudi Arabian government without aggravating the US, and was quickly dismantled.[94] The wider political pressures of maintaining transatlantic harmony had always encompassed British thinking in Saudi Arabia. On this specific occasion, they acquiesced to the Americans in the hope that by doing so, this would bring them closer together.

## The Dhahran Airfield and the New Frontiers of Anglo-American Relations

As Britain and the US found implementing a joint Anglo-American military mission in Saudi Arabia unfeasible, they also stumbled on another knotty issue, the US desire to construct an airfield in Dhahran.[95] In terms of magnitude, the strides in aviation that had been made by World War II allowed countries to bring together their diverse points of influence around the globe into a single integrated system. With the Allied war effort continuing apace, building an airfield in Saudi Arabia had the unintended effect of further blurring the lines of what constituted civil and military aviation How far was it related to the military exigency, or the exclusive objective of long-term national planning? In some respects, the historian Alan Dobson is not guilty of hyperbole when he calls Anglo-American aviation rivalry during World War II the 'Other Air-Battle'.[96]

The US government's scheme to construct an airfield in Dhahran had its origins in the Allied search for air routes in Saudi Arabia in 1942. We now know that this was a moment when Britain and the US had worked closely together under an Anglo-American umbrella. As in 1942, the Americans turned once again to Britain for diplomatic assistance when seeking Ibn Saud's consent to construct an airfield in Dhahran.

In June 1944, Major General Donald H. Connolly of the USAFIME had been told by his superiors in Washington that in relation to the airfield 'a British officer would visit King Ibn Saud and represent combined American and British interests'. Almost immediately however, the American Legation in Jeddah wondered openly if the British-led proposal was going to be presented to the king as an Anglo-American joint venture, or as separate British and American initiatives. Soon thereafter, news came that Ibn Saud had rejected the American proposals while rumours emerged

that the British legation in their discussions with Ibn Saud had unilaterally, without Washington's knowledge, requested permission to build an airfield of their own. Taking this story to be the truth, in Connolly's view, the 'choice of having a field of our own, or sharing one with the British, gives rise to no doubt in my mind, the former is preferable'.[97]

In one of his first orders of business as American minister, Eddy sought to get to the bottom of this mystery to see if Connolly's accusations of British meddling in the airfield affair were true. He found no evidence of a British officer ever visiting Riyadh, possessing the authority to represent both American and British interests, or for that matter, that British representatives had prejudiced the USAFIME airfield request. Yet, in October 1944, there was a curious episode in which the new American consulate in Dhahran reported that a British survey party from Bahrain was inquiring about 'aerodromes' and were calling themselves 'technicians'.[98] Eddy was adamant that the British survey team's appearance was an 'unfriendly act constituting anti-American coercion of Saudi Government and restriction to Allied War effort'.[99] Commenting on the British provocation in Dhahran, Eddy from his spot as the new American minister, wryly noted 'perhaps it is a test of equal opportunities for US and British cooperation in Saudi Arabia'.[100] Like Connolly, Eddy was now strongly committed to the US operating its own airfields, without having to share facilities with the British.[101]

There were influential American voices who took a noticeably different view. Wallace Murray let it be known to Adolf Berle that the charges laid out against the British survey team were baseless, and that British authorities had by no means pressured Ibn Saud into refusing the American request for airfields.[102] Murray's superior however, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, remained suspicious of British manoeuvring. He claimed that the latest airfield saga, which had caused considerable controversy, was evidence of Britain reverting to '"dog eat dog" policies'.[103] Writing to the American Ambassador in London, John Winant, on 17 October 1944, Hull opined: 'A covert contest which begins to assume unpleasant proportions is prevailing over airfields in the Middle East.' Hull asked Winant in London to speak to Anthony Eden to inform him that the airfield saga had 'made an extremely painful impression here Washington'. Evidence of Britain's unilateralism, no matter how faint, disappointed the Americans because it was interpreted as contradictory to the spirit of the Stettinius declaration.[104]

That October, not to be outdone, the British government accused William Eddy of acting in an underhanded fashion. Eddy had alerted the British legation that the US military aircraft would no longer carry civilian personnel en route from Jeddah to Cairo who were not directly related to the war effort.[105] Not surprisingly, British officials were affronted by Eddy's comment, viewing it not only as an insult from an ally, but also as very foolish. Commanding General of USAFIME Benjamin F. Giles would later overrule Eddy's decision, but British officials were more exasperated that the American minister had been seeking out greater air rights for the US from the king without informing the British legation. Indeed in their estimation, Eddy was acting dishonestly, using the airfield issue as a smokescreen to acquire civil air rights in Saudi Arabia for the American airline, Trans World Airlines (TWA).

British officials like Captain C.E. Colbeck, the military attaché of the British legation in Jeddah, complained that 'it is fortunate that we now know he [Colonel Eddy] is prepared to misrepresent the position in order to further his own case'.[106] Later, Laurence Grafftey-Smith would suggest to London that it could also play Eddy's devious game, by organising it so that the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC) could make a proposal to equip Ibn Saud with 'a small civil aviation unit for passenger/freight transport within Saudi Arabia'.[107] In Washington, Paul Alling sought to placate British authorities by trying to explain away the American minister's indiscretion. He stated that Eddy's request for civil air rights had been couched – not solely as an American endeavour – but conveyed in terms of Anglo-American collaboration: 'We were thus, in effect, opening up the field to the British as well to an American.'[108] Although the flap over Eddy's actions had been unfortunate, American officialdom still stood behind the stated goals of the Stettinius talks. As such, the 'general policy of cooperation between Ministers in Saudi Arabia', said Alling, 'remained unchanged, so far as we were concerned'.[109]

British officials did not take kindly to Eddy's subterfuge, but they did agree with him that the US had a right to establish its own commercial aviation interests. Simon Davis has explained the air issue in terms of subservience, stating that: 'British diplomats in Washington sacrificed [...] civil aviation in search for broader Anglo-American harmony.'[110] Yet, the issue has to be placed within the wider political context of the time. It needs to be considered in light of the International Aviation Conference that had taken place in Chicago in November–December 1944 during

which 54 nations sought to 'make arrangements for the immediate establishment of provisional world air routes and services'.[111] From there, the British and US governments began negotiations with Riyadh on the question of Fifth Freedom Rights in Saudi Arabia, which pertained to liberalising rules concerning the right of one nation to fly to another nation. Though at times quarrelsome, the fact that the US had a foot in the door with regard to Saudi Arabia's civil aviation sphere was largely considered a fait accompli, which explains why the issue never became truly combative. Indeed, a year later in 1945, the NEA would concede that it was in the long-term interest of the US to strive to collaborate with Britain on air right issues in Saudi Arabia on equal and open terms.[112]

One notices Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia in the autumn of 1944 bouncing between discord and reconciliation as another tangential issue further complicated the Dhahran airfield matter. Similar to the East India Company of the previous century, the British company Cable & Wireless Ltd was synonymous with British imperialism. Its technological innovations had helped London communicate with its immense worldwide empire.[113] Since 1927, in return for Britain's recognition of his independence, Ibn Saud had among other things granted Cable & Wireless Ltd a concession to provide electronic communication throughout the nascent state. Although this arrangement was monopolistic in nature, the king renewed the British contract throughout the 1930s and 1940s without concerning himself with the growing American presence in his kingdom.[114] In October 1944, American complaints were raised that Cable & Wireless Ltd only served Britain and its imperial byways while excluding Saudi Arabia's contact with US. This was a major problem because the American legation in Jeddah could not use the system. At this stage it did not possess equipment with mechanical or electronic encryption. What's more, rather than discussing the issue with his British counterpart, Eddy complained directly to Ibn Saud, a move that for a short time added another rift to the issue.

After hearing of the incident, Wallace Murray apologised to his British colleagues over Eddy's lack of protocol. He acknowledged that his actions, past and present, had been counterproductive to facilitate a spirit of Anglo-American co-operation. He did mention however that strategic communications in this area of the world were now an essential part of American national security.[115] Seeking to be good allies, the British were willing to accept a modification to the Cable & Wireless Ltd

agreement.[116] Even Stanley Jordan acknowledged that 'because of an exclusive concession to Cable & Wireless Ltd, our critics here will be given a concrete issue on which to attack us'. Placing Anglo-American co-operation squarely first, Jordan agreed that the US had made a reasonable request, and that it was a 'matter of interest to us both in the prosecution of the war and as a matter of one Ally helping the other'.[117] The contretemps in the end was resolved that October, when Cable & Wireless made its services available to the American legation in Jeddah, the consulate in Dhahran and the facilities of ARAMCO.[118]

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Even once the civil air rights and telecommunications issues were resolved, the scholar James Gormly has argued that in attempting to build the Dhahran airfield, US officials still viewed, 'the British [. . .] as the major obstacle'.[119] As early as October 1944 however, the British embassy in Washington was the main source of inspiration offering the best advice to the Americans on the best means to procure London's support. Counsellor of the British Embassy Michael Wright, working in close collaboration with Wallace Murray, stated to him that it was imperative to stress to the authorities in London the military necessity of the airfield. 'Make no mention of any postwar civil aviation rights since that would be sure to cause endless delay in London', claimed Wright.[120] British Air Marshall Chief of the Middle East Sir Charles Medhurst had originally opposed American plans for a military field in Dhahran believing that British bases in the area would be adequate when the centre of gravity of the Allied war effort shifted to the Pacific.[121] That same October the War Department therefore made the case that the RAF-controlled airbase in Bahrain – located on the island of Muhrak – was unsuitable for this task. They explained to the British authorities that the airbase was too small and expansion was impossible. The ground on the island was made up of unstable deposits of fossiliferous and sea shell lime. Instead, Dhahran was a much more desirable location, allowing for an estimated 2,000 landings for military-related activities a month.[122] From their discussions with the British military authorities in the Middle East, the War Department had sharpened its analysis of the British government's regional concerns when it came to an American airfield in Dhahran. In a memorandum drafted for Paul Alling on 22 November 1944, the War Department explained:

> Should the British be concerned about possible desires for Saudi Arabian interests on the part of nations other than Great Britain and the US, it seems reasonable to expect that they would willing to aid in securing the King's approval for an entirely American military air field at Dhahran which could used by British aircraft, if necessary.[123]

Not wanting to alienate its two Allied benefactors, the Saudi Arabian government would prefer, said Alling, that if an airfield was to be operated by the US, it would likely only be granted under joint Anglo-American tenancy.[124] Again, Alling's appeal exhibits that beyond the squabbles, the State Department recognised that American policy in Saudi Arabia was still intimately connected to the continuity of British influence. Indeed, here you have a remarkable example of British and American officials – Wright, Murray and Alling – skilfully working together to overcome bureaucratic obstacles, all to advance Anglo-American co-operation.

In January 1945, hoping to receive Riyadh's preferential treatment with regards to gaining approval for an airfield in Dhahran, President Roosevelt attempted to sweeten the deal by approving in principle the State and War Departments and Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC) plan. This suggested creating an air mission headed by Colonel Voris Connor, which would help train Saudi pilots and ground crew, as well as offering equipment and medical assistance.[125] Yet, American officials were accused of falling into the old pattern of not notifying the British legation in Jeddah of this latest gambit. Some scholars have used this bit of information to attack the notion that Britain and the US were allies in Saudi Arabia in the first months of 1945, but this particular event has been largely misconstrued.[126] The State Department *did* in fact inform their British counterparts, but only the ones in Washington. Wallace Murray disclosed to Michael Wright that the reason for this concealment was specifically laid at the door of Stanley Jordan's 'generally uncooperative attitude in the past'.[127] The irony is that there were British officials in Jeddah who responded positively hearing the news of American intentions, convinced that the US could function as a credible deterrent, contributing to British security in the Middle East. This is why C.E. Colbeck, writing to the Foreign Office, affirmed that Ibn Saud would be 'perfectly justified' in accepting American methods of training and experiencing first-hand modern aviation, communication and airfield development schemes.[128]

When considering the proposed Connor mission, it is important to note that the king did not immediately jump at the American offer. Instead, he alerted the British legation, consulting with them on the pros and cons of developing a closer relationship with the US authorities. The scholar Clive Leatherdale in his writings has tried to highlight the point that 'through diplomatic relations with the US Ibn Saud had found his counter-balance to Britain', but on this particular occasion, it was turned the other way round.[129] Laurence Grafftey-Smith, remained circumspect in his appraisal of the situation. Not wanting to compromise Ibn Saud's trust, the British legation in their dealings with American officials feigned ignorance of the US's unilateral offer. Laying heavy onus on the king's self-reliance, Grafftey-Smith took a subtle approach, advising Ibn Saud to do what was in his country's best interest.[130] The king felt that too much foreign military assistance as envisioned by the US would only raise the ire of his Wahhabist subjects. As a result, Ibn Saud turned down Washington's offer, an act that no doubt took American officialdom by surprise.[131]

American officials, notably acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew, blamed London for the king's decision, which aligns with the historiography's emphasis on confrontation.[132] Commenting on the subject, Simon Davis has taken the nuanced view of suggesting that American frustration came from Washington's secret hope that London's support would 'disguise US ambitions' from Saudi Arabian officials, who were becoming disenchanted about the scale of American intervention.[133] Inferring however that Britain was a political pawn in Washington's diplomatic game distorts the fact that British officials had ascended to a unique strategic position, serving as a diplomatic intermediary between their two close allies, the US and Ibn Saud.

When the next round of discussions on the Dhahran airfield went ahead in spring 1945, American officials in Jeddah were instructed to negotiate with the Saudi Arabian government only once Ibn Saud was informed that the British had finally acquiesced to the proposal.[134] Writing on the subject, the scholar Fred Lawson has stated that throughout this period, British officials 'voiced persistent opposition to the project'.[135] On 17 April 1945 however, Edward Stettinius informed US officials in Jeddah that the British Chiefs of Staff had come round to the American view and 'concur[red] in our proposal to construct a military airfield at Dhahran [...] and is prepared to support our case to King Abdul Aziz should we so request'. For their support, British forces in return would be granted fly over and landing privileges at the

airfield.[136] Less than a month later, British minister Laurence Grafftey-Smith met with the Saudi minister Yussef Yassin and prevailed upon him to secure his government's support of the construction of an airfield in Dhahran in view of 'its essential importance to the joint war effort in the Far East'.[137]

Still acknowledged as the leading hegemonic power in the Middle East, it was not in the interest of Ibn Saud to alienate Britain. Once the Saudi Arabian government had London's backing, construction and the Connor Mission were given the go-ahead that summer. American engineers would in the end complete the Dhahran airfield in May 1946. From this point onwards, what is interesting is that the airfield in Dhahran morphed into a transnational base, converting into one of the key pillars for Anglo-American security arrangements vis-à-vis the Soviet Union during the Cold War.[138] Summing up the Dhahran airfield episode, it is undeniable that the subject created a certain amount of consternation on both sides. Yet, writing about this event years later, Parker Hart, who by then was the American Vice Consul in Dhahran, reflected that British approval had opened the way for the US to gain an airfield, but also helped to achieve better Anglo-American co-operation.[139]

## Conclusion

The arrival in Saudi Arabia of William Eddy signalled that a new line in the sand had been drawn when it came to Anglo-American relations. In view of American policy makers reflecting how important Saudi Arabia had become to America's national security, Eddy had announced to his British colleagues that the US sought to expand its policies in Saudi Arabia. By September 1944, British officials had realised for quite some time that all forms of Anglo-American co-operation would have to go hand-in-hand with the US playing a significantly greater role in the affairs of Saudi Arabia. Although at times it seemed that American and British attitudes towards Saudi Arabia were moving in different directions, the search for greater Anglo-American co-operation carried on despite this.

A large part of the controversy arising from the main issues covered in this chapter stemmed from a fervent debate that had been the subject of discussions since 1941. What were the limits when it came to the scale of Anglo-American intervention in Saudi Arabia? At what point would it begin to weaken the authority of the Al-Saud, and thereby jeopardise

British and American interests? Other issues revolved around this same question, namely Ibn Saud's request for a military mission and the US aim to build an airfield in Dhahran. There was awareness in Washington that fulfilling Ibn Saud's request for a military mission was part of a wider national strategy in which aid in this form buttressed the Saudi–American partnership. British officials however saw things differently. A military mission of the nature that the US proposed would dilute the king's sovereign status, which would injure Britain's panoply of regional interests. On the other hand, the subject of building an American airfield in Dhahran had more to do with the wartime concern of supplying Allied military activities in the Pacific theatre. Both the US and Britain were wary of dealing with the airfield issue since it touched on more contentious debates like civil aviation, telecommunications and questions of regional power. Most striking however is that the historiography has played down the fact that the allies found diplomatic solutions, which would eventually resolve these areas of discord. The British government continued to be a strong influence in Saudi Arabia and in turn the US looked to the weight of its wartime ally's diplomatic power, viewing it as an effective channel to gain Ibn Saud's acceptance to the airfield project. In return, for their part British forces were allowed free access to use the airfield, which cushioned Britain's own regional influence.

By no means was Anglo-American co-operation always a smooth or straight road. There is no doubt that Britain and the US worked together on some issues better than others in Saudi Arabia. Difference in policy priorities and the hegemonic implications attached to them sometimes made collaboration less than seamless. Although the high expectations laid out from the Stettinius Mission proved to be out of reach, the strategic interests of the US and Britain in Saudi Arabia continued to be correlative in character. In trying to find an effective arrangement for an Anglo-American partnership, shades of this continuing paradigm can be observed in the final chapter as World War II wound down and the two allies faced the new and fast approaching challenge of the postwar world.

# CHAPTER 7

# WADI: ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN SAUDI ARABIA IN 1945 AND THE POSTWAR WORLD

## Introduction

On 12 February 1945, with great public fanfare, President Roosevelt met Ibn Saud aboard the USS *Quincy* in Great Bitter Lake. Many historians have interpreted this single event as a crucial moment in the 'American Century', a century powered in part by Saudi Arabian oil, spelling the end of British influence.[1] Ever since, this rather simple and one dimensional interpretation has shaped what we thought we understood about the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia during World War II. This rendering however is too tidy and leaves little room for the context that surrounded the meeting. Quite the contrary, as this chapter will make clear, in the aftermath of the meeting, British power was by no means obsolescent, nor did it mark the end of Anglo-American interaction in Saudi Arabia.

Though Britain had lost some of its clout in the intervening war years, it was by no means a spent force. Its prestige in the Middle East constituted a main font of its strategic strength. Certainly, Washington still found London's influence to be irksome at times. American policy makers however could not deny the significant part that British statecraft continued to play in Saudi Arabia. As this chapter will show, even when pressures arose in 1945 over issues such as the king declaring war against Germany, or when Saudi Arabia joined the United Nations, it was the fact that close Anglo-American

consultation had not been adhered to that proved to be the main sticking point. Indeed, the transitory nature of international geopolitics at the time made it imperative for Britain and the US to hold fast to the idea that greater Anglo-American accord continued to be possible, especially in the uncertain political terrain that was the Middle East.

Given that Saudi Arabia's 'benevolent neutrality' had been a major factor in binding Britain and the US closer together in the Kingdom, more thought was given to the idea of whether this same benevolence could be applied to secure their collective interests in the postwar world. The final section of this chapter addresses this issue, which as the war wound down emerged as an overriding question. Crucially, Ibn Saud and Saudi Arabia now had a fresh role to play as early signs of the Cold War came into the picture, marking the political landscape of the Middle East. On both sides of the Atlantic, a firm belief remained that taken together, the influence of the US and the UK in Saudi Arabia, as well as throughout the Middle East, would play a key role in cementing security in the region in the future, if need be, against an expansionist Soviet Union. As a result, from the perspective of both London and Washington, this type of example of strategic interdependence linked Britain and the US together in Saudi Arabia, which grew to be a hallmark of the wider postwar international system.

## FDR and Churchill's Meeting with Ibn Saud

Following Roosevelt's meeting with Ibn Saud in February 1945, Neville Butler of the British Embassy in Washington wrote to Laurence Grafftey-Smith:

> The fact that President Roosevelt went out of his way to see Ibn Saud confirms what we have long known, namely that the Americans mean to interest themselves much more in Saudi Arabia than they have in the past; we cannot quarrel with that, provided they show a proper respect for our interests and observe the decencies, and do not try to restrict our legitimate activities in other parts of the world.[2]

Butler took this moment as a stepping stone for greater regional Anglo-American co-operation, but that same week, the American minister

William Eddy took away a different meaning from Roosevelt's visit. Nine years later in 1954, Eddy, writing in his hagiographic monograph *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud*, celebrated the Saudi–American union in the most glorious terms: 'This moral alliance, this willingness of Islam to face West and bind his fortunes to ours, symbolizes a consummation devoutly to be wished in the world today.' Eddy has often been cited as the main source of information on how events played out on Great Bitter Lake, but his interpretation should be questioned. He was, it should be said, the sole translator of the Ibn Saud and Roosevelt conversation.[3]

According to Eddy, the king had rhapsodised to him that President Roosevelt was the 'the spirit of benevolence and justice [...] an example of human perfection in the Twentieth Century'.[4] Eddy's account of Churchill's meeting with Ibn Saud on 17 February 1945 in Fayoum could not have been any more different. In a private audience on 20 February 1945, the king apparently told him:

> The contrast between the President and Mr. Churchill is very great. Mr. Churchill speaks deviously, evades understanding, and changes the subject to avoid commitment, forcing me repeatedly to bring him back to the point. The president seeks understanding in conversation his effort is to make the two minds meet; to dispel darkness and shed light upon the issue.[5]

What is most astounding about this missive is not what Ibn Saud apparently claimed, but that Eddy took his words so completely at face value. From the beginning, William Eddy grumbled that the British were trying 'to cap (if not capture) every American move in Saudi Arabia', and the king's meeting with the president was no different. Eddy declined Admiral Sir John Cunningham's offer to send a cruiser to Jeddah to transport Ibn Saud to the Canal Zone, viewing the British overture as suspicious.[6] When the king met with Churchill afterwards, Eddy scoffed that 'the British persisted in their determination to take over the royal party for a bigger and longer visit than he had made with the President of the US'.[7] Meanwhile, British minister Laurence Grafftey-Smith completely rejected Eddy's version of events. He later claimed that the 'meeting passed off very well' and that there had been no 'unpleasant debate' between the two men, partly because Churchill allowed Roosevelt to discuss the controversial issue of Palestine.[8]

Nevertheless, thanks to Eddy, scholars have felt it necessary to put particular emphasis on Churchill's alleged poor showing with the king. Other tittle-tattle type stories have added to Eddy's assessment. The State Department had organised gifts for Ibn Saud, which have attained semi-legendary status; a DC-10 aircraft and a gold-encrusted wheelchair for the king.[9] The Foreign Office, on the other hand, hastily arranged for a Rolls Royce to be presented to Ibn Saud. Although it seemed like an appropriate gift, the car's design unceremoniously forced Ibn Saud to sit on the passenger's side, which dishonoured Saudi Arabian social customs.[10]

Although this may all seem anecdotal, this version of events has nonetheless given symmetry to an important notion that the US had overtaken British influence in Saudi Arabia. Generations of Americans, who have found it in their interest to support their 'special relationship' with Saudi Arabia, continually refer back to the meeting between Roosevelt and Ibn Saud as a cornerstone of that alliance.[11] It is however entirely misleading to describe Roosevelt and Churchill's separate meetings with Ibn Saud as a referendum determining whether American or British influence would subsequently dominate in Saudi Arabia. By doing so, the study of Anglo-American relations once again falls into the trap of being mistakenly observed in isolation, cut off from the wider context of wartime international politics.

To begin with, Roosevelt and Churchill's journey to Great Bitter Lake only happened because they were returning from the Yalta Conference (4–11 February 1945). Significantly, Ibn Saud was just one of several kings, along with Farouk of Egypt and Haile Selassie of Ethiopia whom the two Allied leaders saw during their visit to the region. Secondly, contrary to popular belief, Roosevelt did not reach an agreement with Ibn Saud over access to oil. With the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) concession firmly secured, the subject was barely raised.[12] Instead, Roosevelt had something far more ambitious to share with the Saudi Arabian king. Keeping the faith, the President believed that during their conversation he could persuade Ibn Saud to work as an Arab arbiter for a key strategic American objective, namely Arab acquiescence for a Zionist state in Palestine. Though sincere, Roosevelt's attempt failed spectacularly and damaged his reputation once he returned to the US. In a radio address to the American public that spring, Roosevelt said: 'I learned more about that whole Moslem problem by talking with Ibn Saud for five minutes,

than I could have learned in the exchange of two or three dozen letters.'[13] Such a statement made it look like that it had been Roosevelt who had been swayed by the king rather than the other way around. In comparison, Churchill at this juncture held no illusions when it came to changing the mind of Ibn Saud over the Palestine issue. His opposition to Zionism had been an integral part of his legitimacy and influence within the Muslim world. Instead, the prime minister's conversations with Ibn Saud were focused on something far more agreeable, namely Allied appreciation of Saudi Arabia's 'benevolent neutrality'.[14]

## The Power Dynamics of Anglo-American Relations: 1945

Regardless of what took place, Churchill's meeting with Ibn Saud has been used by historians to convey an overriding sense of *fin de siècle* for British power in Saudi Arabia. Some British officials like Laurence Grafftey-Smith could also see the writing on the wall. Reporting on a meeting between Viceroy Wavell and Ibn Saud in 1945, Grafftey-Smith described how the two men waxed nostalgic about the years of close Anglo-Saudi friendship. Later that same day, Ibn Saud asked Grafftey-Smith if it was at all possible that His Majesty's Government could supply a 'half a dozen "war veteran" air-craft'. The British minister was pained to tell him that it was unlikely that Britain had the resources to help. As he told the Foreign Office however, he felt that there was 'something touching in the King's hope that we may one day offer some material assistance enabling him to dispense with that so expansively and vigorously'. Poignantly, in the end, Ibn Saud asked Grafftey-Smith if he could get the Americans to help him.[15]

Examples like this exposed a feeling of British insecurity and consequently play into the theme that by 1945 their influence was being overshadowed by this new dawn of American power. David Reynolds has rightly said that in the wartime alliance 'the US was clearly the dominant partner by the last year of the war'.[16] When scrutinising Anglo-American relations in the Middle East however, it is equally important to note that in the words of the historian Ritchie Ovendale, 'in 1945, Britain was the paramount power of the Middle East'.[17] If one looks more closely at the region, the European countries against which Britain had competed for influence in the 1930s had in various ways been vanquished from the Middle East by 1945.[18] In contrast, the network of British military furnishings throughout the region – the Suez Canal Zone, air installations

at Lydda, naval ports in Haifa, Bahrain and Aden, the Iraqi air bases in Habanniya and Shaiba, the Arab Legion led by John Glubb, and bases in the Sudan – were proof that Britain's status as the leading military power in the Middle East was still intact.[19]

Recognising this British supremacy, *The Arab World*, a journal that gave an Arab perspective on world affairs in both Britain and the US, professed that coming out of World War II, the British government would have a 'firmer grip on the Near East and greater prestige than before'.[20] Likewise, since British policy still adhered to Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden's *Mansion House Speech* in 1941, which provided support for some form of Arab union, the establishment of the Arab League in March 1945 did not necessarily insinuate British decline in the region.[21] '*Divide et impera*' would be a 'risky motto' for British postwar policy in the Middle East. 'With Arab federalism', R.M.A. Hankey wrote, Britain 'should be able to influence its activities much more than any other Power can.'[22]

The British government's backing for Arab unity also ran concurrently with it identifying itself less with the Zionist cause in Palestine. Saudi Arabian officials were closely watching this steady change in British attitude, troubled by Washington's increasingly pro-Zionist outlook. Describing the quandary in which the State Department found itself in the region, Gordon Merriam remarked that 'they [Saudi Arabian officials] might be cheered up if they knew that our stock is just as low with Zionists'.[23] As William Roger Louis has pointed out, regardless of American excuses, during 1945 Laurence Grafftey-Smith 'detected a change in Saudi mood'.[24] London's standing in the Kingdom was on the rise by virtue of the pro-Zionist stance shown by the Roosevelt and Truman administrations, which according to Grafftey-Smith created a great amount of 'American unpopularity' among everyday Saudi Arabians and had 'shaken Ibn Saud considerably'.[25]

The sturdiness of Britain's regional influence was also a subject of speculation for American officials in relation to what would happen after Ibn Saud's reign had come to a close. Writing in 1945, Harold Hoskins noted that despite his age and infirmities, 'the King continues to run all affairs himself', uncomfortable with delegating important decisions to his successor sons.[26] Reflecting the fact that Ibn Saud's most favoured sons – Saud, Faisal and Mansour – were considered to be rivals, both American and British officials had little confidence that an orderly transition of power in Saudi Arabia would occur following Ibn Saud's death. Rumours had been

swirling that if Ibn Saud died, and Saudi Arabia was thrown into chaos, Iraq would enter the kingdom to commandeer the oil-rich Hasa Coast.[27] Stories like this made the State Department nervous. Prior to serving as the American minister to Iraq, the new director of The Division of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA), Loy Henderson, noticed firsthand the way in which Britain had adeptly used its network of diplomats to modify and moderate the policies of the Iraqi government.[28] Given the fact that it was the NEA's job, said Henderson to 'see to it that order prevailed in Saudi Arabia, and that Ibn Saud remained firmly on his throne', the State Department had a vested interest in British suzerainty keeping the Kingdom's neighbours at bay.[29]

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With London's sway in Saudi Arabia still a force to be reckoned with in 1945, sometimes it seemed that there was not enough room to accommodate both British and American aspirations for influence. This jostling for hegemonic position came into play when Ibn Saud finally declared war on the Axis powers on 28 February 1945. Saudi Arabia's neutrality in the strictest definition of the word was no longer a strategic objective in itself for Ibn Saud or for that matter for British and American policy makers. At this stage in the war, Ibn Saud's decision to declare war could no longer be used by Axis propagandists or his Arab rivals to deny the legitimacy of Saudi Arabia's independence. Declaring war against the Axis was now considered a necessary rite of passage for joining the United Nations, and with it, a prerequisite for securing a place in the new liberal postwar international order.[30]

Occurring only a week after the Roosevelt–Ibn Saud meeting, Saudi Arabia's declaration of war caught the US completely off guard. Deeply displeased, Wallace Murray demanded answers. He sent a diplomatic démarche directly to Lord Halifax, asking why British officials, who had been fully aware of the news, had not informed the US. Murray also added that this injustice undermined the consultation framework set up by the 1944 Stettinius Mission, which the State Department still believed held 'great importance'. Alarmed by Murray's complaint, the British Ambassador sent an urgent message, reprimanding Laurence Grafftey-Smith for not informing the American legation of Saudi Arabia's declaration of war.[31]

For the Foreign Office however – naturally defending one of their own – Wallace Murray's complaints were completely unwarranted, and his

reaction had shown that he had 'gone a bit off the rails.[32] First, British officials in Jeddah were not responsible for 'Ibn Saud on the question of his declaration of war'.[33] From its perspective, the agreements that had emanated from the Stettinius Mission had been committed to the 'fullest possible consultation between British and American officials in the Middle East, with a view to settling complaints and grievances locally at the lowest possible level'. Up to this point, said R.M.A. Hankey 'it's clear that the arrangement is working pretty well'.[34] Rather than protesting directly to Grafftey-Smith however, the American legation in Jeddah complained directly to Lord Halifax in Washington, which was not in 'accordance with the procedure agreed upon for the ventilation of complaints'.[35]

In any case, the Americans did not have to be consulted on every minor concern in Saudi Arabia. Though British foreign policy sought American support, and British officials in Jeddah were instructed to do 'everything they can to avoid any appearance of Anglo-American rivalry', they were nonetheless told by the Foreign Office that 'this should not be interpreted in too restrictive a sense'.[36] British influence with Ibn Saud, at all costs, had to be maintained. Other local Arab leaders that Britain relied upon, such as Emir Abdullah of Transjordan, lacked independent credentials making him a limited ally in the Arab world. Meanwhile in Egypt, King Farouk's 'vagaries [...] were becoming altogether too much', said Lord Killearn, and he could no longer to be trusted.[37] Given this unreliable company, London still looked upon Ibn Saud as an essential part of British foreign policy, and too much of a key player to just sit back and let American officials completely take him over. On that score, it is worth pointing out that bowing to American pressure was not the only means to ensuring the long-term aim of Anglo-American co-operation. Like other issues that had divided Britain and the US, what this controversy had shown is that it festered – not from a fundamental disagreement over Saudi Arabia's declaration of war – but rather from a breakdown in Anglo-American liaison.

In a matter that was distinct, yet ultimately linked to bilateral communication, on 7 April 1945, the Foreign Office received reports that Colonel Eddy was 'scheming' to convince Amir Faisal that his trip to San Francisco for the United Nations inauguration was purely a US function, when it had actually been organised jointly by both American and British officials. The Foreign Office advised Grafftey-Smith not to worry about Eddy's chicanery. The irony was that 'the Arab is truly democratic and cares

little for protocol, and the American efforts to impress usually miss the mark'. Indeed the Foreign Office retold an amusing story from 1943 when the first Lend-Lease riyals arrived and were carried by American Marines with Tommy guns and 'all of Jidda laughed'.[38]

Nevertheless, British officials regarded the lack of communication as somewhat ominous. The fact too that the US demanded to host the Saudi delegation during in its stay in San Francisco made it appear that furthering Anglo-American co-operation was not Washington's top priority. Certainly in some respects, the US in its handling of Saudi Arabia joining the newly established United Nations comes across as retaliatory in nature. Just as Grafftey-Smith had not notified the American legation of Riyadh's declaration of war, Eddy kept the British Embassy in the dark about his discussions with Saudi Arabian officials over joining the United Nations.[39]

Not only did British officials fear that they may be losing their standing in Saudi Arabia, such concerns grew over the fate of British influence bordering the Kingdom, specifically in the Trucial States.[40] This collection of sheikdoms had been tied to the British government by treaty and had dealt with Indian Civil Service's (ICS) political agents for more than a century. Their geographic location and proximity to the Indian Ocean, Basra, Iran and India were critical pieces to London's paramountcy in that part of the world. Given its importance, one Foreign Office official at the time observed that if 'floods of American money' poured into Saudi Arabia, what kind of impact would that have on the adjacent Trucial States?[41]

On the other hand, Washington had its own misgivings over this aspect of its association with the British in Saudi Arabia. In 1944, Loy Henderson had authored a lengthy report, which he delivered to the Secretary of State, outlining the 'British desire to restrict American activities in the Persian Gulf Sheikdoms'.[42] Rather than actively seeking to thwart American interests, what truly troubled Henderson was that the British government had shrewdly blurred the line between outright formal control and informal influence in the Persian Gulf.[43] Given that the frontier between Saudi Arabia and the smaller sheikdoms of the Trucial Coast was not written in stone, but rather shifting sand, as it were, it is understandable why this area was considered a prospective arena for future discord.

For Grafftey-Smith, too, the areas lying between Saudi Arabia and the Trucial States were problematic, but he still saw things somewhat differently than Henderson. He warned his British colleagues that in this no-man zone 'oil is suspected to exist, possibly in large quantities', which

one day might cause trouble to both Saudi Arabia and the US.[44] What is noteworthy about Grafftey-Smith's assessment is that reading between the lines, for him, oil was strictly a Saudi Arabian–American issue, not a British concern. Eventually, Grafftey-Smith's forecast partly materialised in the 1950s with the Buraimi Oasis dispute when Britain, bound by treaty, defended the Trucial States against Saudi Arabia and the commercial interests of ARAMCO, which had the tacit backing of Washington.[45] It is however worth remembering that these circumstances were nothing new. The British government and the Al-Saud had squabbled on and off about control of the region dating as far back as 1800.[46]

Still, the tensions building over the Trucial States were not confined only to Anglo-American relations, but also had been firmly entrenched within the corridors of British policy making for decades. The Trucial Coast was an area in which the Government of India, whose political agents had been responsible for British interests there for decades, sparred with members of the Foreign Office, who took a softer line towards Ibn Saud and the Americans.[47] The US consulate in Dhahran led by Parker Hart was dismayed, but understood why there seemed to be some obstructionism on the part of British political agents in this area, and consequently sought out friendlier channels. For questions referring to the Trucial Coast, American officials involved in Saudi Arabia preferred to deal directly with the Foreign Office.[48]

Simon Davis characterises the Political Agent in Bahrain Thomas Hickinbotham as a British representative whose imperious attitude towards Hart got in the way of Britain and the US reaching a *modus vivendi* over the Trucial Coast. Yet, at the same time, Hart was quite aware that the Government of India saw this territory as its own personal sphere of influence and equally resented outside interference, whether it be it from Washington or London. Writing to his colleagues in Jeddah, Hart would later claim that Hickinbotham was an 'exceptionally well-informed and able man', who was by no means anti-American, but whose judgment was sometimes clouded by the fact that he was 'intensely jealous of his authority'.[49] By spring 1945, relations between the two sides would improve further after Hickinbotham was succeeded by C.G. Pelly, who joked that his predecessor's middle name was 'Pomposity'. Pelly got along well with Hart and was praised by US officials for having 'predilections [...] toward friendliness and cooperation towards Americans'. Another crucial aspect to take note of with regard to Pelly was that he found the

Soviet Union to be 'nothing but trouble', a message that by the end of World War II would add a new meaning to the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia.[50]

## Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia and the Emergent Cold War

By the end of World War II, the spectre of the Soviet Union interfering with Saudi Arabia loomed large. Ironically, it had culminated from the Anglo-American war effort, which had since 1941 *indirectly* helped to build up Moscow's contacts in the Arabian Peninsula. By 1944, 28.8 per cent of all cargo shipped from the Western Hemisphere to the Soviet Union voyaged through the Persian Gulf.[51] When it came to the Foreign Office and the State Department, it was the former that viewed this fact about the Soviet's possible influence in the region with a more wary eye.[52] Rejecting the hopeful optimism that marked aspects of the Roosevelt Administration's policy towards Moscow, London instinctively relied on lessons learnt from the Great Game, the geo-strategic battle waged by the British Empire and Imperial Russia on the north-west frontier of Central Asia since the time of Catherine the Great.[53]

To counter the likelihood of a postwar Soviet threat, London was ready to continue its old strategy of supporting buffer states like Saudi Arabia to impede Russian expansion. London hoped that the growing US presence in the Kingdom would bolster this strategy, which would do double duty by also protecting British interests along the way. In September 1944, Lord Moyne and his chief of staff, William Croft, had both concurred that there was strategic value in an American presence, believing that Britain's position would be 'reinforced' in the event of a Soviet threat.[54] In London, the Foreign Office also acknowledged that in this context, it would be a 'considerable advantage' if the US became more entrenched in the affairs of Saudi Arabia.[55] Though not naming the Soviet Union directly, the Foreign Office noted that if another European war materialised (i.e. against the Soviet Union), the US would be in position to 'directly or indirectly' protect British interests in the region.[56]

As it happened, Britain's fixation on the Soviet Union also coincided with Ibn Saud's own worldview. Once, for a brief period in the interwar years, these most unlikely of bedfellows, Saudi Arabia – home of Islamic Holy Places – and the atheist Soviet Union, curiously had favourable

bilateral relations. The Soviet Union had been the first country to recognise the new Nejd–Hedjaz state back in 1926 and in one of history's great ironies, Moscow had sent Saudi Arabia, the land of the Two Holy Mosques, 42,000 cases of Russian kerosene oil in 1932.[57] This peculiar friendship however had tellingly come to an end by World War II. As early as 31 January 1940, Ibn Saud proposed a 'confederation of Arab countries under the aegis of Great Britain', which he trusted would act as an arc of security against Russian penetration of the Middle East.[58]

Ahead of Churchill's meeting with Ibn Saud in February 1945, London's apprehension over the Soviet Union had grown following Foreign Minister V.M. Molotov's appeal at Yalta for trusteeship of the Italian Middle Eastern colony of Tripolitania.[59] When the two men finally had a chance to speak face-to-face in Fayoum, the king spoke of Soviet power, much like how he spoke of the Nazi threat earlier in the war. Speaking in allegory, a type of dialogue that he often used with both British and American officials, in the king's mind, the Soviet Union was a serpent who had used a man (Britain and the US) for protection against the wolf (Nazi Germany). Once the wolf was driven off, the serpent would attack the man.[60] Churchill, playing the unfamiliar role of conciliatory diplomat, tried to allay the king's misgivings. It must have been reassuring however to know that the level of suspicion that Ibn Saud held for Moscow matched his own anti-communist sympathies. Ibn Saud's cryptic parable put into focus his view of the dangers of the Soviet Union and helped to justify to London the acceptance of the US taking a firmer grip in Saudi Arabia.

As a longtime gatekeeper of British interests in this part of the world, the Government of India also envisioned the possibility of a Soviet challenge in the near future and looked to the power of the US. Delhi's External Affairs Department began New Year's Day 1945 by informing the British War Cabinet that a strategic priority of Britain should be 'to ensure that no single potentially hostile power secures predominance' in the Arab countries, making special note of Saudi Arabia. What was needed, said Delhi, was 'a steadfast understanding with the USA', which might someday be 'the best chance of preserving the living force of the Commonwealth in this region'.[61]

This shows that in 1945 the Great Game was alive and well, and that London had no plans to discourage the US from becoming a playing partner; one that could step up to the front lines in Saudi Arabia.[62] In this respect the underlying objective of using the heft of Washington to

protect Britain's interests invokes the classic Anglo-American relations analogy, once put forth by Harold Macmillan to a young Richard Crossman. Macmillan, the future British prime minister, who once studied the classics at Balliol College, Oxford, proposed that Britain's mentorship of US was similar to that of the Greeks to the Romans in the age of antiquity.[63]

During World War II and thereafter, given its accumulated wisdom, it was up to Britain to harness America's mix of inexperience and might and use it to see through its own national objectives. An internal Foreign Office paper from March 1944 noted: 'We can help to steer this great unwieldy barge, the US of America, into the right harbour. If we don't it is likely to continue to wallow in the ocean, an isolated menace to navigation.' The gist of the paper can be boiled down to the statement, 'the transmutation of their [the Americans'] power into useful forms, and its direction in advantageous channels, is our concern', serving as a perfect illustration of how British officials were profoundly influenced by this Greek way of thinking.[64]

Before London could however steer what the Foreign Office referred to as the 'unwieldy barge' of American power, the idea that the Soviet Union posed a direct menace to the US had by no means permeated all aspects of American policy-making. For a long time, it was unclear that Washington would ever become a willing teammate in its ally's new Great Game. Some American officials like William Eddy applauded the fact that President Truman had refused to see Churchill before the Potsdam Conference (16 July–2 August 1945), stating that 'for too long it has looked as though the US were always backing Britain up to counterbalance Russia [. . .] let's keep ourselves off their apron strings'.[65] On his return from a highly publicised trip to Saudi Arabia in 1945, the influential Senator Claude Pepper, who clearly sat in the Henry Wallace foreign policy camp of being pro-Moscow and anti-London, wrote in his pamphlet on *Big Three Unity and American-Soviet Friendship*: 'exhausted and financially pressed as she is, Britain still keeps huge armies on alert, constantly building more. She holds to her corner of the atomic bomb like Grim Death, backing America's stand on secrecy with a determination born of panic.'[66]

It is true that the US approach in Saudi Arabia lacked Britain's sense of urgency to contain the Soviet Union, but the aforementioned views of Eddy and especially Pepper's were considered to be extreme among most American policy makers at the time. Adolf Berle largely spoke for the majority when

examining if the US should seek to strengthen the Anglo-American alliance or befriend the Russians:

> When and if there ceases to be a reasonable hope, the danger of arousing Russian suspicions will be part of the price we will have to pay for the policy of closer friendship with Britain. In view of the United Kingdom's geographical location as an outpost of security for us, to say nothing of less ponderable [*sic*] reasons it is not too great a price to pay.[67]

Adding to the notion that the US and Britain were interdependent in Saudi Arabia was the fact that Washington could no longer ignore the growing evidence that suggested that the Soviets had expansionist ambitions. Since the beginning of 1943, the State Department was carefully watching the virtual subjugation of the USSR's occupation of Northern Iran, a presence that seemed to have no limit.[68] Commenting on the Soviet Union's aim of acquiring a warm water port, an intelligence report in January 1945 from a US Naval Observer in Basra remarked: 'The question repeatedly asked in this area is "When will Russia move out of North Persia?" [. . .] a more apt question would be "When will Russia move in South Persia".'[69]

As the historian Henry Butterfield Ryan has remarked, as 1945 progressed, Washington willingly allowed its British counterparts 'to launch a trial balloon for a firmer policy towards the USSR'.[70] In this emerging Cold War context, A.B. Calder, the former first secretary to the American Embassy in Moscow, now working at the American Embassy in Cairo, used his own experience to warn his fellow colleagues at the State Department of Soviet designs in the Middle East. Writing a memorandum on the political situation two days before the Potsdam Conference, Calder emphasised that to combat Soviet intrusion, it was important to:

> Explore at once the possibilities for a collaborative effort with the British in the Middle East in feasible ways for improving the economy of the region without impairing British chances for recovery and future prosperity and in ways mutually beneficial to the British, the countries concerned and ourselves.[71]

Like other American officials, such as Harold Hoskins and Herbert Feis before him, Calder said that the US government was not yet sufficiently

steeped in experience or diplomatic infrastructure to transform the region into some sort of an American protectorate. At this critical juncture, it was essential that the US alongside Britain would 'assume protective functions' and protect their interests in Arab countries like Saudi Arabia jointly as a unit to keep them from falling into 'hostile hands'.[72]

Scholars have attempted to explain the Soviet dimension in Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. Barry Rubin asserts that although it was true that London 'was glad to see the Americans with a substantial stake in the Middle East', he lays greater emphasis on the Saudis trying to 'leverage' the threat of Russia 'in order to obtain US aid and support for themselves'.[73] Simon Davis overstates his case by exaggerating that by the end of World War II American officials in Saudi Arabia were 'equating Britain in many ways with the USSR'.[74] On the whole, the historians have not substantially delved into whether the possibility of Soviet expansion led the US and Britain to find common ground against a shared enemy as it pertained to the Kingdom.[75] In many respects, the pattern that had begun to surface in Saudi Arabia would lay down the template for the early Cold War era during which the Soviet threat served as a catalyst for Anglo-American interdependence.[76]

Above all, it was this kind of thinking that led the State Department to reiterate as late as 20 November 1945 that even in the face of obstacles, Anglo-American co-operation remained enduringly valuable. A rejoinder to those that thought the 'Special Relationship' was euphemistic, a report entitled 'Revision of Policy Manual – Saudi Arabia' recommended that it was in the US's interest:

> not to seek a preferred position in Saudi Arabia, but to consult with the British Government in connection with important moves which this Government may make in that country, in the belief that the US and Great Britain have a common interest in securing prosperity and political stability in Saudi Arabia, and in working in harmony to that end.[77]

## Conclusion

The dynamics of power that were shaping Anglo-American relations at the end of World War II have been drawn in such a way that the historian Alex Danchev has characterised them to a weigh-in between a 'poor little

English donkey' and a 'great American buffalo'.[78] Many historical accounts, though, have tended to apply this broader portrait of the wartime alliance directly to the wider circumstances of the relationship between Britain and the US in the Kingdom, which makes for an inaccurate depiction. As this chapter has shown, having cleared away some of the hyperbole of the famed Roosevelt–Ibn Saud meeting in February 1945, the rise of the US as the premier foreign power in the Kingdom's affairs, and the concurrent decline of Britain were by no means preordained.

By 1945, officials on both sides of the Atlantic who were engaged in Saudi Arabia would concede that the earlier strong prospects held for a close Anglo-American partnership in Saudi Arabia had not been fully realised. During the ensuing year, there were labyrinthine issues that tested the two allies, namely the question as to whether Britain's long-standing quasi-colonial influence in the Trucial Coast was compatible with the US's largesse-based policies in Saudi Arabia. There were also other examples where the two sides fell out over such issues as Saudi Arabia declaring war on the Axis and joining the United Nations, but these specific grievances were mainly the result of poor communication between allies rather than actual schisms in policy. When observing Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia in 1945, the tensions present were more often than not readily resolved because the prospect of collaboration mattered most.

Looking towards the postwar international scene, what this chapter has shown is that the underlying rationale behind the Kingdom's 'benevolent neutrality' still applied in the postwar world as Ibn Saud and his kingdom mattered in terms of wider geostrategic considerations. By the latter half of 1945, the State Department was generally comfortable with British agency in the Middle East on the grounds that this provided an extra layer of protection for US interests in Saudi Arabia. Equally, from the vantage point of British strategic thinking, by adapting to the US's greater involvement with Ibn Saud, one could head off any Soviet schemes trained on breaking up Britain's informal empire in the Middle East.

# CONCLUSION

During World War II, Britain and the US joined as allies in a global struggle against 'enemies so evil', as one writer put it, that 'they seemed to be outlandish characters of cruelty'. Regardless, there is a general inclination to believe that the two allies were prone to be rivals. Maybe this simply comes from the notion that because the two countries were world powers, instinctively competitive and seeking to advance their own national interest, it meant that somehow their relationship would inevitably be lined with confrontation and rivalry.[1]

The documents from the US and UK national archives, which were made available from the 1970s onwards, tended to show officials invariably framing their actions in the lexicon of 'national interests'. This led historians to develop interpretations of the relationship in which the theme of co-operation took second place to that of competition. Scholars like David Reynolds argued that the wartime alliance was built – not upon the evangelical Churchillian themes of cultural, historical and ideological unity – but rather on a nexus characterised by the much less heroic and more complex idea of 'competitive-cooperation'. The realities of practical bargaining replaced the idea of high-minded co-operation, and the partnership that saved civilisation as we know it depreciated into an alliance of a kind. With the old myths finally buried however, the continued accentuation of rivalry and discord that subsequently became a fixture within the subject's literature has in its wake contributed to a new unintended form of evangelism; the deeply rooted belief that the Anglo-American relationship was nothing more than a byword for antagonism and narrow rivalry. This protracted view has to a large extent infiltrated our

understanding of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia during World War II, consequently leaving it incomplete.

In analysing Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia between 1941 and 1945 this book has emphasised the forces that shaped the alliance. During this period, it must be acknowledged that Britain and the US's actions in the Kingdom were at times adversarial. Nonetheless, this book offers a new interpretation of the subject arguing that the unique value attributed by both powers to Saudi Arabia's regional influence encouraged a continuous search for a lasting Anglo-American partnership in the Kingdom. Their association can best be described as founded on the concept of strategic interdependence.

Prior to 1941, British and American influence in the Kingdom, though differently designed, was similar in that it mostly took a discrete form. Britain, the greatest regional power in the interwar period, had been far more heavily involved in Saudi Arabia, but it came with a light touch. London's relations with Saudi Arabia were founded on helping to secure the country's independence and the sovereignty of its king, Ibn Saud, who was an important ally within the Pax Britannica system in the Middle East. In contrast, the official contact that Washington had had with the Saudi Arabian king was not only lighter, but barely visible. What fostered early relations between the two countries and made American influence relevant in Saudi Arabia were the philanthropic endeavours of individual Americans as well as the operations of private commercial enterprises. In the lead-up to World War II however, British and American interests in the Kingdom substantially drew closer together in an effort to stop the Axis from penetrating the Middle East.

It is here where this book sets itself apart from other studies in the emphasis that it places on the wider international influence that the Allies attributed to Ibn Saud. For more than 40 years, while Ibn Saud forged the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in an area notorious for its irredentism, officials and policy makers in London and Washington regarded the king as a redoubt of regional stability. With this in mind, Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia had ramifications that spread out well beyond the Kingdom's borders. Once war broke out, the US and Britain were keenly aware of the geographic centrality of Ibn Saud's kingdom, which connected the Mediterranean and Pacific theatres of war and also served as a potential Allied supply route to the Soviet Union from June 1941 onwards. This, of course, was just one strand in panoply of assets Saudi Arabia had on offer. In terms of religion, as the

'Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques', Ibn Saud could help sway Arab and Muslim populations in the Allied–Axis propaganda battle that was under way in the Middle East. Within the wider context of an international system transformed by anti-imperialism and impending decolonisation, the king's credibility was further enhanced by the fact that his country was an outlier in the Arab world; a sovereign nation that had not been under European colonial domination. As the American official Parker Hart noted, 'in Arabia, Ibn Saud and the law of the Koran are unchallenged, except by the vast distances and the careless independence of the desert'.[2]

During World War II, one of the ways in which the Saudi Arabian king exhibited his independence was through his country's position of neutrality, interpreted by British and American officials to be a form of 'benevolent neutrality'. Historically, neutrality has been deemed an 'antisocial policy', but as Efraim Karsh notes, in the realm of twentieth century international politics it had been transformed 'into a dynamic, enterprising policy'.[3] The American envoy to the Middle East, Wendell Willkie, would claim that Nuri Said's early declaration of war against the Axis had 'assured Iraqi leadership in the Arab World', yet belligerency only went so far for those British and Americans officials involved in Saudi Arabian affairs.[4] They knew that the Allied cause had been better served by Ibn Saud precisely because he remained officially neutral. The greater the perception that he was not under the shadow of Britain or the US made the Saudi Arabian king a more credible ally.

Having the weighted favour of a sovereign Arab ruler like Ibn Saud meant that British and American officials would have more scope for political manoeuvring in terms of fielding such regional issues as the deadlock in Palestine. It also meant that respecting Saudi Arabia's autonomy was a useful propaganda tool in the war of public opinion. It was a first-rate example of the glaring difference between the Allied commitment to self-determination and the Axis' promise of coerced subjugation. 'It was to the interest of both British and Americans', wrote James Landis in 1945, 'that the political independence of Saudi Arabia should be assured'.[5]

Given the strategic value of Saudi Arabia and the desire to keep Ibn Saud firmly within the Allied orbit, inter-allied co-operation in the Kingdom was the key theme of the Anglo-American relationship in the early years of World War II. The fact that scholars have tended to neglect this early period of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia in their analysis is one

of the main shortcomings of the subject's historiography. During 1941, Washington went on to support Britain's aim of maintaining its close relationship with Ibn Saud, viewing it as a buffer against Axis penetration in the Middle East as well as additional insurance against Axis designs on the American-owned oil concessions inside Saudi Arabia. By the same token, London realised the reciprocal benefits from enlisting the US government's support in Saudi Arabian affairs. Financially, Riyadh at this juncture was in a precarious position. The government's main source of income, revenues drawn from the Hajj, had dwindled as a result of poor wartime travel conditions. From the vantage point of British policy makers, American provisions for financial aid and an agricultural mission to Saudi Arabia helped strengthen the Al-Saud regime, further binding it to the Allied cause, while at the same time serving to bring the officially neutral US closer to entering the war.

In conjunction with the strategic interdependence that was shaping Anglo-American relations, the Foreign Office and State Department both recognised that the best way to ensure that their policies would be successful in Saudi Arabia was not to take any action that would be interpreted as threatening to the country's sovereignty. All of these interconnected factors combined would set a pattern to the way in which Anglo-American relations in the Kingdom functioned over the following years. In their efforts to protect Saudi Arabian oilfields and to gain air routes over the country in 1942, British and American officials were far from rivals. Keeping in mind the value of Saudi Arabia's 'benevolent neutrality', the two allies rather found themselves sharing common ground in their efforts to deal with the intricate balancing act of increasing their co-involvement in the country without nullifying the country's independence in the process. Most important of all, the strategic interdependence at play in Saudi Arabia and the reciprocity extending from it remained a driving force. Take, for instance, the crucial backing of British diplomats in Jeddah who prevailed upon Ibn Saud to allow American war planners to acquire emergency air routes. This key episode clearly demonstrated to Washington the value of British influence in the Kingdom. Conversely, expanding Anglo-American co-operation had always been a wartime objective for London, and in the case of Saudi Arabia, it allowed British officials to have a say in the formulation of US policy.

Relations between Britain and the US in Saudi Arabia can only be fully grasped when considered in a wider wartime and regional context. This is the reason why, unlike other studies, this book has delved into the question of Palestine during the war years. Although the Allies' attempt to groom Ibn Saud into an arbiter for Palestine in 1943 failed, it did not damage the two allies' relations in Saudi Arabia. Instead, the episode confirmed the belief of the State Department and Foreign Office of the vital importance of preserving the king's political credibility as an independent Arab leader. Furthermore, one of the abiding lessons learnt from the Hoskins Mission, a point that previous historians have almost completely neglected, is that it underscored just how interdependent British and American interests were, not only in Saudi Arabia, but in the entire Middle East.

From 1943 until the end of the war however, there were continuing debates between Britain and the US, most notably over issues such as oil, subsidies, and reforming the Kingdom's finances. These never reached boiling point, though these often-sporadic exchanges could at times be heated, largely surfacing as a result of the US government's desire to play a greater role in Saudi affairs. Policy makers in Washington started to draw a link between the Kingdom's oil reserves and broader concerns of American national security. From a distance, the fact that the Americans had acquired oil concessions in the heart of Pax Britannica made it appear only natural that the topic of oil would be a lightning rod for Allied antagonism. Yet, the question of oil and its impact must always be placed within the broader context of the wartime politics of the Anglo-American alliance.

First, it is worth noting that in the 1940s Saudi oil reserves had not yet acquired the political and economic significance that they were to assume from the 1970s onwards. To give one example of this, shortly after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima in August 1945, Paul Alling of the State Department wrote to Colonel William Eddy:

> I have been wondering what long-term effect the research work on the atomic bomb would have on our relations with Saudi Arabia and with all the Middle East. According to newspaper gossip the power of atomic energy can eventually be used for peacetime activities. In that case what becomes of the vast oil fields in the Middle East! One could speculate indefinitely on the results of this new discovery but if it is as important as everyone seems to be believe, the effect on the Near East may be profound.[6]

As one can see, the indispensability of Saudi Arabian oil had not yet become a fixture to international relations. Between 1941–3, far from worrying about losing their oil concession to British interests, policy makers in Washington were far more concerned with ensuring that London would be responsible for the protection of Saudi Arabian oil facilities against Axis incursions. Thereafter, it can be said that American officials largely manufactured the controversy over oil. Those in particular who dealt with Saudi Arabia first-hand had to protect themselves from charges of negligence if by dim chance ARAMCO's concession fell into the hands of the British. What needs truly needs to be underscored though, is that the subject of oil was less of an Anglo-American contest, but part of a greater competition that pitted the US government against the American oil industry. Finally, in terms of outcome, more attention needs to be given to the fact that it was the immediate goal of putting a clamp on rumour and hearsay that hung over Saudi Arabian oil, which spurred the signing of the Anglo-American Oil Agreement in Washington in August 1944.

Both in the scholarly writing as well as in the popular imagination, the subject of British decline has been used as a means to interpret Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia during World War II. Britain, it is argued, was militarily overstretched, financially insolvent, war weary and as such was no match for the juggernaut of American power. This circumstance was especially the case in a country like Saudi Arabia, which was outside the British Empire. Finding itself in a weakened state, Britain bowed to the prospect of the US gaining a greater foothold in Saudi Arabia as a means to indirectly guard its own interests in the Middle East, interests that the British government no longer felt confident protecting alone. There is a kernel of truth in this depiction, but a determinist paradigm that only portrays Britain as feeble in contrast to the rising power of the US is excessively simplistic and reductive. As clear as it may seem in hindsight that Pax Britannica would eventually supplant Pax Americana, British and American officials involved in the affairs of the Kingdom at the time by no means considered this inevitable.

To use F. Scott Fitzgerald's adage in *The Great Gatsby* nostalgically characterising Britain's position at this time as being 'borne back ceaselessly into the past' ignores its own dynamic qualities. One of the foremost historians of the wartime alliance, Christopher Thorne, has remarked that the equilibrium of Anglo-American relations ceased about the time of the Cairo Conference held in November 1943, when Britain

'declined to junior status'.[7] The power structure of the wartime alliance as a whole was however by no means replicated in the dynamics of British and American influence circulating inside Saudi Arabia.

In fact, the US relationship with Saudi Arabia may best be characterised as moving from infancy to puberty during World War II. As this characterisation implies, considerable uncertainty and insecurity remained part of Washington's influence, despite the outward appearance of a dramatic expansion of American powers. Far from being a victory lap for the US, FDR's meeting with Ibn Saud in February 1945 at Great Bitter Lake was more pretence than power. For many American officials at the time, uncertainty and drift marked their country's policy in Saudi Arabia. In comparison, British policy makers had for more than 40 years deftly crafted an enviable multi-tiered relationship with Ibn Saud, a fact that the Americans could not lightly dismiss. It is little wonder then that on many occasions American officialdom needed to rely on the diplomatic influence of their 'British cousins' for the US to be heard in Saudi Arabia.

Between 1941 and 1945, London and Washington found it in their common interest to co-operate as much as possible. The times when British and American influence in Saudi Arabia clashed, the disparities were not the result of simple national rivalry. By autumn 1944, it can be said that the two powers had come to a genuine impasse over how they should channel their collaborative efforts in Saudi Arabia. Initially, British and American officials in equal measure recognised the fact that shunting along an activist agenda in the Kingdom carried the dangers of chipping away at the politically valuable image of Saudi Arabia's sovereignty. This is why projects such as shelling out Anglo-American financial subsidies, plans to build up infrastructure, and expanding military largesse in Saudi Arabia, had been largely restrained and carefully applied to dispel notions of renascent colonialism.[8] Compared to London, Washington had however grown increasingly assertive in its approach to securing its interests in Saudi Arabia. Casting themselves as the 'anti-colonial' power, American officials more often than not considered that their pro-active policies were 'progressive' and liberal as opposed to reactionary and imperialist. Their thinking with regard to protecting the sovereignty of Saudi Arabia revolved around the question of what would become of the Kingdom if it was cut off from the 'modernity' of the twentieth century. In the postwar world, would Riyadh's independence be secure in its current torpor if the wartime alliance did not intercede and aid the Saudis?

After a visit to Saudi Arabia, Archibald Roosevelt Jr, the grandson of Theodore Roosevelt, and an army intelligence officer in World War II, described American activities in the Kingdom in boastful and congratulatory terms:

> We had waffles! To see what the Americans are doing in this hitherto forbidding land makes one very proud. It is perhaps the most exciting thing I've seen in the Middle East, about the only thing holding promise for a bright future.[9]

From the British perspective however, officials in Jeddah, most notably Stanley Jordan, were unsure if Saudi Arabia was ready to accept this kind of 'modernity'. Earlier policies that had once been constructed as an emergency measure, such as the prodigious subsidies that were offered to Ibn Saud, had now outlived their usefulness. They were no longer considered to be serving as an asset, but were instead thought only to encourage corrupt Saudi officials. The consequences of a pious Muslim kingdom coming face to face with the realities of a materialistic US with all of its excesses seemed uncertain and perilous to many British observers. More importantly, Britain, which was more cash-strapped than ever by 1944, had neither the funds nor the political will to match Washington's largesse-driven policies.

Certainly, many years of experience in the Middle East led Britain to believe that on the whole it was endowed with a certain amount of foresight, which consequently the newly arrived Americans lacked. From what they were witnessing in Saudi Arabia, British officials saw that the US was at risk of pursuing a new form of American colonialism. London initially met with dismay news in 1944 that Washington had further ambitious plans, including supplying Ibn Saud with a military mission and constructing an airfield in Dhahran. British officials saw that these conspicuous projects could undermine the king's rule. American military intrusions like these might also negatively impact on Britain's own regional prestige.

Yet in the end, British officials nudged these concerns aside. They would hedge their bets that the advantages of having the US closely engaged in Saudi Arabia outweighed the harm that might follow. Most notably, when American officials turned to their British colleagues and asked them to use their diplomatic influence to persuade Ibn Saud to

accept the Dhahran airfield scheme, they consented, knowing full well that in return an American base would add another layer of protection to Britain's regional security. This is just one of many episodes in which initial discord in Saudi Arabia was to be temporary but eventually resolved through Anglo-American co-operation with mutually beneficial outcomes for both parties.

As this book has demonstrated, one of the most enduring and underappreciated dynamics of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia during this period is the degree to which strategic interdependence acted as a foundation upon which the two allies cemented their relationship. As Nigel Ashton has aptly put it: 'the most noteworthy feature of the wartime relationship from 1941 to 1945 was the way in which differences in interests around the globe were largely overcome in the face of the unifying Axis threat.'[10] It is this wartime context that has been consistently neglected when it comes to the scholarship of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. In an episode that deserves greater attention, the Stettinius Mission in the spring of 1944 pinpointed the over-arching co-operation shown by British and American officials in Saudi Arabia as a 'test-case' on which to build a more solid inter-allied strategic partnership not limited to Saudi Arabia, but a partnership that could be implemented on a much larger scale throughout the Middle East and survive the war. In this respect, the attempts that were made to co-ordinate policy in Saudi Arabia during the war can therefore be seen as an early voyage of what was later to become a much larger odyssey, culminating in the 'Pentagon Talks of 1947'. In the autumn of that year, for almost a month, a series of strategic consultations took place under the directive of Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin and Secretary of State George Marshall, between a range of British and American officials, including George Kennan, then-head of the Policy Planning Staff (PPS). Both sides came away with the unambiguous conclusion that Anglo-American co-operation in this part of the world was of paramount interest. In a statement issued after the talks:

> The security of the Eastern Mediterranean and of the Middle East is vital to the security of the United States and of the United Kingdom and to world peace. This policy can be implemented only [...] if the British and American Governments pursue parallel policies in that area.[11]

Looking at the relationship from the perspective of social interaction, Clarence J. McIntosh, vice-consul of the American Legation from 1943–5, recalled more than 60 years later that the British were 'excellent and nice fellows' and that the rivalry 'never seemed to come up' among the officials on the ground in Jeddah.[12] On a day-to-day basis, the Americans were invited to the British Legation to watch films with such titles as *Desert Victory* and *Pimpernel Smith* starring the archetypal Briton, Leslie Howard.[13] This human and social element played an important role in Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia throughout the war, a dimension that this book stresses, but one that most studies of the subject have overlooked.

In particular, this study has highlighted the almost entirely overlooked personal interaction between the American quasi-official Karl Twitchell and officials from British Embassy in Washington in 1941. Their work and close collaboration helped to kick start Anglo-American co-operation in Saudi Arabia. Later, this was followed by the closely-knit bond forged between the British minister Hugh Stonehewer-Bird and the American minister James Moose in 1942–3, which proved to be another key building block in constructing the Anglo-American partnership in the Kingdom. In fact, it was precisely these cases of personal amity advancing Anglo-American interests that led policy makers in London and Washington to assume that compatibility among British and American officials in Jeddah could ease any possible political or strategic differences.

This is why, when diplomatic communication between the allies in Saudi Arabia seemed to have faltered in the spring of 1944, at a time when the need for inter-allied harmony grew ever more essential, key officials from both sides of the Atlantic took stock and concluded that the problems derived from a 'lack of liaison' between officials on the ground. Historians have not fully accounted for the importance of this episode for Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. What it shows is that American and British officialdom were not inclined to believe that their countries' interests in Saudi Arabia were irreconcilable. Instead, Edward Stettinius and Lord Halifax boldly suggested that each nation should remove their ministers in the service of reconstituting sound Anglo-American relations. This is an example that highlights the allies' willingness to build and maintain a workable alliance whatever the local difficulties this may occasionally have presented in the Kingdom.

To underscore this point, when early signs of the approaching Cold War began to appear in 1945, the interplay of common British and American

interests over Saudi Arabia was highlighted once again. Backed by the wellspring of support for Ibn Saud, British views of Saudi Arabia took on a Cold War complexion at a very early stage, which might be seen as an extension of the Anglo-Russian rivalry casting back to the eighteenth century. Admittedly London had no desire for Washington to backslide into a non-interventionist Fortress America strategy. Retaining the US's engagement in Saudi Arabia had now come to be viewed as an escape from facing alone Moscow's impending designs on Britain's informal Middle Eastern empire. Some Americans in Saudi Arabia, led notably by William Eddy, were however not so willing to play a supportive role in Britain's Great Game. Nonetheless, as Soviet expansionist tendencies came into full view in neighbouring Iran, American policy makers took comfort in Britain's entrenched position in the region.

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Donald Cameron Watt once noted that 'the distinguishing mark of the international historian is a bias toward the studies of crises'.[14] This book has analysed the development of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia without such a predisposition and has made a distinctive contribution to the subject's historiography. The issue here is that historians who have disproportionately stressed division have tended to focus too much on conflictual processes in Anglo-American relations at the expense of co-operative outcomes. Indeed, while Britain and the US did not always see eye to eye, the questions as to why the two powers continued to pursue the objective of partnership remains unexplained, and what this pattern of resilience infers has never been properly addressed. As this book shows, answers for both questions can be found above all in the interdependence that lay at the heart of Anglo-American relations, but also in the way in which Saudi Arabia's emergent wartime influence served as a binding agent for British and American interests.

It is therefore the co-operative dynamics of the relationship that needs to be reconsidered and deserves our fuller attention. Admittedly, the relationship in Saudi Arabia did not arrive fully formed. The enormity of the task in forging a fully integrated Anglo-American policy tested the mettle of British and American officials alike. Nerves were frayed and in some instances the interests of both countries in Saudi Arabia could not be accommodated by joint action. Not to be deterred, the conviction the allies retained to keep the partnership intact is a monument to its essential,

multifaceted and ultimately empowering nature. Driven by their common goal of an Allied victory, the keynote of their relationship, in this respect, was the unending pursuit for co-operation. Writing in 1945, James Landis, an official with great experience when it came to Anglo-American relations in the Middle East, observed that 'the ultimate test of co-operation must always be that it pays both parties spiritually and materially to work together rather than apart'.[15] With the words of Landis in mind, the Anglo-American relationship in Saudi Arabia between the years of 1941 and 1945 ultimately passed the test.

# NOTES

## Introduction

1. Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: United States, Britain and the War Against Japan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).
2. David Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance 1937–1941: A Study in Competitive-Cooperation* (London: Europa, 1981), p. 169.
3. Philip Baram, *The Department of State in the Middle East: 1919–1945* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1978), p. 223.
4. For the best work covering this period of Anglo-Saudi relations, see Gary Troeller, *The Birth of Saudi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud* (London: Frank Cass, 1976), pp. 13–23. Also see Jacob Goldberg, *The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia: the Formative Years, 1902–1918* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987). For material on Anglo-Saudi relations after World War I, see Haifa Alangari, *The Struggle for Power in Arabia: Ibn Saud, Hussein and Great Britain, 1914–1924* (Lebanon: Ithaca Press, 1998).
5. At the time of the treaty's signing, Saudi Arabia was officially referred to as the Kingdom of the Nejd and Hedjaz and its Dependencies. See Daniel Silverfarb, 'The Treaty of Jeddah of May 1927', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (July, 1982).
6. Robert Bruce, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).
7. In 1938, the United States produced 60 per cent of world crude oil. Irvine Anderson, *Aramco, the United States and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamics of Foreign Oil Policy 1933–1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 37.
8. Writing a review for the Observer, A.J.P. Taylor extolled Richard Overy's *The Air War 1939–1945*, saying 'as so often with sound scholarship, is the ruthless dispelling of myths'. For historiographical sketches on Anglo-American relations, see David Reynolds, 'Rethinking Anglo-American Relations', *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Vol. 65, No. 1 (Winter, 1989), pp. 89–111; John Baylis, *Anglo-American Relations since 1939: An Enduring Alliance* (Manchester: Manchester

University Press, 1997), pp. 8–16; Alex Danchev, 'On Specialness', *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (October, 1996), pp. 737–50. For essential surveys on Anglo-American diplomatic relations, see David Reynolds, 'A "Special Relationship"? America, Britain and the International Order since World War II', Vol. 62, No. 1 (Winter, 1986), pp. 1–20; Wm. Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (eds), *The 'Special Relationship'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

9. For an account of Churchill as historian and his role in establishing a collective memory of World War II, see David Reynolds, *In Command of History: Churchill Fighting and Writing World War II* (New York: Random House, 2005).
10. Works with an evangelical bent include, H.C. Allen, *Great Britain and the United States* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1955); H.C. Allen, *The Anglo-American Predicament* (London: Macmillan, 1960); H.C. Allen and Roger Thompson (eds), *Contrast and Connection: Bicentennial Essays in Anglo-American History* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1976); Joseph E. Lash, *Roosevelt and Churchill: The Partnership that Saved the West* (New York, 1980).
11. Ambivalence towards Anglo-American relations arguably reached its highest point during the presidency and premiership of Richard Nixon and Edward Heath, the same moment when documents from World War II were being officially released. It is very easy to speculate that the lukewarm attitude towards the Anglo-American relationship in the early 1970s may have influenced those contemporary historians who were interpreting the wartime alliance of the 1940s.
12. Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance*, p. 2 and Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, p. 775.
13. Charmley, *Grand Alliance*, pp. 3–10 and pp. 356–60.
14. Warren F. Kimball, *Forged In War: Roosevelt, Churchill and World War II* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1997), p. 33. For similar works that stress the co-operative bonds of Britain and the United States, see Henry Butterfield Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America: The US–UK Alliance and the Emerging Cold War, 1943–1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 14–38; James Holland, *Together We Stand: American, Britain and the Forging of an Alliance* (New York: Miramax, 2006); Lynne Olson, *Citizens of London: The Americans who Stood with Britain in its Darkest, Finest Hour* (New York: Random House, 2010), pp. 3–26; David Stafford, *Roosevelt & Churchill: Men of Secrets* (New York: Overlook, 2000).
15. Reynolds, *Alliance*, p. 210.
16. W. Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945–1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Postwar Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 180 and pp. 173–204.
17. Louis, *The British Empire*, p. 14.
18. Simon Davis, *Contested Space: Anglo-American Relations in the Persian Gulf, 1939–1947* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2009). Also see Simon Davis, 'Keeping the Americans in Line? Britain, the United States and Saudi Arabia 1939–45', *Statecraft and Diplomacy*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (March, 1997).
19. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 14.

20. Barry Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia, 1941–1945', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (April, 1979), pp. 253–67. Also for further context, see Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East* (London: Frank Cass, 1980), pp. 34–73.
21. Thomas Lippman, *Inside the Mirage: America's Fragile Partnership with Saudi Arabia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004), pp. 25–38 and Rachel Bronson, *Thicker than Oil: America's Uneasy Partnership with Saudi Arabia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 35–45.
22. Alexei Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), pp. 321–7.
23. Donald Cameron Watt, 'The Foreign Policy of Ibn Saud 1936–1939', *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (April, 1963).
24. For the best example of this phenomenon, see Barry Rubin, *The Great Powers*, pp. 34–73.
25. There are a group of British memoirs useful to this study. For a view on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, see Laurence Grafftey-Smith's *Bright Levant* (London: John Murray, 1970), p. 258. For a British regional perspective, see Richard Casey, *Personal Experience 1941–1946* (New York: David McKay, 1963), p. 30; Maurice Peterson, *Both Sides of the Curtain* (London: Constable, 1950), p. 238. Focusing on Saudi Arabia on the edge of World War II, see Andrew Ryan, *The Last of the Dragomans* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1951); Reader Bullard and E.C. Hodgkin (eds), *Two Kings in Arabia: Letters from Jeddah 1923–1925 and 1936–1939* (Lebanon: Ithaca Press, 1993).
26. John Glubb, *Britain and the Arabs: Study of Fifty Years, 1908–1958* (London: Hodder Stoughton, 1958), p. 355.
27. William Eddy, *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud* (New York: American Friends of the Middle East, 1953), p. 43. Eddy's work made such an impression that David Howarth – writing more than ten years after it was published – commented that Eddy wrote 'sourly of the British with less reason than many of their critics'. David Howarth, *The Desert King: A Life of Ibn Saud* (Beirut: Continental, 1965), p. 207. Colonel Eddy's wife accused Howarth of calling her husband a liar. Seeley Mudd Library: William Eddy Papers. Box 8, 'Howarth's Book' 5 (March, 1965).
28. For a Saudi Arabian official perspective see Wahba Hafiz, *Arabian Days* (London: Arthur Barker, 1964). For a diplomatic perspective outside of the Anglo-American viewpoint, see D. Van Der Meulen, *The Wells of Ibn Saud* (London: Kegan Paul, 2000), pp. 127–48.
29. Important works that give a foundational basis for British and American oil policies include G. Nash, *United States Oil Policy 1890–1964* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1968); E. Chester, *United States Oil Policy and Diplomacy: A Twentieth-Century Overview* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1983). B. Schwadran, *Middle East Oil and the Great Powers* (New York: Praeger, 1959). Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power* (New York: Simon Schuster, 1991), pp. 280–303 and 392–403; B.S. McBeth, *British Oil Policy 1919–1939* (New York, 1985). For useful studies that deal more directly with the

subject of oil and Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, see Stephen J. Randall, 'Harold Ickes and United States Foreign Petroleum Policy Planning: 1939–1945', *Business History Review*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Autumn, 1983); Mark Stoff, *Oil, War, and American Security: The Search for a National Policy on Foreign Oil, 1941–1947* (New Haven, 1980), p. 58; Stoff, 'The Anglo-American Oil Agreement and the Wartime Search for Foreign Oil Policy', *Business History Review* Vol/55 (1981). Aaron David Miller, *1939–1949: Search for Security Saudi Arabian Oil and American Foreign Policy* (Chapel Hill, 1980).

30. Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom-Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier* (London, 2009), p. 69.
31. See http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/196803/discovery.the.story.of.aramco.then-chapter.3.beachhead.htm. Wallace Stegner, American author known as the 'Dean of Western writers', also won the 1972 Pulitzer Prize for *An Angel in Repose*. 'Discovery! The Story of Aramco Then', *Aramco World*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (May–June, 1968). John R. Starkey, 'Arabist in the U.S.A.', *Aramco World*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (July–August, 1965).
32. Anderson, *Aramco, The United States and Saudi Arabia*, pp. 199–201. For a perspective of an Aramco employee at this time, see Thomas Barger, *Out in the Blue: Letters from Arabia 1937–1940* (Vista, CA: Selwa Press, 2000).
33. I. Anderson, *Aramco*, p. 199. Policies pushed by the United States government including the Petroleum Reserves Corporation and the Anglo-American Petroleum Agreement were mainly viewed by ARAMCO as "government cartels" that directly threatened the lifeblood of the company.
34. Zachary Karabell, *Architects of Intervention: The United States, the Third World and the Cold War 1946–1962* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), p. 111.
35. Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), pp. 304–5. Also see, Russell Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1973). H.W. Brands, *Inside the Cold War: Loy Henderson and the Rise of American Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 115–36. For a contemporary account, see Wendell Willkie, *One World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1943); For a British perspective, see Suke Wolton, *Lord Hailey, the Colonial Office and the Politics of Race and Empire in World War II: The Loss of White Prestige* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), p. 3. For the seminal work on the Arab perspective, see George Antonius, *Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (Safety Harbor, FL: Simon Publications, 1939).
36. For more on works that explore Saudi Arabia's wider regional influence leading up to and during World War II, see Fawaz Traboulsi, 'Saudi Expansion: the Lebanese connection, 1924–1952', in Madawi Al-Rasheed (ed.), *Kingdom without Borders: Saudi Political, Religious and Media Frontiers* (London: Hurst & Company, 2008), pp. 65–7, and D.C. Watt, 'The Foreign Policy of Ibn Saud 1936–1939'. For material that focuses on Saudi Arabia's modern global reach in international affairs, see Al-Rasheed (ed.), *Kingdom without Borders* (London: Hurst & Company, 2008);

Anthony Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (London: Praeger, 2003); As'ad Abukhalil, *The Battle for Saudi Arabia: Royalty, Fundamentalism and Global Power* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003).

37. For more on works that explore Saudi Arabia's wider regional influence leading up to and during World War II, see Fawaz Traboulsi, 'Saudi Expansion: the Lebanese connection, 1924–1952', Madawi Al-Rasheed (ed.), *Kingdom without Borders: Saudi Political, Religious and Media Frontiers* (London: Hurst & Company, 2008), pp. 65–78; D.C. Watt, 'The Foreign Policy of Ibn Saud 1936–1939', 1963. For material that focuses on Saudi Arabia's modern global reach in international affairs see Al-Rasheed (ed.), *Kingdom without Borders* (London: Hurst & Company, 2008). Anthony Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (London: Praeger, 2003). As'ad Abukhahil, *The Battle for Saudi Arabia: Royalty, Fundamentalism and Global Power* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003).
38. Public Records Office, Kew: Foreign Office Records, FO 371 23268 – Report by Reader Bullard regarding Ibn Saud's personal message to Neville Chamberlain, January 2, 1939.
39. NARA: RG 59 Near Eastern Affairs 1941–54, Lot File # 57 D 298, Box 15. *Importance of the Moslem World in the War*, Murray to Berle, 17 January, 1942.
40. PRO: FO 371/35166, Minute by Harry Eyres, 26 October, 1942. Also see Sam Rosenman, *Working with Roosevelt* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1952), pp. 480–1.
41. Donald Cameron Watt, 'The Foreign Policy of Ibn Saud 1936–1939', *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (April, 1963), pp. 152–60.
42. The attitudes of American and British officialdom during World War II were in many respects similar to the United States' view at the time of the Eisenhower Doctrine; the hope that Saudi Arabia would develop into a leading pro-Western bulwark in the Middle East. 28 March, 1956, Eisenhower Library, Whitman File, Eisenhower Diaries. Also see Nathan J. Citino, *From Arab Nationalism to OPEC: Eisenhower, King Sa'ud and the Making of US Relations* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002); Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Roby C. Barrett, *The Greater Middle East and the Cold War: US Foreign Policy under Eisenhower and Kennedy* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2010).
43. For a closer examination of Saudi Arabian security concerns during this period, see Nadav Safran, *Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 57–71.
44. Quoted from Warren Kimball, 'Lend-Lease and the Open Door: The Temptation of British Opulence 1937–1942', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 86, No. 2 (June, 1971), pp. 232–59.
45. Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East*, p. 9.
46. Lord Beloff, *The Special Relationship*, pp. 249–52. Pursuing a similar theme, see D. C. Watt, *Succeeding John Bull: America in Britain's place, 1900–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 90–111 and p. 250; B.J.C. McKercher, *Transition of Power: Britain's Loss of Global Preeminence to the United States* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 340.

47. For example, see Wm. Roger Louis, *British Empire in the Middle East*, p. 183.
48. Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1965), Jacobs to Hull, 3 June, 1944, p. 701.
49. PRO: FO 921/191 25(4)144/36. FO to Cairo and Jeddah, 5 July, 1944.
50. See Chapters 5 and 6, which examine the Anglo-American debates surrounding subsidies and military and financial mission.
51. Although Riyadh was Saudi Arabia's capital, Jeddah, located on the coast of the Red Sea in the Hedjaz, was the country's diplomatic capital where foreign embassies and legations resided.
52. Seeley Mudd Library: William Eddy Papers. Box 5, Folder 13, 6 May 1944.

## Chapter 1 Oasis: Anglo-American Relations and Ibn Saud prior to 1941

1. Seth Arsenian, 'Wartime Propaganda in the Middle East', *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (October, 1948), p. 417.
2. Geoffrey Moorhouse, *The Diplomats: The Foreign Office Today* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), p. 39.
3. For more details on this period of Anglo-Egyptian relations, see Laila Morsy, 'The Military Clauses of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, 1936' *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (Winter, 1984), pp. 67–97; Miles Lampson, *The Killearn Diaries, 1934–1946: The Diplomatic and Personal Record of Lord Killearn (Sir Miles Lampson), High Commissioner and Ambassador, Egypt* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1972).
4. Anthony Clayton, 'Imperial Defence and Security, 1900–1968', in Judith Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (eds), *The Oxford History of the British Empire. Volume IV, The Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. 287–9.
5. For information regarding British relations with Kuwait, see Briton Cooper Busch, *Britain and the Persian Gulf: 1894–1914* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 108. For the Trucial Coast, see James Onley, *The Arabian Frontier of the British Raj: Merchants, Rulers and the British in the 19th Century Gulf* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 46. For Aden, see, R.J. Gavin, *Aden under British Rule: 1839–1967* (London: Hurst, 1975), p. 254.
6. PRO: FO 371/ 35147 E140/69/25. Stonehewer-Bird to Eden, 13 December 1942. Carsten Niebuhr, the famous eighteenth-century Danish explorer, wrote he found an Englishman when he arrived at Jeddah on 29 October 1762 trading in 'almonds from Taif and balm from Mecca'. See Gerald de Gaury, *Arabian Phoenix*, p. 26. In an earlier incident in 1727, Britons from the East India Company had been massacred in the port town of Jeddah. According to an eyewitness, the Arabs had 'mangled and cut into pieces in the most barbarous manner and other were exposed to the Mob, and were most inhumanely murdered, constantly upbraiding us as Christian'. See British Library (BL) India Office Records (IOR): MSSEUR IOR Neg. 11 668,

Microfilm; John Fullerton, 'Account of the Massacre of English at Jidda and the Subsequent Transactions', 1727.

7. Representing the prevailing attitude, E. Parkes of the Foreign Office wrote a year before World War I, 'It would be most unwise for [the British government] to entangle themselves with the Wahabbi Amir [Ibn Saud]'. See British Documents on Foreign Affairs (BDFA). D.C. Watt, David Gillard and Kenneth Bourne (eds), Vol. 18, Part I, *From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to World War I.* (Lanham, MD: University Publications of America, 1984) E. Parkes 3 July 1913.
8. Bruce Westrate, *The Arab Bureau: British Policy in the Middle East 1916–1920* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), p. 114.
9. Vassiliev, *History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 237–8.
10. For a closer look at Britain's consideration of the Ibn Saud–Hussein rivalry at this time, see Gary Troeller, 'Ibn Sa'ud and Sharif Husain: A Comparison in Importance in the Early Years of World War I', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (September, 1971).
11. See St John Philby, *Arabian Jubilee* (London, Robert Hale Limited, 1952), p. 58 and Alexei Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 236.
12. Daniel Silverfarb, 'The Treaty of Jeddah of May 1927', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (July, 1982), p. 285.
13. For material on Britain's imperial view of the Middle East during the 1930s, see D. K. Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914–1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Michael Cohen and Martin Kolinsky, *Britain and the Middle East in the 1930s: Security Problems 1935–1939* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992).
14. For the best in-depth study of the role of the Ikhwan and the formation of Saudi Arabia, including the group's anti-British attitudes, see John S. Habib, *Ibn Sa'ud's Warriors of Islam: The Ikhwan of Najd and Their Role in the Creation of the Sa'udi Kingdom, 1910–1930* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978), pp. 121–55.
15. Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, pp. 268–80.
16. For the best work that covers this era of Anglo-Saudi relations, see Clive Leatherdale's *The Imperial Oasis*.
17. Michael Oren, *Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the Middle East from 1776 to the Present* (New York: Norton Press, 2008), pp. 9–16.
18. For other recent works that explore the concept of American 'exceptionalism' in the Middle East, see Douglass Little, *American Orientalism: The United States in the Middle East since 1945* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992); Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945–2000* (California: California University Press, 2005); J. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East-Missionary Influence on American Policy 1810–1927* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1971).
19. NARA: RG 218/190/1/11/6, Box 149. 'O.S.S. Mission in the Near East', Donovan to Joint Chiefs of Staff, 27 July 1942. Arguably, the two American figures that would have the greatest impact on the country's relationship with Saudi Arabia – Harold Hoskins and William Eddy – both grew up in the same American missionary background in Lebanon. See Chapters 3 and 5.

20. Fawaz Gerges, 'Islam & Muslims in the Mind of America', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 588 (July, 2003), p. 74.
21. B.J.C. McKercher, *Transition of Power: Britain's Loss of Global Preeminence to the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 340.
22. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 21.
23. For further accounts of American policy in the Middle East during the inter-war period, see John Denovo, *American Interests and Policies in the Middle East 1900–1939* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1963); Michael B. Oren, *Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton Press, 2007); Thomas A. Bryson, *Seeds of Mid East Crisis: United States Diplomatic Role in the Middle East During World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Press, 1981); Philip Baram, *The Department of State in the Middle East 1919–1945* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978).
24. NARA: Microfilm T1179 Reel #1. Murray to Stimson, 26 January 1931. Ahman Rihani was an early Arab Nationalist theorist who had befriended Ibn Saud on his travels to Arabia in the 1920s. See Nathan C. Funk and Betty Sitka (eds), *Ameen Rihani: Bridging East and West: A Pioneering Call for Arab American Understanding* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004).
25. FRUS 1931. Vol. II. *Papers Related to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, Stimson to Dawes, 1 May 1931, p. 551.
26. The British historian Arnold Toynbee included Charles Crane along with Nehru, T.E. Lawrence and the Webbs in a contemporary study of famous personalities possessing *'interestingness'*. See Arnold Toynbee, *Acquaintances* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 213.
27. George Antonius's seminal work on Arab Nationalism, *Arab Awakening*, was dedicated to Charles Crane. See, George Antonius, *Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (Safety Harbor, FL: Simon Publications, 1939). Years later, it was said that Crane's overtures for Arab harmony had assisted in ending Ibn Saud's war with Yemen in 1934. See F.W. Brecher, 'Charles Crane's Crusade for the Arabs, 1919–1939', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (January, 1988), p. 46.
28. Harry N. Howard, *The King Crane Commission* (Beirut, Kyahuts, 1963).
29. Schwadran, *The Middle East, Oil and the Great Powers*, p. 288.
30. Vitalis, *America's Kingdom*, pp. 53–4.
31. Speaking of Ibn Saud's bond with the United States, Lippman goes so far as to claim that from the time of Crane's arrival, 'the king inclined toward American interests in economic and strategic decisions'. See Lippman, *Inside the Mirage*, p. 13.
32. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library (FDRPL): Franklin Roosevelt Papers. PPF, Container 3500, Saudi Arabia Hull to Roosevelt, 30 June 1939.
33. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 13.
34. Howarth, *The Desert King*, p. 28.
35. Troeller, *The Birth of Saudi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud*, pp. 13–23.
36. For a recent account on Ibn Saud's consolidation of power in 1902–3, see Al-Rasheed Madawi, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, pp. 37–9, pp. 41–6, pp. 66–8.

37. For an insightful historical examination of Ibn Saud and Wahabbism through the eyes of British officialdom, see BL: IOR R/15/5/116. 'Ibn Saud', T.C. Fowle (Bushire) to JC Walton (The India Office) 26 May 1937.
38. Gertrude Bell, *The Arab War: Confidential Information for General Headquarters from Gertrude Bell* (London: Golden Cockerel Press, 1940), p. 29.
39. PRO: FO 371/24549. Memorandum by Coverly Price, 16 May 1940. Commenting further on the British position in the region, Price would add: 'This is our Battle of the Bulge in the Middle East.'
40. PRO: HW1/3610/142412. Copy of missive from the Turkish Legation in Cairo collected by the Foreign Office, 16 March 1945.
41. David Cannadine, *In Churchill's Shadow: Confronting the Past in Modern Britain* (London: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 71.
42. Donald Cameron Watt, 'The Foreign Policy of Ibn Saud 1936–1939', *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (April, 1963); Lucasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966); Wolfgang Schwanitz. 'German–Saudi Relations and their Actors, on the Arabian Peninsula, 1924–1939', in Uwe Pfullmann (ed.), *Germany and the Middle East 1871–1945* (Princeton: Markus Weiner, 2004), pp. 119–54. For more analysis on Nazi Germany's interest in the Middle East see Andreas Hillgruber, 'The Third Reich and the Near and Middle East, 1933–1939', in Uriel Dann (ed.), *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1919–1939* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1988), pp. 274–82.
43. Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East*, pp. 51–3.
44. PRO: FO 371/ 23268/ E 2928/161/25. 'Annual Report Economic in Saudi Arabia-1938' Bullard to Halifax, 28 March 1939.
45. PRO: FO 371 23268/ E 2928/161/25. 'Annual Report Economic in Saudi Arabia-1938' Bullard to Halifax, 28 March 1939.
46. PRO: FO 371/ 23272. Burkett to Sir John Reith, 28 February 1939. For further inquiry into the purpose of Fritz Grohba's work in Saudi Arabia, see Edgar Flacker, *Fritz Grobba and Nazi Germany's Middle East Policy, 1933–1942* (London: University of London Press, 1998); Wolfgang Schwanitz, '*"The Jinnee and the Magic Bottle"*: Fritz Grobba and German Middle East Policy 1900–1945', in *Germany and the Middle East 1871–1945* (Princeton: Markus Weiner, 2004), pp. 87–118.
47. Lacey, *The Kingdom*, p. 79.
48. PRO: FO 371/ 23272. Burkett to Sir John Reith, 28 February 1939.
49. Massimiliano Fiore, *Anglo-Italian Relations in the Middle East, 1922–1940* (London: Ashgate, 2010). For further studies focusing on Italian foreign policy in the Middle East before and During World War II, see Manuela L. Williams, *Mussolini's Propaganda Abroad: Subversion in the Mediterranean and the Middle East 1935–1940* (London: Routledge Press, 2006); Nir Arielli, *Fascist Italy and the Middle East* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
50. Speaking of the Anglo-Italian rivalry in the Middle East, Harold Eyres of the Foreign Office concluded: 'We must pin our hopes to the fact that the Arabs

probably recognise that, bad as we are, the Italians would be worse.' PRO: FO 371/24549 R# 2283/2029/66. Eyres Minute, 16 July 1940.

51. BL: IOR R/15/5/122. 'Italy, Iraq, Saudi Arabia', Foreign Office to Bullard, 27 April 1939.
52. Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East*, p. 52.
53. PRO: CO 733/443/19. Reg. 2720/567/6. Bullard to Baggelay, 7 November 1939.
54. PRO: FO 371/23271. Bullard to Baggelay, 7 November 1939 and War Office to Scott, 28 November 1939.
55. PRO: FO 371 23268. 'Annual Report Economic 1938' Sir Reader Bullard to Lord Halifax, 10 December 1938.
56. Hiroshi Shimizi, *Anglo-Japanese Trade Rivalry in the Middle East in the Inter-war Period* (London: Ithaca Press, 1986), p. 58.
57. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1. Diary, 3 May 1941.
58. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350, Row 55, Compartment 1, Shelf 02–3, Entry 2410 'Egypt Cairo Embassy 1936–1955' Box 4. Hull to Roosevelt, 30 June 1939.
59. PRO: FO 371 23268. Sir Reader Bullard to Lord Halifax 'Annual Report Economic 1938', 10 December 1938.
60. FRUS 1939. Vol. IV, *The Far East; the Near East and Africa*, GS Messersmith to Bert Fish, 24 May 1939, p. 824.
61. FRUS 1939. Vol. IV, *The Far East; the Near East and Africa*, Fish to Hull, 21 June 1939, p. 826.
62. PRO: FO 371 23272 /E 1129, 737/25. Lampson to Foreign Office, 31 January 1939.
63. FRUS 1939. Vol. IV, *The Far East; the Near East and Africa*, Hull to Roosevelt, 30 June 1939, p. 828.
64. Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East*, p. 52 and Gerhard Schreiber, Bernd Stegemann and Detlef Vogel, *Germany and World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 172.
65. PRO: FO 371 23272/ E5867/735/25. 'Khalid Abu'l Walid report from Berlin to Riyadh-July 20, 1939', Trott to Baxter, 9 August 1939.
66. BL: IOR R/15/5/116. 'Ibn Saud', Bullard to Halifax, 19 September 1939.
67. NARA: RG 84 Row 55, Compartment 6, Shelf 05–6 Entry 2412, Box 1 'Egypt Cairo Embassy 1939–1947'. Fish to State Department, 19 July 1939.
68. BL: IOR R/15/2/561. 'Wireless Communication with Germany', Naval Message to P.R.P.G Bahrain from S.N.O.P.G, 20 August 1940.
69. BL: IOR R/15/2/561. Memorandum by R.A. Kennedy, Chief Local Representative, the Bahrain Petroleum Company, 26 August 1940.
70. NARA: RG 84 Row 55, Compartment 6, Shelf 05–6, Entry 2412, 711.1–711.8 Box 2 'Egypt Cairo Embassy 1939–1947'. Hare to State Department, 24 July 1940.
71. PRO: FO 371/24589 R # E 710/710/25. Stonehewer-Bird to FO, 16 February 1940.
72. PRO: FO 371/24589 R 2306/710/25. India Office to the Secretary of State of India, 25 August 1940.

73. Six months later, the pro-Axis coup of Rashid Ali of 1 April 1941 had been a bellwether moment, signalling that Iraqi support for British wartime strategy could no longer be considered carte blanche. See Daniel Silverfarb, *Britain's Informal Empire in the Middle East: A Case Study of Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 142–5.
74. PRO: FO 371/24/547. Basil Newton to Lord Halifax, 1 October 1940.
75. NARA: RG 59, Lot 57D 298, Box 15. Murray to Berle, Welles and Hull, 30 October 1941.
76. Howarth, *The Desert King*, p. 199.
77. Lacey, *The Kingdom*, p. 255.
78. St Antony's Middle East Centre, Oxford (SAMEC): George Rendell Papers. GB 165–0238. Rendell to Bullard, 19 June 1957.
79. For accounts on the Allied–Axis propaganda battle in the Middle East, see Jeffrey Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World* (Sheridan, CO: Sheridan Press, 2009); Manuela L. Williams, *Mussolini's Propaganda Abroad*, 2006; Seth Arsenian, 'Wartime Propaganda in the Middle East', *Middle East Journal*, pp. 417–29.
80. PRO: FO 371/23269 / 2587/483/76. Bullard to Halifax, 24 October 1939.
81. PRO: FO 371/23269 / 2587/483/76. Bullard to Halifax, 24 October 1939.
82. In October 1940 Germany officially broadcasted its support for Arab nationalism by stating: 'Germany has always sympathized with the Arab question and hoped that the Arabs will one day regain their position in the world which will honour their race and great history.' PRO: FO/371/24549/ R# 2317/2317/65. Foreign Office Memorandum, 21 October 1940.
83. PRO: FO 371/35164 / E8085/549/25. 'Jeddah Report', Reader Bullard, November 1, 1939. Further commenting on the dangers of German Propaganda, Bullard stated in the same missive: 'Hitler is anti-Jew, the Prophet Muhammad was anti-Jew and the raving of the German wireless against Jews must sound agreeably familiar to people brought up almost exclusively on the Quran.' For Ibn Saud's attitude towards Nazi Propaganda, see Herf, *Nazi Propaganda for the Arab World*, p. 34 and pp. 41–3.
84. PRO: FO 371/23269 / 2587/483/76. Bullard to Halifax, 24 October 1939.

## Chapter 2 Storm: Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia, 1941

1. Philip Hitti, *The Arabs: A Short History* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 1949), p. 12.
2. *New York Times*. 'Fish to Be Envoy as Relations are Opened with Country', 27 July 1939.
3. Stoff, *Oil, War, and American Security*, p. 41.
4. Since the 1930s, technical products, such as motor equipment and radios, if they could be purchased by the Saudi Arabian government had mostly come from the United States. See, PRO: FO 371/35164 / E8085/549/25. 'Jeddah Report', Reader Bullard, 1 November 1939.
5. BL: IOR R/15/2/295. Memorandum by Andrew Ryan (Jeddah) June 1932.

6. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (eds), *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), p. 237.
7. Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 306.
8. PRO: 371 23268 E 7398/98/25. '*Communique*' published on September 11, 1939'. Indian Office to Baggelay, 7 November 1939.
9. Vassiliev, *History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 323.
10. PRO: FO 371 23268 E7573/98/25. Reader Bullard to FO, October, 1939.
11. PRO: FO 371/ 35147 E 469/62/25. Wikeley to FO, 5 January 1943.
12. SAMEC: H.R.P. Dickson Papers. Dickson Box 3 File 8, 30 November 1942.
13. PRO: FO 371 31462 E 469/62/25. Wikeley to FO, 5 January 1943.
14. PRO: FO 371 24588 E1570/252/25. de Gaury to Foreign Office, 20 March 1940.
15. BL: IOR R/15/5/116. de Gaury to Trott, 18 December 1939.
16. BL: IOR R/15/5/116. de Gaury to Trott, 18 December 1939.
17. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57, D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. 'British Financial Assistance to King Ibn Saud' Memorandum of Conversation by Wallace Murray between Lloyd Hamilton, General Manager of the California Arabian Standard Oil Company and Paul Alling, 3 June 1941.
18. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 11 June 1941.
19. Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance*, p. 182.
20. For an overview of the ABC talks see Mark S. Watson, *Chief of Staff: Prewar Plans and Preparations* (Washington: Historical Division, US Army, 1950), pp. 367–82; Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Alliance*, pp. 182–5.
21. Overall, little is said about the formation of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia in 1941 partly because most scholars begin their studies in 1943. For a semi-full account of this era, see Davis, *Contesting Space*, pp. 58–63. Other works that cover the subject include Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia, 1941–1945', pp. 254–5; Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 323; Lloyd C. Gardner, *Three Kings: The Rise of an American Empire in the Middle East After World War II* (New York: The New Press, 2011), pp. 25–6. For studies in which Anglo-American relations are touched upon within works that focus on oil, see Anderson, *Aramco, the United States and Saudi Arabia*, pp. 29–34; Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 37–49.
22. Barry Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia: 1941–1945', p. 254.
23. During World War II, American GI's famously referred to the British-designed Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) as 'Save England's Asian Colonies'. See Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 1972.
24. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57, D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Murray to Berle 29 May 1941.
25. Moffett at the time was a trustee of the Roosevelt charity, Warm Springs Foundation. The two men had also worked closely together during World War I when Moffett facilitated oil purchases for the Navy Department, in which Roosevelt was then Assistant Secretary of the Navy. See Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 38.
26. FRUS 1941. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth, the Near East, Africa*, Moffett to Roosevelt, 16 April 1941, pp. 624–5.

27. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57, D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. 'Arab Attitudes to the War'. Memorandum by Wallace Murray sent to Berle, Welles and Hull. 16 June 1941.
28. *New York Times*, 'Oil: the Smell of Scandal', 5 May 1947.
29. Lippman, *Inside the Mirage*, pp. 7–8.
30. Karl Twitchell had first met Charles Crane in 1927 after being introduced to him by the United States consul in Aden. See Schwadran, *The Middle East, Oil and the Great Powers* (London: Atlantic Press, 1955), p. 288.
31. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Murray to Feis. June 13, 1941.
32. Working as a cartographer, Twitchell had also made a name for himself mapping out the city's harbour. Following the publication of his findings, the buoys floating on the Jeddah waterfront were to be known as '*Twitchells*'. See author's interview with Clarence J. McIntosh, 30 January 2006.
33. Toby Jones is one historian who gives a significant amount of credit to Twitchell for being an 'important political actor in the early making of Saudi political authority' in his life-long work 'encouraging the development of its (Saudi Arabia's) natural resources'. See Jones, *Desert Kingdom: How Oil and Water Forged Modern Saudi Arabia*, p. 49 and p. 53.
34. Seeley Mudd Library (SML): Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 16 August 1942.
35. Stephen Longrigg was also a British oil executive who while working for the Iraqi Petroleum Company had unsuccessfully bid for Saudi Arabian oil concessions in 1933 that were later won by ARAMCO. See Leatherdale, *The Imperial Oasis*, p. 200.
36. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 7 May 1942.
37. Twitchell was close friends with the influential Warren Austin as they both came from Vermont. For background information on Warren Austin, see George Mazuzan, *Warren Austin at the UN:* 1946–1953 (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1977). Henry Field at the time was one of America's premier anthropologist who worked with the Roosevelt Administration on project 'M', a scheme involving the issue of wartime refugees and postwar migration. See FDRL: Henry Field Papers or Henry Field, *Arabian Desert Tales between the Two Great Wars* (Sante Fe: Synergetic Press, 1976).
38. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 19 May 1941.
39. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 14 May 1941.
40. For an in-depth first-hand account on the Anglo-Iraqi War of 1941, see British Documents on Foreign Affairs (BDFA). Malcolm Yapp (ed.), Vol. IV, *Near East and Middle East*, Cornwallis to Eden, 6 June 1941, pp. 453–63. For secondary literature, see Jackson, *British Empire and World War II*, p. 149 and Peter Wein, *Iraqi Arab Nationalism: Authoritarianism, Totalitarianism and Pro Fascist Inclination, 1932–1941* (London: Routledge, 2009).
41. See Laila Amin Morsy, 'Britain's Wartime Policy in Egypt, 1940–1942', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (January, 1989), pp. 73–5 and John North, 'Lessons

of the North African Campaign' *Military Affairs*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Autumn, 1944), pp. 161–8.

42. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 13 May 1941.
43. FDRPL: Franklin Roosevelt Papers. PPF 8452, 'Report of the U.S. Agricultural Mission to Saudi Arabia'. Twitchell to FDR, 23 April 1943.
44. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 19 May 1941.
45. See Robert Skidelsky, *John Maynard Keynes, Vol. 3: Fighting for Freedom, 1937–1946* (New York: Viking, 2001).
46. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 26 May 1941.
47. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 27 May 1941.
48. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 27 May 1941.
49. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 27 May 1941.
50. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Murray to Hull and Berle, 29 May 1941. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 4 June 1941.
51. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 79.
52. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 11 June 1941.
53. FRUS 1941. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth, the Near East, Africa* Memorandum by Paul Alling, 18 June 1941, p. 638.
54. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Kirk to Secretary of State, 26 June 1941.
55. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum of Conversation, Halifax, Butler and Hull, 1 July 1941.
56. FRUS 1941. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth, the Near East, Africa*, Butler to Murray, July 2, 1941, pp. 639–40.
57. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Murray to Berle and Hull, 29 May 1941.
58. FRUS 1941. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth, the Near East, Africa*, Secretary of Navy, Frank Knox to Roosevelt, 20 May 1941, pp. 635–636.
59. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. 'Financial Assistance for King Ibn Saud'. Memorandum of Conversation, Murray and Neville Butler, 2 July 1941.
60. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. 'Financial Assistance for King'. Memorandum of Conversation, Murray, Butler and Alling, 29 July 1941.
61. Reynolds, *The Creation of the Anglo-American Wartime Alliance*, p. 195. Or see chapter 8, 'War in Masquerade', pp. 195–222.
62. For one of the best studies on Roosevelt's handling of American neutrality, isolationism and public opinion in American politics during World War II, see Steven Casey, *Cautious Crusade: Franklin Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War Against Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
63. Alan P. Dobson, 'The Export White Paper, 10 September, 1941', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series Vol. 39, No. 1 (1986), p. 59.

64. FRUS 1941. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth, the Near East, Africa*, FDR to Jones, 18 July 1941, p. 643.
65. FRUS 1941. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth, the Near East, Africa*, Hull to Kirk, 22 August 1941, pp. 645–646.
66. Gardner, *Three Kings*, pp. 26–34.
67. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 58.
68. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 18 September 1941.
69. Warren F. Kimball, 'Lend-Lease and the Open Door: The Temptation of British Opulence, 1937–1942', p. 242.
70. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 18 September 1941.
71. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57, D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. 'Financial Assistance to Saudi Arabia'. Memorandum of Conversation – Murray and Jernegan to Fred Davies, Lloyd Hamilton (Standard Oil Company of California) 7 August 1941.
72. 'Studies in War-time Organization: The United Kingdom Commercial Corporation' *African Affairs*, Vol. 43, No. 272 (Spring, 1943), pp. 116–123.
73. William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason, *The Undeclared War: 1940–1941* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1953), p. 214.
74. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57, D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. 'British Financial Assistance to King Ibn Saud'. Memorandum of Conversation, Paul Alling to Lloyd Hamilton (General Manager of the California Arabian Standard Oil Company), 3 June 1941.
75. Alan Dobson, 'The Export White Paper, 10 September, 1941', *Economic History Review*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (February, 1986), p. 59.
76. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 4 June 1941.
77. Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire and World War II* (London: Hambledon, 2006), p. 157.
78. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 19 September 1941.
79. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 18 September 1941.
80. The agricultural mission was part of the Millspaugh Mission. See James Arthur Thorpe, *The Second Millspaugh Mission to Iran: 1943–1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1966). For information relating to Afghanistan see, Georgetown University, Lauinger Library (LL): Cornelius Van Engels Papers, Box 9, Folder 22. 'Afghanistan' circulated by NEA's Paul Alling, 8 August 1944.
81. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57, D298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs, 1941–1954. Alling to Welles, 27 September 1941. Also see, NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54, D 403, Box 15, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum of Conversation: 'Proposed mission to Saudi Arabia of Governmental Experts on Water Resources, Agriculture and Roads'. Memorandum of Conversation, Twitchell, Alling and Merriam, 18 September 1941.
82. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350, Row 55, Compartment 7, Shelf 01, Entry 2415, Box 2. Welles to Kirk, 21 March 1942.
83. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350, Row 55, Compartment 7, Shelf 01, Entry 2415, Box 2. Memorandum of Conversation – Cairo to State Department, 10 May

1942. From the American Legation in Cairo Travelling to Saudi Arabia, Twitchell's team had to make a circuitous journey because of the wartime conditions. They travelled from Washington DC stopping en route in Miami, Trinidad, Brazil, Liberia, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Khartoum, and Cairo. See SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 17 March 1942.

84. NARA: Microfilm LM 165, T 1179 Reel 7. 'Agricultural Invoices', April 1942.
85. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350, Row 55, Compartment 7, Shelf 01, Entry 2415 Box 2. Cairo to State Department, 10 May 1942.
86. The German broadcast was translated by an Arab interpreter who worked for CASOC, Mohammed Al Mani. See SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entries 15 August 1942 and 15 June 1942.
87. In a truly macabre episode, Hamilton in a malaria-induced state killed, cooked and ate a pet gazelle of a Saudi Arabian Mining Syndicate employee. E. Burke Smith, writing to the Secretary of Agriculture remarked on the poor American behaviour in Saudi Arabia: 'One of the objects, I believe of the American Agricultural Mission was to promote good will between the United States and Saudi Arabia yet such acts as this are looked upon by the Arabs, whose Koran teaches them to be kind to animals, as just another evidence of the calibre of us Christian dogs [. . .] Your man Hamilton has succeeded in losing the respect of the local people which only reflects upon our country in general and the American Agricultural Mission in particular.' See NARA: Microfilm LM 165, T 1179 Reel 7. E. Burke Smith to Claude Wickard, Secretary of Agriculture, 13 January 1943.
88. Writing in his diary about having the British Minister's backing, Twitchell exclaimed that: 'Bird had recommended that I should head the Mission!' See SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 24 June 1941.
89. Gordon Merriam had passed along this information to Twitchell SML: Karl Twitchell Papers, Box 1, Diary, Entry, 20 September 1941.
90. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54, D 403, Box 15 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Alling to Welles, 27 September 1941.
91. Alfred Sauvy, 'Le Tiers Monde. Sous-Developpement et Developpement, Reedite, Augmente d'un Mise a Jour', *Population*, 16 Annee, No. 3 (July–September, 1961), pp. 509–12.
92. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54, D 403, Box 15, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Alling to Welles, 27 September 1941.
93. NARA: RG 84, Stack 350 6, Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to Kirk, 23 September 1942. Also see SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Diary, Entry 15 August 1942. Snow's trip to Saudi Arabia was such a success that Ibn Saud gave him an open-ended visa to visit the Kingdom in the future. Snow would return in 1945 after having reported on the first US Congressional visit to Moscow since 1939. See John Maxwell Hamilton, *Edgar Snow: A Biography* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 158.
94. Daniel Boorstin, *The Americans: The Democratic Experience* (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 575.

95. FDRPL: Franklin Roosevelt Papers. PPF 8452, 'Report of the U.S. Agricultural Mission to Saudi Arabia' Twitchell to Roosevelt, 23 April 1943. Twitchell further articulated his view of 'practical diplomacy' later that year. See Twitchell, 'American Ideas for Arabia', *Asia Magazine* (November, 1941).
96. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350, Row 67, Compartment 22, Shelf 1, Entry 3153, Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945. William Eddy to Secretary of State, 16 June 1945.
97. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54, D 40, Box 15, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum of Conversation – Twitchell to Merriam, 19 September 1941.
98. See Michael Chege, 'The State and Economic Reform in Africa: A Review Article', *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (2000), http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v4/v4i3a3.htm
99. PRO: FO 370/787. Memorandum by T.S.E. Boarse, 8 January 1944.
100. NARA: RG 59 Stack Area 250, Row 46, Compartment 3, Shelf 5–04 Box 3, Entry 670. Stimson to R.L. Maxwell, 21 October 1941.
101. NARA: RG 59, Lot No. 57, D 298 Box 15, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum by Gordon Merriam, 20 October 1941.
102. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 15 September 1941.
103. NARA: RG 59, Lot No. 57, D 298 Box 15, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum by Gordon Merriam, 20 October 1941.
104. St John Philby, *Arabian Oil Adventures* (Washington: Middle East Institute, 1964), pp. 73–134 and Leatherdale, *Imperial Oasis*, pp. 199–200.
105. R.P.T. Davenport-Hines and Geoffrey Jones (eds), *British Business in Asia since 1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 34 and p. 39.
106. Vassiliev, *History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 322.
107. To gain a full appreciation at the level of organisation that the Government of India was involved with regarding the Hajj, see 'Report of the Civil Administrator and Director, on the Pilgrim Season' (Calcutta: Government of India Press, 1939).
108. NARA: RG 59, Lot No. 57, D 298 Box 15, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Murray to Berle, Welles and Hull, 30 October 1941.
109. NARA: RG 59, Lot No. 57, D 298 Box 15, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Murray to Berle, Welles and Hull, 30 October 1941.

## Chapter 3 The Empty Quarter: Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia and Wartime Strategy, 1942

1. The city of Dhurma was located about an hour's drive from the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh.
2. NARA: RG 84, Stack Area 350, Row 55, Compartment 1, Shelf 02–3, Entry 2410, Box 1, Egypt Cairo Embassy 1936–1955. 'Memorandum of Remarks of the Minister on the Presentation of Diplomatic Letters', Cairo to State Department, 11 May 1942.

3. Much like the historiography covering 1941, scholars of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia have tended to overlook 1942 and start their studies in 1943. For semi-full accounts see Davis, *Contested Space*, pp. 105–12 and Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 56–61. Davis gives background to what he perceives as a heated Anglo-American argument with regards to the controversies over subsidising Saudi Arabia; a feature that this book will examine more fully in Chapter 5. Miller's study intersects with Anglo-American relations, but only through the prism of oil, which this book will further analyse in Chapter 4. Other works that touch upon Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia during 1942 include Anderson, *Aramco, the United States and Saudi Arabia*, pp. 42–7 and Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia: 1941–1945', pp. 255–6.
4. Daniel Silverfarb offers the most in-depth analysis of this one key feature of Anglo-American relations in 1942, which has been largely omitted by historians. See Daniel Silverfarb, 'Britain, the US and Securing Saudi-Arab Oilfields in 1942', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (September, 1983), p. 719–26.
5. PRO: FO 371/31540 E 1337/13/25. Stonehewer-Bird to FO, 26 February 1942.
6. Lacey, *The Kingdom*, p. 25.
7. PRO: FO 371/ 35147 E140/69/25. Stonehewer-Bird to Eden, 13 December 1942.
8. PRO: HW 1/203 097494. Copy of missive from Fuad Hamza to Ibn Saud, 10 November 1941.
9. A Foreign Office minute from this period claims: 'Ibn Saud's dreams of an efficient regular army and air force are never likely to be realised.' In fact, Ibn Saud had little wish to employ the Saudi Arabian Army as a paramilitary arm like the 'wild Ikhwan'. See PRO: FO 371/245/89 RE 1636/1636/25, Bullard to Halifax, 29 November 1940.
10. NARA: Microfilm T1179 Reel 3, Bert Fish to State Department, 11 March 1940.
11. PRO: FO 371/24549. Minute by Laurence Baggelay, 6 October 1940.
12. PRO: FO 371/24/547 E2794/236/65. Lieutenant Colonel Mallaby to Eyres, 19 October 1940.
13. PRO: CAB 121/639. Stonehewer-Bird to FO, 25 February 1942.
14. PRO: FO 371/ 31/ 456. Stonehewer-Bird to FO and War Cabinet, 25 February 1942.
15. Alan Moorehead, *A Year of Battle* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1943), p. 209.
16. Richard M. Leighton and Robert W. Coakley, *United States Army in World War II: The War Department, Global Logistics and Strategy 1940–1943* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History Department of the Army, 1955), pp. 108–11.
17. John G. Winant, *Letter from Grosvenor Square* (London, 1947), p. 5. Prior, in October 1941, Hitler discussed this contingency during a meeting with the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, to use the Caucasus and its oilfields as a staging post for a lunge against the Arab states. See Galeazzo Ciano, *The Ciano Diaries, 1939–1943: The Complete, Unabridged Diaries of Count Galeazzo Ciano, Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1936–1943*, ed. Hugh Gibson (Safety Harbor, FL Simon, 2001).
18. For a thorough account of German plans to use the Caucasus as a springboard into the Middle East to boost its oil production, see Joel Hayward, 'Hitler's Quest for

Oil: the Impact of Economic Considerations on Strategy, 1941–1942', *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (December, 1995), pp. 94–135.

19. NARA: RG 253, 650/6/6/30/07, Entry 913, Box 5786, 'Axis Oil Requirements of 1942'. Memorandum Report by the Enemy Oil Committee, 10 June 1942.
20. NARA: RG 250/49/32/05, Box 1, Lot File No. 78 D440, Entry 1435, Record of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1942–1953. F.W. Oligher to State Department, Undated Memorandum, Summer 1942.
21. Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin Wars: From WWII to Cold War, 1939–1953* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 118.
22. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 57 D 298 Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs, 1941–1954. Memorandum by James Moffett, 16 April 1941. By 1959, the number of stockholders connected to the CASOC concessions had risen to 1,000,000 stockholders. See Roy Lebkicher, George Rentz, Max Steineke, *Aramco Handbook* (Arabian American Oil Company, 1960), pp. 135–6.
23. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 57 D 298 Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs, 1941–1954, Stimson to State Department, 5 June 1941.
24. NARA: RG 59 Lot file No. 57 D 298 Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs, 1941–1954, Stimson to State Department, 5 June 1941.
25. For a study on the origins of the term 'Middle East', see Clayton R. Koppes, 'Captain Mahan, General Gordon and the Origins of the term "Middle East"', *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan, 1976), pp. 95–8.
26. Cordell Hull, *Memoirs: Volume II* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1948), pp. 1514–15.
27. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Stimson to Hull, 23 May 1942.
28. NARA: RG 84, Stack Area 350 Row 55, Compartment 6, Shelf 05–6, Entry 2412, Box 5, Folder 863.6 Egypt Cairo Embassy 1941–1941. Memorandum of Conversation between Lenahan and Merriam, 24 August 1942.
29. Silverfarb, 'Britain, the US and Securing Saudi-Arab Oilfields in 1942', p. 722.
30. The British oil denial programme in Burma particularly stands out. For a full account detailing its negative impact on British influence in the country afterwards, see 'Burmah Oil Affair' *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (January, 1966), pp. 614–65.
31. NARA: RG 218 19 0/01/75, Box 327, Central JCS Files 1942–1945. Memorandum by Vivian Dykes, 13 October 1942.
32. NARA: RG 218 19 0/01/75, Box 327, Central JCS Files 1942–1945. Memorandum by Vivian Dykes, 13 October 1942.
33. For a study on how Wedemeyer and his work impacted United States global strategy, see Charles Edward Kirkpatrick, *An Unknown Future and a Doubtful Present: Writing the Victory Plan of 1941* (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1990).
34. NARA: NARA: RG 218 19 0/01/75 Box 327, Central JCS Files 1942–1945. 'Air Defense of Oil Installations in Saudi Arabia' Missive by Albert Wedemeyer's secretary, A.J. McFarland Secretary to Dykes, 21 October 1942.
35. That summer, the campaign in the Mediterranean, the Battle of the North Atlantic, supplying the Soviet Union and the aftermath of the Battle of Midway are just a few examples of areas that were British and American strategic priorities. For

an account of the Mediterranean theatre during this time period, see Carlo D' Este, *World War II in the Mediterranean: 1942–1945* (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 1990), p. 1–21. For the Battle of the North Atlantic, see Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), pp. 25–62. For the Allied supply problems to the Soviet Union in 1942, see Gerhard Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War Two* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 377–80. For accounts on the Pacific in the summer of 1942, see Samuel Eliot Morrison, 'American Strategy in the Pacific Ocean', *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (March, 1961), pp. 4–56 and Galen Rogers Parras, *Stepping Stones to Nowhere: The Aleutian Islands, Alaska and American Military Strategy, 1867–1945* (Canada: UBC Press, 2003), pp. 70–94.

36. See Chapter 5 for further analysis on the dynamics of Saudi Arabian oil and Anglo-American relations.
37. Silverfarb, 'Britain, the US and Securing Saudi-Arab Oilfields in 1942', p. 726.
38. NARA: RG 59, Lot File # 57 D 298, Box 15 Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum of Conversation between Max Thornburg and Paul Alling, 5 May 1941.
39. Looking beyond the Rashid Ali coup, if instances like Anthony Eden's 1941 Mansion House speech, where he pledged His Majesty Government's 'full support of any scheme of Arab Unity' on the surface gave voice to the new anti-colonial zeitgeist, the coercive dismissal of a pro-Axis prime minister in Egypt in February 1942 was further evidence that Britain's imperialistic fire was not completely extinguished. See Charles D. Smith, '4 February 1942: Its Causes and Influences on Egyptian Politics and Anglo-Egyptian Relations, 1937–1945', *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (November, 1979), pp. 453–79.
40. NARA: RG 84, Stack Area 350 Row 55, Compartment 6, Shelf 05–6, Entry 2412, Box 5, Folder 863.6 Egypt Cairo Embassy 1941–1941. Moose to Kirk, July 1, 1942. Stonehewer-Bird and Moose were further annoyed by an episode later that month in which a British officer, Captain Bale, was sent by the British government to Dhahran to study the site to prepare a plan for an oil denial programme there.
41. NARA: RG 250/49/32/05 Entry 1435, Box 2 Lot File No. 78 D 440, Record of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1942–1953. Alling to Evan Wilson, 17 April 1942.
42. NARA: RG 250/49/32/-05, Box 1, Lot File No. 78 D440, Entry 1435, Record of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1942–1953. F.W. Oligher to State Department, Undated Memorandum, Summer 1942.
43. Howarth, *The Desert King*, p. 198.
44. James Holland, *Together We Stand: America, Britain, and the Forging of an Alliance* (New York: Miramax, 2006). To further emphasise how Anglo-American relations were becoming more integrated, in June 1942, British authorities in Washington, led by Field Marshall Sir John Dill, were expressing their gratitude to their wartime allies for providing reinforcements in the region in the aftermath of Britain's retreat from Tobruk. See NARA: RG 218/190/01/14/16 Entry UD2 Box 148. Minutes of Combined Chief of Staff meeting, 25 June 1942.

45. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Kirk to Hull, 19 May 1942.
46. NARA: RG 165 Entry 418, Box 1575 'Arabian Airfields'. Also see Alan Dobson, *Peaceful Air Warfare: The United States, Britain, and the Politics of International Aviation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
47. PRO: FO 371/24547. Newton to Halifax, 26 October 1940.
48. For an account on Operation Barbarossa its wider impact on the war in 1942, see Robert Kershaw, *War Without Garlands: Operation Barbarossa 1941–1942* (Shepperton: Ian Allen Publishing, 2001).
49. Russian Turkistan is the name for the western part of the Turk regions of the Soviet Union, including the Kazakh Steppes.
50. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. 'Report on meeting from May 12, 1942', 23 May 1942.
51. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Stimson to Hull, 29 June 1942.
52. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Stimson to Hull, 11 April 1942.
53. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Stimson to Hull, 11 April 1942.
54. Robin Higham, *Britain's Imperial Air Routes 1918 to 1939: The Story of Britain's Overseas Airlines* (London: GI Fouris, 1960), p. 311.
55. PRO: FO 371 31/456, Minutes by Oliver Stanley, Future Operations Planning Section, War Cabinet Chief of Staff Committee, 11 February 1942.
56. NARA: Microfilm T1179 Reel 6, Kirk to State Department, 28 February 1942.
57. NARA: Microfilm T1179 Reel 6, Memorandum by Roy Lebkicher to State Department, 26 February 1942.
58. NARA: Microfilm T1179 Reel 6, Memorandum by Roy Lebkicher to State Department, 26 February 1942.
59. Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia 1941–1945', p. 255.
60. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 108.
61. NARA: Microfilm T1179 Reel 6, Kirk to State Department, 28 February 1942.
62. For an intimate account of the Battle of Corregidor, see Eric Morris, *Corregidor: The American Alamo* (New York: Cooper Street Press, 1982).
63. SML: Karl Twitchell Papers. Box 1, Diary, Entry 7 May 1942. Also in May 1942, this was the time when Roosevelt began lecturing Churchill over colonialism and the future of Southeast Asia, according to Christopher Thorne. See Christopher Thorne, 'Indochina and Anglo-American Relations' *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 45, No. 6 (February, 1976), p. 78 and pp. 73–96. For further insight, see Walter LaFeber, 'Roosevelt, Churchill, and Indochina: 1942–1945', *American Historical Review*, Vol. 90 (1975), pp. 1277–95. For British perspective on the loss of Singapore and its connection to the failures of British colonialism, see William Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez and Decolonization* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006), pp. 293–338 and Roland Turner, 'Prologue: The Two Miss Perhams', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (1991), p. 21.
64. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Welles to Kirk, 26 March 1942.
65. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. 'Possibilities of Construction of One or More Airports in Saudi Arabia' Louis S. Girbel Jr Captain, Air Corps, Chief,

Intelligence Section, Air Corps Ferrying Command to Commanding General ACFC. 4 February 1942.

66. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. 'Possibilities of Construction of One or More Airports in Saudi Arabia' Louis S. Girbel Jr Captain, Air Corps, Chief, Intelligence Section, Air Corps Ferrying Command to Commanding General ACFC. 4 February 1942.
67. FRUS 1942. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa* Welles to Kirk, 26 February 1942, p. 564 and NARA: RG 59/34/13/4 Box 5809. Welles to Kirk, 15 April 1942.
68. NARA: RG 59/ 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Kirk to State Department, 19 May 1942.
69. NARA: RG 59/ 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Kirk to State Department, 19 May 1942.
70. NARA: RG 59/ 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Kirk to State Department, 11 May 1942.
71. NARA: RG 59/ 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Memorandum 'Visit of the Minister to Saudi Arabia to Present his Letter of Credence, to King Abdel Aziz Ibn Saud', Kirk to Hull, 23 May 1942.
72. Reader Bullard – Agent Consul 1925. Hugh Stonehewer-Bird – Consul 1927. Stanley Jordan – Acting Consul 1925, Laurence Grafftey-Smith – Vice Consul 1925. See Godfrey Hertslet (ed.), *Foreign Office List and Diplomatic and Consular Yearbook 1946* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1946).
73. NARA: RG 84, Stack 350 6 Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to Cairo and State Department, 29 July 1942.
74. Phone Interview with Clarence Macintosh, 26 January 2006. Clarence Macintosh speaking about James Moose: 'He could read *Gone With the Wind* in two days and remember everything [...] He knew everything. If you wanted to know about Russian train tracks, he knew it.' In the 1960s Moose lectured and wrote extensively on Foreign Affairs. Moose on the United States' place in the world in 1965: 'Our affairs would be better directed and our interests better served if we exercised more reticence in intl. matters and took our claims to international leadership less seriously.' See University of Arkansas Mullins Library (UAML): James Moose Papers, Box 8, Lecture Notes, 18 January 1965.
75. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Moose to Cairo and State Department, 14 July 1942.
76. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 54.
77. FRUS 1942. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa* Kirk to Berle 24 July 1942, p. 573.
78. NARA: RG 84, Stack 350 6 Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to Cairo and State Department, 29 July 1942.
79. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Moose to Cairo and State Department, 25 July 1942.
80. NARA: RG 84, Stack 350 6 Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to Cairo and State Department, 29 July 1942.
81. PRO: FO 371 31448 E 41/14/117/25. Foreign Office to Stonehewer-Bird, July 19, 1942. Also see, Davis, *Contested Space*, pp. 107–8.
82. NARA: RG 84, Stack 350 6 Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to State Department, 29 July 1942.

83. NARA: RG 84, Stack 350 6, Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to State, 20 September 1942.
84. NARA: RG 84, Stack 350 6, Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to State, 23 September 1942. The suggestion that a secret could *ever* be kept in Riyadh was later scoffed at by none other than Stonehewer-Bird.
85. In 1953 before his death, Ibn Saud established the Council of Ministers, which became the key decision-making body for the Saudi Arabian government until 1995. The council consisted of the king who is also the prime minister, the crown prince who is deputy, the second deputy prime minister and cabinet ministers. See James Wynbrandt, *A Brief History of Saudi Arabia* (York, PA: Maple Vail, 2010), pp. 206–8.
86. NARA: RG 84 Stack 350 6, Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to State Department, 8 September 1942.
87. NARA: RG 84 Stack 350 6, Shelf 05–06, Entry 2412, Box 5. Moose to State Department, 8 September 1942.
88. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Alling to S.W. Boggs, Office of Geographer, 29 September 1942.
89. PRO: FO 371/31450 E 5945/13/25. Monroe to Lockhart, 6 October 1942.
90. The king's fears regarding the air routes question were actually realised in January 1943 when a United States Army plane flew over Mecca, causing a great furore with Saudi Arabian officials. See NARA: RG 59/ 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Harold Shullaw to State Department, 13 January 1943.
91. PRO: FO 371/ 31450. Stonehewer-Bird to Foreign Office, 6 October 1942.
92. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Kirk to State Department, 5 August 1942.
93. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Kirk to State Department, 14 July 1942.
94. Anglo-American aviation rivalry in Saudi Arabia will be further examined in Chapter 6.

## Chapter 4 Nahal: Anglo-American Relations and Ibn Saud outside Saudi Arabia, 1943

1. PRO: FO 371/31450 E 663 6/13/25. Jeddah to Foreign Office, 11 November 1942. After the battle Churchill demanded 'ringing the church bells all over Britain'. See Lord Moran, *Churchill: Taken from the Diaries of Lord Moran, the Struggle of Survival 1940–1965* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), p. 84.
2. See David Reynolds, 'Great Britain: Imperial Diplomacy', in David Reynolds, Warren Kimball, and A.O. Chubarian (eds), *Allies at War: The Soviet, American and British Experience 1939–1945* (London: Macmillan, 1994), pp. 333–54.
3. Warren F. Kimball, *Allies at War*, p 396.
4. PRO: CO 733/443/18. Winant to Churchill, 14 June 1943.
5. When it comes to the historiography of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, scholars have paid scant attention to the Hoskins Mission. Simon Davis' *Contested Space*, Barry Rubin's *Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia 1941–1945*, Aaron

David Miller's *Search for Security* and William Roger Louis' *British Empire in the Middle East* make no mention of it in their studies. Philip J. Baram and Thomas W. Lippman give mention to the Hoskins Mission, but without applying it to Anglo-American relations. See Baram, *Department of State*, pp. 141–3. Lippman, 'The View from 1947: The CIA and the Partition of Palestine', *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Winter, 2007). The Hoskins Mission has, on occasion, been covered from a wider Anglo-American perspective. See Monty Noam Penkovar, *Decision on Palestine Deferred: Anglo-American Diplomacy 1939–1945* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 241–59; Matthew Coulter, 'The Joint Anglo-American Statement on Palestine, 1943', *The Historian*, Vol. 54, No. 3 (March, 1992), pp. 465–70. From an American vantage point, see Evan Wilson, 'The Palestine Papers, 1943–1947', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4. (Summer, 1973), pp. 36–41; Samuel Halperin and Irvin Oder, 'The United States in Search of a Policy: Franklin D. Roosevelt and Palestine', *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July, 1962), p. 320–41. Most studies that discuss the Hoskins Mission do so in relation to Palestine and the Arab–Israeli conflict. For valuable accounts see Monty Noam Penkovar, *The Holocaust and Israel Reborn: From Catastrophe to Sovereignty* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), pp. 145–175. Louis Rapoport, *Shake Heaven & Earth: Peter Bergson and the Struggle to Save the Jews of Europe* (Jerusalem: Geffen, 1999), pp. 95–108.

6. Peter Young, *World War 1939–1945: A Short History* (London: Arthur Baker Limited, 1966), p. 231.
7. PRO: FO 371 34955 E 1369/506/65. Minute by Eyres, 11 March 1943.
8. FRUS. *The Near East and Africa*, Patrick Hurley to Roosevelt, Vol. IV, 5 May 1943, p. 776.
9. See Alexander Schloch, 'Britain in Palestine, 1838–1882: The Roots of the Balfour Policy', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Autumn, 1992).
10. PRO: CO 732 88 22. Report entitled, 'An Appreciation of the Military Implications of the Palestine Problem on Imperial Strategy', 2 May 1944.
11. See Eitan Bar Yosef, 'The Last Crusade? British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign 1917–1918', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (January, 2001).
12. D.K. Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914–1958* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 151. For further analysis on Britain's eroding rule in Palestine leading up to World War II, see Michael Cohen, *Palestine: Retreat from the Mandate* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978) Chapters 1–5.
13. For a contemporary view, speaking in this case on the British government's inability to crackdown on Zionist extremism, the famed historian H.A.R. Gibb lamented at the time, 'a government which is forced to look on impotently while its subjects build up two, indeed three, rival armies which openly drill with weapons stolen from its own troops is no Government, but the abdication of all government'. See H.A.R. Gibb, 'Middle Eastern Perplexities', *International Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (October, 1944), p. 454.
14. Wilson, *Decision on Palestine*, p. 29.

15. For a perspective of the United States relations with Palestine preceding World War II, see Lawrence Davidson, *America's Palestine: Popular and Official Perceptions from Balfour to Israeli Statehood* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2001).
16. PRO: CO 733/443/18. Copy of OSS Report #13, 'Zionist Politics in the United States', 1 July 1943 and Isaac B. Berkson, 'Jewish Palestine in a Post World War', *Journal of Educational Sociology* (1945).
17. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, Patrick Hurley to President Roosevelt, 5 May 1943, p. 776.
18. Baram, *The Department of State in the Middle East: 1919–1945*, p. 75.
19. Similarly, the British government had made a similar statement given in the House of Lords by the Secretary of the Colonies, Viscount Cranborne (Robert Cecil) on 6 May 1942. See Hansards (HAN): House of Lords, Deb 06, May 1942, Vol. 122, cc943–4 (Lord Cranborne).
20. Roosevelt adopting Ibn Saud as an intermediary to speak to the Arab World will be discussed further in Chapter 7.
21. Halperin and Oder, 'The United States in Search of a Policy', p. 323.
22. Susan Hattis Rolef, 'St. John Philby and the Zionists' *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 2 (April, 1972).
23. Barnet Litvinoff (ed.), *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series B, Vol. 2, Entry 6 October 1939 (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1983), pp. 371–2.
24. For more in-depth analysis, see Leslie McLoughlin, *Ibn Saud: Founder of the Kingdom* (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1993).
25. PRO: FO 371/24589, R 2306/710/25. India Office to the Secretary of State of India, 25 August 1940. On 25 August 1940 however, British officials with the aid of Saudi authorities placed Philby under restraint by Defence of India Rules Act when he arrived in Karachi with the intent of travelling to the United States on an Anti-British and pro-isolationist lecture tour.
26. PRO: AIR 2/ 1858 E791/10/31. Bullard to Halifax, 6 June 1938.
27. NARA: RG 59, Lot File No. 57, D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Murray to Berle 29 May 1941. For the State Department's view at this time, refer back to Chapter 2.
28. For studies on American ethnocentric attitudes towards Arab culture, see Melani McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East, 1945–2000* (California: California University Press, 2005).
29. According to Sumner Welles, from the Hoskins Mission's inception, President Roosevelt believed that Ibn Saud was 'purchasable'. See *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Series B, Vol. Entry 5 July 1943 (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1983), p. 514. For a British perspective on the possibility of bribing Ibn Saud, see Reader Bullard's missive to Lord Halifax in January 1938, 'One hesitates to make prophecies [...] that no bribe would buy the support of Ibn Saud for the proposal to partition Palestine.' See, PRO: AIR 2/1858, E 3791/10/31. Bullard to Halifax, 6 June 1938.
30. This meeting was attended by State Department officials Wallace Murray, Paul Alling and William Parker, and the Zionist contingent included Chaim

Weizmann, Moshe Shertok, and Rabbi Israel Goldman. See, FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa* 'Memorandum of Conversation', 3 March 1943, p. 754.

31. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, 'Memorandum of Conversation', 3 March 1943, p. 754.
32. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, Shullaw to Hull, 6 May 1943, p. 780.
33. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, Moose to Hull, 24 July 1943, p. 802.
34. It is interesting to note that Welles would be one of Ibn Saud's harshest critics, chastising the king, *'recalcitrant'* and calling him an *'absolute dictator'*. See Sumner Welles, *Where Are We Heading* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1947), p. 220.
35. Litvinoff, *Letters of Chaim Weizmann*, Entry for 5 July 1943, p. 514.
36. SML: Harold Boies Hoskins Papers. Box 5, Folder 11, 'Memorandum of Conversation by Dr. Chaim Weizmann', 12 June 1943.
37. PRO: FO 371/35163 E 3326/3326/25. 'Personality Report' Jeddah to Foreign Office, 31 May 1943.Weizmann was the former director of the British Admiralty's scientific laboratories during World War I. See Jehuda Reinharz, 'Science in the Service of Politics: the Case of Chaim Weizmann during World War I', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 100, No. 394 (July, 1985). To emphasise Weizmann's close connection with Britain, later in June of 1943, Weizmann disclosed to Isaiah Berlin that he regarded Jewish development in Palestine as 'serving British Imperial needs and based on British rather than American capital'. See PRO: CO 733/443/18 E 311 2/89.31. Minute by Campbell, 6 June 1943.
38. Michael J. Cohen, 'The British White Paper on Palestine, May 1939, Part II: The Testing of a Policy, 1942–1945', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (September, 1976), pp. 728–9.
39. The British prime minister had earlier confided to his cabinet in October 1941: 'The Liberal and Labour Parties will never agree to the Pro-Arab policies which are the commonplace of British Service circles, nor, so long as I remain in British public life, will I.' See PRO: CO 733/443/18, Reg. 826/87/31. Quote taken from Churchill's missive to the Secretary of the War Cabinet, 1 October 1941, Campbell to Battersill, 17 February 1943. To gain further sense of the British establishment's attitudes towards the Palestine situation during World War II, Lord Lloyd as Secretary of the Colonies wrote to his son on 19 May 1940, 'I find myself in a Government which is almost entirely pro-Zionist and anti-Arab, so I may have a good many difficulties ahead of me'. Quoted from J. Charmley, *Lord Lloyd and the Decline of the British Empire* (London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, 1987), p. 251. During 1943, Freya Stark had been dispatched to the United States on a speaking tour specifically for the purpose to refute and explain the prime minister's pro-Zionist position in light of the White Paper to a critical American press. See Efraim Karsh and Rory Miller, 'Freya Stark in America: Orientalism, Anti-Semitism and Political Propaganda', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (July, 2004), p. 328.
40. PRO: CO 733/443/18. Winant to Churchill, 14 June 1943.

41. PRO: CO 733/443/18. Copy of message from Roosevelt to His Majesty Ibn Saud, 7 July 1943.
42. To further understand why Roosevelt employed an eclectic set of envoys during World War II, see M. Fullilove, *Special Faith and Confidence* (PhD. dissertation, University of Oxford, 2004), p. 284.
43. Von Joseph Gabrill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Middle East: Missionary Influence on American Policy 1827 to 1910* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1971), p. 286.
44. PRO; CO 733/443/19 E 1771/532. Baxter to Hayter, 14 March 1943.
45. PRO: HS 3/166. Copy of report from Brigadier General J.R. Deane to Colonel William J. Donovan, 6 November 1942. Along with his mission in 1943, a work that covers Hoskins' journey to the Middle East in 1942, see Louis Rapoport, *Shake Heaven & Hell*, pp. 95–9.
46. Baram, *The Department of State in the Middle East 1919–1945*, p. 75.
47. See, Robert Rhodes James, *Anthony Eden* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1985).
48. PRO: CO 733/443/18. Minute by W.S. Battershill, 16 June 1943.
49. Baram, *The Department of State in the Middle East: 1919–1945*, p. 75.
50. PRO: HS 3/166. Casey to Foreign Office, 6 November 1942.
51. PRO: CO 733/443/19 E 1771/532. Baxter to Hayter, 14 March 1943.
52. SML: Harold Hoskins Papers, Box 1, Folder 35, 'Memorandum by Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. vis-à-vis Hoskins', 31 August 1943.
53. PRO: CO/733/433/18. 'Harold Hoskins' Baxter to Hayter, 14 March 1943. As early as 21 May 1943, Hoskins suggested the same advice to Weizmann adding that he would rather 'try and use some of the Egyptian leaders as intermediaries' because they were 'sufficiently objective' as non-Arab Moslems. See Litvinoff, *Letters of Chaim Weizmann*, p. 509.
54. Daniel Silverfarb, 'Britain and Saudi Arabia on the Eve of World War II', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (October, 1983), p. 404. The Peel Commission was a British inquiry that controversially recommended partition for Palestine. See Earl Peel (William Peel), 'The Report of the Palestine Commission', *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Vol. 16, No. 5 (September, 1937), pp. 761–79.
55. According to a Turkish report intercepted by British Intelligence, to put a stop to King Abdullah of Transjordan's dream of leading a 'Greater Syria' that included Palestine, the King of Egypt and the President of Syria proposed that Ibn Saud should accept the mantle of Arab leadership. See PRO: HW1/3610 142412, Foreign Minister in Hungary to Turkish Legation Cairo, 16 March 1945. The scholar Maurice Labelle has dealt with Saudi Arabia's rivalry with the Hashemites *vis a vis* Palestine, but his work covers the period between 1945 and 1949. See Maurice Labelle, '"The Only Thorn": Early Saudi–American Relations and the Question of Palestine, 1945–1949', *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (April, 2011), p. 288.
56. PRO: CO 733/443/18. George Gater to V.G. Glenday, 29 July 1943.
57. PRO: CO 733/443/18 E 3464/87/31. Anthony Eden to John G. Winant, 24 July 1943.

58. NARA: RG 59, Lot File # 57 D 298, Box 15, Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum of Conversation between Alling and Moffett, 13 May 1941.
59. *Life Magazine*, 'The King of Arabia', 31 May 1943.
60. PRO: FO 371/3516 E 3326/3326/25. Jeddah to Foreign Office, 31 May 1943.
61. PRO: FO 371 401 39. Minute by R.M.A. Hankey, 25 January 1944.
62. PRO: CO/733/443/18. Colonial Office report, 16 November 1943. For a detailed account of the joint Anglo-American Statement on Palestine in 1943, see Penkovar, *The Holocaust and Israel Reborn*, pp. 145–75.
63. PRO: CO 733/443/19 E 3464/87/31. Missive by Secretary of Colonies to Palestine Sir Harold MacMichael, 25 July 1943.
64. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Sir Harold Alfred MacMichael, by M.W. Daly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004–6).
65. PRO: CO 733/443/19 E 3464/87/31. Missive by Secretary of Colonies to Palestine Sir Harold MacMichael, 25 July 1943.
66. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, Hull to Hoskins, 7 July 1943, p. 796.
67. PRO: FO CO/733/443/18. Copy of Memorandum of Conversation from Hoskins to Ibn Saud, Wikeley to Eden, 11 August 1943.
68. PRO: FO CO/733/443/18. Copy of Memorandum of Conversation from Hoskins to Ibn Saud, Wikeley to Eden, 11 August 1943.
69. PRO: CO 733/443/19. Copy of Memorandum of Conversation between Ibn Saud and Colonel Hoskins (translated Arab Text approved by the King), 16 August 1943.
70. PRO: CO 733/443/19. Copy of Memorandum of Conversation between Ibn Saud and Colonel Hoskins (translated Arab Text approved by the King), 16 August 1943.
71. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Kirk to State Department, 4 September 1943. The subjects mentioned above will be further covered in Chapter 5.
72. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, 'Memorandum by Lieutenant Harold B. Hoskins', 31 August 1943, pp. 807–10.
73. During his meeting with Roosevelt, Hoskins gave him a gift from Ibn Saud. Hearing that Roosevelt was a keen philatelist, the king sent him a box of Saudi Arabian stamps. See, FDRPL: Franklin Roosevelt Papers, PPF 7960, Roosevelt to Ibn Saud, 10 February 1944.
74. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa* 'Palestine Question', Memorandum by Gordon Merriam in reference to Hoskins conversation with the President on 27 September 1943. 15 October 1943, pp. 816–21.
75. FRUS. Vol. IV, 'Memorandum by Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. Hoskins', 31 August 1943, p. 809.
76. NARA: RG 250/49/32/-05 Entry 1435, Box 1, Lot File No. 78, D 440. 'Report on Trip to England of Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. Hoskins, A.U.S.' 14 December 1943.
77. Besides meeting with key members of the British government, Hoskins dined at the estate of the Duke of Devonshire, while also having conversations on his

mission with Chaim Weizmann and St John Philby. The meeting with Philby proved particularly uncomfortable. Speaking of Ibn Saud's former advisor, Hoskins wrote: 'I came away with the impression of a violent and passionate man who thought that he was being completely honest in laying about him against anyone who did not agree with him or whim he felt had attached him.' See NARA: RG 250/49/32/-05 Entry 1435, Box 1, Lot File No. 78, D 440. 'Memorandum of Conversation with Mr. St. John Philby', 15 November 1943.

78. PRO: CO 733/443/19. Minutes of Hoskins and Petersen Meeting, 9 November 1943.
79. PRO: CO 733/443/19. Minutes of Hoskins and Petersen Meeting, 9 November 1943.
80. PRO: CO 733/443/19. Minutes of Hoskins and Petersen Meeting, 9 November 1943.
81. PRO: CO 733 443 19. Richard Law to Churchill, 9 November 1943. Law had also tried to organise a meeting between Hoskins and Churchill, but failed. Writing to Law the next day, Churchill stated, 'Alas I cannot see him. My opinions on this question are the result of long reflection and are not likely to undergo any change. I will talk to the President about it when we meet.'
82. NARA: RG 250/49/32/-05 Entry 1435, Box 1, Lot File No. 78, D 440. 'Memorandum of Conversation with Colonel Oliver Stanley', 17 November 1943.
83. NARA: RG 250/49/32/-05 Entry 1435, Box 1, Lot File No. 78, D 440. 'Memorandum of Conversation with Mr. Eden', 22 November 1943.
84. FO 371/35163 E 3326/3326/25. 'Personality Report' Jeddah to Foreign, 31 May 1943.
85. *Washington Post*, 'The Washington Merry-Go-Round', 9 August 1943.

## Chapter 5 Shifting Sands: Anglo-American Relations inside Saudi Arabia, 1943–4

1. For studies on the dynamics between Middle East oil and Anglo-American relations, see p. 6.
2. PRO: FO 921/191 25(11)44/21. Jordan to Eden, 15 March 1944.
3. Kimball, *Forged in War*, p. 261.
4. NARA: Harley Notter Files. RG 59, Stack Area 250 Row 6, Compartment 22, Shelf 06, Box 166–169, Entry 298, Files 457. 'Anglo-American Relations: Post War Alternatives', 17 February 1944.
5. PRO: FO 371/38523. 'The Essentials of an American Policy', 21 March 1944.
6. Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 70, 245.
7. NARA: RG 218 190 1 74 Box 316, Entry UD1. 'Current British Policy and Strategies Rel. to that of the US', 8 May 1943.
8. William Leahy, *I Was There* (New York: McGraw Hill Press, 1950), p. 219. Diary Entry, 14 September 1943.
9. See, NARA: RG 59 250 46 35 04 Box 3 Entry 670. Truman Committee Report 'The Future of the US in the World Petroleum Economy', 1944.

10. It was believed at this time by American officials that the country's domestic oil reserves had a 'relatively short life span' running out in the mid 1950s. See *The New Statesman*, 'Oil and Politics', 22 April 1944.
11. The British Library (BL) India Office Records (IOR): IOR: R/15/1/700. 'The Future of Oil in its Relation to the Middle East' Memorandum prepared by the Admiralty, Peel to Caroe, Secretary of Government of India External Affairs Department, 15 January 1941.
12. 'Next to winning the war', Ickes told the President at the time, 'the most important matter before us as a nation is the world oil situation.' See Rachel Bronson, *Thicker Than Oil*, p 39. For more information on Harold Ickes' influence, see Stephen J. Randall, 'Harold Ickes and United States Foreign Petroleum Policy Planning, 1939–1945', *The Business History Review*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Autumn, 1983).
13. Miller, *Search for Security*, Intro XV.
14. Anderson, *Aramco, the United States & Saudi Arabia*, pp. 38–9.
15. Library of Congress (LC): Loy Henderson Papers. Box 12. Thornburg to Feis, 26 May 1943.
16. FRUS 1943. Vol. IV, *The Near East and Africa*, Feis to Hull, 26 July 1943, pp. 933–4.
17. IOR: R/15/2/538. Foreign Office to Jeddah, 4 May 1944.
18. NARA: RG 38 370 14 13 3, Box 5. 'Memorandum of Conversation; Oil Matters in the Near East', Senator Maloney, Richard Joyce Smith and Cordell Hull, 10 May 1944.
19. LSE Library: Pamphlet Collection, HD9/605. Herbert Feis, 'Petroleum and American Foreign Policy' p. 43.
20. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 8. Feis to Hull, 8 October 1943.
21. Library of Congress (LC): Harold Ickes Diaries, Microfilm, Reel 6. 29 May 1943.
22. Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia, 1941–1945', p 253.
23. Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia, 1941–1945', p 253.
24. Rubin is not the only scholar to use Ickes as a symbol of Anglo-American discord. According to Wm. Roger Louis, Ickes' main priority was to '(strike) out against British Imperialism'. See Louis, *British Empire and the Middle East*, pp. 185–6. For other examples, see Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 120. Irvine Anderson and Aaron David Miller come close to capturing Ickes' views on Anglo-American relations and his New Dealer mentality. See Anderson, *Aramco, The United States and Saudi Arabia*, p. 73. Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 94–5.
25. NARA: RG 38/ 370/ 14/ 13/ 3 Box 5. Ickes to Roosevelt, 31 December 1943.
26. NARA: RG 59/250/34/13/4 Box 5809. 'Telephone Conversation between Harold Ickes and Edward Stettinius', 3 June 1944.
27. PRO: FO 371/24549. Report by A.C. Hearn, *'The Future of Oil in its Relation to the Middle East'*, 10 November 1940.
28. See J. Cable, *Intervention at Abadan: Plan Bucaneer* (Hong Kong: Palgrave Macmillan, 1991), pp. 9–19; B. Schwadran, *The Middle East, Oil and the Great Powers* and S. Marsh, *Anglo-American Relations and Cold War Oil: Crisis in Iran* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

29. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. 'Some Observations on the Saudi Arabian Problem', 3 November 1944.
30. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Kirk to State Department, 13 October 1943.
31. PRO: FO 371/ 45543. Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 22 November 1945.
32. PRO: FO/921/192. Jordan to Foreign Office, 29 September 1944.
33. Irvine Anderson, *Aramco, the United States and Saudi Arabia*, p. 100.
34. As the *Washington Daily News* noted in February 1944, the royalties that the CASOC had offered in 1939 was far 'less than government controlled Japanese and German companies'. See *Washington Daily News*, 'Yank Industrialists Outmaneuver Japs and Nazis for Oil Reserves', 18 February 1944.
35. NARA: RG 59 Entry 456 Box 28. 'First Meeting of Special Committee on Petroleum, Kirk to State Department, 27 July 1943.
36. For a more detailed overview of the ARAMCO-US discussions that took place in 1943, see Anderson, *Aramco, the United States & Saudi Arabia*, pp. 56–67.
37. Anderson, *Aramco, the United States & Saudi Arabia*, p. 62.
38. For an account of TAPLINE, see Douglass Little, 'Pipeline Politics: America, TAPLINE, and the Arabs', *The Business History Review*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (Summer, 1990), pp. 255–85. For a study that covers the strategic dimension leading up to TAPLINE, see Helmut Mejcher, 'Saudi Arabia's Vital Link to the West: Some Political, Strategic and Tribal Aspects of (TAP) in the Stage of Planning 1942–1950', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (October, 1982), pp. 359–77.
39. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel # 6. Report by the Independent Petroleum Association of America, 'The Proposed Arabian Pipeline: A Threat to our National Security', 28 April 1944.
40. NARA: RG 38/ 370/ 14/ 13/ 3 Box 5. Moffett to Hull, 18 April 1944.
41. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 8. Ickes to Stettinius, 3 June 1944.
42. PRO: FO 800/ 431 44/38. Viscount Halifax to Foreign Office, 20 February 1944.
43. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. 'Memorandum of Conversation between Cordell Hull and Lord Halifax', 20 March 1944.
44. BL: IOR R/15/1/700. Memorandum, India Office to Bushire, 14 February 1944.
45. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 124.
46. Edited by Warren Kimball, *Churchill and Roosevelt: the Complete Correspondence II. Alliance Forged* (New Jersey, 1984), p. 744. Roosevelt to Churchill, 22 February 1944, p. 744. Roosevelt believed that this issue was of such great importance he offered to 'preside at the first meeting of the joint group to be held in the Cabinet Room of the White House', p. 745. Churchill's response to FDR, see PRO: FO 954/30/C, Microfilm. Churchill to Roosevelt, 4 March 1944. The idea that the British government covetously eyed Saudi Arabian oil never completely faded away in some quarters of the United States. In a highly publicised visit to Saudi Arabia in October 1945, Senator Claude Pepper and Under Secretary of War John J. McCloy raised inter-allied tensions by accusing Britain of trying to dislodge America's top spot in Saudi Arabia's oil sector in October 1945. Afterwards, Laurence Grafftey-Smith cabled London, describing Pepper's findings as 'mendacious allegations' and 'used this bogey officially to obtain Congress

approval for the current Lend-Lease programme here (Saudi Arabia)'. See PRO: FO 371/ 45543. Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 22 November 1945.

47. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 156.
48. NARA: RG 59 250 46 35 04 Box 3 Entry 670. 'Truman Committee Additional Report of the Special Committee Investing the National Defense Program: Part I'.
49. PRO: FO 954 30 C. Foreign Office Missive, 6 March 1944.
50. FRUS 1944. Vol. III, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Hull to Moose, 11 May 1944, pp. 698–9.
51. *New York Times*, 'Deny British Fight US on Arabian Oil', 18 March 1944.
52. See Mejcher, 'Saudi Arabia's 'Vital Link to the West', pp. 361–2 and Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 157.
53. NARA: RG 38/370/14/13/3, Box 5. Winant to State Department, 5 May 1944.
54. NARA: RG 38/ 370/ 14/13 /3, Box 5. Winant to State Department, 5 May 1944.
55. To see a copy of the Anglo-American Petroleum Agreement in full, see Anderson, *Aramco, the United States, Saudi Arabia*, pp. 218–23. For studies that cover the Anglo-American Oil Agreement and viewed it as a positive force to US–British relations in Saudi Arabia, see Herbert Feis, 'The Anglo-American Oil Agreement', *The Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 55, No. 5 (August, 1946). For works that stress that the main source of acrimony was between the commercial oil business and governments, not between Britain and the United States, see Stoff, 'The Anglo-American Oil Agreement and the Wartime Search for Policy', *Business History Review*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (Spring, 1981), pp. 59–74; Anderson, *Aramco, the United States*, pp. 86–104. For works that cover the agreement as a representation of Anglo-American rivalry, see Davis, *Contested Space*, pp. 163–8; 'The Wartime "Special Relationship"? From Oil War to Anglo-American Oil Agreement, 1939–1945', *The Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (June, 2012), pp. 119–33. To a lesser extent, see Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 103–6; Louis, *British Empire and the Middle East*, pp. 188–9.
56. Herbert Feis, 'The Anglo-American Oil Agreement', p. 1182 and p. 1187.
57. See Anderson, *Aramco, the United States, Saudi Arabia*. p. 106.
58. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. 'Some Observations on the Saudi Arabian Problem', 3 November 1944. By the autumn of 1944, CASOC had officially changed its name to ARAMCO, the Arabian American Oil Company.
59. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. 'Some Observations on the Saudi Arabian Problem', 3 November 1944.
60. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. 'Some Observations on the Saudi Arabian Problem', 3 November 1944.
61. Louis, *British Empire and the Middle East*, p. 189.
62. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 104.
63. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. 'General Considerations in Connection with Economic of Financial Assistance to SA', 3 April 1943.
64. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 70 and p. 245.
65. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 108.

66. PRO: FO 371/31/462 # E6711/6711/25. 'Lend-Lease' Report, 20 November 1942.
67. PRO: FO/371/ 34955. Foreign Office Minute, 18 February 1943.
68. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 70.
69. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Moose to State Department, 17 August 1943.
70. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Shullaw to State Department, 15 February 1943.
71. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Shullaw to State Department, 24 April 1943.
72. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum of Conversation, DH Robertson, W.G. Hayter, Leonard Parker and F.W. McGuire, 17 September 1943.
73. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum of Conversation, Treasury Department, Leonard Parker and F.W. McGuire, 24 November 1943.
74. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum of Conversation, Treasury Department, Leonard Parker and F.W. McGuire, 24 November 1943.
75. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum of Conversation, British Treasury, US Treasury and State Department, 17 February 1944.
76. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum of Conversation, British Treasury, US Treasury and State Department, 17 February 1944.
77. For a contemporary account of Harry Dexter White and his background as an alleged Soviet spy, see *Time Magazine*, 'The Strange Case of Harry Dexter White', 23 November 1953.
78. PRO: FO 954/15D, Microfilm, Row #3, Drawer 10. Baxter to Hankey, 2 November 1945.
79. PRO: FO/921/192, Cairo to Foreign Office, copies sent to Stanley Jordan, Chancellor Exchequer, Leo Amery, Colonel Stanley, Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, Lord Leathers. 29 September 1944. In 1944, the British government also offered a £10,000 a month credit to cover the expenses of Saudi Arabia's Diplomatic Consulates abroad. See, FRUS. 1944, Vol. V, British Embassy to State Department,-7 July 1944, p. 719.
80. PRO: FO/371/40267 E 364/325/25. Foreign Office Minute, 20 January 1944. Also see, FO 371/4028, E 2128/325/25. Foreign Office to Washington 17 April 1944.
81. PRO: FO 954/15D Microfilm, Row 3, Drawer 10. Eden to Churchill, March 31, 1945 and FO 921/192. Lord Moyne, 18 September 1944.
82. PRO: FO 371/40267. Jordan to Baxter. 31 December 1943.
83. PRO: FO 371/4028 E/565/325/25. 14 February 1944.
84. Sheik Yassin had complained to Jordan that the people in the area were so poor, 'both women and men, walk about naked'. See, PRO: FO 371/40267, 'Translation of Meeting between Stanley Jordan and Sheik Yassin', Jordan to Eden, 14 February 1944.
85. PRO: FO 371 40267 25/32/487/1233. Jordan to Baxter, 31 December 1943.
86. PRO: FO 816 168 5/792/44. FO Missive, 18 April 1944.
87. PRO: FO 371 40267 25/32/487/1233. Jordan to Baxter, 31 December 1943.
88. NARA: Microfilm, Reel 6. Kirk to State, 18 January 1943.

89. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Kirk to State, 18 January 1943.
90. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 245.
91. FO 371/ 31462. Lord Killearn to Ministry of War Transport, 18 November 1942.
92. FRUS 1944. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth and Europe*, Moose to Hull, 29 April 1944, p. 694.
93. FO 371/ 40267. Jordan to Eden, 14 February 1944.
94. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Stettinius to Hull, 22 April 1944, p. 690.
95. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Hull to Roosevelt, 3 April 1944, p. 679.
96. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, T*he Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Hull to Roosevelt, 3 April 1944, p. 679.
97. PRO: FO 921/192. Foreign Office to Jeddah, 29 September 1944.
98. FRUS. Vol. V, Hull to Moose, March 3, 1944, p. 677. During the period of 1943–5, the United States gave 22.3 million ounces of silver to Saudi Arabia. Cited in *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Treasury for Fiscal Year Ended, 30 June, 1944*, R. Mikesell, *Arabian Oil* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1949), pp. 77–8.
99. PRO: FO 371/4028. Foreign Office to Washington, 17 April 1944.
100. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Hull to Peterson, 1 July 1944, pp. 718–9.
101. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Peterson to Hull, 7 July 1944, pp. 711–3. During World War II, 1 riyal roughly =$.30. Mikesell, *Arabian Oil*, p. 78.
102. PRO: FO 371/ 45542. Foreign Office Minute, 6 March 1945.
103. FRUS 1944. Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth and Europe* 'The Stettinius Report', 22 May 1944, p. 29 and FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East Aide-Me moiré*, British Embassy to the Department of State, 7 July 1944, pp. 713–5.
104. NARA: Harley Notter Files. RG 59, Stack Area 250 Row 6, Compartment 22, Shelf 06, Box 166–169, Entry 298, Files 457. 'Anglo-American Relations: Post War Alternatives', 17 February 1944.
105. See K. Eubank, *Summit at Tehran* (New York: William & Morrow, 1985).
106. NARA: RG 218–190-1–74 Box 316, Entry UD1. 'Current British Policy and Strategies Rel. to that of the US', 8 May 1943.
107. Warren Kimball, *Forged in War*, p. 261.
108. *The Times*, April 8, 1944, p. 4 and FRUS. Vol. II, 'Stettinius Report', 22 May 1944, p. 29. The scholar Thomas M. Campbell sees the Stettinius Mission as evidence of British and American policy makers realising that Anglo-American co-operation was an 'essential cornerstone for a stable postwar world'. Thomas Campbell (ed.) *Stettinius Diaries 1943–1946* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975), p. 36.
109. M. Peterson, *Both Sides of the Curtain* (London, 1950), p. 238.
110. PRO: PREM 4/18/3. Stettinius to Churchill, 28 April 1944.
111. See Randall Woods. *Changing of the Guard: Anglo-American Relations 1941–1946* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), pp. 154–7.

112. FRUS. Vol. III, Stettinius to Hull, 22 May 1944, pp. 29–30.
113. PRO: FO 921/191, E2720/2720/G. Halifax to Foreign Office, 3 May 1944.
114. PRO: 921/19125(4)144/36. Foreign Office to Minister Resident in Cairo and Jeddah, 7 May 1944.
115. Wm. Roger Louis, *British Empire and the Middle East*, p. 173.
116. FRUS. 1944 Vol. III, *The British Commonwealth and Europe* 'The Stettinius Report', 22 May 1944, pp. 29–30.
117. 'The Middle East Supply Centre: I Organizations and Functions' *The Bulletin of International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 16 (August, 1944), pp. 619–25. M. Wilmington, *The Middle East Supply Centre* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1971), p. 7. N. Godfield, 'Economic Development and Regionalism: United States Foreign Relations in the Middle East: 1942–1945', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 22, No. 3 (1987), p. 492.
118. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Landis to Murray, 9 June 1944.
119. Edgar Mowrer, *The Nightmare of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Alfred Knopf Press, 1948), p. 199.
120. The key texts do put a spotlight on the major personalities of the subject, but none adequately examine the dynamics of interpersonal relationships and how they were a crucial force in shaping Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. For a look at the role of personalities, see Matthew Hinds, 'Ministers Abroad: British and American Ministers in Saudi Arabia, Spring 1944'. This paper was presented at the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) Conference in Washington DC in 2007.
121. PRO: FO 921/191, E2720/2720/G. Halifax to Foreign Office, 3 May 1944.
122. PRO: FO 921/191, E2720/2720/G. Foreign Office to Halifax, 7 May 1944.
123. PRO: FO 921/191, E2720/2720/G. Halifax to Foreign Office, 3 May 1944. For more information on the Killearn-Kirk relationship see, FO 954/5C, Microfilm, 27 April 1944. LSE pamphlet collection: CT/B78, T. E. Evans 'Mission to Egypt-1934–1946 Lord Killearn', Inaugural Lecture at Aberystwyth, 2 December 1970.
124. PRO: FO 921/191, 2720/2720/G. Foreign Office to Halifax, 7 May 1944.
125. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Hull to Moose, 12 July 1944, pp. 716–7.
126. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Hull Memorandum, 26 June 1944, p. 710.
127. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Moose to Hull, 13 March 1944, p. 676.
128. PRO: FO 921/191. Foreign Office Minute, 3 March 1944.
129. PRO: FO 921/191. Foreign Office Minute, 3 March 1944.
130. PRO: FO 921/191. Moyne to Eden, 18 March 1944. Landis' full title was Director of Economic Operations in the Middle East. See D.A. Ritchie, *James Landis: Dean of the Regulators* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 124–5.
131. PRO: FO 921/191. Foreign Office to Jordan, 7 May 1944.
132. PRO: FO 921/191. Law to Moyne, 18 April 1944.
133. Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East: 1941–1947*, p. 55.

134. NARA: RG 218/190/1/11/6 Box 148. Stimson to Hull, 1 May 1944.
135. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Moose to Hull, 13 March 1944, p. 671.
136. PRO: FO 371/40267, E 1160/325/25. Minute by R.M.A. Hankey, 24 February 1944.
137. PRO: FO 921/191. Foreign Office to Halifax, 7 May 1944.
138. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Moose to State Department, 30 March 1944.
139. PRO: FO 921/191, E2720/2720/G. Foreign Office to Halifax, 7 May 1944.
140. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 6. Landis to Murray, 9 June 1944.
141. The various views on Moose were from Gerald Hume Pinsent of the British Treasury and William Croft, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister Resident in Cairo. See A. D. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 113
142. P. Hart, *Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership* (Bloomington, IN: Bloomington Press, 1998), p. 23.
143. PRO: FO 921/191. Halifax to Foreign Office, 21 May 1944.
144. PRO: FO/921/192. Jordan to Foreign Office, 6 September 1944.
145. PRO: FO 921/191. Halifax to Foreign Office, 2 May 1944.
146. Phone Interview with Clarence Macintosh, 26 January 2006.
147. PRO: FO 921/191. Foreign Office, 28 May 1944.
148. PRO: CAB 121/639. Jordan to Foreign Office, 16 August 1944.
149. PRO: WO 208/1592. Foreign Office to Jeddah, 16 August 1944.
150. Jordan would remain unemployed until May 1946 when he was appointed Trade Commissioner to Palestine. See Godfrey Hertslet (ed.), *Foreign Office List* (London, 1946).
151. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *The Near East, South Asia, Africa, the Far East*, Jacobs to Hull, 3 June 1944 p. 700.

## Chapter 6 Mirage: Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia and the Limits and Advantages of Co-operation, 1944–5

1. PRO: FO 371/ 145542. Minute by R.J. Campbell, 14 March 1944.
2. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 173.
3. SML: William Eddy Papers. Box 12, Folder 11, 'Basketball Rule Book', 1930.
4. SML: William Eddy Papers. Box 6, Folder 1, 8 July 1945. To give greater context to Eddy's worldview, J. Grabill has remarked on American missionaries in the early twentieth century: 'A powerful lobby which wanted the United States Government to organize part of the Old World. Failing to achieve this aim, the religionists nevertheless had a continuing effect in diplomacy'. See J. Grabill, *Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East-Missionary Influence on American Policy 1810–1927* (Minneapolis, 1971), p. 286.
5. Baram, *The Department of State in the Middle East*, p. 76.
6. PRO: FO 921/121. Jeddah to the Eastern Department, Foreign Office, 13 July 1944.

7. NARA: RG 228, OSS Record Archives, Entry 108C, Box 10, Folder 29, Memorandum 'the Possibility of a US Intelligence Service in Saudi Arabia'. 4 April 1944.
8. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945, Box 1. Hart to State Department, 3 September 1944.
9. PRO: FO/921/192. 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia', Jordan to Foreign Office, 6 September 1944.
10. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Eddy to Washington, 30 June 1944. On top of his poor impression of Jordan, Eddy had troubling experiences with British officials earlier in the war. During his time as part of the OSS in Tangiers, the chief of the British Secret Intelligence allegedly plotted to poison his own assistant for being too close to Eddy; an incident far away from the exemplar of amiability of General Dwight Eisenhower and Harold Macmillan, the British Minister Resident in Algiers during Operation Torch. See H.R. Smith, *OSS, the Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency* (London: Lyons Press, 1972), p. 42 and N. Fischer, *Harold Macmillan* (London: Littlehampton Press, 1982), p. 99.
11. PRO: FO/921/192. Sir William Croft referring to Jordan's report, Cairo to Foreign Office, 29 September 1944. A former Dean at Hobart College, William Eddy was not the only American official to stress education as a valuable tool to expand American influence in the region. The American minister to Afghanistan Cornelius Van H. Engert presented the king of Afghanistan with *The Writings of George Washington*, which he hoped would be distributed at the Afghan Academy School. See Lauinger Library (LL): Cornelius Van H. Engert Papers, Box 9, Folder 9. 'The Writings of George Washington', Van H. Engert to Hull, 3 December 1944.
12. NARA: RG 59, Red Folder. 'Memorandum on U.S. Relations with Saudi Arabia' report by Nils Lind, 15 May 1946.
13. PRO: FO/921/192. Sir William Croft referring to Jordan's report, Cairo to Foreign Office, 29 September 1944.
14. PRO: FO/921/192. Sir William Croft referring to Jordan's report, Cairo to Foreign Office, 29 September 1944.
15. See Richard Stewart, *Sunrise at Abadan: The British and Soviet Invasion of Iran 1941* (New York: Praeger Press, 1988).
16. PRO: FO/921/192. 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia', Jordan to Foreign Office, 6 September 1944.
17. PRO: FO/921/192. Lord Moyne to Foreign Office, 18 September 1944.
18. PRO: FO 921/192. Lord Moyne to Foreign Office, 13 September 1944.
19. PRO: FO 921/192. Foreign Office Minute by Hamilton, 12 September 1944.
20. PRO: FO 921/192. Lord Moyne to Foreign Office, 13 September 1944.
21. PRO: FO 921/192. Lord Moyne to Foreign Office, 3 September 1944.
22. PRO: FO 921/192. Croft commenting on Jordan's report, Cairo to Foreign Office, 27 September 1944.
23. PRO: FO 371/ 45543. Foreign Office Minute, 17 March 1945.

24. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945, Box 1. Eddy to State Department, 23 October 1944.
25. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945, Box 1. Hart to State Department, 15 October 1944.
26. Vitalis, *America's Kingdom*, p. xxix.
27. D. Van der Meulen, *The Wells of Ibn Sa'ud* (London: Kegan Paul International, 2000), pp. 146–8
28. PRO: FO/921/192. 29 September 1944. Moyne had presided over the colonial development related to the Moyne Commission in the Caribbean in the 1930s. For further background on colonialism as a factor in Anglo-American relations, see John J. Sbrega, *Anglo-American Relations and Colonialism in East Asia: 1941–1945* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1983), p. 124.
29. PRO: FO 370/917. Report by C.A.F. Dunbas, 3 November 1943.
30. PRO: FO 370/917. Report by C.A.F. Dunbas, 3 November 1943.
31. PRO: FO 301/787, Boarse to Blake, 9 June 1944.
32. FO 301/787 L 2944/640/410, Hankey to Jeddah, 26 May 1944. Just two months earlier, the Joint Anglo-American Film Planning Committee (JAAFPC) in March 1944 had been formed to show audiences the wartime alliance 'from a truly integrated viewpoint'. See Frederick Krome, 'The True Glory and the Failure of Anglo-American Film Propaganda in World War II', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (January, 1998), p. 21.
33. Foreign Office referred to the Government of India, who originally proposed Zahid Hussein, an Indian Civil Service financial expert who was the Financial Commissioner of Railways. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *Near East, South Asia, Africa and Middle East*, Peterson to Hull, 21 July 1944, p. 931
34. FRUS 1944. Vol. V, *Near East and Africa*, Peterson to Hull, July 21, 1944, p. 931 and PRO: FO 371/45542. Butler to Grafftey-Smith, 6 March 1945.
35. PRO: FO 371/45542. Butler to Grafftey-Smith, 6 March 1945.
36. PRO: FO 371/45542. Butler to Grafftey-Smith, 6 March 1945.
37. BL: IOR/15/5/123, Jordan to Foreign Office, 2 March 1944.
38. PRO: FO 921/192. Croft to Foreign Office, 27 September 1944.
39. PRO: FO 371/45542. Foreign Office Missive, 5 March 1945.
40. PRO: FO 954/15D. Microfilm, Row 3, Drawer 10. Eden to Churchill, 31 March 1945.
41. PRO: FO 954/15D, Microfilm, Row 3, Drawer 10. Eden to Churchill, 31 March 1945.
42. BL: IOR: MSSEUR F 138 /71 Gilbert Laithewaite Papers. Memorandum prepared by the External Affairs Department October 1944 and Olaf Caroe (Government of India) to Gilbert Laithwaite (War Cabinet Secretariat), 3 January 1945.
43. PRO: FO 954/15D. Microfilm, Row 3, Drawer 10. Eden to Churchill, 31 March 1945.

44. To gain a further insight into Anthony Eden's lifelong ambivalent attitude towards the United States, see Robert Rhodes James, *Anthony Eden: A Biography* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1986).
45. NARA: RG 59, Lot 57 D 298, Box 5. Aide-Memoire British Embassy Washington DC to State Department, 17 April 1945.
46. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. 'Memorandum of Conversation' between Judge Fred. M. Vinson, Director, Office of War Mobilisation Ralph A Brad, Under Secretary of the Navy Mr. John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War, Gordon Merriam and Leonard Parker, 22 June 1945.
47. NARA: RG 59, Lot 57 D298, Box 15, Record of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. State Department Memorandum, 5 July 1945.
48. Louis, *British Empire and the Middle East*, p. 190.
49. Given that it was likely that Saudi Arabia would only be able to meet its balance of payments in five years, the United States without British assistance took the initiative. In the summer of 1945, the State Department, the Treasury, the Army, the Navy and the Export-Import Bank discussed workable solutions to this critical problem. Loy Henderson, now heading the NEA, pressed for securing some type of loan for Saudi Arabia that would activate the construction of waterworks, sewage plants, paved roads, and harbours. These projects would not only help the country, but also facilitate the export of oil. On 1 August 1945, the American-based Export-Import Bank working with the State Department agreed to provide the Saudi Arabian government with a loan worth $5,000,000, with interest only being repaid during the first ten years at which point the loan will be repaid in five yearly instalments. See NARA: RG 59 Lot 57 D298, Record of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954, Box 5. Memorandum of Conversation by Loy Henderson, 1 August 1945.
50. PRO: FO 371/ 45542. Butler to Grafftey-Smith, 6 March 1945. Speaking to the British counsellor, Michael Wright, Wallace Murray was relieved that Jordan was finally dismissed because of his 'generally uncooperative attitude'. See FRUS. Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, Memorandum of Conversation with Wallace Murray, Michael Wright, Paul Alling and Leonard Parker, 1 January 1945, pp. 845–6.
51. SML: William Eddy Papers. Box 6. Eddy to Alling, 30 July 1945.
52. PRO: FO 371/ 45542. Grafftey-Smith to Dixon, 22 February 1945.
53. NARA: RG 59, Lot 57 D 298, Box 5. Memorandum for Record, Harry R. Snyder, 24 March 1945.
54. The two other key points of US policy in Saudi Arabia that were highlighted in Parker's report were 'to assist in the maintenance of stability in the Near East by supporting the economy of Saudi Arabia' and 'to afford diplomatic protection to the American-held oil concession in Saudi Arabia'. See LL: Van H. Engert Papers. 'United States Policy Toward Saudi Arabia: 1933–1944' Memorandum by Leonard Parker, 7 December 1944.

55. NARA: RG 59 Lot 57 D 298, Box 5. Memorandum for Record, Harry R. Snyder, 24 March 1945.
56. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945, Box 1. Division of Public Liaison Office of Public Information, 'Public Attitudes on Foreign Policy No. 45', November 1944.
57. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 8. Hoskins to Henderson 22 July 1945.
58. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Eddy to Washington, 30 June 1944.
59. Kermit Roosevelt described the incident as such: 'The photographer spent most of the meal period shooting off flashlight bulbs and getting candid camera shots and each course greeted by most of the Americans present with shouts to the army doctor asking whether this particular dish could be eaten. Almost invariably the doctor shouted back 'no'. The Arabs are extremely hospitable people, but they are also proud, and I cannot believe that this performance endeared us to him [*sic*].' See NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 8. State Department memorandum by Kermit Roosevelt, 9 March 1944.
60. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 8. State Department Memorandum by Kermit Roosevelt, 9 March 1944.
61. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945, Box 1, Folder 000–610-1. Hart to Eddy, 5 November 1944.
62. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945, Box 1, Folder 000–610-1. Eddy to State Department, 30 October 1944.
63. NARA: T1179, Microfilm, Reel 6. Eddy to State Department, 26 October 1944.
64. Five million riyals were eventually delivered safely to the Saudi Arabian Government on 21 November 1944, and it was recommended that nine million riyals more be sent directly to Ras Tanura. See NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403, Memorandum No. 239, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs-1941 1954. US Army Forces in Middle East Cairo to War Department, 21 November 1944.
65. PRO: FO/ 371/45543. Foreign Office Memorandum, 12 January 1945.
66. FRUS 1944 Vol. III, *British Commonwealth and Europe*, Stettinius to Hull, 22 May 1944, pp. 29–30.
67. LL: Van Engert Papers, Box 9, Folder 33. 'Possible Military Mission to Afghanistan', Memorandum of Conversation between Wallace Murray and Lieutenant Colonel John S. Wise, 9 June 1944.
68. As scholars go, Simon Davis gives scarce space to the issue and only offers roughly two paragraphs. Aaron Davis Miller surprisingly makes no direct reference to the military mission controversy. See Davis, *Contested Space*, pp. 213–14 and Miller, *Search for Security*. Wm. Roger Louis in his survey of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia also makes no mention of it. See Louis, *British Empire and the Middle East*. Barry Rubin briefly speaks of an American military mission, but does not explain how it impacted Anglo-American relations. See Rubin,

'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia', p. 263. Alexei Vasiliev only states that in 1944 'a US military mission arrived in Saudi Arabia to train the Saudi Army, together with a group of British military instructors also invited by Ibn Saud'. See Vasiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, p. 326. Thomas Lippman and Rachel Bronson do not refer to this important event, even in relation to the advent of closer Saudi–American relations. See Lippman, *Inside the Mirage* and Bronson, *Thicker than Oil*.

69. Ibn Saud requested six transport aircraft, a small arms plant, roads built considered to be of 'strategic importance'. Most interestingly, General Royce believed that the king was asking for too much and did not agree with expanding the Saudi Arabian military; all were recommended by General Royce to 'not to be furnished at this time.' See NARA: RG 59, Lot 57 D 298, Box 5 'Outline of Events Relating to U.S. Army Activities in Saudi Arabia' Report by Royce, 4 January 1944.
70. NARA: RG 165, Entry 418, Box 1715. Bowen to War Department, 23 September 1944.
71. NARA: RG 165, Entry 418, Box 1715. Memorandum Gilbert C, Cheves, 18 April 1944. Afterwards, the Royce Mission recommended that in order to maintain order inside the Kingdom, 'a regular Army of approximately 10,000 troops can be required to cover the nine districts of the country'.
72. NARA: RG 165, Entry 418, Box 1715. Memorandum by Gilbert C, Cheves, 18 April 1944.
73. NARA: RG 165, Entry 418, Box 1715. 'Anglo-American Military Activities in SA', report by Thomas T. Handy Major General Assistant Chief of Staff, 23 April 1944.
74. NARA: RG 59/250/34/13/4, Box 5809 RG 165. Stimson to Hull, 1 May 1944.
75. NARA: RG 59/250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Stimson to Hull, 1 May 1944.
76. FRUS. Vol. 5, *Near East, South Asia, Africa and Middle East*, Winant to Secretary of State, 9 June 1944, p. 704.
77. PRO: FO 371 45543. 'Ibn Saud's Request for a British Military Mission', Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945.
78. PRO: FO 921/192. Jordan to Foreign Office and Cairo, May 20, 1944. Jordan used the same term 'horn in' when explaining the US desire to get in the Military Mission. This was the exact term on 22 February 1944 that Churchill used in his correspondence to President Roosevelt that Britain had no desire to 'Horn in' on American oil interests in Saudi Arabia. W. Kimball (ed.), *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence* (New Jersey: Princeton Press, 1984), p. 744.
79. BL: IOR R/15/5/123. India Office London to Government of India, New Delhi, Repeated to Political Resident Bushire, 20 March 1944.
80. BL: IOR R/15/5/123. Jordan to Foreign Office, 2 March 1944.
81. PRO: FO 371/40251 E 6629/63/25. Minute by Wikeley, 1 November 1944.
82. Ibn Saud's Hashemite nemesis, King Abdullah, referred to his Saudi adversary as a 'son of a dog'. See Mary C. Wilson's *King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 34.

83. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 214.
84. Eddy had been critical of the fact that American military officials had donned helmets, rather than traditional Arab headdress, which evoked suspicion amongst the Saudi Arabian populace. Compounding the poor showing, the United States had delivered their military equipment late, a problem all the more accentuated by the fact that the British had always had a reputation of effectively delivering its share of Anglo-American supplies. Although Shomber's delivery was offered to Ibn Saud as an American undertaking, following the unannounced arrival of eight members of a British military mission, the gossip in the *souk* had been that the British would lead as per usual. See, NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Eddy to Washington, 30 June 1944.
85. PRO: FO 371/ 45543. Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945.
86. PRO: FO 371 45543. 'Ibn Saud's Request for a British Military Mission', Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945.
87. NARA: RG 165, Entry 418, Box 1715. American Embassy in London to State, 3 August 1944.
88. NARA: RG 165, Entry 418, Box 1715. American Embassy in London to State, 3 August 1944.
89. Quoted from Lynne Olson's *Citizens of London*. See, Lynne Olson, *Citizens of London* (New York: Random House, 2010), p. 314.
90. PRO: FO 371/45543. 'Ibn Saud's Request for a British Military Mission', Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945.
91. PRO: FO 371/45543. 'Ibn Saud's Request for a British Military Mission', Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945.
92. PRO: FO 371/45543. 'Ibn Saud's Request for a British Military Mission', Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945.
93. FRUS 1945. Vol. VIII, *Near East, South Asia, Africa and Middle East*, Eddy to State Department, 9 April 1945, p. 872.
94. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 214.
95. The Dhahran Airfield story has been covered extensively from the vantage point of Saudi–American relations, but the Anglo-American angle has been far less studied. Arguably, the most extensive study of the subject has been offered by Parker Hart. His account is part memoir, part history from his recollections as the Vice Consul in Dhahran. See Hart, 'Diplomacy of an Airbase', *Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership* (Indiana: Bloomington Press, 1998), p. 12–20. Also see Davis, *Contested Space*, pp. 181–3 and pp. 213–17; Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 132; Rubin, *Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia* p. 263; Fred H. Lawson, 'The Iranian Crisis and the Spiral Model of International Conflict', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 5 (August, 1989), pp. 310–12. See James Gormly, 'Keeping the Door Open in Saudi Arabia: The United States and the Dhahran Airfield, 1945–1946', *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (April, 1980), pp. 191–201.
96. See Alan Dobson, *Peaceful Air Warfare: The United States, Britain, and the Politics of International Aviation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

97. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Headquarters Persian Gulf Command United States Army. Office of the Commanding General. Major General Donald H. Connolly to Brigadier General C.R. Smith, 27 June 1944.
98. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945, Box 1. Eddy to Parker T. Hart, 7 October 1944.
99. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Tuck to State Department, 6 October 1944.
100. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Tuck to State Department, 6 October 1944.
101. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Eddy to State Department, 9 August 1944.
102. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Murray to Berle, 10 October 1944.
103. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Cordell Hull to Winant, 17 October 1944.
104. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Cordell Hull to Winant, 17 October 1944.
105. PRO: FO/921/192. Foreign Office to Jeddah, Distribution-M.D. Internal 'A', Brigadier Clayton, 25 October 1944.
106. PRO: FO/ 921/192. Near East Department Report, November 1, 1944. Taken in its context, the statement by Colbeck is not necessarily to be seen as an indictment of Anglo-American relations, but Britain's general annoyance with William Eddy.
107. PRO: FO 371 45543. 'Ibn Saud's Request for British Military Mission', Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945. Ironically TWA followed this line of thinking and made an agreement with Ibn Saud in 1946 to form and train 'Saudi Arabian owned airline which would become known as Saudia Airlines'. See, Lippman, *Inside the Mirage*, p. 126.
108. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum of Conversation by Gordon Merriam, 'Civil Air Rights In Saudi Arabia' 15 June 1945.
109. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Memorandum of Conversation by Gordon Merriam, 'Civil Air Rights In Saudi Arabia' 15 June 1945.
110. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 219–20.
111. Dobson, 'The Other Air Battle: The American Pursuit of Post War Aviation Rights' *The Historic Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (June, 1985), pp. 437–9. For an outline of the air agreements that were signed, see MacGill University, 'Convention on International Civil Aviation, signed at Chicago on 7 December 1944 Chicago Convention', www.mcgill.ca/files/iasl/~HEAD=NNS chicago1944a.pdf.
112. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Henderson to Secretary of State, 14 November 1945.
113. To see how wireless and telegraphic communication played in imperial management, see, Paul Kennedy (ed.), 'Imperial Cable Communication and Strategy: 1870–1914', *War Plans of the Great Powers, 1880–1914* (London: Unwin, 1979), pp. 75–98.
114. The company's terms of agreement were renewable automatically at five-year intervals unless notice was given before 1 December preceding a year divisible by five. After notice, modifications would be made within the next six months. See-Hart, *Saudi Arabia and the United States*, p. 24.

115. Davis, *Contested Space*, 184.
116. PRO: FO/921/192. 'Cable and Wireless Station', Jordan to Foreign Office, 11 November 1944.
117. PRO: FO/921/192. 'Cable and Wireless Station', Jordan to Foreign Office, 11 November 1944.
118. PRO: FO 371 45543. Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 22 October 1944. Looking back a year later from 1945, Jordan's replacement Grafftey-Smith did not appreciate what he perceived as the United States' "strong arm methods", but he did concede that the removal of Jordan did help to 'remove one source of American ill-will'. See PRO: FO 371/ 45543. Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 22 November 1945.
119. Gormly, 'Keeping the Door Open in Saudi Arabia', p. 195.
120. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Cordell Hull to Winant, 17 October 1944.
121. Rubin, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia', p. 263.
122. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum by the War Department for the State Department, Colonel J.W. Colonel, Chief, Mediterranean Theater Section to Paul Alling, 22 November 1944.
123. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum by the War Department for the State Department, Colonel J.W. Colonel, Chief, Mediterranean Theater Section to Paul Alling, 22 November 1944.
124. NARA: Microfilm T1179, Reel 5. Memorandum by the War Department for the State Department, Colonel J.W. Colonel, Chief, Mediterranean Theater Section to Paul Alling, 22 November 1944.
125. The proposed American mission was quite large, consisting of 49 officers and 110 enlisted men ready to give air and ground force instruction. See NARA: RG 59, Lot 57 D 298, Box 5, Memorandum for Record, Harry R. Snyder, 24 March 1945.
126. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 210.
127. FRUS 1945. Vol. VIII, *The Near East and Africa*, Memorandum of Conversation with Wallace Murray, Michael Wright, Paul Alling and Leonard Parker, 1 January 1945, pp. 845–6.
128. PRO: FO/ 921/192. Colbeck to Foreign Office, 11 January 1945.
129. Leatherdale, *Imperial Oasis*, p. 310.
130. PRO: FO 371/ 45543. Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 12 November 1945.
131. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 140.
132. Miller, *Search for Security*, p. 140.
133. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 213–17. Aaron David Miller's states that the US JCS ended up only accepting the plan for an airfield in Dhahran if it came with British acquiescence, which was a key reason for why the US was able to proceed in constructing it, but strangely he offers no background information surrounding Britain's role with regard to the issue. See Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 131–2.
134. NARA: RG 59, Lot 57 D 298, Box 5. Memorandum for Record by Harry R. Snyder, Cairo to State Department, 24 March 1945.
135. Lawson, *The Iranian Crisis of 1945–1946*, p. 311.
136. NARA: Microfilm T1179 LM 168, Reel 4. Stettinius to Jeddah, 17 April 1945.

137. NARA: Microfilm T1179 LM 168, Reel 4. Copy of missive from Grafftey-Smith to Yassin, 6 May 1945.
138. Hart, *Saudi Arabia and the United States*, p. 66. And see Bronson, *Thicker than Oil*, p. 25.
139. Hart, *Saudi Arabia and the United States*, p. 20.

## Chapter 7 Wadi: Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia in 1945 and the Postwar World

1. There are many historical accounts of the Ibn Saud–Roosevelt meeting. For some of the most notable examples, see Davis, *Contested Space*, pp. 195–9; Van der Meulen, *The Wells of Ibn Saud*, pp. 164–6; Howarth, *King Ibn Saud*, pp. 203–9; Vassiliev, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, pp. 326–7; Bronson, *Thicker Than Oil*, pp. 36–9; Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 128–31; Gardner, *Three Kings*, pp. 19–25; Lippman, *Inside the Mirage*, pp. 27–9; Lippman, 'The Day FDR met Ibn Saud', *The Link*, Vol. 38, No. 2 (April–May, 2005), pp. 1–12; Hart, *Saudi Arabia and the United States*, p. 35–7; Yergin, *The Prize*, pp. 403–5.
2. PRO: FO 371/45542. Butler to Grafftey-Smith, 6 March 1945.
3. William A. Eddy, *F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud* (New York, 1954), p. 42.
4. NARA: RG 59/250/38/23/2 Box 7207. Eddy to State Department, 21 February 1945.
5. NARA: RG 59/250/38/23/2 Box 7207. Jeddah to State Department, 19 March 1945.
6. NARA: RG 59/250/38/23/2 Box 7207. Minister Tuck to State Department, 9 February 1945. Ibn Saud was transported to the Canal Zone by the American ship USS *Murphy*. The Saudi Arabian delegation on the USS *Murphy* included not only the entire Saudi Arabian privy council, but also an astrologer, an Imam and food taster. Saudi Arabian Guests on the USS *Murphy*. See NARA: RG 59/250/38/23/2 Box 7207. 'Guest List on U.S.S. Murphy February 12–14, 1945', 21 February 1945.
7. NARA: RG 59/250/38/23/2 Box 7207. Eddy to State Department, 22 February 1945.
8. SAMEC: Laurence Grafftey Smith Papers. GB165–0123, 'Alleged Altercation on Palestine Between Churchill and King Ibn Saud', 1982.
9. Later, in October 1945, Loy Henderson wrote to Dean Acheson, that the President's 'gift' of giving Ibn Saud a DC47 for their meeting at Great Bitter Lake in February 1945 had made 'the Saudis more air minded', and crucially for the future, it made it more cognisant of the 'high quality of American airplanes'. See NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. Henderson to Acheson, 16 October 1945.
10. Lippmann, 'The Day FDR Met Ibn Saud', p. 11.
11. To this day, the American embassy in Riyadh proudly displays an enclosed replica of the USS *Quincy* on special occasions. See Bronson, *Thicker Than Oil*, p. 42.
12. Gardner, *Three Kings*, p. 21.

13. Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins* (New York: Harpers Brothers, 1948), p. 872. Robert Sherwood, Roosevelt's speechwriter, wrote that he 'never could reconcile' the statement and that the President was 'overly impressed' by Ibn Saud. One of Roosevelt's most trusted advisors, Sam Rosenman, said the remarks 'bordered on the ridiculous' and it became remarkably visible that the oratory and eloquence of Roosevelt had been extinguished by the strain of being wartime Commander in Chief. See Sam Rosenman, *Working With Roosevelt* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1952), pp. 480–1.
14. SAMEC: Laurence Grafftey-Smith Papers. GB165–0123, 'Alleged Altercation on Palestine between Churchill and King Ibn Saud', 1982.
15. In this correspondence, it was noted that Viceroy Wavell assured Ibn Saud that Churchill would win the upcoming British election that summer. See, PRO: FO 371/ 45543. Grafftey-Smith to Anthony Eden, 13 June 1945.
16. David Reynolds, 'A "Special Relationship"? America, Britain and the International Order Since World War II', *International Affairs*, Vol. 62, No. 1 (Winter, 1985–6), p. 4.
17. Ritchie Ovendale, *Britain, the United States and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East 1945–1962* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1996), p. 3.
18. For a study on France in Middle East and World War II, see Aviel Roshwald, *Estranged Bedfellows: Britain and France in the Middle East during the World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). For Germany, see Wolfgang Schwanitz, 'The German Middle Eastern Policy: 1871–1945' (2004), pp. 11–20. For Italy, see Nir Arielli, *Fascist Italy and Middle East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
19. See Elizabeth Monroe, 'British Interests in the Middle East', *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (April, 1948), pp. 129–46.
20. *The Arab World*, Vol. 2 (Spring Edition, 1945).
21. Majid Khaddur, 'Toward an Arab Union: The League of Arab States', *The American Political Science Review*, 1945. Eden later recalled in his memoirs, that the 'Mansion House' speech was a stab to draw the Arab states away from the yoke of the Axis's growing influence, in the 'days when Hitler's friends in every part of the world had cause to be in a buoyant mood'. See, Eden, *Eden Memoirs: The Reckoning*, p. 241.
22. FO 371/45237 Reg. # 209/3/65. Foreign Office Minute, Robin Hankey, 27 March 1945. Some commentators at this time saw the Arab Unity Project purely as a British initiative, 'a tool of the British Colonial Office'. See Bernard D. Weinryb, 'Arab Unity', *Commentary Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (March, 1946). On 22 March 1945, Ibn Saud reluctantly agreed to have Saudi Arabia sign the Alexandra Protocol thereby joining the League of Arab States. The Saudi Arabian king had little enthusiasm for the organisation, believing that the entire 'Arab Unity project' to 'be a waste of time leading to nothing' and 'would cause dissension and dispute rather than agreement and harmony among the Arab peoples'. See PRO: FO 371/45237 Reg. # 210/3/65, FO Minute, Robin Hankey, 27 March 1945 and PRO: FO 371/45235. Sir Kinchan Cornwallis to Foreign Office, 26 July 1943.

23. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954 Box #15. Chief, Division of Near Eastern Affairs. Merriam to Rayner, 5 December 1945.
24. Louis, *British Empire and the Middle East*, p. 194.
25. PRO: FO 371/45543. Grafftey-Smith to Foreign Office, 30 November 1945.
26. NARA: RG 59–250-38–23-2 Box 7207. Hoskins to Henderson, 22 July 1945.
27. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No: 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954, NEA Memorandum of Conversation between Nuri Pasha and Marcel Wagner, President of the American Eastern Corporation, 11 June 1945.
28. Brands, *Inside the Cold War: Loy Henderson and the Rise of American Empire*, pp. 116–18.
29. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954 'Memorandum of Conversation' Judge Fred. M. Vinson, Director, Office of War Mobilisation Ralph A Brad, Under Secretary of the Navy Mr. John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War Mr. Merriam, Mr. Parker, 22 June 1945.
30. At this time, Saudi Arabia declared war against the Axis along with its regional neighbours Turkey, Egypt Lebanon and Syria. See Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World*, pp. 180–4.
31. PRO: FO 371 45542. 'Saudi Arabian Declaration of War Controversy' Halifax to Foreign Office, March 1945.
32. PRO: FO 371.45542. Foreign Office Minute, 7 March 1945.
33. PRO: FO 371 45542. Hankey to Wright, 7 March 1945.
34. PRO: FO 371 45542. Hankey to Wright, 7 March 1945.
35. PRO: FO 371 45542. Hankey to Wright, 7 March 1945.
36. PRO: FO 954/15D. Baxter to Wright, 3 April 1945.
37. PRO: FO 141/952. Lord Killearn to Foreign Office. 5 August 1944. British hesitance towards King Farouk may have been bolstered by the fact that the king openly courted American officers rather than British. Lord Killearn opined that this set of circumstances was attributed to how Farouk felt 'less of an inferiority complex with American than with Englishman'. See, PRO: FO 141/952. Killearn to Foreign Office, 22 June 1944. In a report compiled by Chatham House in March 1945, it was said that a major strike against Emir Abdullah of Transjordan was due to the 'unfortunate fact that the majority of Arabs do not regard him with favour'. See, PRO: FO 371 45237. Elphison to Baxter, 6 March 1945.
38. PRO: FO 371 45543. Foreign Office to Grafftey-Smith, 7 April 1945.
39. PRO: FO 954/15D. C.W. Baxter to Wright, 3 April 1945.
40. For this study, the Trucial States represents a wide area of British suzerainty in the Persian Gulf. Along with Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm-al Quawain, Dibba, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, and Kalba, it also includes Qatar, Bahrain and Bushire.
41. PRO: FO 921/192. Foreign Office Minute by Hamilton, 12 September 1944.
42. Library of Congress (LC): Loy Henderson Papers, Container 12, 'British Efforts to Retain the Position of Great Britain as the Sole Great Power with Important Interests in the Persian Gulf', March 1944.

43. An OSS report assessed British treaty relations in the Arabian Peninsula at the time and contended that in the postwar years, relationships with these sheikdoms would be predicated largely on determining the status of the of the area in relation to the British Government. See NARA: RG 250 49–32 05 Entry 1435 Record of Office of Near Eastern Affairs Box 2 Lot File 78D 440, OSS Report, 'The British Treaty Position in the Arabian Peninsula', 4 February 1944.
44. IOR: R/15/1/700. Bahrain to Prior, Political Resident, Bushire, 8 August 1944 and FO 371/45543. Foreign Office Memorandum, 'Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia', 1 December 1945. It is worth recalling that the British government and the Al-Saud had quarrelled on and off about border disputes dating back as far as 1800. See J.B. Kelly, 'The Buraimi Oasis Dispute', *International Affairs*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1956), p. 319.
45. FRUS. *The Near and Middle East 1952–1954*, Vol. IX (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1986), pp. 2576–7 and Donald Hawley, *The Trucial States*, pp. 186–93. For a study on postwar Anglo-American dynamic in the Trucial Coast, see Simon Smith, *Britain's Revival and Fall in the Gulf: Kuwait, Qatar and the Trucial States, 1950–1971* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), pp. 109–29.
46. Kelly, 'The Buraimi Oasis Dispute', p. 319.
47. For a primary source that best explains the tensions between the Government of India and London in relation to the Trucial Coast, Saudi Arabia and the United States, see IOR: R/15/1/700. Hickinbotham to Prior, 20 June 1944. For a brief secondary source account, see Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 222.
48. IOR: R/15/2/538. 'Report Briefly on American Penetration in the Bahrain and Trucial Coast Areas', Hickinbotham to Prior, 1 March 1945.
49. NARA: RG 84 350/67/22/1 Entry 3153. 'The Political Agent at Bahrein, Major Thomas Hickinbotham C.I.E.', Hart to the legations of Jeddah, Cairo and Embassy in Tehran, 18 November 1944.
50. NARA: RG 84 350/67/22/1 Entry 3153. Vice Consul William Sands to Gordon Merriam, 15 July 1945.
51. LL: Tim Mulligan Papers. Bernard Reich, 'The Persian Gulf', *Research Analysis Corp Prepared for the US Army* (June, 1971).
52. Taking a different view of things, the historian Martin Folly claims that the Foreign Office was cautiously optimistic that Britain and the Soviet Union shared enough interests that co-operation was thought to be feasible. See Martin H. Foley, *Churchill, Whitehall, and the Soviet Union, 1941–1945* (London, 2000).
53. For works relating to the Great Game, see K. Meyer and S. Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows: The Game and the Race for Empire in Asia* (London: Abacus, 1999). Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia* (London: John Murray, 2006). Kathleen Burk, 'Imperial Rivalry with the Russian Empire', Lecture given at Gresham College, 28 November 2005.
54. PRO: FO 921/192. William Croft referring to Stanley Jordan's report, Cairo to London, 27 September 1944. On an equal level, the Soviet Union had been eyeing London's actions in the Middle East viewing the Arab League, which according to a State Department report, was believed by the Soviets to be a 'British tool directed

against the USSR'. NARA: RG 250 49–32 05 Entry 1435 Record of Office of Near Eastern Affairs Box 2 Lot File 78D 440. Office of Coordination Liaison and Intelligence, 'Background, Development and Prospects of the Arab League to Mid-1946', 1 July 1946.

55. PRO: FO/921/192. Jordan to Foreign Office, 6 September 1944.
56. PRO: FO/921/192. Jordan to Foreign Office, 6 September 1944.
57. Later that same year, Amir Faisal, Ibn Saud's most trusted son went on an unprecedented visit to Moscow in an effort to 'strengthen and deepen the friendly relations between the peoples of the USSR and Arabia'. *Moscow Daily News* 'Emir Faisul Received by Molotov', 2 June 1932. See Georgetown University, Laninger Library (LL): Tim Mulligan Papers Box 6 Folder 11 and BL:IOR R/15/2/295 Intelligence report Jedda, Chargé d'Affaires to Secretary of State at Foreign Office, 1 October 1932.
58. PRO: AIR 2/5047 R.W. Chappell, Group Captain, 1 January 1940. The king's plan was shelved by British officials, but would eventually materialise in the 1950s under the name of the Baghdad Pact.
59. Gardner, *Three Kings*, p. 51–4.
60. PRO: FO 371/45542. Foreign Office Minute, 9 February 1945.
61. BL: IOR MSSEUR F 138 /71. Memorandum prepared by the External Affairs Department, Government of India, Sir Olaf Caroe to Gilbert Laithwaite, War Cabinet Secretariat, 1 January 1945.
62. For a contrasting view to this outlook, in 1942, a special report on British public opinion concluded that 'the gratitude and admiration for the great fight of the Russians far exceeds the feeling for any other foreign country'. See P.M.H. Bell's *John Bull and the Bear* (London, 1991).
63. A. Sampson, *Macmillan: A Study in Ambiguity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), p. 60.
64. PRO: FO 371/38523. 'The Essential of an American Policy', 21 March 1944.
65. SML: William Eddy Papers. Box 6, Correspondence, 23 July 1945.
66. LSE: CHAT C2/222. 'An American Policy for Peace: A Program for Big Three Unity and American–Soviet Friendship', Pamphlet written by Claude Pepper, 1946.
67. NARA: RG 59 250/34/13/4 Box 5809. Missive by Adolf Berle, 20 April 1944.
68. Soviet authorities in this area had demobilised Iranian military forces and encouraged Kurdish separatism, which was a bane for the Iranian government in Iran. See NARA: RG 38–37-14–13-3 Document 1549, Box 6. 'American Policy in Iran', Report by Jernegan, 23 January 1943. For greater regional context, Britain and the Soviet Union were also continuing the Great Game in Afghanistan at this time in connection to Russo-Afghan frontier disputes. See LL: Van H. Engert Papers, Box 9, Folder 10. 'British Policy re-Russo-Afghan Frontier Disputes', Van H. Engert to Hull, December 26, 1944. For works on Russian ambitions in Iran via 'the Great Game', see Elena Andreeva, *Russia and Iran in the Great Game: Travelogues and Orientalism* (London: Routledge Press, 2007).
69. NARA: RG 38/370/14/13/3 Box 5. Intelligence Division, 'Top Secret Reports of Naval Attaches' Intelligence Report by US Naval Observer in Basra, C.E. Perry, 15 January 1945.

70. Henry Butterfield Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-Alliance: The US–UK Alliance and the Emerging Cold War, 1943–1946* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 171.
71. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs-1941–1954. Memorandum prepared by A. Bland Calder, American Embassy in Moscow, 14 July 1945.
72. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 403 Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs-1941 1954. Memorandum prepared by A. Bland Calder, member of American Embassy in Moscow, 14 July 1945.
73. Rubin, *Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia*, p. 265.
74. Davis, *Contested Space*, p. 195.
75. Although one of Wm. Roger Louis' main contentions in his work the *British Empire and the Middle East* is that Britain looked to the Americans for assistance against Soviet expansion in the region, he does not connect this point in his section on Saudi Arabia. Focusing on the United States' search for security in Saudi Arabia, Aaron David Miller's main comments on the Soviet role apply only to the postwar years. See Miller, *Search for Security*, pp. 173–9. Another historian who has looked at the geo-strategic dynamic of Saudi Arabian oil at this time, Helmut Mejcher, also makes no mention of the Soviet Issue. See Mejcher, 'Saudi Arabia's vital link to the West', *Middle Eastern Studies*.
76. See, Ryan, *The Vision of Anglo-America*, pp. 170–3. Peter Weiler 'Britain and the First Cold War: Revisionist Beginnings', *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (1998), pp. 127–138; John Kent, *British Imperial Strategy and the Origins of the Cold War: 1944–1949* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993).
77. NARA: RG 59 Lot File No. 54 D 40, Records of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs 1941–1954. NEA Memorandum, 'Revision of Policy Manual – Saudi Arabia', November 20, 1945.
78. Alex Danchev, 'The Indirect Strategy', in D. Reynolds, W. Kimball, and A.O. Chubarian, *Allies at War* (New York, 1994), p. 21.

## Conclusion

1. Nicholas Dawidoff, *The Fly Swatter: Portrait of an Exceptional Character* (New York: Random House, 2002), p. 131.
2. NARA: RG 84 Stack Area 350 Row 67 Compartment 22 Shelf 1 Entry 3153 Saudi Arabia, US Consulate Dhahran 1944–1945 000–886.7 Box 1. Dhahran to American Legation in Jidda and Cairo, Parker T. Hart, December 20, 1944.
3. Efraim Karsh, 'International Co-operation and Neutrality', *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (March, 1988), p. 57.
4. PRO: FO 371 34955. British legation in Jeddah to Foreign Office, 18 February 1943.
5. J.M. Landis, 'Anglo-American Co-Operation in the Middle East: Bi-national Cooperation is Significant if International Cooperation is our Aim'. Speech delivered before the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, 13 April 1945. *Vital Speeches of the Day*, Vol. 11, pp. 428–32.

6. SML: William Eddy Papers. Box 8, Folder 27. Alling to Eddy, 9 August 1945.
7. Christopher Thorne, 'Indochina and Anglo-American Relations 1942–1945', *Pacific History Review*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (February, 1976), p. 73.
8. See Wm. Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East*; Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East.*
9. Library of Congress: Archibald Roosevelt Papers. Box 1, Diary, April 1945.
10. Nigel Ashton, 'Anglo-American Relations from World War to Cold War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (January, 2004), p. 119.
11. FRUS 1947. Vol. V, *Near East and Africa*, 'The Pentagon Talks of 1947' 'General Statement by the American Group', November 1947, p. 583.
12. Phone interview with Clarence McIntosh, 30 January 2006.
13. Georgetown University, Lauinger Library (LL): Clarence McIntosh Papers. Box 1, Folder 16, 29 May 1943.
14. See Robert M. Hathaway, *Great Britain & the United States: Special Relations since World War II* (Boston: Twayne Publishing, 1990).
15. J.M. Landis, 'Anglo-American Co-Operation in the Middle East', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 240, 'Our Muddled World' (July, 1945), p. 70.

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