

Britain's agents in Saudi Arabia

Britain's most powerful agent-of-influence within Saudi Arabia is Second Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz. Arab intelligence sources who know the secretive internal workings of the Saudi kingdom call Prince Abdullah "Britain's boy."

Abdullah's power in the Saudi royal family hierarchy is derived from his control over the Saudi Royal Guard and a clique of non-royal family technocrats and ministers who are opposed to policies of the most powerful policymaker in the kingdom, Crown Prince Fahd.

Abdullah and the Muslim Brotherhood

Abdullah is known to be a leader in the clandestine Muslim Brotherhood movement in Saudi Arabia. The Muslim Brotherhood, a creation of British intelligence, was instrumental in bringing the fundamentalist regime of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini to power.

Among Abdullah's allies in the kingdom are Saudi Planning Minister Hisham Nazir and Abdul Hadi Taher, the head of the Saudi state oil company Petromin. Both are said to favor a cutback in Saudi oil production to 5 to 6 million barrels a day. They justify this policy, like many of the younger Saudi technocrats, by claiming that the kingdom does not need the immense revenues which Saudi Arabia's 9.5 million barrels a day is yielding. Like Abdullah, they are opposed to the strong cooperation which Prince Fahd and, before him, King Faisal forged with the industrial nations.

Abdullah's Royal Guard, which was created in 1964, is a composite of tribal chieftains whose power is based on the backward tribal structure of Saudi society before it began to modernize. The Guard is known to interface the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood both inside and outside the kingdom.

The orchestrator of the seizure of the Mecca Grand Mosque last year, Juhaiman al Oteibi, spent 10 years in the Guard before he began to organize clandestine anti-Saudi activities. More-

over, Saudi Defense Minister Sultan, the brother of Prince Fahd, countermanded Abdullah during the Meccan affair and replaced the Royal Guard with regular Saudi Army troops in terminating the seizure.

Later it was revealed that elements within the Guard had played a role in arming the Muslim Brotherhood insurgents who had occupied the Mosque.

Informed sources report that Abdullah is one of the chief funders of groups operating in London whose purpose is to overthrow the Iraqi regime. Since the Iranian revolution, Saudi Arabia and Iraq have formed a powerful alliance around ensuring regional security against Khomeini's threat of "spreading the Islamic revolution" through the oil producing nations of the Gulf.

According to European sources, powerful interests within the Qahtan and Oteib tribes in western Saudi Arabia are known to be allied to the Muslim Brotherhood in building an anti-Saudi royal family conspiracy within the kingdom.

The two leaders of the Meccan affair hail from these two tribes. The western-based Idrissi clan is also known to have a hand in building a challenge to Prince Fahd. Arab sources report that historically these tribes have been opposed to the unity of Saudi Arabia around the royal family. Historically the Idrissis have been allies of Britain.

Familiar charges

In recent weeks, Saudi Prince Talal bin Abdul Aziz has been touring a number of Gulf emirates in his capacity as deputy secretary general of Unicef. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* observed last week that Talal's widely publicized tour may be cause for alarm. Talal ran the "free princes movement" against the monarchy in 1962. He is reported to still command considerable influence within Saudi Arabia, especially with "younger Saudis," and continues to oppose the monarchy.

In July the *Washington Post* reported that a Saudi student organization in the U.S. was increasing its organizing against the Saudi monarchy. Called the Voice of the Vanguard, the group is challenging Prince Fahd for his corruption and lack of adherence to Islam. This is the same claim the leaders of the Meccan affair used to justify their terrorism, and the same claim which the young prince who assassinated King Faisal made against the royal family.