

Discovering the Arabian Gulf:
Canada's Evolving Ties with the GCC States

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Gulf Research Center

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“Discovering the Arabian Gulf: Canada’s Evolving Ties with the GCC States” first published January 2006 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, by the Gulf Research Center.

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ISBN 9948-432-18-5

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the *Gulf Research Center* (GRC) seeks
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knowledge is for all.

Abdulaziz O. Sager
Chairman
Gulf Research Center

About the Gulf Research Center

The **Gulf Research Center (GRC)** is an independent research institute located in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The **GRC** was founded in July 2000 by Mr. Abdulaziz Sager, a Saudi businessman, who realized, in a world of rapid political, social and economic change, the importance of pursuing politically neutral and academically sound research about the Gulf region and disseminating the knowledge obtained as widely as possible. The **Center** is a non-partisan think-tank, education service provider and consultancy specializing in the Gulf region. The **GRC** seeks to provide a better understanding of the challenges and prospects of the Gulf region.



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Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the individuals and institutions which have made this work possible. This project quite literally could not have started without the kind assistance of Walter Eisenbeis and the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in Toronto. Information provided by Mr. Eisenbeis unlocked some of the early uncertainties surrounding Canada's relations with the Gulf states which allowed the other material to follow. Additionally, the librarians of the Robarts Library at the University of Toronto and Millersville University's Ganser Library were very helpful in quickly locating hard-to-find items. I would also like to acknowledge the generous financial support from the Pennsylvania Canadian Studies Consortium and the Government of Canada which permitted an extended Toronto research trip to take place.

I am very grateful to the dozen Canadian diplomats once posted to the Gulf region who generously gave of their time and memories. Most of them are listed by name in the bibliography and they agreed to direct attribution in the body of this work, although a few requested anonymity in their remarks. In any case, they provided a depth of information impossible to glean from books or articles. I also wish to thank Dr. Erik Nakjavani of the University of Pittsburgh who very kindly translated articles from French to English and Ms. Jennifer Luxbacher for her very able research skills and table-making talent.

Most importantly of all, I would like to thank my wife, Dr. Kirsten N. Bookmiller. She not only offered months of encouragement for this project and assumed extra parental duties in tending to the care of our son Sebastian, but she also served as a sounding board and editor of the thoughts which follow here. In the end, of course, responsibility for all the thoughts, judgments (and misjudgments) contained within remain my own.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this work to Dr. R. K. Ramazani of the University of Virginia. Two decades ago, he took a very green graduate student under his care and not only revealed a whole new world to him but also taught him methods of academic inquiry to understand and explain that world. I will be forever grateful.

Robert J. Bookmiller

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Introduction

In many respects, Canada's overall Middle East course – and its relations with the Arabian Gulf in particular – reflects the larger maturation of Ottawa's foreign policy itself. First bound by the parameters of its self-view as a European - and specifically British - tethered entity, it was only in the mid-1940s that Canada began to articulate its own diplomatic voice in the context of its active pursuit of multilateralism. Indeed, for much of the first half of the 20th century, the Middle East failed to even register on Ottawa's diplomatic radar. Canada - as an energy-self sufficient country - had few political or economic interests in the larger Middle East and almost none in the Arabian Gulf region. As Tareq Ismael asserts, because of Canada's limited resources, "priorities in foreign relations [were] given to areas in which Canada [had] vital interests' and this did not include the Middle East."¹

Only as Canada began to position itself as a post-World War II 'middle power,' did Ottawa enter into direct contact with the region. Even then, its diplomatic relations with Middle Eastern states would have more to do with Ottawa's efforts within international organizations (especially the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and bilateral links to London, Paris and Washington and less to do with the individual countries of the Middle East. As a result, the Arab-Israeli side received far more diplomatic priority than the Arabian Gulf. In the words of one observer, "Canada's involvement in the Middle East has been intense but episodic."² As Canada opened embassies in Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Israel and Lebanon in the 1940s and 1950s, the Arabian Peninsula remained without a resident Canadian diplomatic presence.

1- Tareq Y. Ismael (1984) "Canada and The Arab World: A Diplomatic History," in Tareq Y. Ismael (ed.) *Canadian Arab Relations: Policy and Perspectives*. Ottawa: Jerusalem International Publishing House, Inc.: 7.

2- Roy Licklider (1988) *Political Power and the Arab Oil Weapon: The Experience of Five Industrial Nations*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 106.

It would take a looming domestic oil crisis, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and fears of an embargo by petroleum-producing Arab states to prompt Canada to quickly alter its course and initiate diplomatic relations with the Arabian Gulf states under study here: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. After 1974, the Government of Pierre Trudeau shifted from viewing the Middle East collectively as part and parcel of the Arab-Israeli conflict to be managed multilaterally through the UN toward a policy of fostering closer bilateral relations with each of the Gulf states. Initially these bilateral ties centered around commerce; as a trading nation (the fifth largest in 2005), Canada relies on exports for 40% of its GDP and these exports are connected to 25% of all Canadian jobs. Given the importance of trade to Canada's economy, Ottawa progressively began to realize how the regional changes taking place in the mid-1970s, the influx of petrodollars and Gulf infrastructure development might be of commercial benefit to Canada. It was not until the late 1980s, however, that Canada's diplomatic engagement would take its fullest stride, applying its vaunted multilateral strategy to back-to-back Gulf crises as a gateway to construct stronger bilateral relationships with the region. Only then would Ottawa's horizon expand beyond the economic realm to other agendas, including human security concerns and even cultural linkages in the area of sports.

Perhaps due to Ottawa's relative inattention to the Arab Gulf region until comparatively recently, scholarly consideration given to these relationships has been correspondingly slow to emerge. Consequently, this study heavily relies upon primary sources – in particular interviews with Canadian ambassadors posted to the region – in addition to what little secondary material exists concerning Canada's relations with the Arabian Gulf. While this study also originally set out to explore Ottawa's ties with the Gulf Cooperation Council, discussions with diplomats and a review of the official record showed relatively little Canadian contact with the organization. Ambassadors report 'taking notice' of its formation and being generally 'aware' of its activities. However, short of a few perfunctory statements and a small number of visits paid to GCC headquarters, Canada has had no meaningful interaction with the body and the organization plays no role in the larger relationships Ottawa has forged with the region. What follows, then, is the story of Canada's gradual discovery of the Arabian Gulf states in other multilateral fora, such as the United Nations, and through its own direct bilateral diplomacy.

Author's Note: Unless otherwise stated, all dollar figures mentioned in this study are in Canadian Dollars.

Chapter One

Canada and the Arabian Gulf: Establishing a Diplomatic Foothold

Although Canada traces its creation to the British North American Act of July 1867, which brought together four previously separate British colonies, London viewed the new entity as only semi-autonomous within the larger British Empire. The lack of Canadian sovereignty was especially evident in matters of foreign and defense policy. For example, acts of the British parliament, and not the Canadian parliament, compelled Canadians to fight on behalf of the Empire in southern Africa during the Boer War (1899-1901) and in World War I (1914-1918). Canada did not have its own recognized diplomat posted abroad until 1880 when London grudgingly gave accreditation to a Canadian High Commissioner. The representative was pointedly termed a 'High Commissioner' and not 'Ambassador' to denote the fact that countries do not send ambassadors to parts of themselves. With British encouragement, Canada established its own Department of External Affairs in 1909. The department was not a foreign office *per se*, for it largely dealt only with cross-border issues between the US and Canada. These matters were previously handled by the British Embassy in Washington, which had complained to London that such issues occupied 'three quarters' of its time.³

While Canada had little say in its initial involvement in the First World War, the Government of Prime Minister Robert Borden parlayed the Canadian war effort into a seat in the British Imperial War Cabinet and later a place at the Paris Peace Conference. In Paris, Canada secured separate membership in the League

3- See Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (2003) "A Sort of Foreign Office – 1896-1909," in *Our Past: The History of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade*, URL (consulted December 2004): <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/departement/history/>.

of Nations. Ottawa's involvement with the League, participation in its first bilateral treaty and the establishment of independent legations in Washington, Paris and Tokyo heralded a burgeoning sovereign foreign policy for Canada by 1926, although as Muhammad Chohan observes, "The principle tasks of these legations did not relate to diplomatic activity since their main duties were to promote immigration and commercial ties."⁴ Canada's new sovereign status was formally recognized by the United Kingdom in 1931 with the Statute of Westminster, after which Canada's foreign policy would be its own, although Ottawa would closely follow the leads of London, Paris and Washington.

Canada and the Middle East: Finding 'Expression' through the United Nations

The immediate post-World War II period marked a diplomatic watershed for Canada. In addition to trade interests, Canada's "relations expanded ... because of the needs of European security, [British] Commonwealth relations and involvement in and with the United Nations."⁵ Prior to the start of war, Canada operated just seven foreign posts. By 1946, it had 26 missions in parts of Europe, Latin America and with the other Dominions (Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and South Africa).⁶ A year later, Turkey became the first Middle East country to host a mission. The Canadian embassy in Ankara was a by-product of the emerging Cold War and Turkey's eventual membership in the western military alliance, NATO, which also included Canada. In fact, the Department of External Affairs continued to view all of the Middle East as merely an "adjunct of Europe."⁷

Canada's Middle East policy eventually "found expression" through the United Nations;⁸ Ottawa was an early proponent of UN activity related to the Palestine Question. Canada served on the eleven-member UN Special Committee

4- Muhammad Anwar Chohan (1985), "The Evolution of Canadian Foreign Policy Toward the Middle East (1945-67)," *Pakistan Horizon* 38(3): 15-16.

5- Philip Stigger (1971), "A Study in Confusion: Canadian Diplomatic Staffing Practices in Africa and the Middle East," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 5(3): 261.

6- See Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (2003) "The Golden Age - 1945-1957," in *Our Past: The History of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade*, URL (consulted December 2004): <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/departement/history/>.

7- Stigger: 251.

8- As late as 1969, External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp asserted "Our Middle Eastern policy has largely found expression through the United Nations." [The Secretary of State for External Affairs (19 November 1969) "Visit to the Middle East." Press Release. Ottawa: Department of External Affairs.]

on Palestine (UNSCOP) and its representative, Ivan Rand, was a forceful advocate of partitioning the British mandate into Jewish and Arab states. It was also a Canadian, Lester B. Pearson, as chairman of the UN's First Committee, who would have overall responsibility for UNSCOP. In 1947, Pearson helped broker a compromise in the General Assembly between the US and the Soviet Union which allowed passage of Resolution 181, the document which officially partitioned Palestine. Pearson believed that as a result of Resolution 181's passage, direct Soviet and/or American military intervention in the area had also been avoided. As one observer maintains, "In the struggle to secure acceptance of the partition plan, his influence...was perhaps decisive."⁹ Furthermore because Pearson's diplomatic efforts laid the groundwork for the eventual establishment of Israel, many viewed him as "the Balfour of Canada."¹⁰

Between 1948 and 1949, Canada held one of the rotating Security Council seats when the Council was seized of the matters of Palestine and armistice agreements among the Middle East belligerents. During this time, Ottawa supported the creation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which was charged with addressing the needs of the 750,000 Palestinian refugees created by the war. In due course, Canada became one of UNRWA's major financial backers and later provided UNRWA's Director-General. A Canadian, Lieutenant-General E.L.M. Burns also served as head of the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), that was established to maintain the 1949 truce between Israel and the surrounding Arab states.

Given Ottawa's heavy involvement with the Palestine Question, its paucity of formal diplomatic ties to regional players became increasingly untenable. In 1954, Canada appointed an ambassador to Egypt and assigned its Athens ambassador responsibility for Israel. A legation was established in Beirut headed by a charge d'affaires, although the Canadian Ambassador in Cairo was also accredited to Lebanon in a non-resident capacity. Furthermore the Cairo embassy had responsibility for trade issues involving parts of northeastern Africa, Yemen and Saudi Arabia.¹¹ These steps allowed Ottawa to have on-the-ground representation as the Arab-Israeli conflict once again assumed center stage in 1956. As with the Palestine issue a decade earlier, Canada's Middle East agenda took shape through

9- Robert Spencer (1959) *Canada in World Affairs from UN to NATO 1966-1949*. Toronto: 147, quoted in Ismael (1984): 11.

10- Ibid. This is a reference to then-British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour who in 1917 issued a letter to the World Zionist Organization which stated British support for a Jewish national home in Palestine. It is known as the Balfour Declaration.

11- See Chohan: 19. He calls these arrangements "confused and complicated." [20]

the United Nations. Additionally as a member of the British Commonwealth and NATO, Canada was destined to be drawn in via the involvement of Britain, France and the US.

Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's seizure of the Suez Canal Company in July 1956 and the subsequent Israeli-British-French invasion of Egypt three months later spawned an international crisis. The US, while critical of Egypt's nationalization of the canal, also strenuously condemned the tripartite invasion by its allies. Canada found itself caught between the US position on one side and the British and French stands on the other. Ottawa was also deeply troubled over rifts within the Commonwealth, as many of its members threatened to quit because of British actions in Egypt. Lastly, while the canal itself was not particularly important to Canada, Ottawa did recognize its economic importance to the UK and that it offered the shortest route to London's military and political interests within the Commonwealth. While details of the Suez Crisis and its resolution are better told elsewhere,¹² it is appropriate here to note Canada's role in UN mediation efforts. Pearson, now Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, is credited with using the mechanics of the UN Charter to fashion what would become the world body's first true peacekeeping mission.¹³ The United Nations Emergency Forces (UNEF), to which Canada would contribute significant personnel, would be placed on the Egyptian-Israeli border following the tripartite military withdrawal from Egyptian territory. UNTSO chief Major General Burns served as the commander of UNEF as well. For his mediation efforts, Pearson was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1957. Canada's diplomatic involvement during this period was pivotal in defusing the crisis, but as Tareq Ismael correctly asserts:

Canada's primary concern was not the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, but rather the resolution of differences of opinion within the western alliance and within the Commonwealth. In a word, Canada wanted to solve a NATO and Commonwealth problem, not the Arab-Israeli problem...The Suez crisis thus demonstrated that Canadian

12- See, for example, Donald Neff (1988) *Warriors at Suez*. Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books. For Lester Pearson's own account see *Mike: The Memoirs of The Right Honorable Lester B. Pearson*, Volume 2, 1948-1957. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 225-278.

13- Service in peacekeeping missions became a hallmark of Canadian foreign policy. Writing in 1995, Alex Morison, points out "Canada's peacekeeping record is unsurpassed. In addition to participating in every United Nations peacekeeping operation, Canada has contributed more military personnel and resources than any other country." ["Canada and Peacekeeping: A Time for Reanalysis" in David B. Dewitt and David Leyton Brown (eds) *Canada's International Security Policy*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada, Inc.: 221.

policy toward the Middle East was based upon a calculation of interests in which the Middle East itself played no intrinsic role.¹⁴

Over the next few years Canada progressively augmented its initial presence in the Middle East. In 1958, Lebanon and Israel received resident Canadian ambassadors, as did Iran. Yet, despite Canada's diplomatic involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict and its own military contributions to various Middle East peacekeeping forces, Ottawa's actual diplomatic presence in the area remained surprisingly minimal. This situation prompted the popular Canadian publication *Saturday Night* to run a piece in 1959 entitled "Wanted: Canadian Diplomats in the Middle East." Its author, Peter Worthington, lamented the fact that 'in the Arab world, stretching 4,500 miles from the Atlantic coast of Africa to the Persian Gulf' Canada only has embassies in Egypt and Lebanon.¹⁵ He further noted that:

It is this political instability which demands that we should have increased representation in the Middle East, for as good as the Cairo and Beirut embassies are, they cannot possibly keep us informed about all that is going on in the whole area. As [Canada's then-Ambassador to Lebanon] Paul Beaulieu admits, "Lebanese politics are quite complicated enough," he does not have time to post even a watching brief on adjacent countries. In any case, as he further points out, it is dangerous for the ambassador of one country to have dealings with another.¹⁶

Perhaps reflecting the heady days ushered in by Pearson's Nobel Peace Prize-winning diplomacy, Worthington argued that the West needed a "trusted listening post" in the region and that Canada fit the bill. Because of the positive regional feelings engendered by UNEF and Canada's lack of an imperial past, which allowed it to act as an independent neutral, Ottawa could serve as a go-between for the West and the Arab world. He concluded:

The doubts and suspicions the Arabs harbor towards the West certainly would be lessened and might even be dissolved by Canadian influence. Furthermore, the Arabs themselves have asked

14- Tareq Y. Ismael (1984) "Canada and The Arab World: A Diplomatic History," in Tareq Y. Ismael (ed) *Canadian Arab Relations: Policy and Perspectives*. Ottawa: Jerusalem International Publishing House, Inc.: 18-19.

15- Peter Worthington (1 August 1959) "Wanted: Canadian Diplomats in the Middle East," *Saturday Night*: 14.

16- Ibid: 15.

us to assume such a leadership role. One is left wondering why we do not.¹⁷

Undoubtedly Worthington's arguments were echoed in the corridors of External Affairs as well, though other political and economic realities took precedence. In the next few years, Ottawa did steadily extend its ties in the Middle East through non-resident ambassadors. In terms of the Gulf region, in March 1965 Canada expanded links by accrediting its ambassador in Iran additionally to Kuwait. Also, its embassy in Lebanon would now cover Iraq,¹⁸ Jordan and Syria. Still, as L. A. Delvoie explains, the embassies in Cairo, Beirut and Tel Aviv "existed less for the purpose of fostering bi-lateral relations than of monitoring developments in the Arab-Israeli dispute and making known Canadian views concerning these developments to the host governments."¹⁹ Chohan adds, "Canada's general lack of interest in [the] Middle East may be attributed to the fact that the Middle East had a history of political upheaval and it was not attractive as a trade region."²⁰ Throughout the early 1960s, Canada's principal diplomatic involvement remained limited to peacekeeping operations. In addition to UNEF, Canada did participate in one mission directly tied to the Arabian Peninsula. Between July 1963 and September 1964, Canada was part of the UN Yemen Observation Mission (UNYOM) which was located along the 20 kilometer-wide demilitarized zone on each side of the demarcated Saudi-Yemeni border. UNYOM was put in place following the Yemeni Civil War, which witnessed Saudi Arabia and Egypt supporting opposite sides in the conflict. Its tasks "were limited strictly to observing, certifying and reporting...the intention of Saudi Arabia to end activities in support of the royalists in Yemen and the intention of Egypt to withdraw its troops from that country."²¹ Saudi Arabia and Egypt equally bore the costs associated with UNYOM. Canada contributed aircraft and some three dozen military personnel to this mission. It ended in late 1964 when Riyadh informed the UN that it was withdrawing its financial support for UNYOM.²²

17- Ibid: 39.

18- Responsibility for Iraq was moved to the Canadian Embassy in Iran after 1965. It shifted back again to the Ambassador in Lebanon in 1970 following a growing tension between Iraq and Iran. Canada's first resident ambassador to Iraq was appointed in 1975.

19- L. A. Delvoie (December 1976) "Growth in Economic Relations of Canada and the Arab World," *International Perspectives*: 29.

20- Chohan: 16.

21- United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

"Yemen-UNYOM" http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/unyombackgr.html (Consulted 8 February 2005).

22- Ibid.

Elsewhere in the region, clashes along Jordan and Syria's boundaries with Israel intensified in 1966 and early 1967. As tensions rose, Cairo requested that UNEF contingents be removed from the Sinai so Egypt could protect its own border with Israel. Over Canadian objections, UN Secretary-General U Thant agreed to Egypt's request. Thant reasoned that Egypt had a sovereign right to request UNEF's withdrawal from its territory, just as Israel had rejected the positioning of any UNEF units on its side of the border since 1956. Ottawa argued however that the Secretary-General did not have the unilateral power to order the withdrawal of UN peacekeeping forces when they had been previously approved by other bodies within the organization. Nasser took notice of Ottawa's stand on the UNEF withdrawal and its urgent calls for a Security Council meeting on the subject; soon, Canada was linked with Britain and the US as agents of imperialism.²³ Prime Minister Pearson's seemingly pro-Israel statements in the House of Commons and his meeting with President Lyndon Johnson in Ottawa all but confirmed this alliance in Nasser's mind. As such, the Egyptian President demanded the immediate extraction of the 800-person Canadian contingent attached to UNEF.

Canada's past role as a neutral mediator in the region evaporated with the expanding crisis. Ottawa's position even created a minor diplomatic incident at the 'Expo 67' fair celebrating Canada's centennial year; the Kuwaiti government abruptly ordered its national pavilion at the Expo in Montréal closed because of Canada's 'attitude' in the crisis.²⁴ It is worth noting, however, that Egypt maintained its pavilion at the Expo and despite breaking diplomatic relations with Washington and London, Cairo did not sever its ties with Ottawa. In the end, events surrounding the June Arab-Israeli War undermined Canada's influence with the parties to the conflict as "Canadian policy there—always so careful and circumspect—was suddenly portrayed as quite the opposite."²⁵ Even though Canada again held one of the rotating seats on the UN Security Council in 1967, perceptions of a pro-Israeli bias to its policy weakened Ottawa's ability to mediate. While Canada would cosponsor UN Security Resolution 242, the central role Canada played in mediation efforts during the 1947-1956 period was not to be repeated following the June War.

23- See quotes by Nasser in Ismael (1984): 21-22.

24- *Canadian News Facts* (19 May-1 June 1967): 87.

25- *Canadian Annual Review*, 1967: 223, quoted in Chohan: 30.

The Trudeau Era Begins

As Canada watched its Middle East role diminish at the UN in 1967 and 1968, it was also undergoing a leadership change in Ottawa. With Pearson's retirement as Prime Minister and Liberal leader, Pierre Trudeau emerged as the party's head. In the 1968 elections, Trudeau's Liberals received a new mandate and he became prime minister.

At the point of Trudeau's elevation, Canada had some 90 foreign diplomatic posts plus representation through non-resident accreditation in another 40 countries. Of these 130 missions, Kuwait was the sole country in the Arabian Peninsula to have an accredited Canadian ambassador and even then he was resident in Tehran. Canada's economic and political relations with the Emirate were minimal at this point and the diplomatic attention given from Iran was equally so. But a presence – however accredited – was important for Canada's nascent ties in the region. As Philip Stigger correctly summed at the time, "multiple accreditation [was] the only means by which Canada [could] hope to conduct relations with a large number of states"²⁶ given its size and budgetary resources.

During Trudeau's first five years of power, the Middle East was de-emphasized.²⁷ This policy downgrade was due to a number of factors: 1) the Middle East was linked to the old style of governing associated with the Pearson era and even though Trudeau and Pearson were both Liberals, the new Prime Minister wanted to craft his own foreign policy; 2) there was general agreement among the British, French and Americans on the region as reflected in the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 242 (1967) and thus there was little need for the traditional 'conflict management' role played by Ottawa and 3) with the UNEF mission withdrawn, there were few peacekeepers in the region, which meant that Canada had diminished influence even within its traditional peacekeeping role.²⁸

If Canadian attention had shifted away from the side of the Middle East where Ottawa had once been most active, then the new Trudeau policy did not bode well for other parts of the region. Regarding the Arabian Gulf states in the late 1960s

26- Stigger: 248.

27- Roy Licklider (1988) *Political Power and the Arab Oil Weapon: The Experience of Five Industrial Nations*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 109.

28- See Ibid and Janice Gross Stein (1976/1977) "Canadian Foreign Policy in the Middle East After the October War," *Social Praxis* 4(3-4): 276.

and early 1970s, one Canadian diplomat termed the area an 'orphaned' part of Ottawa's foreign policy. While there was some consideration at External Affairs given to establishing trade offices during this time, nothing came of these discussions.²⁹ Noticeably absent was a Canadian diplomatic presence – even in a non-resident capacity -- in the largest of the Gulf states, Saudi Arabia.

Canada's Opening to Saudi Arabia³⁰

Until mid-1973, Ottawa considered its relations with Saudi Arabia to be primarily commercial in nature.³¹ Accordingly, trade issues were handled by the commercial section of Canada's Beirut embassy. It should be noted that the mission was also simultaneously responsible for Canada's relations with Iraq, Jordan and Syria. The diplomats stationed in Lebanon became increasingly frustrated as economic ties with Riyadh (and their own duties) increased substantially, yet Canadian firms and the diplomats themselves were prevented from having meaningful contact with Saudi ministers and other decision makers because of geographic distance and the absence of formal diplomatic ties. In early 1972, Canada's Ambassador to Lebanon, Jacques Gignac, sent an urgent dossier back to Ottawa outlining the rationale for diplomatic ties with the kingdom. In explaining this sense of urgency, Gignac held that it "involved our economic and commercial, as well as our political interests, given the rapid emergence of Saudi Arabia as one of the principal actors in the Middle East."³²

When External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp was questioned on 15 May 1973 about the need to have diplomatic representation in the Arab oil-producing countries, he replied:

We now have representation in what are considered to be the most important of the Middle East countries from the point of view of

29- Confidential interview.

30- I am particularly grateful for the observations and suggestions that Jacques Gignac, Canada's first ambassador to Saudi Arabia (1973-1974) offered on a previous draft of this section.

31- Although at that time Saudi Arabia was supplying 40% of all Middle East oil coming into Canada.

32- Jacques Gignac (1996) "En Ambassade au Moyen-Orient de 1970 à 1974," in David Reece (ed) *'Special Trust and Confidence': Envoy Essays in Canadian Diplomacy*. Ottawa: Carleton University Press: 123. The French-to-English translation of Mr. Gignac's work was kindly provided to the author by Dr. Erik Nakjavani, University of Pittsburgh-Bradford.

Canada and Canadian interests, for instance in Cairo, in Tel Aviv, in Beirut... These are key countries from the Canadian point of view.³³

While Saudi Arabia was not categorized as a "key country" in Sharp's statement, the Canadian Government was in the process of accrediting Gignac, in a non-resident capacity to Jeddah, then Saudi Arabia's diplomatic capital. He presented his credentials to King Faysal in June 1973. Gignac reports an almost immediate change in relations:

From then on, the doors of Saudi administration began to open to our commercial representatives and their efforts were sympathetically received by the respective representatives of the Saudi government... However, to profit from this promise, it became obvious to me that we had to open an embassy without delay... Therefore, I recommended it shortly after presenting my credentials.³⁴

Gignac did not expect quick action by External Affairs, since at that time Canadian "policy toward the Arab world vacillated between indifference and mistrust. Priorities went to regions other than the Middle-East."³⁵ However events in the area would expedite approval of Gignac's proposal. The October 1973 Arab-Israeli War and subsequent Canadian fears of oil shortages would dramatically demonstrate the need for a permanent diplomatic presence on the ground.

In September 1973, Gignac returned to Ottawa for consultations. He hoped to use this time to highlight the enormous potential for Canadian businesses in the Middle East, as well as secure government backing for high-level political and commercial visits to the region. His efforts to meet with the Minister of Industry to press these issues "were not fruitful... the priorities [of Ottawa] were elsewhere."³⁶ Gignac's attempts to speak directly to Minister Sharp were also less than fruitful. However, a chance encounter with Sharp did secure an appointment. Prior to the appointment date, the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War erupted and the ambassador was called back to Beirut. In a message to the minister, Gignac

33- Quoted in R. B. Byers (1974) 'External Affairs and Defense,' in John Saywell (ed) *Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs* 1973. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 256. The questioning took place before the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defense.

34- Gignac: 123.

35- Ibid.

36- Ibid: 123-124.

"pointed out to Mr. Sharp that the events which were taking me [Gignac] back to my post illustrated, better than my comments, the importance of the Arab World for our interests and the urgency for us to pay attention to it."³⁷ Gignac did have a meeting with Undersecretary of State Ed Ritchie who was very sympathetic to the need for an embassy in Jeddah. This need for a permanent Canadian presence in Saudi Arabia became abundantly clear by late October as the government sorted through conflicting reports as to whether Canada was the target of an Arab oil embargo.

As some of the Arab oil-producing states began to categorize its customers into friendly, neutral and enemy camps, the Trudeau Government opined that Canada would not be affected by the reduction in oil supplies since it had friendly relations with the Arab world. "There is no reason to expect a cutback," Energy Minister Donald Macdonald told the *Globe and Mail*, "Canada does not take an anti-Arab line. We were very friendly to Israel but that does not mean we are against the Arabs."³⁸ With this thinking prevailing in Ottawa, the government was somewhat surprised to find itself categorized as a 'neutral,' defined as a state exhibiting an even-handed policy, but one which still favored Israel. Such states could be subject to a 25% reduction in oil deliveries. Reports also circulated in Arab corridors equating Canada's views on the Arab-Israeli conflict with those held by The Netherlands. As the Arab Information Agency in Ottawa noted, oil producers had recently halted all petroleum shipments to Holland.³⁹ The government was particularly concerned about the supply of petroleum to the heavily populated eastern part of the country, especially Quebec and the four Atlantic provinces, if it faced some form of embargo. Since 1961, government policy dictated that areas lying west of the Ottawa Valley would be supplied by Canadian sources. This policy had the dual purpose of shoring up the domestic oil industry by guaranteeing outlets and at the same time allowing the western provinces to export their excess oil to refineries in the United States.⁴⁰ Areas east

37- Ibid: 124-125.

38- Quoted in Tareq Y. Ismael (1994) *Canada and the Middle East: The Foreign Policy of a Client State*. Calgary: American-Arab Institute for Strategic Studies/Detselig Enterprises Ltd: 27.

39- Ibid: 28.

40- By the early 1970s, Canada became a net exporter of oil through its economic relationship with the United States. As Ted Greenwood notes, "By choice and design, therefore, Canada was both a producer and an importer of oil." [Greenwood (1976) "Canada's Quest for Energy Autarky," in J.C. Hurewitz (ed) *Oil, the Arab-Israeli Dispute and the Industrial World: Horizons of Crisis* Boulder: Westview Press: 21.] For other good accounts of the 1973/1974 oil crisis, see Glyn R. Berry (1974) "The Oil Lobby and the Energy Crisis," *Canadian Public Administration* 17(4): 600-635 and Roy Licklider (1988) *Political Power and the Arab Oil Weapon: The Experience of Five Industrial Nations*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

of the dividing line relied on imported petroleum, which at that time was cheaper than oil shipped from Alberta or Saskatchewan. Eastern Canada received 25% of its oil from the Arab world, with Saudi Arabia supplying 10% of Canada's imported supply.⁴¹

To further complicate matters, in 1973, Canada was already experiencing an energy crisis prior to the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War. In February, aware that North American oil supplies were dwindling because of increased US demand, the government imposed restrictions on the amount of crude that the western provinces could export to the United States. In order to ensure supplies for domestic customers, supplementary restrictions were placed on the export of gasoline and heating oil to the US in June and a per-barrel export tax was added in September. Despite these measures, shortages were already taking place in the eastern provinces as Canada headed into the winter season; contributing to a steep rise in oil prices. A further disruption of imported petroleum destined for the eastern part of the country would only exacerbate these problems.

In mid-October, it became evident that at least one shipment slated for Canada through the Portland, Maine-Montréal corridor had been diverted. Without diplomatic representation on the ground and the ability to separate facts from rumors, confusion reigned in Ottawa as to the port of origin of the diverted petroleum, let alone whether Canada had been placed on the embargo list. Given that the United States appeared destined to be punished because of its massive military re-supply of Israel, the Trudeau Government was also concerned that Canada would be lumped together with its southern neighbor because of the Portland transshipment point. "We did not want to be included involuntarily in the Saudi boycott of the USA," commented one official.⁴² Indeed, initial reports seemed to validate that Saudi Arabia was responsible for the diversion, but after Sharp met with Arab ambassadors posted to Ottawa, it appeared more likely that Abu Dhabi was the responsible party. However since none of the Arab ambassadors resident in Ottawa represented Arabian Gulf countries, they could not shed any light on Abu Dhabi's motivations.⁴³ Adding to the problem was apparently that the oil-producing states themselves could not reach agreement on which countries should be placed on the embargo list.⁴⁴ In meeting with the Arab

41- *International Canada* (1973) Toronto: Canadian Institute for International Affairs 4(10): 251.

42- Confidential interview.

43- *International Canada* (1973): 254. In 1973, only Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia had representatives in Ottawa.

44- David Taras (1984) "Parliament and Middle East Interest Groups: The Politics of Canadian and American Diplomacy During the October 1973 War," *Middle East Focus* 6(5): 23. Taras notes that

representatives in Ottawa, Sharp attempted to impress upon them that his government decoupled politics from commercial interests, and he "hoped that the Arab countries would do likewise in their relations with us."⁴⁵

As uncertainty reigned at home,⁴⁶ Ambassador Gignac, under instruction from Ottawa to obtain assurances from the Saudi Government that Canada would not be put on the embargo list, made arrangements to personally meet with Saudi officials. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs informed him that indeed Canada was considered 'neutral' and would be subject to gradual oil cuts unless Ottawa issued a declaration clarifying its position on the Israeli-Arab conflict and the Palestinian question. Gignac was told that such a clarification would net Canada a 'friendly' designation and thus avoid any reduction in oil supplies. Working from the British Embassy in Jeddah, Gignac received permission from External Affairs to issue such a statement.⁴⁷ Thinking that a crisis had been averted, the ambassador prepared to return to Beirut, only to find out the next day that Canada was back on the list because it was an important oil supplier to the United States. As Licklider observes, "If the Arabs were serious about cutting the United States off, Canada was an obvious target."⁴⁸ It was also an unfortunate reality of geography that Canada's imported oil entered the country through a pipeline originating in Maine, USA. Gignac appealed directly to Saudi Foreign Minister Omar Al Saqqaf:

In deferential but firm terms, I pointed out to the minister the lack of knowledge of Canada, its politics and its geography that his country

much time in Cabinet meetings was devoted to the energy crisis and he quotes one DEA officer as saying, "There was the feeling that we didn't know what the hell had hit us. Some Arabs said that we were on the embargo list and some said the opposite." [23]

45- Quoted in R. B. Byers (1974): 256.

46- This uncertainty continued well after the immediate crisis had passed. Licklider asserts, "ten years later very well informed observers of Canadian foreign policy still did not know for certain if Canada had been embargoed, and a number of them suspected the government itself never really found out." [110]

47- Gignac notes that "once we submitted at their request our position... [the] subject never came up again in my dealings with Saudi officials." [Interview with Ambassador Gignac, January 2005.] In Ottawa at the time, Sharp began to publicly use the term 'Palestinian' and for the first time Canada acknowledged that the Palestinians had collective national rights. See Licklider: 113. Despite Trudeau's assertion to *The Toronto Star* on June 17, 1974, "There has been no change in the Canadian Government's policies regarding the Middle East conflict as a result of the Arab oil boycott or for any other reason," Canadian declaratory policy at least did change. [See Trudeau quote in Janice Gross Stein (1976/1977) "Canadian Foreign Policy in the Middle East After the October War," *Social Praxis* 4(3-4): 293.]

48- Licklider: 110.

was showing in making such a decision and the disastrous effects that it could have for the future of the very burgeoning relations between our two countries.⁴⁹

The Minister reversed course on the spot. Gignac attributed this change of heart to his passionate plea for good bilateral relations between Canada and Saudi Arabia, which were still at a very early stage of development after years of hard work to establish them. Once "having made my pitch," Gignac noted:

the minister thanked me very warmly for my frankness. As a former journalist he had appreciated my direct and non-diplomatic language which had helped him evaluate better the situation. As a result, he accepted my view that it would be a mistake to have us on the embargo list and gave me his word that their decision would be canceled.⁵⁰

However a few weeks later the ambassador was back in Saudi Arabia again meeting with Al Saqqaf, after Canada learned that it remained on the list. The Foreign Minister told Gignac that he had lost the argument "with young technocrats" within the corridors of the Saudi government and 'was not in a position to keep the commitment he had given.'⁵¹ Rather than return to Beirut and wait for new instructions from Ottawa which would cost "close to a week of precious time," Gignac decided to appeal directly to King Faysal on the basis of his first instructions.⁵² He later learned through the Chief of Royal Protocol that the King had reviewed the matter and had sent new instructions to his foreign minister upholding Al Saqqaf's original decision keeping Canada off the list. In the end, Gignac summed that the crisis "shed light on the true nature of Canada at the highest level of power in Saudi Arabia and brought us in the bargain sympathy and favorable treatment."⁵³

While Gignac's local diplomacy successfully kept Canada off the list, Ottawa's confusion mostly likely hastened the Trudeau Government's decision to open an embassy in Jeddah. In making the announcement on December 21, the

49- Gignac: 127.

50- Interview with Ambassador Gignac, January 2005.

51- Gignac: 127. According to Licklider, "the Saudi government seems to have been internally divided, stating that Canada was not embargoed, while Saudi oil companies claimed that their orders were not to send oil." [111]

52- Interview with Ambassador Gignac, January 2005.

53- Gignac: 128.

External Affairs Department said the new embassy "would be an expression of a policy of strengthening Canadian representation in the Middle East and a move to extend contacts with oil-producing countries."⁵⁴ Trudeau made yet another important decision in December that would impact Canadian-Gulf relations; he announced the creation of a national petroleum company called Petro-Canada. The company would become more directly involved in development and exploration projects and in negotiating contracts with other state-owned or state-controlled petroleum companies, a move long advocated by Gulf officials. DEA also suggested at the time that other new diplomatic ties in the region were under consideration.

Six weeks later, Sharp revealed that Canada would establish diplomatic relations with Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. While conceding that Canadian petroleum imports from these four states were minimal at the time, an External Affairs spokesperson asserted that recognition "couldn't do anything but help" a future expansion of oil trade.⁵⁵ Responsibility for the four new posts was given to Canada's Ambassador to Iran, James George, who was already responsible for Kuwait. George would now oversee five non-residential postings, in addition to his duties in Tehran. He would have no staff or offices in any of the Arab countries. All management of bilateral ties with Ottawa, monitoring of local events and promotion of Canadian commercial interests were handled primarily from Iran. George recalls that he visited each of the countries once or twice a year, but that Canada was at a "disadvantage" in both understanding what was happening in the country and in promoting Canadian interests without resident diplomatic representation.⁵⁶ In the end, George notes, "Ottawa considered that Tehran was most of my job and that the Gulf was not as important in my allocation of time."⁵⁷ George's successor in Tehran, Ambassador Kenneth Taylor, also conceded that the multiple accreditations "did not work very well" because of the demands of the bilateral Iran-Canada relationship.⁵⁸

54- *Canadian News Facts* (December 16-31, 1973): 1127.

55- Quoted in *Canadian News Facts* (February 1-15, 1974): 1155. By March 1974, Canada announced it had established diplomatic ties with the Arab Republic of Yemen and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Canada's ambassador to Saudi Arabia would also be accredited to the Arab Republic of Yemen in December 1975 and the PDRY in May 1976. With these actions, Canada now had formal diplomatic relations with all countries of the Middle East.

56 Interview with Ambassador James George, November 2004.

57 Ibid.

58- Interview with Ambassador Kenneth Taylor, December 2004.

Chapter Two

The Era of Bilateralism

In the mid 1970s, Prime Minister Trudeau's paramount concern was national unity, centering on the Quebec question. International trade, one observer noted, could be used "to improve Canadian macroeconomic health, which [Trudeau] felt was vital for unity."⁵⁹ The 1973-1974 oil crisis was also a wake-up call to the fact that Canada did have its own direct interests – economically, in the Middle East. Previously in Trudeau's 1970 foreign policy review, *Foreign Policy for Canadians*, economic growth was closely tied to foreign policy. As External Affairs Minister Sharp explained, it was because of Canada's economic strength relative to other powers in the immediate post-World War II period that Canada "enjoyed a brief spell of unusual prominence upon the international stage."⁶⁰ He continued:

Canada makes no pretensions to 'power' in the absolute sense but it does intend to have an effective voice in world affairs. To act constructively in the community of nations one must have a powerbase of some kind... Emphasis on economic growth enhances Canada's capacity to play its full part in the councils of the nations.⁶¹

Moreover, Trudeau wanted to break Canada's heavy reliance on the US as its principal trading partner and the inherent vulnerability that this reliance placed on Canada's economy. This was especially true following the so-called 'Nixon

59- Licklider: 140.

60- Sharp (27 October 1970) "Statement to the Standing Committee of the House of Commons on External Affairs and National Defence," reprinted in Lawrence Grossman (ed) (1976) *Canadian Foreign Policy in the Middle East: A Summary Review*. Montreal: The Canada-Israel Committee: 24.

61- Ibid: 23-24.

Shock' of 1971, when Washington arbitrarily levied a 10% import surcharge on Canadian goods in a bid to reverse the US trade deficit. In seeking trade diversification and the strengthening of Canadian 'ownership' of its economy (formally called the 'Third Option' policy), Trudeau sought to expand commercial ties with Europe and Japan.⁶² Ironically, the quadrupling of oil prices, which layered another level to the energy crisis for Canada in some ways, also produced a corresponding silver lining for Ottawa's trade ambitions in the Gulf region. The newly-realized financial resources of the Gulf oil-producing states offered Canada opportunities for increased trade and involvement in regional infrastructure projects.

Openings to Saudi Arabia

Trudeau's new trade strategy dictated that his government set out to solidify ties with the wealthiest of the Arab states, Saudi Arabia. Shortly after Ottawa's December 1973 announcement of the establishment of an embassy, a commercial secretary was dispatched to Jeddah; premises for a chancery and an ambassador's residence were rented and soon thereafter, Michael Shenstone arrived as Canada's first resident ambassador.⁶³ During this transition from the Beirut-based Gignac to Shenstone, two high-level Canadian ministerial visits to the kingdom occurred. It was fitting that the very first Canadian minister to call on his Saudi counterpart was Energy Minister Donald Macdonald in March 1974, who was received warmly by Oil Minister Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani. Trade Minister Alistair Gillespie followed shortly afterward with a delegation of Canadian businessmen. With these high-level exchanges, "more was accomplished in one year" in terms of the Saudi-Canadian relationship, Gignac affirmed, "than during the previous decade."⁶⁴

For his part, Ambassador Shenstone remembers the challenges facing his small staff in Jeddah as they set up a diplomatic post from scratch. Since there was no institutional memory or established procedures to work from, everything from finding a good plumber to understanding the genealogical lineage of the Saudi royal family had to be discovered for the first time. Rarely were there direct discussions over contentious matters such as the Arab-Israeli conflict or the

62- See Pierre Elliott Trudeau (1993) *Memoirs*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc.: 203-206.

63- Unless otherwise noted, information in this section is based on interviews conducted with Ambassador Michael Shenstone in January 2005.

64- Interview with Ambassador Gignac, January 2005.

Palestinian question. These issues, Shenstone recalls, were either dealt with by his home government and the Saudis at the UN headquarters in New York or not at all. Although, as Dewitt and Kirton note, "only with its subsequent opening of an embassy in Saudi Arabia did Canada begin to develop the contact required for a more complete and sensitive appreciation of the region itself."⁶⁵

As the embassy staff developed local expertise and a network of people that could be helpful for Canadian interests, they also faced a steady stream of Canadian business people hoping to cash in on the oil boom. "The world was flocking to Saudi Arabia and Canada was part of that process," the ambassador stated. The corporate visitors arriving in the kingdom were mostly senior officers of companies and not merely the vice-presidents for sales. Dealing with this "parade" of "the Titans of Canadian industry" placed additional demands on a staff just finding its own way through the complexities of Saudi commercial and legal culture. Moreover, a number of provincial and federal ministers were making their way to Jeddah as well. The newsweekly *Maclean's* described the politicians as "swarm[ing] to the Middle East like flies to baklava."⁶⁶ The magazine reported one Canadian politician in Jeddah asserting that "to pass the time I went to a hotel bar. I bumped into a finance guy from British Columbia and he was buying a drink for a Quebec civil servant. I thought I was back at the federal-provincial conferences."⁶⁷

Foreign diplomats posted in Jeddah paint a scene of "indescribable confusion" in the port city as everything from Japanese cars to camels were being offloaded from ships. "Saudi Arabia was importing everything, including sand," Shenstone notes. The sand was of a special quality needed for cement utilized in the building boom taking place in the country. As more Canadian enterprises participated in this economic frenzy, more Canadians began to arrive in the kingdom. The consular services of the new embassy would soon be tested as a number of expatriates became embroiled in a sometimes capricious Saudi judicial system. Embassy personnel dedicated significant staff time assisting their fellow nationals who were jailed or denied exit visas to leave Saudi Arabia over business disputes.

65- David B. Dewitt and John J. Kirton (1983) "Canada-Middle East Relations: The End of Liberal-Internationalism," in Janice Gross Stein and David B. Dewitt (eds) *The Middle East at the Crossroads: Regional Forces & External Powers*. Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press: 179.

66- "Some of the Arabs' Best Friends are Canadians," (3 November 1975) *Maclean's*: 60.

67- Ibid.

Over the next three decades, this would be a recurrent issue for Canadian diplomats posted to the kingdom.⁶⁸

The Trade Relationship

Despite its growing trade ties with the region, the relationship between Canada and the Gulf states remained fairly modest. While Canadian exports to the six countries had increased from approximately \$7.8 million to \$18 million in a six-year span (1968-1973), this total only amounted to a small fraction of Canada's overall international trade (see tables 1 and 2). There were also wide fluctuations in the proportion of exports to these states. In 1969, for example, the UAE accounted for 12.86% of total Canadian exports to the Arab world. A year later, however, proportional trade to the UAE was less than 1%.⁶⁹ Primary exports to the Gulf region were agriculture products (mainly grains and sugar), semi-processed materials such as lumber, pulp, paper and metals as well as large manufactured items like engines, machinery and equipment, automobiles.⁷⁰ By 1974, manufactured products accounted for half of Canada's sales. It should be noted that Canadian trade statistics measure only the sale of goods and do not include services which have become an important profitable aspect of the economic relationship between Canada and the Gulf. For example, one of the first Canadian firms to operate in the region was the Toronto-based Cansult, a multi-

68- See for example "Canadians threatened with flogging" (19 July 1983) *Globe and Mail*: 9. In this story, six telecommunications workers were warned of the punishment for working during the daily Islamic prayer hours in Saudi Arabia. There was a press frenzy in 1987 when two dozen female Canadian flight attendants were among 90 partygoers arrested in Jeddah for violating Saudi liquor laws. See Robert Brehl (17 August 1987) "Saudis detain 21 partying Canadian stewardesses," *Toronto Star*: A1 and Heather Mallick (21 August 1987) "Stewardess tells of Saudi jail hardships," *Globe and Mail*: A13. These flight attendants were working with almost 300 other Canadians on a summer contract with Saudi Arabian Airlines assisting with religious pilgrims flying to Mecca. Canadian diplomats posted to the kingdom frequently spoke of an "unreliable" capricious legal system "which unduly favored Saudi citizens." While allowing that some of those arrested "deserved to be held accountable for their actions," there was also a local mentality that if a Saudi and a foreigner were involved in an accident, it was always the foreigner's fault. One diplomat noted that if a Canadian citizen was arrested in the US there would be a general trust in the legal system and while the consulate would follow the case, it would not create a crisis in Canadian-US relations. In Saudi Arabia, however, Canadians were not sure what would happen upon arrest or in many cases why they were being arrested in the first place. As a consequence, the embassy had to take a lot of interest in each case. These issues demanded much embassy time and frequently created mini-crises in the overall Canadian-Saudi relationship. [Confidential interviews.]

69- Atif Kubursi (1985) "Canada's Economic Relations with the Arab World: Patterns and Prospects," in Tareq Y. Ismael (ed) *Canada and the Arab World*. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press: 49.

70- Delvoie: 31.

faceted international consulting and planning company involved in projects ranging from agriculture to urban development. It secured its first regional contract in 1965 to design and construct Riyadh and Medina's sewage systems and was later part of a Canadian consortium responsible for Abu Dhabi's international airport and harbor projects. By 1971, Cansult had branch offices in Oman, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. A top Cansult official only half-jokingly attributed his Canadian company's success to a combination of "US technology and UK modesty."⁷¹

Predictably, petroleum and petroleum derivatives accounted for over 97% of Arab Gulf products imported by Canada. Imports from the Gulf had increased from \$45 million in 1968 to \$115 million through 1973. Saudi Arabia accounted for over half of the imports and, together with the UAE, the two states were responsible for 96% of Canadian imports from the Gulf in 1973 (see table 3). Also significant for the Canadian economy at this time was the scope of Arab investment in the country, which is another level of economic activity, not reflected in trade statistics. While any foreign investment was important to Canada's economy, it was also a double-edged sword for the government. Ottawa had long been troubled by foreign (read US) ownership of her economy and was not eager to add Arab control on top of the already heavy American presence in the country.⁷² Ottawa preferred that "foreign funds enter the economy as debt instruments rather than as equity."⁷³ Some reports indicated that provincial public utilities, such as Hydro Quebec, sold bonds worth more than \$500 million in the Arab Gulf region in 1974-1975.⁷⁴ But the overall level of Arab investment was harder to quantify due to the "curtain of silence" surrounding it. Yet, as *Maclean's* noted at the time:

in spite of these efforts, the word in the investment and banking communities is that Arab oil money is very much a factor in the Canadian economy. More than \$1.5 billion has been invested here

71- See "Canada and the Middle East" (May 1984) *MEED Special Report*: 16-21.

72- Trudeau's Third Option policy was designed to decrease foreign ownership of Canada's economy. Foreign concerns controlled 37% in 1971. This was reduced to 23.6% in 1986. Overall American ownership fell from 28% to 17% during this 15 year period. [Trudeau (1993): 205.] In 1982 Saudi investors created a stir when they were involved in a \$500 million purchase of 11,000-unit Toronto apartment complex. See "Saudis start buying plan for Canadian properties," (November 12, 1982) *Globe & Mail*: 1.

73- Stein (1976/1977): 289.

74- Delvoie: 32.

during the past 18 months and investment bankers are hoping for at least that much again in the next 12 months.⁷⁵

Even as Canadian newspapers and business journals touted the potential for increased trade in light of the seemingly vast well of available 'petro-dollars,' Canadian companies were slow to capitalize.⁷⁶ Diplomats posted to the region regularly wired Ottawa pushing for high-level political visits and trade missions in order to highlight business opportunities. This petition became a frequent – if largely ignored – refrain of embassy personnel well into the late 1990s.

The External Affairs Minister Comes Calling

A number of high profile visits did indeed take place. External Affairs Minister, Allan MacEachen, traveled to five countries in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, in January 1976. His was the first such high-level tour by a senior federal official to the Gulf region.⁷⁷ The principal reason for MacEachen's visit was the building of the hitherto almost non-existent bilateral ties. As one of the Minister's chief advisers noted:

Up to now Canada looked at the Arab forest as a whole, as a theatre of major conflict where we had an interest as peace-keepers to be acceptable to both sides. Therefore there were no strong commitments to or deep involvements on either side. Canada is now looking at the trees as well as the forest. We are still a peace-keeper but this is no longer seen as a reason for not developing better bilateral relations with these countries.⁷⁸

This focus on the individual "trees" and not just the whole Middle Eastern "forest" would be first broached in the late 1975 Cabinet discussions and

75- "Some of the Arabs' Best Friends are Canadians" (1975): 60.

76- See for example Jane Becker (1974) "The Scramble for Arab Money," *Executive* 16(9): 31-36. Among the "guidelines for doing business" was the observation that companies should be prepared to invest much time, effort and residency in the region in order to make a sale. It took Westinghouse Canada over a year to secure its first Saudi sale and its marketing manager logged 150,000 airmiles in 1973 in support of the contract. Canadian companies were also advised that the Gulf State were interested in turnkey projects in which the foreign concern designs the plant, initially operates it while training nationals to run it before turning the working model over to its owners.

77- Stephen Scott (1976) "MacEachen Finds His Policy Acceptable in Middle East," *International Perspectives* (May/June): 3. In addition to Saudi Arabia, MacEachen visited Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Israel.

78- Quoted in Stein (1976/1977): 280.

underscored by a February 1976 Cabinet document that outlined Ottawa's hopes for "close and mutually beneficial bilateral relations with all states of the area, outside the context of any regional disputes or problems and with particular emphasis on trade and economic cooperation."⁷⁹ During MacEachen's January visit, Saudi Arabia and Canada signed a commercial memorandum of agreement and established the Joint Committee for the Development of Trade and Economic Cooperation (JEC). According to official Canadian parlance, the purpose of JEC was "to serve as an umbrella under which bilateral economic issues are discussed and opportunities for involvement in commercial projects are explored."⁸⁰ The government-to-government contacts associated with this committee were important to Ottawa. With the involvement of senior Saudi economic officials, Canada hoped to raise its profile in the kingdom. Privately Canadian diplomats in the area reasoned that at least senior Saudi officials would have to look at briefing notes on Canada to get ready for the talks and junior Saudi officials would have to prepare those notes, perhaps for the first time.⁸¹ Ambassador Shenstone recalls, "our efforts [were] concentrated on the minimum hope that in some way some Saudis would at least momentarily be brought to think about Canada, amidst all the other countries vying for their attention at the time."⁸² The first meeting of the JEC was held in Ottawa in September 1976.⁸³

Canadian officials traveling with MacEachen in 1976 were briefed on the Saudis' \$145 billion five-year development plan. Additionally, during the Minister's visit, the Arab-Israeli issue did intrude, as it became clear that companies doing business with Israel could not do business in Saudi Arabia because of the boycott. Foreign Minister Saud also raised the issue of Canada recognizing the PLO, but did not tie action on this front with Saudi-Canadian

79- Quoted in Government of Canada, The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (1985) *Report on Canada's Relations with the Countries of the Middle East and North Africa*. Ottawa: Minister of Supplies and Services Canada: 87. Ambassador Shenstone, who wrote the first draft of this document in September 1975, notes that the memo "devoted as much or more attention to our policy on the Arab-Israeli issue as it did to relations with individual states." (E-mail from Ambassador Shenstone, March 2005) As part of the cabinet discussions, MacEachen supported efforts for Canada to "secure a fair share of Arab petrodollars" by participating in trade shows. He also agreed to shift some trade commissioners from South Africa to a newly created post in Kuwait. [Dewitt and Kirton: 190]

80- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (2003) "Bilateral Relations Canada-Saudi Arabia," <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/menu-en.asp> (Consulted July 14, 2004).

81- Confidential interview.

82- Interview with Ambassador Shenstone, January 2005.

83- A second round was held in Riyadh in February 1978 and a third round convened in Ottawa in June 1980. The JEC lapsed sometime prior to the start of the 1982 round.

commercial relations.⁸⁴ Regardless in MacEachen's statement following the JEC agreement's signing, he noted for the first time that any settlement "will have to take full account of the legitimate interests and aspirations" of the Palestinians.⁸⁵

New Diplomatic Bridges to Kuwait

During the late 1975 regional policy review previously mentioned, External Affairs Minister MacEachen agreed with the commercial officer's recommendations concerning the need for an expanded diplomatic and trade presence in Kuwait. Although Ottawa had extended diplomatic ties to the Emirate in 1965, accreditation remained through its embassy in Tehran, where Kuwaiti affairs took a backseat to the seemingly more important Canadian-Iranian relationship. Despite the decision to upgrade relations with Kuwait, implementation was not imminent. As one diplomat explained, "the struggle was just about money and was not at the political level. Kuwait wasn't considered very important by those officials not concerned with the Middle East at a time when External Affairs was going through one of its belt-tightening periods."⁸⁶ This official also noted that these belt-tightening periods "come and go like the tides." Even a fiscal compromise to move trade commissioners from South Africa, where Canada was downsizing its presence because of the apartheid regime, to Kuwait City did not advance the process. The appointment of Kenneth Taylor as Ambassador to Iran and Kuwait in 1977, however, symbolized how important regional commercial ties had become to Canada. Prior to his posting as ambassador, Taylor most immediately had served as Director General of the Trade Commission Service. In Tehran, he replaced James George, a political officer. Like George, Taylor was also concurrently serving as non-resident ambassador to Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the UAE in addition to his responsibilities for Iran and Kuwait. This arrangement, Taylor acknowledged, "did not work very well" because of the demands of the bilateral Iranian-Canadian relationship.⁸⁷

When the long-planned establishment of an embassy in Kuwait finally occurred in early 1978, the timing coincided with the Iranian Revolution, which became the chief focus of Taylor's time. A Canadian charge d'affaires headed up the mission in Kuwait City when it was established in April. Six months later, its

84- Scott: 5.

85- Quoted in "Canada's Middle East Shift" (1980) *Middle East Focus* 2(6): 2.

86- Confidential Interview.

87- Interview with Ambassador Taylor, December 2004.

diplomatic staffing was raised to the ambassadorial level. In an even larger staffing reorganization, Ottawa's new resident ambassador in Kuwait City would also be charged with Canada's ties with Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. For the time being, Taylor remained as Ambassador to Oman because the Sultan refused to accept accreditation through the embassy in Kuwait City, noting that an Emir held lesser royal status than a Sultan. As a courtesy to the Sultan, accreditation remained through Canada's embassy in Iran, a country which was still ruled at that time by the Shah, the King of kings.⁸⁸ Following a rupture in Canadian-Iranian relations in early 1980 over Taylor's sheltering of six Americans in his embassy during what became the Iranian hostage crisis, diplomatic responsibility for Oman was transferred to Canada's ambassador in Saudi Arabia.⁸⁹

The Arab Economic Boycott, Canada and the Gulf States

A long-time underlying tension between Canada and the Gulf states concerned the economic boycott imposed by the Arab League in the wake of the first Palestine War. There were three levels associated with this policy: a primary boycott of Israel and Israeli goods/services by the Arab states; a secondary boycott prohibiting third party states or firms from having contact with Israel if they wished to conduct business with them, and a tertiary boycott barring these third parties from dealing with other businesses who had a relationship with Israel or Israeli concerns. Unlike the United States, which enacted strict laws preventing American companies from participating in any level of the boycott against Israel, Ottawa shied away from actual legislation prohibiting compliance with boycott clauses. In adopting this stance, Ottawa was more in line with European and Japanese thinking. However, as it came under increasing domestic pressure and legislative calls from within its own Liberal parliamentary caucus,⁹⁰ the Trudeau

88- Ibid.

89- About the time that Canada's embassy in Tehran was shuttered, the Canadian Embassy in Kuwait City became the mission responsible for immigration matters for much of the Middle East. It processed cases for ten countries: Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. In general, however, immigration to Canada from the Middle East is relatively small. It accounts for only some 5,000-6,000 cases each year and only 10% of these cases are from the six Arab Gulf states. This is a very small percentage of the nearly 250,000 immigrants that come to Canada annually.

90- See Howard Stanislawski (1983) "Ethnic Interest Group Activity in the Canadian Foreign Policy-Making Process: A Case Study of the Arab Boycott," in Janice Gross Stein and David B. Dewitt (eds) *The Middle East at the Crossroads: Regional Forces & External Powers*. Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press: 200-220 and Stanislawski (1984) "Domestic Interest Groups and Canadian and American Policy: The Case of the Arab Boycott," in Robert O. Matthews, Arthur G. Rubinoff

Government announced new guidelines in late 1976 that would withhold support and/or facilities to Canadian firms which signed contracts containing boycott clauses. Such a move, the government believed, "would be an effective deterrent to compliance with a boycott, for...it would impose serious handicaps in terms of contact with foreign officials, market information and Canadian government financing."⁹¹ With all the complexities of conducting business in the Gulf region, companies without access to government services and personnel faced a considerable risk in their commercial dealings. The guidelines further required that Canadian firms would also have to report any boycott compliance to the government. This information would be made available in governmental reports and thus allow for public scrutiny of companies engaged in such business practices. One of the first Canadian companies to tangle the boycott guidelines was Bell Canada International (BCI).

In December 1977, the Saudi Government awarded a sizable contract to an international consortium, which included Bell Canada, to extend and modernize the kingdom's telephone system. A month later, the company signed a separate \$1.1 billion agreement to operate and maintain the Saudi telephone system for a five-year period. The 600 Canadian personnel involved would also train Saudi citizens to eventually run the system. At the time of the contract awarding, Bell Canada termed its task as "the largest-ever managerial undertaking in the history of the telecommunications industry."⁹² Hyperbole aside, in 1977 telephone service in Saudi Arabia's three largest cities was spotty at best, long-distance and international phone calls had to be booked through an operator and sometimes took days to place and the kingdom had but one phone directory. There were only 126,000 working lines in the country.⁹³ In the first five years of the Bell contract, almost a million land lines were put in place, 150 towns and cities received phone

and Janice Gross Stein (eds) *International Conflict and Conflict Management*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall of Canada, Inc.: 137-147.

91- David Leyton-Brown (1977) "External Affairs and Defence," in John Saywell (ed) *Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs* 1976. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 326.

92- Quoted in Richard Hobson and Arthur Clark (1986) "The Long Leap Forward," *Saudi Aramco World* 37(4) <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/198604/> (Consulted 10 December 2004). Reflecting on the work eventually completed by Bell, MEED held "the programme has made possible the most dramatic advances ever recorded in a developing country's telecommunications." ["Canada and the Middle East:" 9.]

93- Robert Pouliot (May 22, 1982) "Bell Hopes to Ring Up New Saudi Agreement," *Financial Post*: 12. Bell Canada International did secure a second five-year contract (worth \$1.7 billion), but lost its bid for a third agreement in late 1988. At that time, Saudi operations made up 75% of Bell's revenue. ["Bell loses Saudi pact to Australian agency" (October 13, 1988) *Globe and Mail*: B7.]

service, direct dialing was initiated along with a uniform seven-digit code, pay phones were introduced and a Telex and mobile system established.⁹⁴

However almost immediately upon signing the agreement in 1978, BCI became embroiled in domestic politics over allegations that the company was adhering to the Arab economic boycott. Later, the firm faced additional accusations that it had agreed to Saudi demands that Jewish employees not be assigned to work in the kingdom. It is important to note that Saudi visa applications required Canadians to indicate their religion. Even before the 1978 agreement, BCI had employees working with ARAMCO, who had to list their religious preferences on applications. Bell President James Thackray also acknowledged signing a document which indicated that BCI did not have a direct business relationship with Israel, nor would it engage in one during the duration of the contract. Thackray mentioned this was simply a statement of fact and not adherence to the boycott, "we are not doing business with Israel and I would doubt very much if there is a market for this type of service in Israel...because they don't need any help from us on how to operate or manage a telephone system."⁹⁵ However, proponents of anti-boycott legislation in Canada highlighted that the government's Export Development Corporation (EDC) had provided both transaction and performance security insurance coverage to BCI. In other words, the EDC had agreed to insure up to 90% of Bell's risk on the contract despite the fact that the company subscribed to boycott clauses. This EDC insurance coverage was the largest provided to any Canadian company at that point.⁹⁶

Trudeau came to the aid of Bell, claiming the company had not contravened Canada's anti-boycott policy. The Prime Minister also asserted that "we have the assurances of the Saudis themselves that they will not exclude people from working in their country because they are Jews."⁹⁷ Twice during 1978 and 1979, the Canadian Human Rights Commission investigated Bell's actions to determine if they were discriminatory against Canadians of Jewish background. With its second report in June 1979, the Commission seemed satisfied with BCI's written assurances that it would not discriminate in hiring employees for assignment in

94- Hobson and Clark.

95- Quoted in Howard Jerry Stanislawski (1981) *Elites, Domestic Interest Groups, and International Interests in The Canadian Foreign Policy Decision-Making Process: The Arab Economic Boycott of Canadians and Canadian Companies Doing Business with Israel*. Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University: 268.

96- Atef Sultan (30 June 1978) "Boycott hardliners may harm growing Middle East trade," *Middle East Economic Digest*: 4.

97- Stanislawski (1981): 272. Some observers, such as Stanislawski, maintain this was a "totally inaccurate statement." [271]

Saudi Arabia.⁹⁸ Other firms were caught up in this debate as well. For example, Air Canada, which had a \$2 million maintenance service contract with Saudi Arabian Airlines, acknowledged the agreement contained clauses forbidding involvement by Israeli citizens or companies.⁹⁹ As this issue continued through 1979, it quickly became part of the political discourse surrounding that year's federal election campaign. When Conservative Party leader Joe Clark defeated Trudeau for the premiership, the Arab boycott was soon coupled with Clark's ill-advised promises during the campaign to move Canada's embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The Embassy Affair: Reaction from the Gulf

At his first press conference as prime minister on 5 June 1979, Clark reiterated his campaign pledge to relocate Canada's embassy to Jerusalem.¹⁰⁰ Numerous theories suggest that Clark moved forward on this issue for a number of reasons: 1) in order to send a message to the External Affairs bureaucracy that after 16 years in Liberal hands, there was a new leader in charge; 2) in a genuine belief that by rewarding Israel with this move, Canada could advance the Camp David Peace Process; and 3) that it was one-half of a change in regards to Middle East policy – the second part, an elevation of the Palestinian issue and perhaps even recognition of the PLO, was never put forward because of the firestorm of protests.¹⁰¹

Whether he fully realized the ramifications of this policy shift or not, Clark's actions would have implicitly recognized Israel's claim to sovereignty over the entire city. Canada's position since 1967 was to regard East Jerusalem as an occupied territory. Only about a dozen countries housed their embassies in Jerusalem in 1979; for Canada to shift its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem would be viewed by many as an endorsement of Israeli claims. When Clark made the original pledge in April prior to an appearance before the Canada-Israel

98- Ibid: 276-277.

99- Howard Stanislawski (1989) "Canadian Corporations and Their Middle East Interests," in David Taras and David H. Goldberg (eds) *The Domestic Battleground: Canada and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press: 78-79.

100- For good accounts of this period in Canadian foreign policy see George Takach (1989) "Clark and the Jerusalem Embassy Affair: Initiative and Constraint in Canadian Foreign Policy," in David Taras and David H. Goldberg (eds) *The Domestic Battleground: Canada and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press: 144-166 and Norrin M. Ripsman and Jean-Marc F. Blanchard (2002) "Lightning Rods Rather Than Light Switches: Arab Economic Sanctions Against Canada in 1979," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 35(1): 151-174.

101- Licklider: 119-120.

Committee, most observers assumed that it was said as part of a close election campaign. Now that Clark was pushing forward on his proposal as Prime Minister, negative reaction was swift at home and abroad. He faced tremendous resistance from within his own government. Most Cabinet members opposed his plan, including External Affairs Minister, Flora MacDonald, but they did not express these opinions publicly. Yet, dissenting views soon found their way into the Canadian media. For example, in a front page article in *The Toronto Star*, anonymous government sources in the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce claimed that Canada would lose over \$1 billion worth of business, some 56,000 jobs and 250,000 barrels of oil per day if Clark's policy was enacted.¹⁰²

This rather dire assessment was born out as Iraq immediately threatened to cut off oil supplies if the embassy was moved. In Ottawa, the Arab Diplomatic Corp met to coordinate their governments' responses. It should be recalled that Saudi Arabia was the only Arab Gulf state to have resident diplomats in the capital at this time.¹⁰³ The spokesman for the group told the *Toronto Star* that "what is needed now is pressure from our governments to stop this silly action before it happens."¹⁰⁴ To smooth things over, MacDonald met with the ambassadors on June 8. They assured her that there would be no reprisals as long as Canada's embassy remained in Tel Aviv.¹⁰⁵ She met with them again a week later after statements by Employment and Immigration Minister, Ron Atkey, made matters worse. Atkey was well known to the ambassadors as one of the authors of Ontario's provincial anti-boycott legislation. He was now known for his 'provocative statements' equating the stands taken by the ambassadors to that of a dog. Atkey publicly dismissed their views as "externally-imposed blackmail" and noted "the Arabs' bark is worse than their bite."¹⁰⁶ If they wanted Canadian products, he asserted, they would buy them. Following the outcry over Atkey's words, Clark took the unprecedented step of receiving the ambassadors as well. In a statement released after the meeting, which attempted to strike a conciliatory position, the Prime Minister said he had:

102- Quoted in Stanislawski, (1989): 78.

103- The other Arab ambassadors were from Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Somalia and Sudan. Egypt also had a resident ambassador in Ottawa, but he was not in contact with his counterparts because of Cairo's isolation in the Arab world following the Camp David Accords.

104- Quoted in Stanislawski, (1989): 78.

105- David Leyton-Brown (1981) "External Affairs and Defence," in R.B. Byers (ed) *Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs 1979*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 230.

106- *Canadian News Facts* (1979) "Stanfield to study embassy move," 13(12): 2156.

very useful discussions...about the whole spectrum of Canada's relationship with the Arab world and my desire to develop it further in all fields—political, economic, technological and cultural—to our mutual and continuing benefit.¹⁰⁷

As the crisis unfolded, Canadian businesses became involved in efforts to reverse Clark's decision. On June 7, Bell's President Jean de Grandpré flew to Ottawa to meet with the Arab ambassadors; representatives from the company also met with officials in the kingdom as well. Bell maintained that the proposed embassy move threatened its lucrative contracts in Saudi Arabia and a bid that it was then making on a major telecommunications contract in the UAE. Officials at Bell, like others in the Canadian business community, were already in an uproar over Ontario's 1978 anti-boycott legislation even before the embassy crisis erupted. A significant number of corporations were headquartered in Ontario, Canada's largest province, and the legislation was now applicable to them. Concrete links between this legislation and punitive measures were highlighted in the *Globe and Mail* reports indicating that the Saudi embassy had restricted issuing visas for Canadians because of the Ontario government's measures. An embassy spokesman hinted that Canadian contracts in the kingdom were also in jeopardy.¹⁰⁸

Many corporate leaders feared that months or years of preparation work needed for landing Gulf contracts would evaporate if the embassy move further exacerbated the situation. As a consequence, the Canadian business community -- a natural ally of the conservative Clark government -- mounted an unprecedented lobbying campaign; logging hundreds of calls to various government ministries, conducting press interviews and holding meetings with high-level officials including Clark himself. These activities marked the first real foray of Canadian businesses as an organized interest group seeking to influence the direction of foreign policy. Furthermore, Howard Stanislawski contends "Alliances, both tacit and explicit, were formed between Canadian business interests and Arab governments and their representatives, so that statements from one bolstered the credibility of statements from the other."¹⁰⁹

On June 18, the director of the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) in Abu Dhabi announced "that the Fund had decided to boycott all Canadian banks and financial

107- Ibid. The ambassadors also met with Opposition Leader Trudeau at this time as well.

108- Leyton-Brown (1981): 236 and Stanislawski (1989): 77.

109- Stanislawski (1983): 215.

institutions and told all its affiliates to withdraw their capital from Canada."¹¹⁰ While it is not certain how much money AMF members had in Canada -- reports suggest as much as \$10 million to as little as zero¹¹¹ -- the real concern was whether Kuwait and Saudi Arabia would follow the Fund's suggestions and/or join in other comprehensive Arab League sanctions.¹¹² If these countries pursued such policies, "then Canada would suffer serious economic damage indeed."¹¹³ As George Takach perceptively explains:

Canada's economic relationship with the Arab world...was based upon a largely inelastic demand for petroleum and investment capital and a desire to acquire a larger share of the lucrative Arab market. The Arabs could have sold to other buyers the oil they exported to Canada and could have invested their petro-wealth outside Canada. Similarly, given the highly competitive nature of the Middle East domestic market for goods and services of the type provided by Canada, the Arabs could obtain elsewhere whatever Canada sold to them without great inconvenience. While Canada considered its economic ties with the Arab world very important, the inverse was not true. As one trade official perceived the situation at the time, "the Arabs could cut us off tomorrow both in terms of imports and exports and not so much as feel a tickle in the nose."¹¹⁴

With this stated, it is important to note that Canadian exports to the Gulf states increased tenfold between 1974 and 1978 to \$323 million. Almost 75% of these goods were destined to Saudi Arabia, whereas Kuwait and the UAE together accounted for another 24% (see table 1). While this commercial activity was still less than 1% of total Canadian exports, the Gulf region represented one of the fastest-growing markets for Canadian wares and foodstuffs. As for imports from the six countries in 1978, Canada purchased a hefty \$750 million in petroleum from Saudi Arabia. Imported products from the other five states were negligible (see table 3). Petroleum prices were already rising due to the Iranian Revolution and there were fears of a second oil shock because of diminishing supplies. It was against this background that strains in Canada's relations with the Arab oil-producing states took on a new economic urgency.

110- Stanislawski (1989): 79.

111- Stanislawski asserts the AMF had zero funds in Canada at that time. [Ibid.] Takach agrees (155) Ripsman and Blanchard offer the range between zero and \$10 million. [160].

112- "Arabs hint at full boycott" (June 22, 1979) *Winnipeg Free Press*: 4.

113- Takach: 155

114- Ibid: 155-156.

Almost from the start of the embassy crisis in early June 1979, Clark and his advisers sought desperately for a way out of the mess with some measure of cover that could protect the new government. Largely at MacDonald's urging, the Prime Minister appointed his Conservative Party predecessor, Robert Stanfield, to review Canada's Middle East policy, including the proposed embassy move. It seems clear now that Clark had already decided to reverse policy even before appointing Stanfield, but he wanted the time provided by the mission – Stanfield's findings were not expected until late 1980 – to give his government some breathing space.¹¹⁵ Stanfield, who enjoyed widespread support in Canada as an elder statesman, embarked on his fact-finding mission by visiting the Middle East (including Saudi Arabia), Europe and a number of provinces back home. In Canada alone, he consulted with scores of individuals or groups that had some connection to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Stanfield caught Clark somewhat by surprise on October 28 when he issued preliminary observations recommending against the embassy move. The Prime Minister announced support of Stanfield's recommendations the next day. In reflecting on the policy shift later in his career, Clark claimed he had "not had a chance to be briefed on all the nuances' associated with the embassy's relocation."¹¹⁶

As Stanfield made his rounds in the summer of 1979, the Canadian embassy in Jeddah was particularly busy trying to outline the folly of Clark's policy to their superiors at External Affairs - so much so that one of Clark's senior advisers viewed the cables as so alarmist "that led one to believe that half of Canada's gross national product was about to go down the drain."¹¹⁷ There are indications that Clark's stand did indeed have an impact on some aspects of the Canadian-Saudi economic relationship;¹¹⁸ however, the ambassador in Jeddah was credited by many with preventing an even larger economic backlash against Canada by explaining the intricacies of his country's domestic politics to the Saudis. Riyadh in turn argued Canada's case in Arab circles. According to the *Financial Post*:

Says a top Arab League spokesman, "Had it not been for the intervention of Saudi Arabia, backed by Sudan and Tunisia, the

115- Ripsman and Blanchard: 166.

116- Quoted in Margaret Royal (1988) "External Affairs and Defence," in R.B. Byers (ed) *Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs* 1985. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 185.

117- Takach: 160.

118- See for example John Honderich (October 16, 1979) "PM's stand on embassy 'cost \$4.5 m in trade'," *Toronto Star*: A1. One of the contracts noted in this article was a \$350,000 contract with Saudi Arabia to send medical students to Canada.

League would certainly have yielded to pressure from Iraq and Syria last summer to stage an immediate boycott against Canada."¹¹⁹

With the immediate embassy crisis over by October, the Stanfield Report also tackled the other issue of concern to the Gulf states – anti-boycott legislation. The report specifically asserted that anti-boycott legislation "would seriously affect economic, financial and commercial relations with Canada." In explaining this verdict, it continued:

A number of Arab governments have asserted emphatically that they would regard legislation against the boycott by Canada as a specifically 'anti -Arab' and 'pro-Israeli' political initiative directed against their basic interests and their right to use economic sanctions against a country with which they are in a state of war.¹²⁰

By the time Stanfield submitted his formal findings in February 1980, the Clark Government had fallen. With Trudeau again at the helm, the Liberals were eager to move beyond these issues. The Jerusalem matter and anti-boycott legislation would not be raised again during Trudeau's remaining four years as premier. Interestingly, the Liberal Prime Minister did carry through with at least one of the report's recommendations. Stanfield stressed that Arab businessmen and governmental officials "like to meet and know the people they are dealing with."¹²¹ Furthermore, he stated, "of basic importance...is the recognition that in Arab countries generally the role of government in the economy is more extensive than in Canada."¹²² An expansion of Canadian exports would be greatly helped by an increase in the number of Canadian governmental officials in the Gulf who could offer introductions between businessmen and local trading partners. As such, government-to-government contacts were important. Stanfield emphasized, "We need frequent visits by ministers and officials of our government and a greater exchange of well prepared trade missions."¹²³ In November 1980, Trudeau would become the first sitting Canadian prime minister to visit the Arabian Peninsula.

119- Robert Pouliot (April 19, 1980) "Arabs once again are willing to buy from Canada." *Financial Post*: P1.

120- *Final Report of the Special Representative of the Government of Canada Respecting the Middle East and North Africa [Stanfield Report]* reprinted in Tareq Y. Ismael (ed) (1985) *Canada and the Arab World*. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press: 198.

121- Ibid: 205.

122- Ibid.

123- Ibid.

Trudeau in Saudi Arabia

While he was in the kingdom, the Prime Minister's principal host was Oil Minister Sheikh Yamani, who Trudeau had met on previous occasions in Canada and Europe. Indeed, it was a visit by Yamani to Ottawa in March 1980 to confer with his counterpart, Energy Minister Marc Lalonde, which signaled that Canadian-Saudi relations were back on track following the embassy fiasco. By 1980, the kingdom had surpassed Venezuela as Canada's largest single supplier of foreign oil. In Saudi Arabia itself, Trudeau hoped to address trade issues (including the large trade deficit Canada had with the kingdom, which was nearly half a billion dollars); hold negotiations over Saudi participation in the International Monetary Fund as well as discuss a role for Riyadh as part of preparations for the 1981 Cancun North-South dialogue summit. North-South issues were a particularly important aspect of Trudeau's vision of global social justice; he envisioned the summit dealing with an integrated agenda of raw materials, energy, trade, development and finance. He personally traveled to a dozen of the key countries which he believed would play an important role in the North-South dialogue - Saudi Arabia was one of these states. However, Trudeau was pointedly told by his hosts that trade issues were on the agenda but not the north-south dialogue,¹²⁴ which Riyadh equated with other's expectations of large Saudi financial contributions. The Prime Minister remarked at the time, "I don't expect instant success, everybody and his brother is coming here and asking for money."¹²⁵ Trudeau met with the top Saudi leadership, including the King, Crown Prince and Foreign Minister, but it was a trip to the oasis of Madain Saleh which captured the adventurous Prime Minister's imagination. Joined by other Canadian officials and his six-year old son Sacha, Trudeau was entertained in a magnificent tent near the Nabataean cliff tombs.

During the visit, Yamani surprised Trudeau with a Saudi proposal to sell Petro-Canada up to 100,000 barrels of oil a day. Canada never followed through on the offer because at that time it did not need the petroleum and some ministers expressed concern that political conditions, such as recognition of the PLO, might be tied to the proposal.¹²⁶ While in Saudi Arabia, Trudeau met with the growing Canadian expatriate community based there. By 1980, over 4,000 Canadians were living in the Kingdom and almost one-third of these expatriates were Bell employees or their family members; it is useful to mention that there were less

124- Dewitt and Kirton, "Canada-Middle East Relations," 193.

125- Warren Gerard (December 1, 1980) "Some Enchanted Evenings," *Maclean's*: 34.

126- Ibid.

than 50 Canadians working in Saudi Arabia in 1976.¹²⁷ Trudeau made one more trip to the Gulf as Prime Minister; in December 1983, he paid brief visits to the leaders of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates as part of his famous world peace tour.¹²⁸ While increased trade between the states and Canada was on the agenda,¹²⁹ war and peace issues ranging from the escalating and dangerous nuclear arms race between the superpowers to the Iran-Iraq War were the main issues of concern for Trudeau during this global journey.

Canada and the Gulf: Enhanced Bilateralism

Trudeau's 1980 visit to Saudi Arabia corresponded with a renewed effort within his administration to elevate bilateralism as a central tenet of Canadian foreign policy. Ottawa's relations with Riyadh figured prominently in this strategy which was announced in January 1981. Reflecting later on this policy, External Affairs Minister Mark MacGuigan wrote in his memoirs:

I announced a new Canadian policy of bilateralism, which expressed a more self-interested, more nationally assertive foreign policy, in response to the changes in the world the previous decade, particularly the rise in importance of petroleum-producing countries. I stated that Canada would henceforth be guided by a new and more hard-nosed realism. It was not enough for us to be merely the world's leading internationalist. We would concentrate our resources to achieve the necessary political relationships with a limited number of key countries.¹³⁰

MacGuigan's concept of bilateralism was a move beyond the mere establishment and maintenance of a network of two-way ties, which was the expressed policy of Trudeau governments stretching back to early 1976 with MacEachen's Gulf visit. As MacGuigan explained about the second incarnation of the policy, "bilateralism is not a policy of just having bilateral relations: it is a policy of having certain

127- See Bill Fox (November 17, 1980) "Canadian Unity Lives in Arabia, PM Says" *Toronto Star*: A1.

128- For more on Trudeau's 1983-1984 peace initiatives see J.L. Granatstein and Robert Bothwell (1990) *Pirouette: Pierre Trudeau and Canadian Foreign Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 363-376.

129- "Trudeau hopes to boost trade during gulf tour" (December 2, 1983) *Winnipeg Free Press*.

130- Mark MacGuigan (2002) *An Inside Look at External Affairs during the Trudeau Years*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press: 27.

kinds of bilateral relations. It is a policy of concentration in our bilateral relations."¹³¹

Prior to announcing this new approach, MacGuigan provided the cabinet with a list of countries which were identified as being of the "highest priority" in terms of bilateral ties. Of the three dozen states mentioned by name, Saudi Arabia was the only Gulf state included and, along with Algeria, the only Arab country on the list. "Generally speaking," the External Minister said, "these countries of concentration represent our trading interests."¹³² The kingdom was viewed as the market with the "greatest potential" for Canada.¹³³ Bilateralism's commercial thrust was also seen in the reorganization of the Canadian bureaucracy; the Minister for International Trade was moved under DEA, which would now have added responsibility for trade policy and export promotion.

During this time period, Canadian consulting firms and service-related contracts were on the rise. To illustrate this point, in 1982 *The Canadian Business Review* published an article entitled "Canada's Natural Advantage in Saudi Arabia." Authored by D.I. Campbell, a Commercial Minister-Counselor at the Jeddah embassy, it listed numerous Canadian engineering, architectural and management consultants active in the kingdom at that time. Among the projects with Canadian ties¹³⁴:

- SNC's \$1 billion rural electrification project in Qasseem
- Hydro Quebec's contract with Saudi Consolidated Electric in Abha
- Cansult's municipal work throughout the kingdom
- Watts, Griffis, McQuat acting as the consulting geologist to the Mineral Resources Section of the Saudi Petroleum Ministry
- Architects designing a new university in Jeddah

131- Ibid. See also Janice Gross Stein (1984) "An Experiment in Bilateralism: Canadian Policy in the Middle East," *Middle East Focus* 6(5): 6-11+.

132- MacGuigan: 27.

133- Stein (1984): 9.

134- D. I. Campbell (1982) "Canada's Natural Advantage in Saudi Arabia," *The Canadian Business Review* 9(3): 28.

- Peat, Marwick of Vancouver as administrative consults to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- A Riyadh hospital staffed fully by Canadian doctors and nurses

Campbell's list was by no means exhaustive for the kingdom or for the larger region itself. One of the encouraging links between Canada and the Gulf states in the early 1980s was in the area of higher education and professional training. For instance, in 1982 the Ontario Educational Services Corporation (OESC) signed a teacher training and curriculum development contract with Bahrain and another with Saudi Arabia for civil aviation training. Also that same year, the University of Toronto entered into a multi-faceted five-year agreement with the Saudi Government. Under its terms, engineering and applied sciences undergraduate and graduate students from King Saud University would enroll at the University of Toronto, while Canadian faculty would work with their counterparts at King Saud to develop the university's graduate school of engineering and its research facilities. At the time, Riyadh was also in talks with Ontario's Guelph University and McGill and Concordia Universities in Montréal over a wide array of educational exchange programs.¹³⁵ The link between educational exchanges and future trade was not lost on Canadian officials or businessmen. Corporate Canada often noted that those in the Gulf region who were educated in the United States or United Kingdom tended to think of those countries first for business deals before turning to Canadian firms. It was a point underscored in 1984, when the Minister of International Trade would tell a Senate panel that "these [educational] relationships will be important in consolidating and expanding our markets in the long term."¹³⁶

Despite these successes, the full potential of commercial relations with the region - and in some ways the larger policy of enhanced bilateralism itself - remained fundamentally unrealized at the end of Trudeau's tenure as Prime Minister in 1984. It is true that exports to the Gulf had increased dramatically since the establishment of diplomatic ties in the 1973/1974 period, rising from a mere \$18 million to \$475 million by 1984 (see tables 1 and 4). However given the large volume of Canada's global commerce, overall trade with the region was still only a very small fraction of the country's international trade. Writing in 1984,

135- John Cruickshank (March 10, 1982) "U of T deal with Saudi Arabia trades students and research," *Globe and Mail*: 1.

136- Quoted in Government of Canada, The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (1985) *Report on Canada's Relations with the Countries of the Middle East and North Africa*. Ottawa: Minister of Supplies and Services Canada: 94.

Janice Gross Stein noted that “with a few outstanding exceptions like Bell [Canadian companies] have not been prepared to pay the sometimes significant costs of doing business in an unfamiliar environment.”¹³⁷ Trudeau arrived at a similar assessment in his memoir:

after years in office, I eventually came to the conclusion that Canadian businesspeople have it easy with the United States – where they already know the customers, the techniques, the language, and the geography – that they are a little lazier and less inclined towards initiatives in Asia or Africa... You see the Germans or the Americans or the French in the most faraway corners, but my successive ministers of international trade used to tell me that you have to kick Canadians in the pants to get them to go into a new market. And so our trade expanded, but it did not diversify.¹³⁸

As the Liberals prepared to turn over power to a Conservative Government headed by Brian Mulroney after nearly 21 years in office, they left the new administration and Canada with full diplomatic relations with all six Arabian Gulf states. In a move begun under Trudeau but not fully completed until Mulroney became Prime Minister, Canada opened an embassy in the UAE. While it would still be headed by a non-resident ambassador based in Kuwait City, a Chargé d’Affaires and a small staff would be housed in the Abu Dhabi mission. “Our main objective,” said Chargé Henry Guy, “is to facilitate development of trade to the Gulf area.”¹³⁹ In reporting on the new embassy, the *Financial Post* concluded that the UAE was among the wealthiest countries in the world and had to import virtually all its needs; as a consequence “trading nations” like Canada “take notice.”¹⁴⁰

Mulroney at the Helm

When Brian Mulroney became Prime Minister in September 1984, he appointed a familiar face, his Tory predecessor Joe Clark, as Secretary of State for External Affairs. Given Clark’s brief tenure as premier and his ill-fated attempt to move Canada’s embassy to Jerusalem, there were some initial concerns in the Gulf about the foreign policy orientation of the new administration. As some Canadian

137- Stein (1984): 11.

138- Trudeau (1993): 206.

139- Jean Danard (October 27, 1984) “New Embassy highlights trade push in Emirates,” *Financial Post*.

140- Ibid.

analysts maintained, “the government began its tenure in 1984 with a strongly pro-Israel bias that brought a sudden halt to the trend of the later Trudeau years and a sharp return, at least in rhetoric, to the pro-Israel sympathies” of the late 1950s.¹⁴¹ However, diplomats posted in the Gulf reported no real shifts in Canadian policy toward the region after the transition to the Mulroney government. The main thrust of Canadian foreign policy was to continue shoring up its regional bilateral ties with a particular emphasis on the area of trade. More importantly, the Mulroney government would maintain Trudeau’s strategy of making relations with Saudi Arabia the centerpiece of its policy in the region.

In an era of falling oil prices and diminishing Gulf budgets, this track would pose a challenge to Canadian policymakers, as evidenced in Canada’s relations with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. In early 1985, Ottawa was one of the first countries to complete construction of an embassy in the new diplomatic quarter in the capital city of Riyadh.¹⁴² By shifting the core of its operations from Jeddah some 1,100 kilometers away to the Saudi governmental center, Canada hoped to deepen political ties with the kingdom. In the past, diplomats saw the great distance between Jeddah and Riyadh and the lack of proximity to important Saudi decision-makers as an impediment to the relationship. Ottawa appointed an Honorary Consul from a leading Jeddah commercial family to watch over its interests in that city. He would continue to interact with the Canada-Arab Business Council which was formed a year earlier by Canadian private sector representatives working in the kingdom. About the same time as the embassy move, Canada decided to unilaterally waive visa requirements for Saudi citizens traveling to the country, although this change was not reciprocated by Riyadh. Ottawa’s reasoning was that its embassy was not turning down Saudi applicants anyway, so keeping visa requirements in place was a waste of valuable embassy time. In waiving the requirements, Canada hoped to attract more Saudi visitors, especially those whose original destination was the United States and who now would have an easier time adding Canada to an American travel itinerary.

Concerning political ties at this time, a promising relationship which had developed between Riyadh and the Canadian International Development Agency

141- John Kirton and Peyton Lyon (1989) “Perceptions of the Middle East in the Department of External Affairs and Mulroney’s Policy 1984-1988,” in David Taras and David H. Goldberg (eds) *The Domestic Battleground: Canada and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press: 197.

142- For details on the Canadian compound see Patricia Lush (14 November 1983) “Canada’s new Saudi embassy meets strict Arab privacy rule,” *Globe and Mail*.

(CIDA),¹⁴³ the main foreign aid arm of the Canadian government, had a minor setback in 1985. The cooperation between CIDA and the Saudis over co-financing of Asian development projects became caught up in the larger Arab-Israeli conflict. A sizable irrigation project in Sri Lanka which was based on a \$50 million investment from both Canada and Saudi Arabia (as well as \$90 million in funding from the World Bank) was put on hold after Riyadh learned that Sri Lanka had allowed an Israeli interest section to be established in the US Embassy in Colombo and that Israeli military intelligence was training Sri Lankan forces.¹⁴⁴ This, however, was just one of the three dozen projects CIDA had in operation, in cooperation with Arab aid agencies. Working with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, these projects would be priced at \$856 million in 1985 alone.¹⁴⁵ At times there were economic side-benefits to this aid as well. For example, a Senate Standing Committee report examining Ottawa's relations with the Arab world remarked that "such trilateral assistance projects may even stimulate increased exports of Canadian products to the cooperating country."¹⁴⁶ In the end, however, it would be the economic ties which were paramount in the Ottawa-Riyadh relationship. Reflecting back on this period, Dwight Fulford, who served as Canada's ambassador to Saudi Arabia from September 1982 through August 1985, characterized the connectedness between his country and the kingdom as overall "good but unimportant" except in areas of trade.¹⁴⁷

The trade issue itself with Saudi Arabia was in a state of flux in the mid-1980s as the petroleum markets experienced a time of turmoil. Canadian exports to the kingdom were primarily in the areas of agricultural products, particularly wheat and barley. Saudi Arabia was Canada's second largest barley market after the Soviet Union and its fourth largest grain customer overall. Ottawa also sold high technology items such as semi-conductors and electronic components; soft wood lumber and cars/trucks to the kingdom. While Saudi Arabia remained Canada's largest market in the Gulf, exports had declined by almost 25% between 1981 and 1984. The total for 1984 was just under \$362 million (see table 4); this only

143- CIDA also worked closely with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development to co-finance projects in Tunisia and Egypt [*MEED Special Report on Canada*: 6].

144- Margaret Royal (1988) "External Affairs and Defence," in R.B. Byers (ed) *Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs* 1985. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 186.

145- Government of Canada, The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (1985) *Report on Canada's Relations with the Countries of the Middle East and North Africa*. Ottawa: Minister of Supplies and Services Canada: 107.

146- Ibid.: 108. As an example, the report cited one joint development venture with the Kuwait Fund that led to the sale of \$14 million in Canadian locomotives to Zimbabwe.

147- Interview with Ambassador Dwight Fulford, December 2004.

represented about 1% of the \$33 billion in products Saudi Arabia imported in 1984.¹⁴⁸ Even though Canada was running a huge trade surplus with Saudi Arabia - and for that matter the other five Gulf states as well - the declining price of oil meant loss of revenues for the Gulf states and a corresponding decrease in imports. Conversely, oil imports from Saudi Arabia ceased completely in 1984 as Canada diversified its foreign petroleum imports and increased domestic production. In 1980, Canada had purchased over \$2 billion in oil from the kingdom.

The dramatic fall in international oil prices in early 1986 would have a domestic impact on Canada as well. The petroleum-rich province of Alberta saw its revenues halved in the course of two months. At that point Alberta, which was pumping 1.4 million barrels a day, accounted for 2-3% of the world's oil production. The province would have ranked fourth in production terms if it were a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).¹⁴⁹ Most of Alberta's crude oil was destined for either the domestic or US markets. Alberta's premier, Donald Getty, gained headlines in March after a phone call with Saudi Oil Minister Yamani. During the conversation, Getty apparently offered to cut Alberta's oil output to help OPEC stabilize prices. When External Affairs Minister Clark learned of the phone call, he angrily reminded Getty that Ottawa "speaks for Canada on international questions."¹⁵⁰ Three weeks later, this matter was raised directly with Yamani during Clark's visit to Saudi Arabia, which was part of a previously planned trip to the Middle East.¹⁵¹ The Oil Minister denied asking Getty to reduce Alberta's production.¹⁵² But Yamani did attempt to interest Clark in a production-sharing agreement between non-OPEC oil-producing countries such as Canada, the UK and the US and the cartel in order to "restore order" to the international market;¹⁵³ Canada indicated disinterest.

Despite disagreement over oil issues, Clark's trip to Saudi Arabia seemed to alter Canada's relationship with the kingdom in a number of ways. In Riyadh, Clark told Foreign Minister Prince Saud that his government supported plans by General Motors Canada to sell several hundred light armored vehicles (LAV) to the Saudi Army and National Guard. The \$250 million deal would be the first sale

148- Government of Canada, The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (1985): 96.

149- Stephen Handelman (9 April 1986) "Oil crisis looms over glut," *Toronto Star*: A1.

150- Quoted in Richard Cleroux (21 March 1986) "Ottawa sets oil policy, Clark says of Getty offer to OPEC," *Globe and Mail*: A5. While it is true that Ottawa is responsible for international sales and market price, the production of oil is a provincial matter in Canada's complex federal system.

151- Clark's ten-day trip also included stops in Jordan, Egypt and Israel.

152- Handelman: A1.

153- Ibid.

of Canadian military armaments to the kingdom.¹⁵⁴ This support was in marked contrast to Clark's opposition earlier in 1986 to a proposal by a German corporation's Nova Scotian subsidiary to manufacture heavy battle tanks and armored personnel carriers for Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.¹⁵⁵ The cabinet ultimately denied export permits for these armaments. In explaining the change in Canada's position, an External Affairs spokesman said, "There is a growing realization that Saudi Arabia is a stable, moderate power in the region that should be supported, including help for its defenses."¹⁵⁶ The LAV sale probably also reflected Ottawa's growing concerns over Saudi vulnerability in the expanding Iran-Iraq War at that time. On the economic front, Riyadh and Ottawa agreed to restart their joint economic committee (JEC), which had lapsed after the 1980 round of meetings. From Ottawa's perspective, it was hoped that the JEC mechanisms might open some other areas of the Saudi economy to Canadian imports. By 1987 the worsening oil bust had reduced its exports to the kingdom to \$212 million, one of the lowest levels since the mid-1970s. Perhaps most importantly of all, in terms of signs that the relationship was at a new level, Foreign Minister Saud made an official trip to Canada in October 1987, becoming the highest-ranking Saudi official ever to visit the country. In advance of the Foreign Minister's arrival, two dozen senior Saudi businessmen and governmental officials toured various commercial concerns in Ontario, Quebec and Alberta. In at least one measure of successful linkages, a working team was established with some Ontario auto parts firms.¹⁵⁷ During Prince Saud's visit, the two countries signed an Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement which established 'most favored nation' status connecting the two. Clark hailed the accord as a "new era" in the relationship, while the Prince intoned that "hopefully this will be a step in removing all trade barriers between the countries."¹⁵⁸ In a later interview, the Foreign Minister expanded on these ideas:

Both of us have experienced the fickleness of the marketplace: We had a trading relationship of multi-billions of dollars, but that has declined considerably because of international situations and internal economic situations in our country. And we thought that because of the similarity of our experiences, because of the complementarity of

154- Patrick Martin (19 June 1986) "Ottawa's view of Saudis shifting gears," *Globe and Mail*: A13.

155- Ibid.

156- Quoted in Martin (1986): A13.

157- "Saudi visit expected to open business for Canadian firms," (October 1, 1987) *Toronto Star*: D5.

158- Patrick Martin (October 5, 1987) "Canada and Saudi Arabia sign bilateral trade pact," *Globe and Mail*: A1

our situations, a relationship based on investments and partnerships would be a good thing. With investments here and there, the markets of the Middle East can be open to Canadian manufacturing, and also the markets of North America can be open to Saudi Arabia.¹⁵⁹

As Canada struggled to maintain and even enhance its bonds with Saudi Arabia despite falling oil prices and a decline in Saudi imports, the opposite trend was occurring in its relationship with the UAE. The oil bust would have a damaging impact on the nascent diplomatic ties Ottawa had established with the Emirates. In late 1986 – less than two years after Canada had opened it – Clark announced the closure of the Canadian embassy in Abu Dhabi. This closure was part of a larger External Affairs cost-saving measure which also shuttered six other embassies and consular offices around the world. Commercial and other issues would now be handled through the Canadian embassy in Kuwait, which continued to also have responsibility for Canadian interests in Bahrain, Qatar and Oman. The practical impact of the Abu Dhabi closure was that UAE citizens would have to travel to Kuwait City for Canadian visas and Canadians would need a local sponsor before coming to the Emirates. Reaction to this move was decidedly negative; in reflecting on the lull in trade ties which prompted the closure, the Director of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce said, "We like to think when you have a friend, it's not only for the good times, it's also for the bad times."¹⁶⁰ A senior vice-president from the engineering firm Cansult, which has had business links with the Emirates since 1966, went one step further:

Canadians aren't really that good at selling things in other parts of the world. That's where we're not well organized and where an embassy comes in handy – especially for somebody new coming in. Now they'll have a struggle...From an economic point of view it was

159- "Saudis and Canadians are bridging the gulf," (October 10, 1987) *Globe and Mail*: D3. It is interesting to note that the Jerusalem Embassy affair resurfaced in this interview with Prince Saud, thus demonstrating once again how the events of 1979/1980 had soured relations between the two countries during that period. The Foreign Minister said, 'Indeed it was an issue that upset many, but we have fortunately reached the stage where both [Clark] and I can joke about that incident as something past, and something that is a transitory element in relations between the countries rather than an obstacle.' [Ibid.]

160- Robert Lee (September 22, 1987) "The closure of the Canadian Embassy in the UAE," *CanWest News*: 1.

unjustified and from the political side it makes a political statement that Canada is no longer interested in the Emirates.¹⁶¹

The closing of the UAE embassy was caught up in one of the periodic budget reduction frenzies at External Affairs. Ottawa felt it could manage its ties from two embassies in the region: Riyadh and Kuwait City. In some ways, the 'enhanced bilateralism' policy outlined by the Trudeau Government and embraced by Mulroney had also run its course by this point. Larger Gulf issues would soon emerge as important for Canadian foreign policy and serve as a watershed for Canada's relations with the Gulf states. Ottawa's involvement in UN peacekeeping efforts after the Iran-Iraq War ceasefire would not only revitalize this traditional aspect of Canadian foreign policy which had diminished over the previous decade, but through UN involvement Ottawa would create deeper ties with the Gulf region on both the multilateral and bilateral levels.

Table 1

Canadian Exports to Gulf States 1968-1978 (000 Canadian Dollars)

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Bahrain	221	87	85	160	447	789	1139	1383	1476	1595	2491
Kuwait	2571	1734	1124	1206	2750	1848	4943	16127	22564	37299	41489
Qatar	133	158	82	195	234	436	3523	1543	4161	3351	2671
Saudi Arabia	4168	3776	7254	5368	7120	13350	17972	40602	1E+05	109964	237620
United Arab Emirates	746	4208	324	1679	787	1919	4896	4954	12057	20429	38835

Source: Statistics Canada, Candum, *External Trade*.

Adapted from: Atif Kubursi (1985) 'Canada's Economic Relations with the Arab World: Patterns and Prospects', in Tareq Y. Ismael (ed) *Canada and the Arab World*. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press: 47.

161- Ibid. In 1987 Cansult was designing and constructing a 380x65 meter aircraft hanger and reception hall for the President of the UAE. Built to accommodate six aircraft, the Cansult Vice-President called it 'gi-normous.' [Ibid].

Table 2

Exports as a percent of:

A) Total Exports to Arab Countries - B) Total Canadian Exports

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Bahrain	.59	.27	.08	.13	.48	.72	.35	.38	.35	.25	.34
	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Kuwait	6.85	5.30	1.01	.99	2.95	1.70	1.54	4.46	5.29	5.95	5.62
	.02	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.02	.05	.06	.08	.08
Qatar	.35	.48	.07	.16	.25	.40	1.10	.43	.98	.53	.36
	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.01	.00	.01	.01	.01
Saudi Arabia	11.11	11.54	6.49	4.39	7.63	12.27	5.60	11.22	25.94	17.53	32.19
	.03	.03	.04	.03	.04	.05	.06	.12	.29	.25	.45
United Arab Emirates	1.99	12.86	.29	1.37	.84	1.76	1.53	1.37	2.83	3.26	5.26
	.01	.03	.00	.01	.00	.01	.02	.01	.03	.05	.07

Source: Statistics Canada, Candum, *External Trade*.

Adapted from: Atif Kubursi (1985) 'Canada's Economic Relations with the Arab World: Patterns and Prospects', in Tareq Y. Ismael (ed) *Canada and the Arab World*. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press: 50.

Table 3

Canadian Imports from Gulf States 1968- 1978 (000 Canadian Dollars)

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Bahrain	5	0	0	593	5263	749	264	8	1	1	0
Kuwait	3865	6071	7039	16	2592	3693	64729	110522	22439	20064	46
Qatar	0	0	0	4	640	0	0	6411	1	0	4
Saudi Arabia	36187	26751	24074	27215	54634	60381	318906	745963	481607	712283	749411
United Arab Emirates	4626	14923	7163	4879	27063	50256	86386	140590	61982	14192	109

Source: Statistics Canada, Candum, *External Trade*.

Adapted from: Atif Kubursi (1985) 'Canada's Economic Relations with the Arab World: Patterns and Prospects', in Tareq Y. Ismael (ed) *Canada and the Arab World*. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press: 52.

Table 4**Canadian Imports from Gulf States 1979- 1984 (000 Canadian Dollars)**

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Bahrain	3,997	5,629	5,334	5,576	4,697	5,211
Kuwait	66,371	71,072	82,983	96,506	64,652	66,479
Oman	1,035	3,233	12,329	22,077	8,549	6,853
Qatar	6,007	8,742	13,522	18,582	9,951	11,013
Saudi Arabia	251,060	310,509	455,496	442,374	364,772	361,873
United Arab Emirates	29,183	44,367	49,104	47,441	31,001	23,596

Adapted from: Government of Canada, The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (1985) Report on *Canada's Relations with the Countries of the Middle East and North Africa*. Ottawa: Minister of Supplies and Services Canada: 131.

Table 5**Canadian Imports from Gulf States 1979- 1984 (000 Canadian Dollars)**

	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Bahrain	0	10	179	1,113	523	274
Kuwait	106,962	167,555	164,598	769	18,283	355
Oman	0	n/a	0	0	34	133
Qatar	34	104	2	37	67	308
Saudi Arabia	1,241,973	2,445,804	2,272,750	731,331	94,044	1,429
United Arab Emirates	905	62,163	63,760	34,266	2,432	6,554

Adapted from: Government of Canada, The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs (1985) Report on *Canada's Relations with the Countries of the Middle East and North Africa*. Ottawa: Minister of Supplies and Services Canada: 132.

Chapter Three**Canada and the Gulf: The Ties that Bind**

By the mid-1980s, changing global dynamics, particularly the easing of Cold War tensions between the United States and USSR, would resurrect Canada's traditional role as 'helpful fixer' within the United Nations and place Ottawa squarely in the middle of a number of major Gulf events. Canada would become involved in monitoring the ceasefire between Iran and Iraq and later play a significant role in the international coalition efforts to liberate Kuwait. Ottawa's participation in that conflict itself and the ensuing peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peacemaking efforts which resulted from the war proved to be watershed events for Canada's ties with the Gulf states. No longer a relationship built largely on economics, it now encompassed security and geo-strategic concerns. In the end, Canada's renewed embrace of multilateralism in the Arabian Gulf strengthened its bilateral ties there too.

Canada and the First Gulf War

While the United Nations Security Council was paralyzed by superpower vetoes through much of the Cold War, the emerging cooperation between Washington and Moscow by 1987 allowed the Council to operate in the manner originally suggested by the UN Charter; perhaps for the first time since the organization's inception in 1945. One of the areas assuming new life during this period was UN peacekeeping missions. Historically a major peacekeeping player, Canada would become a new military presence in the Gulf as the Security Council tackled the eight-year bloody conflict between Iran and Iraq.

During the Iran-Iraq War, Britain, France and the United States principally shouldered the military commitments of the Western alliance which grew as the Iran-Iraq conflict lumbered on in the 1980s. The reflagging of Kuwaiti vessels, the escorting of pro-Iraqi shipping and the military encounters with the Iranian

navy not only deepened direct Western involvement but also intensified efforts to bring the conflict to an end. When both belligerents finally accepted the ceasefire outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 598 (1987) during the summer of 1988, the Council created a peacekeeping mission to separate the warring parties, confirm the withdrawal of forces to the internationally recognized boundaries and monitor the 1,400-kilometer ceasefire lines.

Since it had no military connections with the region and played no major role in the mediation efforts to stop the war¹⁶², Canada was a natural choice for a leadership position in the newly-created United Nations Iran-Iraq Observer Group (UNIIMOG); the first Canadian military personnel ever to be stationed in the Gulf. When the UN call came, "Canada's response was prompt and substantial. There appears to have been no conflict over that decision within the government and the move was endorsed by all parties in Parliament and most editorial opinions."¹⁶³ At the beginning of the operation in August, Ottawa contributed a 525-men signals unit which ensured vital communication lines until a civilian-operated system was established at the end of 1988. Following the withdrawal of the signals unit, Canadian military observers served with UNIIMOG until the completion of its mandate. As Sean Maloney comments, "contributing the initial signals capability and thus the backbone of UNIIMOG was a significant move and is therefore indicative of increased Canadian interest in the Persian Gulf region."¹⁶⁴ Likewise Canadians felt justifiably proud when the Nobel Committee in Oslo awarded the 1988 Peace Prize to UN Peacekeeping Operations and those who served in them. UNIIMOG remained in place monitoring the Iran-Iraq border as the next Gulf crisis erupted with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Baghdad's naked aggression prompted a major policy shift in Ottawa and, as a consequence, the Mulroney government would place combat-ready Canadian Forces in a war zone for the first time in forty years.

162- In one notable endeavor, External Affairs Minister Clark raised the issue of the war with his European, Japanese and American counterparts during the June 1987 G-7 summit in Venice. Clark pushed for a Gulf arms embargo. He also embraced renewed UN mediation efforts to arrange a ceasefire between the belligerents. See Margaret Royal (1991) "External Affairs and Defence," in R.B. Byers (ed) *Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs* 1987. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 167.

163- John Kirton and Peyton Lyon (1989) "Perceptions of the Middle East in the Department of External Affairs and Mulroney's Policy 1984-1988," in David Taras and David H. Goldberg (eds) *The Domestic Battleground: Canada and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press: 200.

164- Sean M. Maloney (2002) *War with Iraq: Canada's Strategy in the Persian Gulf, 1990-2002*. Kingston: Centre for International Relations, Queen's University: 5.

Canada and the Second Gulf War

Iraq's attack on Kuwait caught Canada by surprise just as it did the rest of the world. External Affairs Minister Joe Clark termed Baghdad's actions "totally unacceptable aggression" and within a day of the invasion, he froze all Kuwaiti assets held by Canadian financial institutions in order to keep them out of Iraqi hands. Soon thereafter, Canada severed all trade and financial transactions with Baghdad; two-way trade with Iraq was worth \$320 million in 1989.¹⁶⁵ Of particular domestic concern for Ottawa were the approximately 400 Canadian citizens trapped and unable to leave occupied Kuwait. Canada was also apprehensive about the possibility of further Iraqi moves against Saudi Arabia or other Gulf states such as the UAE, which had been repeatedly threatened by Baghdad during the previous months. With the enormity of the crisis clearly understood, Ismael asserts, "the Canadian government immediately engaged in a diplomatic process of bilateral and multilateral consultation designed to shape an international response to the conflict."¹⁶⁶

On the bilateral level, Canada's response to the crisis was heavily influenced by its relationship with the United States. Prime Minister Mulroney and President George H.W. Bush were close friends. The two men spoke frequently by phone and the Prime Minister flew to Washington on August 6 to confer in person with his American counterpart. As John Kirton notes, because Mulroney was one of Bush's "closest confidants throughout the war, Canadian advice was given to the President, and carefully weighed by him, before rather than after the critical US decisions were taken."¹⁶⁷ Additionally, Canada's NATO ties and its fortuitous membership on the UN Security Council would buttress the country's importance to the US as the Bush Administration mustered support in multilateral forums to address the Iraqi aggression.

At the UN, Canada co-sponsored resolutions condemning the invasion and imposing comprehensive economic sanctions on Iraq. On August 10, Clark attended an emergency NATO foreign ministers meeting where a decision was made to intervene in the crisis through a show of force. Immediately, Mulroney

165- "Ottawa weighing response to Iraq," (August 3, 1990) *Toronto Star*: B2. Canada exported about \$20 million in goods to Kuwait and received less than \$1 million in return in 1989.

166- Tareq Y. Ismael (1994) *Canada and the Middle East: The Foreign Policy of a Client State*. Calgary: American-Arab Institute for Strategic Studies/Detselig Enterprises Ltd.: 84.

167- John Kirton (1992) "Liberating Kuwait: Canada and the Persian Gulf War, 1990-91," in Don Munton and John Kirton (eds) *Canadian Foreign Policy: Selected Cases*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada, Inc.: 383.

announced that Canada would send two destroyers and a supply ship with almost 1,000 crew members to the Gulf to join the multinational force gathering in the region. When these vessels arrived in September, they were assigned the patrol area between the Strait of Hormuz to just south of Bahrain. It is also significant that in the early weeks of the crisis, as the Mulroney government was committing Canadian forces to the Gulf, Parliament was not in session. Thus as Ismael observes, "the opposition parties had little effect or input into Canada's decision to deploy military forces in the region."¹⁶⁸

Mulroney's decision to dispatch the three ships came as Iraq declared its annexation of the Emirate and ordered all foreign embassies to shutter their buildings in Kuwait City within two weeks and relocate their diplomatic personnel to Baghdad. When Ottawa rebuffed this request, Iraqi troops surrounded the embassy and cut off food and supplies from entering the premises in a bid to force compliance. A month later, in a flagrant violation of international law, the Iraqi military would enter the embassy compound and remove the Consul, Jean Gauthier, one of the highest ranking Canadian diplomats on site.¹⁶⁹ The Ambassador, Lawrence Dickenson, was out of Kuwait at the time of the invasion. He tried a number of times in early August to enter Kuwait from Saudi Arabia, but he was turned back by the Iraqis. Dickenson, who was also ambassador to Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the UAE, would spend the duration of the crisis shuttling between his various accreditations as he assisted in managing the Canadian response.¹⁷⁰ Ultimately, on October 29, Ottawa closed its Kuwait City embassy and moved its skeleton staff of five to Baghdad. At this time, only the British, French and American embassies remained opened in defiance of Saddam Hussein's orders to close their missions. Hundreds of Canadians were held as virtual human shields in Kuwait and Iraq throughout the remainder of 1990. Some non-diplomatic personnel were permitted to leave in small groups as Saddam Hussein used them and other foreigners as bargaining chips. Then abruptly and unexpectedly in mid-December, Iraq allowed all Western captives to leave. The last of the Canadians who wished to leave returned home by the end of year.¹⁷¹

168- Ismael (1994): 85.

169- Kirton (1992): 388.

170- See Stephen Ward (October 31, 1990) "On the move; Canada's ambassador to Kuwait works out of his briefcase," *The Ottawa Citizen*: A8.

171- The newsweekly Maclean's provided extensive coverage of Canadians held in Kuwait and Iraq. See "An urgent mission," (November 19, 1990): 18; "Terror in Iraq," (December 3, 1990): 16-18 and "Home for the holidays: Hussein starts to release his 'guests'" (December 17, 1990): 32-33.

Following the initial violation of the Canadian embassy in Kuwait City in mid-September, Mulroney committed an 18-plane squadron of CF-18 fighter aircrafts to the international force. He also added 450 military personnel to the contingent already in the area and placed the three Canadian ships on combat status. These ships were now concentrated in a patrol area near Bahrain and would operate out of a center there that would become the Canadian headquarters. The additional military personnel announced by Mulroney would join others at a new air base in Qatar. They would turn an old camp for foreign workers into the headquarters for Canadian air operations in the Gulf and dub it 'Canada Dry.'¹⁷² In making these announcements, "the Prime Minister spoke of Canada's obligation to international solidarity, requests from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and the United Nations economic embargoes against Iraq."¹⁷³ This was a significant move for Canada, as John Kirton explains:

While many other middle and minor powers had and would commit naval vessels (sic) to the Gulf, the dispatch of fighter aircraft placed Canada among the far more select ranks of the five extra-regional major powers (the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Italy) who contributed in what was to prove to be the militarily decisive way.¹⁷⁴

At this point, the Mulroney government was shifting toward the position that diplomatic efforts and economic sanctions alone were not going to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait. In a last-ditch diplomatic effort to shape the international response, Clark embarked on a mission to the UK, Czechoslovakia, USSR, Jordan, Israel, Turkey and Egypt. When this mission was deemed unsuccessful, Canada fell in line with the major powers at the UN. Within the context of the UN Charter and its collective security clause, Canada would co-sponsor Security Council Resolution 678, which established a January 1991 deadline for Iraq's withdrawal and authorized the use of force ("all necessary means") if Iraq did not comply by that deadline. Clark himself attended the historic UN session, marking only the second time since 1945 that the body invoked its collective security clause. In voting for the measure, Ottawa hoped that the collective threat of force would make the actual use of force unnecessary. In November, with parliament now in session, opposition parties--including the Liberals and their new leader Jean

172- For an interesting account, see Rob Hepburn (October 19, 1990) "Canada Dry base is a bustling mini-town," *The Toronto Star*: A1.

173- Ismael (1994): 85.

174- Kirton (1992): 387.

Chrétien--opposed Mulroney's moves. Their preferred course of action was to give economic sanctions more time to work.

Mulroney convened a special session of parliament in mid-January as the UN-imposed deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait was fast approaching and the threat of force outlined in UNSCR 678 seemed certain to be invoked. By this point, Canada had closed its embassy in Baghdad and evacuated its last diplomats. During the parliamentary debates which followed, government ministers tied current policy to traditional Canadian values, previous international behavior and support for multilateral order. Iraqi atrocities in Kuwait were abundantly highlighted. As Ismael recounts:

Mulroney outlined the terrible wrongs committed by Iraqi forces within Kuwait by referring to the Amnesty International report...the torture and executions of non-combatants, including young children, the arbitrary arrest and detention of thousands of people and the eviction of many more thousands from Kuwait were described by the Prime Minister as a ruthless effort by the Iraqi government to erase the identity of the Kuwaiti nation.¹⁷⁵

Additionally both Clark and Mulroney invoked the name of Liberal icon Lester Pearson to support their policies. Clark reminded parliament of Pearson's defense of Ethiopia following Italy's 1935 invasion:

For collective security to have a real meaning for peace, all members must be prepared and willing to join in precisely the kind of action, economic and military, which is necessary to prevent or defeat aggression. Otherwise an aggressor has nothing to fear from the international community but pinpricks.¹⁷⁶

Mulroney equated Iraq's aggression not only with Italy's invasion of Ethiopia, but also Japan's brutalization of Manchuria and Nazi Germany's attack on Czechoslovakia. He then compared Kuwait with Canada. The Prime Minister asserted:

as a country with a comparatively small population, with two superpowers as neighbors, and limited military capacity, Canada's most basic interest lies in the preservation of international law and

175- Ismael (1994): 88.

176- Quoted in Ismael (1994): 87.

order. The United Nations and its Charter are essential to the rule of law and to the respect of the integrity of small countries by larger neighbors.¹⁷⁷

In the end, while still preferring non-military sanctions and diplomacy, Chrétien reluctantly announced Liberal support for the government. His party would endorse Mulroney's position out of respect for the Canadian forces already militarily engaged in the Gulf and out of a desire to show a unified Canadian stance to the international community. The motion passed 217-47, with only the more leftist New Democratic Party registering opposition to Canada's adherence to UNSCR 678.

During the buildup to war, Canadian ships intercepted 1,875 vessels in the Gulf (and boarded 19 of them), which was almost 25% of all interceptions conducted by the multinational flotilla.¹⁷⁸ In addition to the early military commitments outlined above, Canada also sent a communications and security unit, a KC-135 aerial refueller tanker, six more CF-18's and a mobile field hospital (staffed by over 500 medical and support personnel) by mid-January 1991.¹⁷⁹ The 100-bed field hospital was originally set up in eastern Saudi Arabia as an advance facility to treat the wounded in the anticipated ground offensive. Eventually it would be protected by the First Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment.¹⁸⁰ When war did commence on January 16, 1991, Canadian planes provided air cover for coalition ships on patrol, were involved in 'sweep and escort' missions for US bombers over Kuwait and Iraq, as well as refueling operations for allied planes. Additionally, AWACS aircraft associated with the US-Canadian North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) were stationed in Saudi Arabia.¹⁸¹ Some of these aircraft had Canadian crew. When the ground war commenced on February 24, Canada shifted its more defensive position of airborne escorts to military strikes against Iraqi ground targets in Kuwait and Iraq itself. The CF-18s were assigned a role which entailed "such ground targets as tanks, armored fighting vehicles, artillery storage depots, and supply lines."¹⁸² All told, Canadian aircraft flew more than 2,700 sorties during

177- Quoted in Andrew Richter (1998) "External Affairs and Defence," in David Leyton-Brown (ed.) *Canadian Annual Review of Politics and Public Affairs* 1991. Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 115-116.

178- Richter: 120 and Ismael (1994): 95.

179- Kirton (1992): 382, 391.

180- Andrew Phillips (February 18, 1991) "Doctors in the Desert; Canada's Medics Report for Duty," *Maclean's*: 32.

181- Maloney: 9.

182- Richter: 118.

the war, including 56 offensive bombing attacks against Iraqi targets in the last week of the conflict.¹⁸³ For the first time since the Korean War (the only other UN-authorized collective security operation),¹⁸⁴ Canadian military personnel engaged in actual combat operations. Unlike Korea however, Ottawa did not commit ground forces to the liberation of Kuwait. Nevertheless, the 3,700 Canadian forces who participated in the eight-month operation in the Gulf played an important role in the coalition's efforts and demonstrated a new Canadian commitment to the region. The financial cost of the war to Ottawa was estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$690 million.¹⁸⁵

Why did Canada become militarily involved in the Gulf, and perhaps more importantly, why would that military involvement continue well past Iraq's defeat in the 1990-1991 conflict? One argument is that Canada, a dedicated multilateralist, responded to United Nations' requests to help carry out the will of that body in support of international legal principles. A second explanation is that Canada's participation was tied to its relationship with the United States. Ottawa was either giving support to Washington's policy in order to leverage this capital later over bilateral US-Canadian issues such as free trade or conversely, as commentators such as Ismael argue, Canada had simply become a US client state without freedom of action and in the end was merely doing Washington's bidding.¹⁸⁶ Yet as Sean Maloney correctly explains, "neither position permits Canada to have national interests nor a choice in the projection of its military power." With much of its GDP based on trade, Canada needs a stable world in which to survive and prosper. Maloney therefore concludes:

In the Persian Gulf, the designs of a totalitarian state (Iraq) threatened the stability of an extremely volatile region which provides 65 percent of the world's petroleum. Canada's closest trading partners in a globalized economic system, the United States, Europe and Japan are dependent on a secure flow of petroleum for their industrial needs... if it were shut off, there would be an economic domino effect throughout the European and Japanese

183- Ibid: 120.

184- During the Korean War (1950-1953), Canada contributed 21,000 troops and suffered 300 combat deaths. [Kirton (1992): 382.]

185- Richter: 120.

186- Ismael titled his 1994 book: *Canada and the Middle East: The Foreign Policy of a Client State* and argues that it was the 1990-1991 Gulf War which "truly demonstrated its client state status to Washington." [111].

economies which would affect the North American economic system.¹⁸⁷

As such Canada's economic self-interests were as much a determining factor in its decision to go to war as were its ties to the United Nations and the United States.

By April 1991, with Iraq's formal surrender and the end of the war, "Canada turned to the challenge of translating its ...military contribution into an equally energetic and effective effort to build a durable postwar order in the Gulf."¹⁸⁸ These efforts were evidenced in a number of ways: 1) through Canadian contributions to a peacekeeping mission along the Iraq-Kuwait border; 2) its participation in UN efforts to dismantle Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs; 3) Ottawa's continuing military presence in the Gulf to enforce sanctions imposed on Iraq and 4) Canada's embrace of the multilateral Middle East peace process which also encompassed the Gulf states.

Canada and UNIKOM

In April 1991, the Security Council established the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) to monitor a demilitarized zone which projected ten kilometers into Iraqi territory (including Umm Qasr, its only outlet to the sea) and five kilometers into Kuwait. While UNIKOM was ostensibly in place to observe any military movement on either side, its clear intent was to contain Iraq. Despite early objections over "belligerents" playing a role in a peacekeeping operation, Canada did participate after it successfully argued that the war was a "UN enforcement action" and thus not inconsistent with the principles associated with UN peacekeeping.¹⁸⁹ Canada's contributions included a 300-man combat engineer regiment and smaller force of engineer units which de-mined territory of unexploded ordnances; these units served until 1994. While UNIKOM was originally set up as an unarmed observation mission, in February 1993 the Security Council expanded its mandate and increased its strength with the deployment of an infantry battalion, a change that was implemented after a series of Iraqi incidents along the newly demarcated border with Kuwait. UNIKOM was authorized to use physical force if necessary to prevent any violations of the demilitarized zone. Canadian military observers remained deployed throughout

187- Ibid: 44-46.

188- Kirton (1992): 392.

189- Maloney: 14.

the mission's life, which ended only in October 2003. A Department of National Defense memorandum explained that Canada's long-term commitment to UNIKOM was partly due to the "need to maintain a presence in the Middle East/Gulf region."¹⁹⁰

Canada and UNSCOM

Canada was also a member of the twenty-country UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) created to locate and destroy Iraq's WMDs as well as its ballistic missiles possessing a range greater than 150 kilometers. Under the terms of UNSCOM outlined in UNSCR 687, the commission was empowered to inspect, dispose, monitor and verify. For these tasks, Ottawa provided a dozen intelligence, medical, technical and military specialists in the nearly decade-long search for Iraq's biological and chemical weapons programs. UNSCOM also worked in tandem with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to identify and destroy Iraq's nuclear weapons capabilities. It was not easy work, as UNSCOM encountered a suspicious and increasingly hostile Iraqi regime. As one observer notes the inspectors "were subjected to varying forms of harassment short of lethal military force" and the inspections process itself "became an elaborate political theatre staged by the Hussein regime."¹⁹¹ Yet despite this 'cat and mouse' game, the IAEA, UNSCOM and its successor organization, the UN Monitoring Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) had a great deal of acknowledged accomplishments in locating and destroying Iraqi WMDs.¹⁹² In hindsight, following the US-lead coalition attack on Iraq in 2003 and the coalition's ultimately futile two-year effort to locate the evasive WMDs, UN efforts in the 1990s appear to have fully carried out the charge entrusted to them by UNSCR 687.

Canada's Military Role beyond UNIKOM and UNSCOM

Ottawa's participation in both UNIKOM and UNSCOM is easily understood in the context of the prevailing Canadian support for multilateral UN missions. Still the Canadian military presence which remained in the Gulf well beyond Iraq's 1991 surrender seems a departure from previous peacekeeping operations and Ottawa's long-time military thinking. On the one hand, the Canadian forces can be viewed as a continuation of the wartime coalition now reconfigured to pressure

190- Quoted in Maloney: 17.

191- Ibid: 20.

192- A litany of these accomplishments can be found in Maloney: 20-26.

Baghdad to comply with the still unmet terms of UN resolutions and to contain possible future Iraqi aggressions. As such, Canada was upholding much-valued international legal principles and norms; other motivations, however, also played a role. Outside of its NORAD and NATO obligations and the Korean operation, actual Canadian military forces were not regularly stationed abroad in the post World War II period. To do so in the Gulf in the 1990s signified a new Canadian relationship with that region of the world. Its military operated in two ways after the actual war ended: Canada would temporarily increase its personnel and equipment to counter Baghdad's periodic aggressive movements; enhanced Canadian involvement could be seen in late 1994 when Iraq moved significant forces toward the Kuwaiti border and again in early 1998 following Iraq's threatened expulsion of UNSCOM. During the latter crisis, Ottawa contributed additional Hercules refueling aircrafts and a frigate which would escort tankers to Kuwait and ultimately would be positioned adjacent to Iraq's oil terminals.¹⁹³ Once these episodes passed, Canadian troop strength decreased.

A second way in which Canada's military operated after 1991 was through a continual air presence related to the 'no fly zones' imposed over northern and southern Iraq. NORAD's deployment of AWACS aircraft to the Gulf meant that Canadian forces attached to these AWACS served in monitoring the 'no fly zones,' which were designed to protect the Iraqi population in those areas and also to degrade Iraq's air might that could be used against its Gulf neighbors. While publicly, the US, UK, France and Turkey were the only countries usually listed as providing military support for the zones, Canadian personnel were attached to the command at any given time during the dozen years the zones were in place.¹⁹⁴

Even more significant than participation in these NORAD operations however was the on-going Canadian role in the 14-country Multilateral Interdiction Force (MIF). Canada was a major player in the multinational naval flotilla in 1990-1991. After the conflict, it maintained these activities through the MIF, whose purpose was the "monitoring of shipping and boarding vessels of interest to ensure that contraband was not being delivered to Iraq."¹⁹⁵ In the post-war period, Canada originally operated in the Red Sea, patrolling the coastline along Saudi Arabia and monitoring maritime traffic destined for Jordan. Since the Jordanian

193- Maloney: 30. In writing about the frigate, Maloney notes "In a high-speed transit to the Persian Gulf, *Toronto* stopped off at Crete to take on nuclear, biological and chemical defence equipment as well as Anthrax vaccines for the crew." [30].

194- Ibid: 32-33.

195- Ibid: 34.

port of Aqaba functioned as Iraq's main access to the sea (goods were trucked overland between Iraq and Aqaba), Canadian destroyers were tasked with intercepting banned items before they reached the port. However, most of Canada's MIF participation occurred in the Gulf, where working in concert with the other states (including Kuwaiti coast guard vessels), they carried out sanctions interdiction responsibilities, such as the capture of illegally-exported Iraqi petroleum products. MIF patrols were also important in ensuring the safety of Gulf shipping as well as making certain that the strategic Straits of Hormuz remained open. Canadian ships were frequently deployed for a six-month tour of duty. Over time the Canadian frigates were integrated into the US carrier battle group stationed in the Gulf. As the Canadian Minister of Defence explained, "our contribution is important in promoting our national interests...It will further strengthen our Navy's relationship with the US Navy and reaffirm our commitment to peace and stability in this region."¹⁹⁶ Frequent port calls to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere also had the economic side benefit of "showcasing" new types of Canadian vessels and also acted as a means to "promote Canadian industry and technology" to governments in the region.¹⁹⁷

As the United States and other coalition partners increased the diplomatic and military pressure on Iraq in late 2002 and early 2003, Canada made it clear that it would not support military action against Baghdad without a new UN resolution authorizing force. This stance was popular among the Canadian public and within the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien. However, despite disavowing support of US war moves, in February 2003, the Prime Minister dispatched the destroyer HMCS Iroquois to the Arabian Gulf five months ahead of schedule.¹⁹⁸ The Iroquois would serve as the MIF's communication command center. Canadian Commodore Roger Girouard was named commander of the international flotilla assembled there, which would also include three Canadian frigates. Its tasks were to patrol the Arabian and Oman Gulfs, escort ships and board suspect vessels.

196- Quoted in Maloney: 36.

197- Ibid: 35. Maloney further elucidates, "Despite the failed bid to sell Canadian Patrol Frigates to Saudi Arabia, attempts were made...to sell maritime patrol aircraft equipment, communications equipment developed by Computing Devices of Canada, light armored vehicles made by GM Diesel Division, and other high technology goods produced by CAE to a number of GCC states. These moves specifically played off Canadian participation in regional presence and stabilization operations." [46]

198- Kevin Cox (25 February 2001) "Canadian crew to ship out to perilous waters," *Globe and Mail*: A1.

Seizing Diplomatic Opportunities Created by the Gulf War: Canada and the Multilateral Middle East Peace Process¹⁹⁹

In late 1991, the United States announced a three-tier negotiation structure designed to foster a comprehensive Middle East peace. The first two phases – an international conference ultimately held in Madrid and then subsequent bilateral negotiations between the direct belligerents in the Israeli-Arab conflict – did not directly involve the Gulf. However, the third phase, which would tackle region-wide issues, brought the Gulf states and Canada into the peace process.

These multilateral talks were open to all of the Middle Eastern and North African states, including Israel, interested extra regional actors such as Canada and international organizations. The talks centered around five areas integral to enhancing the well-being of all Middle East peoples: refugees; economic development and cooperation; the environment; drinkable water and arms control. In addition to diplomats and politicians, participants included academics, area specialists, scientists and practitioners who could shed technical light on these issues. It was hoped that by including these professionals, bridges would be built across the Israeli-Arab divide, which might shatter old political taboos. Moreover, since the five areas selected were trans-state issues that crossed sovereign boundaries, workable solutions to the problems were only possible through regional efforts and cooperation. In the end, such technical cooperation would create functional levels of peace, which would have a 'bottom-up approach' reaching ultimately to governmental leaders and hopefully transforming political thinking at that level.

In the early phases, Saudi Arabia represented the GCC states at these talks. Later – especially after the 1993 Oslo Agreement between Israel and the Palestinians – most of the other Gulf states became very involved in the process as well. Ultimately, even Bahrain, Qatar and Oman would host rounds of the multilateral talks, which included sizable Israeli delegations. Perhaps even more importantly in terms of changing regional attitudes, on the eve of an economic summit in October 1994, the GCC announced it would no longer participate in the secondary and tertiary economic boycott of Israel. These regional policy

199- For the best and most comprehensive account of the multilateral talks see Dalia Dassa Kaye (2001) *Beyond the Handshake: Multilateral Cooperation in the Arab-Israeli Peace Process, 1991-1996*. New York: Columbia University Press. See also Robert J. Bookmiller and Kirsten Nakjavani Bookmiller (1996) "Behind the Headlines: The Multilateral Middle East Talks," *Current History* 95(397): 33-37 and Joel Peters (1996) *Pathways to Peace: The Multilateral Arab-Israeli Peace Talks*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs.

departures on the Palestinian issue, contacts with Israel and the boycott cutback would remove many of the political roadblocks underlying Canadian-Gulf ties and help launch a new level of bilateral relations between Ottawa and these countries.

From the inception of the multilateral talks, Canada played a prominent role in the process and would chair the Refugee Working Group. Ottawa also assumed a leading position in the working groups on environment, water and arms control, in which it worked closely with Manama, Muscat and Doha. Water-related issues in particular became a paramount interest for Canada; for example, in the arms control framework, Canada's major project dealt with maritime-related security such as preventing incidents at sea and search and rescue operations in the Red Sea and Arabian Gulf. These two maritime areas were "considered 'easier' than other technical military confidence-building because they present clear benefits to the regional parties committed to such measures."²⁰⁰ As Canadian diplomat Peter Jones, who worked on these maritime concerns, explains:

Search and Rescue is first and foremost a humanitarian activity and no state could object to steps designed to enhance the ability of the region to respond to humanitarian tragedies. With respect to [Incidents at Sea] no state wants to see an unplanned incident escalate into a tense situation...Both require naval officers to work cooperatively toward the establishment and realization of agreed operational goals.²⁰¹

In these endeavors, Ottawa was in regular contact with senior Gulf naval officers. It hosted a number of gatherings in Nova Scotia and Ontario between 1993 and 1995. A 1994 session in Halifax included naval demonstrations simulating international maritime confrontations and procedures utilized to diffuse the incidents. In the end, Canada would draft a Prevention of Incidents at Sea (INCSEA) document. Along with a Search and Rescue agreement, the INCSEA accord would be approved by the parties in late 1994.²⁰² These maritime agreements represented just two of the many tangible results which emerged from the multilateral negotiations.

Even after the multilateral talks fizzled out in late 1996, due in large part to the breakdown in negotiations on the Israeli-Palestinian front, Canada remained in

200- Kaye: 94.

201- Quoted in Kaye: 95.

202- Kaye: 95-97.

consultation with the Gulf states on many of these same issues. The multilateral framework had opened a new level of political discourse between Canada and the region. Canadian diplomats posted to the Gulf reported that Ottawa's continuing work on Palestinian refugee issues was raised often in conversations with Saudi officials. As Ambassador Ted Hobson notes about this time period:

All parties were willing to let informal work continue quietly on refugees. We saw this important in order to keep contacts going for dialogue and because there was a lot of 'brush clearing' work that had to be done and could be without compromising political positions. Our efforts focused mainly on the Saudis, because they were the most important in influencing others, and in the hopes of financial support for on-the-ground projects. They were supportive and encouraging of our efforts for the first couple of years of my stay, but were cooler towards our 'helpful' efforts to keep the flame of the peace process alive as the Israelis pursued a more aggressive settlers' policy.²⁰³

Likewise, Canada encouraged Oman and Qatar's flexibility on ties with Israel as a confidence building measure that would assist future peace negotiations.²⁰⁴

203- Interview with Ambassador Daniel Edward 'Ted' Hobson, January 2005.

204- Ambassador Hobson asserts " We tried to keep in touch with the Omani's on [the Palestinian refugee issue] as well, as they were the most forward in the Gulf in their relations with Israel: they allowed an Israeli trade office in Muscat, and were involved in a water desalinization project with Israel and others under another wing of the multilateral process." [Ibid.]

Chapter Four

Canadian-Gulf Relations Come of Age

By the early 1990s, Canada's current overall Gulf policy was set in place. Through its continued regional involvement in military operations, peacekeeping and the functional peace talks, Ottawa would now have sustained multilateral contacts with the Arabian Gulf states. Yet save for common membership in the UN System and certain international economic organizations, Ottawa would not have other mutual multilateral networks with the Gulf states that it has with other areas of the world.²⁰⁵ While Canada proactively fosters bilateral ties within the limited multilateral opportunities that it has, the paucity of these forums has meant that Ottawa has relied mainly on local contacts in the respective capitals. What follows here is an examination of these bilateral relationships over the past ten years. As with other sections of this study, the bulk of the space is devoted to Canada's ties with Saudi Arabia and then the UAE and Kuwait. While Qatar increasingly became important to Canada as it embraced new international legal principles such as the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines, ties with Bahrain and Oman – while good – remain minimal.

205- By virtue of its geography, colonial history or security ties, Canada belongs to regional organizations encompassing every area of the globe (from the Organization of American States in its own hemisphere to NATO, the G-8 and the OSCE in Europe to La Francophonie, the British Commonwealth and APEC, which link Canada to additional Asian and African countries). The exception to this rule is any such regional organizational linkages with the Arabian Gulf states.

Oman

According to Foreign Affairs Canada, "bilateral relations with Oman are good, but modest."²⁰⁶ Diplomatically, Canada's ambassador to Riyadh is also accredited to Muscat, although Canada has a physical presence in Oman through an Honorary Consul located in the capital city. The Sultanate is represented in Ottawa by its ambassador posted to Washington. "Educational cooperation is one of the most significant elements" in the relationship, asserts Foreign Affairs Canada.²⁰⁷ Of the 300-some Canadians living in Oman, many of them are associated with Sultan Qaboos University or other educational institutions. The Sultan himself was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Ottawa in recognition of the educational contributions made to his country.

In terms of trade, Canadian exports to Oman doubled between 2002 and 2003 to reach a total of almost \$50 million; this number increased to \$60 million in 2004. Canada primarily ships vehicles, machinery and medical equipment to the Sultanate, while the smaller return trade (valued most recently at \$7 million) is in the areas of apparel and aquaculture food products (see tables 6 & 7). For Canadians, Oman is a fast-growing market, although it ranks only 72nd in overall importance.²⁰⁸ The increase in Canadian exports there has been helped by Oman's membership in the World Trade Organization in 2000 and a bilateral double taxation treaty signed in 2004, both of which have created more predictability in the trade relationship. In the service sector, Cansult and other firms continue to operate in the Sultanate. One recent service contract of note was awarded to Canadian Energy Services (CES) in 2001; under its terms, CES operated and maintained the gas transportation facilities of Oman Gas Company, which is the major natural gas transportation company in the Sultanate with 2,000 kilometers of pipelines.²⁰⁹ CES had the additional task of training Omanis to manage the system by the end of the contract. Oman Gas took over operations in January 2005. Lastly, Ottawa hails Oman's pursuit of what it terms a "pragmatic foreign

206- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Oman Bilateral Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/oman_relations-en.asp.

207- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2003) "Canada-Oman Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted 14 July 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/old_oman_relations-en.asp.

208- See International Trade Canada (2005) "Merchandise Trade by Country," URL (consulted 4 May 2005): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/eet/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004-12-en.asp. In 2004, Oman ranked 124th in terms of imports coming into Canada.

209- "Oman Gas Company takes over gas transportation from Canadian firm," (January 2, 2005) *Times of Oman*. URL (consulted January 12, 2005): <http://www.gulfinthemed.com>.

policy."²¹⁰ From Muscat's participation in the Madrid peace process in the 1990s to its more recent diplomatic backing for the international campaign against terrorism in Afghanistan, which included Canadian access to Omani ports, Ottawa appreciates the regional support given to these common multilateral efforts.

Bahrain

In 2003, the Foreign Affairs Canada homepage stated that "Canada's ties with Bahrain are not extensive."²¹¹ By 2004, the wording was changed to "cordial but limited."²¹² As Ambassador Hobson notes about his posting:

On reflection, and even at the time, I recognized that we did not get to Oman and Bahrain as much as we would have liked, but for understandable reasons. Our interests (and potential for commercial gains) were not significant compared with Saudi Arabia, and could not likely be improved upon much without a significant increase in time and resources, which we did not have.²¹³

While the relationship revolves generally around the rather small two-way trade, there have been other important points of contact outside the economic realm. For example, during the 1990-91 Gulf War, Canada took a deep interest in the environmental contamination resulting from massive oil slicks in the Arabian Gulf. Concern centered not only on stopping potential environmental damage but perhaps more importantly to protecting vital desalination plants and industrial facilities located on the coast. Since Canadian Forces were operating out of Bahrain and Qatar, Ottawa focused its prevention and clean-up efforts off the coastlines of these two states. As *Maclean's* indicated, the country took "a leading role in planning and organizing Bahrain's and Qatar's defences against the slicks."²¹⁴ The Canadian Coast Guard and Environment Canada's emergency

210- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Oman Bilateral Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/oman_relations-en.asp.

211- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2003) "Bilateral Relations Canada-Bahrain," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted July 14, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/old_bahrain_relations-en.asp.

212- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Bahrain Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/bahrain_relations-en.asp

213- Interview with Ambassador Hobson, January 2005.

214- Darcy Jenish (March 4, 1991). "War's dark tide," *Maclean's*: 48.

branch helped erect surface booms and rock barriers to protect these sites from the approaching oil spill.²¹⁵

In another major interface with Manama, both Bahrain and Canada found themselves as temporary members on the UN Security Council in 1999. Together, the two states crafted a proposal calling on the UN Secretariat to prepare an assessment on Kuwaiti POWs as well as property and archives stolen by the Iraqis in 1990-1991.²¹⁶ In doing so, the two governments hoped to highlight the plight of those missing Kuwaitis as well as other unresolved humanitarian and economic issues associated with the war. With respect to diplomatic issues, Bahrain agreed to issue five-year multiple entry visas, which will make it more convenient for Canadians conducting business in the kingdom. Ottawa has also closely watched the emerging political liberalization in Bahrain. In 2003, a Canada-Bahrain Parliamentary Friendship Group was established with the goal of exchanging "expertise in the training, administrative and parliamentary areas."²¹⁷ Additionally, the Group agreed to coordinate efforts with their counterparts in multilateral organizations.

Outside of these encounters, the relationship remains largely based on trade. The latest figures show Canada exporting \$24 million in machinery and manufactured goods to Bahrain while receiving some \$6 million Bahraini imports of woven apparel and fabrics in return (see tables 6 & 7). In 2004, Bahrain ranked 97th in terms of Canada's export markets.²¹⁸ On the diplomatic front, Bahrain maintained a Consulate in Montréal for a short period of time, but that mission was closed in 1998. Since then, its ambassador to Washington is also accredited to Ottawa. From the inception of diplomatic ties, Canadian representation has been first through its resident ambassador in Iran, then Kuwait and since 1996 through its embassy in Saudi Arabia. Between 700-800 Canadians reside in Bahrain.

215- Ibid.

216- See "Kuwait Welcomes Bahraini Proposal on War Prisoners," (January 30, 1999) *Kuwait Times*. Found at LexisNexis (consulted August 31, 2004).

217- "Friendship group set up to bolster ties with Canada, Bahrain," (June 9, 2003) *Bahrain Tribune*. Found at LexisNexis (consulted July 30, 2004).

218- See International Trade Canada (2005) "Merchandise Trade by Country," URL (consulted May 4, 2005): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/eet/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004-12-en.asp. In 2004, Bahrain ranked 128th in terms of imports coming into Canada. The Emirate ranked 106th in 2003.

Kuwait

Canada's participation in coalition efforts to liberate Kuwait, as well as its continued military presence in the region produced a definite political boost to its bilateral relationship with the Emirate. A tangible example of this upgrade was Kuwait's 1992 decision to open an embassy in Ottawa and to appoint a resident ambassador in 1993. Kuwaiti officials cited Canada's coalition involvement as a major contributing factor in the timing of this decision.²¹⁹ As its ambassador, Abdulmohsin Al-Duaij, would later concur, "Canada's support for Kuwait in that difficult time was a turning point in our relationship."²²⁰ Prior to this change in 1993, Ottawa was represented in Canada through its US mission in Washington. Canada established its embassy in Kuwait City in 1978.

The diplomatic upgrade in the 1992-1993 period, however, did not produce an immediate or sustained corresponding boost in trade. The value of Canadian exports to Kuwait jumped dramatically in 1991 when Air Canada leased five airplanes to Kuwaiti Airways; by the next year, however, the value of Canadian exports had fallen to prewar levels of about \$20 million. The drop to prewar levels is all the more noticeable because Canada dispatched two high-level trade missions to the Emirate in 1991. One was headlined by External Minister Clark, while the other was led by International Trade Minister John Crosbie. Over time, Canada did fare much better in the service sector which the Foreign Ministry deem 'significant.'²²¹ As Ambassador Christopher Poole recounts, "Canadian oil safety companies extinguished 200 out of 600 Kuwaiti oil fires and Canadian companies have played a substantial role in the refurbishment and restoration of the oil sector."²²² The value of these contracts is not included in trade statistics. Overall, Canadian exports did pick up in the mid-1990s (see tables 6 & 7). In recent years they have averaged in the neighborhood of \$80 million dollars. Canadian exports vary from motor vehicles and machinery to foodstuffs to wood and paper. In 2004, Kuwait ranked 65th in terms of Canada's export markets.²²³

219- Patrick Best (November 10, 1992) "Kuwait names first resident ambassador," *Ottawa Citizen*: A7.

220- Quoted in Charles Enman (February 26, 1998) "Ambassador seeks end to stereotypes," *Ottawa Citizen*: D3.

221- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Kuwait Relations," in *Middle East and North Africa*, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/kuwait_relations-en.asp.

222- Quoted in Nirmala Janssen (April 26, 1994) "Companies hold talks on equity participation; Canada seeks to boost trade ties," *Arab Times*. Found at LexisNexis (consulted February 14, 2005).

223- See International Trade Canada (2005) "Merchandise Trade by Country," URL (consulted May 4, 2005): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/eet/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004-12-en.asp. In 2004,

Since these trade figures do not include services, it is important to note that over the past few years, Canadian architects have designed the headquarters for the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and the Public Institution for Social Security, that an Alberta company provides technical training at the Kuwaiti Oil Company and that Canadian companies that provide health care, information technology and telecommunications services are prevalent in Kuwait. In the education realm alone, the University of British Columbia is heavily involved in the creation of the Kuwait Institute of Business and Technology while provincial primary and secondary educational officials in Ontario and Nova Scotia are working with their Gulf counterparts.

Defense ties, important to both parties, were visible through numerous port calls made by Canadian ships stationed in the Gulf with the MIF as well as through visits by ranking military or defense officials. Additionally, the Canadian Coast Guard College has a presence in the Emirate through a long-term training contract. Kuwait served as a partial staging area for both the international humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) stationed in that country. Because of Canadian involvement in these efforts, some of its military personnel have passed through Kuwait on their way to Afghanistan.²²⁴ Furthermore, the two governments have cooperated in dispatching humanitarian aid to Kabul. For example, in 2002, a Canadian Air Force cargo plane transported books, computers and educational supplies from the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society to school children in Afghanistan.²²⁵ Canadian diplomats posted to Kuwait assert that the Emirate understood Ottawa's stand against the 2003 Iraqi war in the absence of a clear United Nations mandate and accepted that Canada's military engagement in Afghanistan fit into the overall international campaign against terrorism. As Foreign Affairs Canada holds, "There has been a mutually-supportive pattern of political cooperation between Canada and Kuwait, based largely on a commonality of views and interests in bilateral and multilateral fora."²²⁶

Kuwait ranked 183rd in terms of imports coming into Canada. This was a sizable drop from the previous year when Kuwait was the 78th largest supplier of Canadian imports.

224- Confidential interview with a Canadian diplomat posted to Kuwait.

225- "Kuwait sends school supplies donation to Afghan children," (August 22, 2002) *Kuwait Times*. Found at LexisNexis (consulted August 31, 2004).

226- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Kuwait Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/kuwait_relations-en.asp.

In 2005, Kuwait is home to some 3,000 Canadians. There is also an organized Canadian business community in the Emirate expressed via the Canadian Commercial Circle. Yet despite this Canadian presence and Ottawa's multifaceted bilateral relationship with Kuwait City, cooperation on the parliamentary level and the trade relationship between the two countries, diplomats stationed in the Emirate relay disappointment in the lack of high-level political attention paid to Kuwait. They especially note the absence of senior-level visits to the Emirate. In the end, they maintain Kuwait does not rank "very high on the radar back home."²²⁷

Qatar

"Bilateral relations between Canada and Qatar," predicts Foreign Affairs Canada, "are expected to expand significantly in the next few years."²²⁸ Currently, both countries are mutually represented through non-resident ambassadors. Canada's envoy in Kuwait City doubles as Ambassador to Doha, whereas Qatar's Ambassador to the United Nations in New York City is also accredited to Ottawa. The Qatari government has not embraced the diplomatic practice of allowing countries to appoint an Honorary Consul as a local representative, a custom seen elsewhere in the Gulf. Qatar fears that once a Consul is appointed, countries would be less inclined to establish actual embassies in Doha. In recent years, diplomats accredited to Doha have pressed the case for opening a Canadian embassy in that city, arguing that there was as much bilateral activity with Qatar as there was with Kuwait. Diplomats also underscored that Qatari foreign policy is sympathetic to Ottawa's own thinking. While the Foreign Ministry has been receptive, the financial resources necessary to make it a reality have not yet been committed.²²⁹ The 1,300 Canadians living in Qatar and the Canadian Business Association (formed in May 2003) have been supportive of efforts to establish an embassy in Doha.

Given Qatar's impressive and steady economic growth since 2000, Ottawa pegs much of the expansion of bilateral ties to its economic relationship with the Emirate. While trade is "relatively modest at present," Foreign Affairs Canada reported in 2003, it postulated at the time that Qatar's "unprecedented rate of

227- Confidential interview with a Canadian diplomat posted to Kuwait.

228- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Qatar Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/qatar_relations-en.asp.

229- Confidential interview with a Canadian diplomat accredited to Qatar.

growth...will translate into a variety of commercial opportunities."²³⁰ Indeed, the value of Canadian exports jumped from \$37 million in 2003 to \$132 million in 2004 (see tables 6 & 7). Qatar moved from being the 79th largest market for Canadian goods in 2003 to the 54th biggest market a year later.²³¹ Canadian exports to the Emirate are in the categories of machinery, furniture, metal ores, vehicles and aircraft. Qatar sends principally apparel and fertilizers to Canada. In 2004, Qatar sold \$35.8 million in products to Canada, up from \$7.6 million during the previous year. In addition to export of goods, Foreign Affairs Canada contends that 'the value of service exports would add a further 25% to the total of Canadian exports to Qatar.'²³² Among the Canadian consulting engineering firms which have secured a piece of the massive \$55 billion in planned infrastructure projects is Cansult. The firm, which has had a Doha office for years, has undertakings in the \$200 million City Centre commercial expansion and a venture associated with the Qatar Broadcasting Complex project.

H.H. Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Misnad paid an official six-day visit to Canada in May 2000 in which she headed a delegation of Qatari health and education experts who toured hospital and university sites in eastern Canada. One of the tangible results from this visit became evident a year later when Newfoundland's College of the North Atlantic signed a ten-year Memorandum of Understanding with Qatar to establish a campus in Doha. It will be the first Canadian campus in the Arabian Gulf.²³³ Foreign Affairs Canada calls the linkage "the largest international educational project ever undertaken from Canada."²³⁴

In terms of military ties, the American base in Qatar featured Canadian defense personnel as well. Originally, the Canadian Forces were attached to US Central Command in Tampa, Florida, but when Central Command Headquarters

230- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2003) "Trade Relations with Canada," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted July 14, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/old_qatar_relations-en.asp.

231- See International Trade Canada (2005) "Merchandise Trade by Country," URL (consulted May 4, 2005): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/ect/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004-12-en.asp. In 2004, Qatar ranked 89th in terms of imports coming into Canada. It was 120 in 2003.

232- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Trade Relations with Canada," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/qatar_relations-en.asp.

233- "Canada and Qatar sign education MOU" (May 6, 2001) *Kuwait Times*. Found at Lexis-Nexis (consulted August 31, 2004).

234- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Trade Relations with Canada," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/qatar_relations-en.asp.

moved to the As Sayliyah base prior to the 2003 war with Iraq, 25 officers were deployed to Qatar along with the Americans. Despite Canada's objections to launching military action against Iraq without UN approval, Prime Minister Chrétien dismissed any significance associated with the Canadian officers at the As Sayliyah base. "Qatar is the same work we were doing in Tampa. It's just that they've moved the people," remarked the Prime Minister.²³⁵

Perhaps even more important than the economic, educational or military ties the two countries share is their common views on many aspects of foreign policy. As Foreign Affairs Canada maintains, "Qatari diplomacy has been supportive of Canadian foreign policy initiatives."²³⁶ Chief among these Canadian initiatives was the Human Security Agenda advocated by Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy. The foundation of the Agenda is protecting human rights and international humanitarian law. Its focus is on people-centered development and threats to their security rather than the issues related to states' rights and sovereignty. One of the first major accomplishments associated with the Agenda was the 1997 Ottawa Convention to Ban Antipersonnel Landmines, which prohibits the stockpiling, production and/or transfer of these devices. Qatar was the only Gulf country to sign and ratify this new avenue of international law.²³⁷ Qatar was also a participant in other human security issues important to Canada. For example, during H.H. Sheikha Mozah's 2000 Canada visit, she presided over a ceremony which marked joint Qatari-Canadian efforts in regards to Palestinian refugees. As part of its leadership role in the multilateral Refugee Working Group, Canada designed a scholarship program for Palestinian women living in Lebanese refugee camps. Qatar is the main contributor to the fund. Foreign Minister Axworthy attended the 1997 Middle East and North Africa Economic Conference in Doha and Qatar also hosted the 2002 Regional Maritime Safety Colloquium. The latter gathering was funded by the Canadian Coast Guard and the Human Security Program at Foreign Affairs.

235- Quoted in Julian Beltrame (February 24, 2003) "Brilliantly Machiavellian," *Macleans's*, URL (consulted October 17, 2004): <http://www.macleans.ca/>.

236- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Qatar Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/qatar_relations-en.asp.

237- Ambassador Hobson asserts "Regional reaction to our Human Security Agenda was polite – Canada 'doing good' in the international community, and so on. On landmines, the Saudis recognized that there was a problem and expressed admiration for our initiative, but expressed confidence that we would understand, following the Gulf War, that they would not be in a position to sign on, given their on-going security needs along the northern border with Iraq." [Interview with Ambassador Hobson, January 2005.]

United Arab Emirates

Canada signaled its renewed interest in the Gulf region in the early 1990s by expanding ties with the United Arab Emirates. After shuttering its Abu Dhabi embassy due to budget cuts in 1986, Ottawa came to realize the need for a commercial and diplomatic presence in the UAE as Canadian firms were engaging increasingly in more business with the Emirates. In May 1991, Trade Minister Michael Wilson inaugurated a trade office in Dubai. At the time he stated that it was "an independent trade centre which will have the Canadian government's moral and financial support for developing trade and economic relations with the United Arab Emirates as a strategic linkage point between the gulf and the world."²³⁸ The private sector's Canada Arab Business Council operated the center along with a Foreign Service officer posted there. In April 1993, Ottawa upgraded the office to a Consulate and appointed Robert Farrell its first Consul-General and Senior Trade Commissioner; the upgrade in representation was in recognition of the corresponding increase in Canadian exports to the UAE. Additionally, since the Consulate handled visa applications, local businessmen no longer needed to travel to Riyadh in order to visit Canada. Farrell also highlights the growing Canadian expatriate community in Dubai as a factor in establishing an official presence there.²³⁹ The small staff at Canada's Kuwait City embassy could no longer keep up with the demand for consular services emanating from the UAE. Three years later, Canada re-opened an embassy in Abu Dhabi and appointed Stuart McDowall from the Trade Commissioner Service as its first resident ambassador. The Consulate in Dubai would continue to function with a senior trade commissioner at the helm and have primary responsibility for commercial interests in Dubai and the five northern Emirates. With the embassy's launch, the UAE became the only Gulf country to host two simultaneous Canadian diplomatic missions staffed by Canadians (as opposed to Honorary Consuls). In 1999, the UAE opened its own embassy in Ottawa headed by a resident ambassador to complete the diplomatic circle. Foreign Affairs Canada declares, "Canada enjoys excellent relations with the United Arab Emirates, founded upon substantial commercial ties and frequent visits by political and business leaders."²⁴⁰

238- Quoted in "Abu Dhabi trade centre opened," (May 9, 1991) *Toronto Star*: C9.

239- Interview with Robert Farrell, January 2005.

240- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-United Arab Emirates Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/united_arab_emirates_relations-en.asp.

With more than 7,000 Canadians living in the UAE (almost 5,000 of them in Dubai alone), over 100 Canadian companies engaging in various enterprises and active Canadian Business Councils thriving in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the vitality of the Canadian economic relationship with the Emirates is second only to Saudi Arabia in the region. Canadian exports to the UAE totaled almost \$416 million in 2004 (see table 6); this represented an impressive 35% growth in export trade in comparison to 2002. Canadian goods range from cereals and other foodstuffs to machinery, including flight simulators, to wood and paper products. Overall, the UAE is Canada's 29th largest export market.²⁴¹ In 2004, Canada imported \$91 million in goods from the UAE.²⁴² As such, Ottawa enjoys a substantial trade surplus with the Emirates. Notably, the UAE is also a major regional distribution center; therefore, many of these Canadian products are re-exported elsewhere. At least 35 Canadian firms are located in the Jebel Ali Free Zone, a distribution center for such destinations as Iran.²⁴³ These trade figures also do not encompass services, which Foreign Affairs Canada states "are estimated to be almost equal to Canadian merchandise export."²⁴⁴

Canadians have been heavily involved in the health and education sectors in the UAE. Many Canadian doctors and health care professionals are employed in the Emirates and Interhealth Canada Limited, a health management firm, oversees the administration of various sites including a 335-bed hospital in Abu Dhabi. Canadian professors, educators and administrators can be found at local universities and schools, while various different Canadian private and government agencies have provided their expertise through training programs. Inter-governmentally, the Canadian Coast Guard has worked with its counterpart in the UAE, while The Royal Canadian Mounted Police has offered courses in the Emirates. Lastly, as Canada is fond of highlighting, its citizens have designed and engineered many of the country's landmarks from the first bridge, Al Maqta to the first airport, Al Bateen. As then Minister for International Trade, Sergio Marchi reminded his audience at a 1999 Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry gathering:

241- See International Trade Canada (2005) 'Merchandise Trade by Country,' URL (consulted May 4, 2005): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/eet/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004-12-en.asp.

242- Ibid. The UAE is the 73rd largest supplier of products to Canada.

243- 'Dubai, Canada bilateral trade value rises 44 per cent to \$175 million,' (October 16, 2002) *Khaleej Times*. Found at LexisNexis (consulted December 5, 2004).

244- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-United Arab Emirates Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/united_arab_emirates_relations-en.asp.

Canadians are helping to define the modern skyline of your region. The National Bank of Dubai, the Sharjah Science Museum, the Sharjah Library, the Etisalat Towers, both Higher Colleges of Technology in Sharjah and the Dubai Twin Towers – all of these were not only designed by Canadians, but also had Canadian supervision in their engineering and construction.²⁴⁵

Ambassador McDowall confirms that “Canada’s relations were overwhelmingly commercial” with the UAE and that “very few political issues existed” between the two countries.²⁴⁶ “The UAE was not really concerned about Canada’s ‘Human Security’ agenda,” he explains, “but by and large agreed with it anyway.”²⁴⁷ Perhaps due to few political issues dividing the countries, the Emirates played more frequent host to the highest-level Canadian visitors than any of its Gulf counterparts. Since 1998, Governor-Generals, the representative of Canada’s Head of State, have paid three visits to the UAE. Governor General Romeo LeBlanc made a trip in 1998, while Governor General Adrienne Clarkson visited in 2002 and 2004.

Saudi Arabia

Diplomatically speaking, Canada has had the longest physical presence in Saudi Arabia than anywhere else in the Arabian Gulf, having established an embassy in 1974. Similarly, in its economic ties, the kingdom is Ottawa’s largest trading partner in the region. While Saudi Arabia is arguably Canada’s most important relationship in the Gulf, it is also the one most prone to periodic chills over issues ranging from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to Canadians detained in Saudi jails. Foreign Affairs Canada’s own description of the relationship is telling:

Bilateral relations have been generally cordial despite a divergence of views on some issues...while there have been some ministerial level visits to and from Saudi Arabia in the past decade, political

245- “Notes for an address by the Honorable Sergio Marchi, Minister for International Trade to the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry,” (February 25, 1999) Found at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Statement/Speech 1999. URL (consulted November 4, 2004): <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/minpub/>

246- Interview with Ambassador Stuart McDowall, December 2004.

247- Ibid.

dialogue between Canada and Saudi Arabia has been more frequent at the level of officials.²⁴⁸

In the end, Foreign Affairs Canada maintains that “trade and economic interest continue to be at the forefront of our bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia.”²⁴⁹ Canada purchased \$1.23 billion in goods from the kingdom in 2004 and exported \$591 million worth of products in return. Riyadh ships mostly oil to Canada, while Ottawa sends aircraft, barley, forest products, industrial machinery, motor and armored vehicles, telecommunication equipment as well as metal products to the kingdom (see tables 6 & 7). Overall, Saudi Arabia ranks 22nd in terms of Canada’s export markets.²⁵⁰ Of the six Arabian Gulf states, Saudi Arabia is the only one with which Canada has a trade deficit. Ottawa supports Saudi membership in the World Trade Organization, an entity that Foreign Affairs Canada terms “the cornerstone of Canadian trade policy.”²⁵¹ Currently Saudi Arabia is the only Gulf State not part of the global body. Between 1996 and 2002, Canadian diplomat John Weekes chaired the Working Party on Saudi Accession to the WTO and in February 2004, Canada completed its own set of negotiations with Riyadh, which the latter needs for its WTO membership.

As with the case of the other Gulf states, services and educational links are important in understanding the Canadian-Saudi economic relationship. In terms of services, famed Canadian architect Raymond Moriyama designed Saudi Arabia’s national museum, which opened in 1999. Recently his firm - Moriyama & Teshima Planners - and a British engineering company were given responsibility for a \$207 million project to clean up the 120 kilometer Wadi Hanifah which flows into Riyadh.²⁵² They are also tasked with transforming the waterway’s banks into public parks. All told, the project covers 4,500 square kilometers of territory. Canadians are also involved in teaching and training at Saudi hospitals²⁵³ and for the 2004-2005 academic year, over 760 Saudi students are

248- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) “Canada-Saudi Bilateral Relations,” in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/saudi_arabia_relations-en.asp.

249- Ibid.

250- See International Trade Canada (2005) ‘Merchandise Trade by Country,’ URL (consulted May 4, 2005): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cet/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004-12-en.asp. In 2004, Saudi Arabia ranked 28th in terms of imports coming into Canada.

251- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) “World Trade Organization” in Trade Negotiations and Agreements, URL (consulted July 28, 2004): <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/wto-co-en.asp>

252- Sarah Hood (October 11-24, 2004) “Reclamation” *Canadian Business* 77(20): 47.

253- Ambassador Hobson notes, In the late 1990s ‘we did a lot of work in the health care area, especially on the human resource development side, working on two significant projects in the

enrolled in Canadian institutions of higher education; these students often choose to study medicine, engineering and English.²⁵⁴

Consular issues involving the Canadian expatriate community have placed frequent demands on the embassy's time and attention as outlined in previous chapters. While the arrests of Canadians in Saudi Arabia generally merits press mention and perhaps a few days of scrutiny of the Saudi justice system at home, no case has generated as much media and public frenzy as that of William Sampson following his arrest in December 2000. The House of Commons committee exploring Canada's ties with the Islamic world goes one step further stating that "Mr. Sampson's repeated allegations of torture against Saudi authorities have probably received more Canadian media attention in the past several years than any other aspect of Canada's relations with the Arab and Muslim worlds."²⁵⁵ Thus, the Sampson case is also at the center of the tepid relationship which has existed between Riyadh and Ottawa for over four years.

Sampson, who held dual Canadian and British citizenship, worked for the Saudi Industrial Development Fund. He was arrested, along with two other Westerners, in December 2000 for suspected involvement in a number of November car bombings targeting foreigners in which one man was killed and five persons were badly injured.²⁵⁶ Saudi officials said the bombings took place as part of a turf war over the kingdom's illegal alcohol trade. Many within the foreign community saw the bombings – which continued after Sampson's incarceration – as the work of indigenous extremists and the arrests as part of a government propaganda campaign to blame the violence on foreigners to avoid embarrassment. On February 4, 2001, Sampson confessed to the crimes on Saudi television. Later he recanted his confession and said he originally made it after days of torture and sleep deprivation. As reports of torture surfaced in May, Foreign Minister John Manley said he was "appalled" by this news from Saudi Arabia.²⁵⁷ Manley summoned Saudi Ambassador Mohammed Al-Hussaini to the

nurses training area – one with the Ministry of Health, the other with the King Fahd National Guard Hospital, which had many Canadian doctors, nurses and administrators.' [Interview, January 2005.]

254- M. Ghazanfar Ali Khan (November 23, 2004) "Saudi firms to take part in Construct Canada Expo," *Arab News*. URL (consulted January 31, 2005): <http://www.arabnews.com/>

255- Government of Canada, The House of Commons Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade (2004) *Exploring Canada's Relations with Countries of the Muslim World*. URL (consulted December 2004): <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Infocom/Doc/Documents/37/3/parlbus/commbus/house/reports/faitrp01-e.htm>: 79.

256- See Tom Fennell and Michael Snider (June 25 2001) "Prisoner of Riyadh," *Maclean's* URL (consulted October 17, 2004): <http://www.macleans.ca/>

257- Ibid.

Ministry to express his concern. In a public statement, the Foreign Minister asserted, "We have informed Saudi officials that we hold them responsible for Mr. Sampson's safety and that we expect him to be treated in accordance with international standards for prisoners set out in the Geneva Convention"²⁵⁸ The Sampson torture issue broke on the eve of a planned state visit to Ottawa by H.H. Crown Prince Abdullah; the Crown Prince was leading a 300-member delegation which included senior ministers, two dozen Princes and numerous Saudi business leaders and would be the highest-ranking visit of any Saudi official ever to Canada.²⁵⁹ The visit was timed to underscore a new level in the joint relationship, started in part by Chrétien's trip to Jeddah the previous year.²⁶⁰ Among the items on the Crown Prince's agenda was the opening of a new Saudi embassy.

With allegations of torture swirling around Ottawa, members of the Canadian Alliance called on the government to cancel Prince Abdullah's visit and recall Canada's ambassador from Riyadh. Before Chrétien could react to these opposition calls, the Crown Prince dispatched a letter "postponing" his trip "until a more conducive time."²⁶¹ Reports in the Saudi media blamed "false statements" by Canadian officials and the media campaign against the kingdom for the cancellation.²⁶² When asked by *Maclean's* about the impact of the Sampson case on Canadian-Saudi relations, Ambassador Al-Hussaini replied:

I consider it a setback. It shouldn't have happened. Canadian officials and parliamentarians attacked Saudi Arabia, saying Sampson was physically abused, and then a few hours later they said no, he wasn't tortured. But they did not even apologize. How do they expect our crown prince to come here after this?²⁶³

Sampson was eventually convicted of the murder and sentenced to death. Ottawa pursued months of what it termed 'quiet diplomacy,' raising the issue when

258- Quoted in Andrew Duffy (May 29, 2001) "Cancel Saudi state visit, Alliance says," *Ottawa Citizen*: A4.

259- It is interesting to note that the Crown Prince declined an invitation to visit Washington during his time in North America because of the Bush Administration's stand on the Palestinian issue.

260- Chrétien's visit to Saudi Arabia was the first from a Canadian Prime Minister since Trudeau's 1980 visit.

261- The National-CBC Television (June 1, 2001) "Canadian-Saudi relations under strain." Found at ProQuest (consulted November 25, 2004).

262- See "Furious Saudis scrap visit," (June 16, 2001) *Canadian News Facts* 35(10): 6248 and "Al-Riyadh holds Canada responsible for canceling visit of crown prince," (June 7, 2001) URL: <http://www.arabicnews.com/> (consulted November 22, 2004).

263- "Interview with Ambassador Mohammed Al Hussaini," (July 1, 2001) *Maclean's*. URL: <http://www.macleans.ca/> (consulted October 17, 2004).

meeting with Saudi counterparts at the UN and addressing it in Riyadh through the embassy.²⁶⁴ The Sampson issue produced a great deal of tension in the bilateral Canadian-Saudi relationship. Symbolic of this strain was the fact that the completed Saudi embassy in Ottawa remained unoccupied.

Tensions increased in September 2002 when Canada re-imposed visa requirements for Saudi citizens entering the country. Immigration Canada announced the move because Saudi passports were "vulnerable to abuse, making it a target for people who could potentially try to enter Canada illegally."²⁶⁵ The change, however, also harmonized Canadian visa policy with that of the United States, a requirement of the US-Canadian Smart Border Agreement signed in December 2001. Ambassador Al-Hussaini accused Ottawa of caving in to American pressure over the issue.²⁶⁶

After nearly three years in prison, William Sampson was released in August 2003 through a royal clemency. Believing that the case was closed, Chrétien issued a statement thanking the Canadian and British officials instrumental in gaining Sampson's freedom. The Prime Minister also acknowledged, "We are pleased with the cooperation of King Fahd and the Saudi government in the resolution of this matter, and I look forward to the building of further constructive ties between Canada and Saudi Arabia."²⁶⁷

While Canada hoped to quickly 'normalize' relations with Saudi Arabia, Sampson's personal accounts of his 31-month ordeal in solitary confinement thrust the issue of torture back into the media spotlight and quickly placed a new stress on the bilateral ties. *The National Post* editorialized:

If Ottawa is serious about standing up for Mr. Sampson, a message must be conveyed to the Saudis in the strongest possible terms – and the place to start is with Mohammed R. Al-Hussaini, the Saudi

264- It was later revealed that there were 49 attempted consular visits to Sampson in prison and seven trips to Saudi Arabia by Canadian officials on his behalf. See John Geddes (December 8, 2003) "The Fog of Suspicion," *Macleans's*. URL: <http://www.macleans.ca/> (consulted October 17, 2004).

265- Quoted in Estanislao Oziewicz (September 6, 2002) "Canada to require entry visas for Saudis," *Globe and Mail*: A1.

266- Stephen Thorne (September 19, 2002) "Canada caved to US pressure to impose visas on Saudis, ambassador suggests," *Canadian Press Newswire*.

267- "Prime Minister welcomes the release of William Sampson," (August 8, 2003) The Former Prime Minister's News Archive 1995-2003. URL: <http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca/> (consulted July 13, 2004).

Ambassador to Canada. He should be sent back to Riyadh and Canada's diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia should be suspended until the nation's medieval regime is willing to admit it brutalized and scapegoated an innocent man.²⁶⁸

Opposition members in parliament took up the *Post's* call and demanded that the Saudi ambassador be expelled. Canadian Alliance foreign affairs critic Stockwell Day also pressed for a Saudi apology and financial restitution for Sampson. Foreign Minister Bill Graham responded "We are taking strong steps with the Saudi Government to deal with the treatment of Mr. Sampson."²⁶⁹ He also said that Ottawa was requesting a formal investigation into the allegations of torture and that he would raise these issues with the Saudi Foreign Minister in meetings at the UN later in the week. Graham would not expel the Saudi ambassador and place the safety of 8,000 Canadians in the kingdom at risk by breaking off relations.²⁷⁰

A week later, Riyadh rejected Graham's request for an open investigation into Sampson's incarceration. In denying once again that any type of torture took place, the formal letter stated in part:

In spite of the harm that affected its internal security and the magnitude of the crime perpetrated by Mr. Sampson in killing another human being who had the right to live safe and secure with his family, the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, out of its keen desire to maintain its good relations with a friendly country and in response to the Canadian government's efforts on all levels, granted Mr. Sampson royal clemency.²⁷¹

With the avenue of an official investigation now closed, Graham suggested that the next step would be for Sampson himself to lodge a complaint with the Saudis. The Foreign Minister pledged the support of his department. However, since his release from prison, Sampson has severely criticized Canadian efforts to win his freedom. Later he would note:

268- "Expel the ambassador," (September 15, 2003) *National Post*: A13.

269- Quoted in Mike Blanchfield (September 16, 2003) "Saudis may not know of torture, Graham says," *National Post*: A5.

270- Ibid.

271- Quoted in Louise Elliot (September 23, 2003) "Saudi Arabia rejects Canada's request for investigation into Sampson case," *Canadian Press NewsWire*.

Not only did they do nothing, they did, in many respects, worse than nothing. Quiet diplomacy only works when you have influence and you are willing to use it. The Canadian government, quite frankly, uses the term "quiet diplomacy" for inaction, or riding on the coat tails of other countries that have the ability to use their influence.²⁷²

After his release in August 2003, Sampson settled in the UK. He would seek legal redress through British courts.

The story resurfaced again in July 2004 when *The New York Times* reported that Sampson, five British men and a Belgian had been released in 2003 as part of a three-way deal involving the US, UK and Saudi Arabia. In return for the US freeing five Saudis jailed as suspected terrorists and held at the American base in Guantanamo Bay, Riyadh would later release the seven Westerners.²⁷³ Since July 2004, Sampson has won two legal victories in the United Kingdom. In October of that year, Britain's Court of Appeal agreed with Sampson's argument that those who order or engage in torture are not protected under the State Immunity Act. The court ruled that while the government of Saudi Arabia enjoys immunity, individuals do not.²⁷⁴ This paved the way for Sampson's suit against the two men he accuses of torturing him as well as the deputy governor of the prison and Saudi Interior Minister, Prince Nayef, who Sampson believes sanctioned these actions. Additionally, in February 2005, a British Coroner's inquest into the death of the British man Sampson was convicted of killing found no evidence linking Sampson to the crime.²⁷⁵ The still-unresolved case of William Sampson continues to cast a cold shadow on Canada's relations with Saudi Arabia. The visit of Crown Prince Abdullah "has not yet been rescheduled."²⁷⁶ As of this writing, the Saudi Embassy building in Ottawa remains empty.²⁷⁷

272- Quoted in Michael Friscolanti (July 5, 2004) "Sampson appalled by deal," *National Post*: A1.

273- See Alan Freeman (July 5, 2004) "Swap for Saudi prisoners led to freedom, Sampson believes," *Globe and Mail*: A1.

274- Francine Kopun (October 29, 2004) "Sampson wins right to sue Saudi captors," *Ottawa Citizen*: A4.

275- CBC News (February 23, 2005) "British inquiry clears Sampson," URL: <http://www.cbc.ca/> (consulted February 23, 2005).

276- See Foreign Affairs Canada (2004) "Canada-Saudi Bilateral Relations," in Middle East and North Africa, URL (consulted October 3, 2004): http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/saudi_arabia_relations-en.asp.

277- See Michael Prentice (September 17, 2003) "Saudi Embassy to stay empty until 2005," *Ottawa Citizen*: F3. The exterior of the embassy was completed in 2001, just in time for the Crown Prince's planned visit. However, work on the interior of the building was never started because of the

Table 6

Canadian Imports from Gulf States 1997- 2004 (000 Canadian Dollars)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Bahrain	10,769	9,414	12,649	13,923	13,570	15,617	17,215	23,940
Kuwait	55,431	65,869	38,328	44,154	62,324	85,099	82,388	79,767
Oman	14,849	15,098	11,608	11,113	19,296	23,679	49,150	60,383
Qatar	16,312	16,938	11,162	23,043	25,969	28,954	36,667	131,950
Saudi Arabia	557,689	315,558	296,931	332,735	339,664	356,254	468,852	590,661
United Arab Emirates	260,353	290,616	181,070	222,862	208,781	272,701	342,975	415,991

Source: World Trade Atlas (Canada), Statistics Canada. Adapted from: International Trade Canada website:

http://www.dfaitmaeci.gc.ca/eet/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004_12-en.asp

Table 7

Canadian Imports from Gulf States 1997- 2004 (000 Canadian Dollars)

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Bahrain	2,391	5,831	5,097	7,606	11,815	12,727	11,240	6,258
Kuwait	1,971	2,607	3,096	865	18,864	24,592	51,330	133
Oman	842	845	1,593	5,721	2,703	2,993	7,002	7,282
Qatar	37,840	9,626	6,111	9,884	14,333	485	7,673	35,836
Saudi Arabia	647,775	393,834	429,458	916,232	800,442	748,810	919,241	1,227,999
United Arab Emirates	13,652	11,925	29,012	143,480	72,186	29,123	30,281	90,894

Source: World Trade Atlas (Canada), Statistics Canada. Adapted from: International Trade Canada website:

http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/eet/cimt/2004/pfact_annual_trade_2004-12-en.asp

diplomatic row over the Sampson case. The architect responsible for the structure estimated that the interior phases would take at least 18 months to complete once the initial go-ahead was given.

Chapter Five

Of Falcons, Hockey and Fox: The Canadian-Gulf Sports Connections

In the diplomatic world, leaders strive to make personal connections between their countries as a means of fostering better relations. Typically, Canadian and Gulf officials will emphasize the difficult geographical and extreme climatic conditions which their respective citizens face. While the Canadian winters and the desert environment could not be more dramatically different, they each present shared challenges to the populations as they brave the elements. Much is also made of the fact that Canada is rich in petroleum and that it, along with the Gulf states, is a net exporter of energy commodities. Saudi and Canadian officials will often speak of their large and vast land mass and small and dispersed populations; all will highlight the heavy reliance their economies place on international trade. However, outside of these commonalities which have almost become diplomatic platitudes, there are some notable cultural connections between Canada and the Gulf states in the area of sports.

Falconry

The art of hunting with birds has a long 4,000-year history and while it has faded somewhat internationally as a sport, it still retains much popularity in the Middle East. It is believed that falconry was practiced by the Arabs long before it reached other parts of the world. As such, there is a sense of heritage and deep cultural pride associated with the sport. In the Middle East, the birds themselves have

become "symbols of valour and personal integrity."²⁷⁸ Perhaps President H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan said it best when he explained in 2002:

In spite of modern achievements that had been made, we are keen to preserve our indigenous traditions and heritage. Falconry is an important and indispensable sport as it teaches patience, perseverance and valour and is therefore useful physically and psychologically. It is also a social sport which strengthens the sense of comradeship among people during their journey and also promotes the spirit of community and oneness.²⁷⁹

Canada is home to two species of the bird. The Arctic regions are the natural habitat of the gyrfalcon which has a wingspan of 1.2 meters and is the world's largest falcon. The smaller, yet swifter and more common peregrine falcon can be found throughout western and upper Canada. From the very inception of relations between Canada and the Gulf states, diplomats have highlighted this connection. Ambassador James George, who was Canada's top representative to Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the UAE between 1974 and 1977, holds that early in his posting, when Canada was a relatively unknown quantity to many of the Gulf governmental officials, he searched for areas of commonality between his country and the region. He recalls, "the fact that Canada had falcons was of great interest to the Gulf states because they were passionate about falconry. This was a common cultural bond and I made good use of it."²⁸⁰ Ottawa has on occasion presented falcons as official gifts to Gulf leaders, which is fitting since they are known as the "birds of kings." For example, in 1978, King Khaled of Saudi Arabia was presented with a rare gyrfalcon which would be utilized to help boost the Saudi falconry breeding program.²⁸¹ Conversely, falconry shows are frequently used by Gulf leaders to entertain visiting dignitaries. In 2002, President Sheikh Zayed played host to Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, the representative of Canada's Head of State, at such a show during her trip to the UAE. In recent decades, as the population of desert hawks has dwindled, the Canadian Wildlife Service has worked with a number of Gulf falconry programs to help increase their numbers.²⁸² Conservation efforts are particularly noteworthy in the UAE and Bahrain. In terms of the latter country, in 1998 the Sulman Falcon

278- "UAE: Falconry is an Indispensable Sport—Zayed," (December 28, 2002) *The Emirates*. Found at LexisNexis (Consulted December 5, 2004).

279- Ibid.

280- Interview with Ambassador James George, November 2004.

281- "Canada Gives Saudis Falcon," (April 21, 1978) *Vancouver Sun*: A21.

282- Ibid.

Centre released a number of Gyrfalcon chicks into the wild. The goal of this program was to introduce this species of the bird to Bahrain and create a gyrfalcon colony there,²⁸³ as Gyrfalcons are originally native to only Canada and Greenland.

Hockey in the Desert

Canadians' love of hockey is, of course, legendary. It is, after all, the national pastime and most Canadians arriving in the UAE for the first time are amazed to learn of organized hockey leagues, some of which have existed in the Emirates since the early 1980s.²⁸⁴ As one expatriate exclaimed, "To my surprise and to my teenage children's pleasure, they have been able to continue their enjoyment of the game here."²⁸⁵ Today, the children's clubs, which include both boys and girls, are very active in Dubai (Sandstorms), Abu Dhabi (Falcons) and Al Ain (Vipers). The children on these teams come from 20 different countries as well as from the UAE. The various different levels of these teams (ranging in age from 5-17) also play squads from Dhahran and Muscat. Many of their coaches are Canadian and professional hockey instructors from such Canadian institutions as the well-respected Okanagan Hockey School in British Columbia regularly run camps for the children. Additionally, firms such as CAE and the Royal Bank of Canada sponsor youth ice hockey tournaments. Adult ice-hockey clubs are also prevalent in the Emirates. For example, the Dubai Mighty Camels have an extensive league that features a number of teams sponsored by Canadian businesses such as the CAE Canadians and the Shred-it Blades. In Abu Dhabi, its adult ice hockey club is called the Scorpions. These adult clubs frequently put together all-star teams to play visiting teams comprised of former or current professional players from Canada and elsewhere for charity. A recent tournament raised money for Afghan children charities and Dubai minor hockey. Given the widespread interest in ice hockey in the country, in 1998, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport founded the UAE Ice Hockey Association to promote the sport in the Emirates; it is the first such ice hockey organization of its kind in the Middle East.

Speaking only slightly in jest, Stuart McDowall, who was Canada's Ambassador to the UAE, remarks "seeing someone skate in a galabia is quite a

283- Amira al Hussaini (March 12, 1998) "Falcons first for Bahrain," *Gulf Daily News*. Found at LexisNexis (Consulted December 5, 2004).

284- J.H. Silverman (June 13, 1981) "Dubai: Sheikdom with its very own hockey league," *Toronto Star*: G11.

285- Confidential interview.

sight!"²⁸⁶ Canadian diplomats posted elsewhere in the Gulf have noted that special hockey tournaments have taken place when Canadian ships made port calls in Saudi Arabia and that there are informal 'pick up' hockey games conducted on ice rinks in Kuwait and Qatar. Indeed, on a Qatari rink located in the middle of a shopping center, expatriates once publicly celebrated Canada Day by staging another typically Canadian ice sport – curling. Since it was impossible to find the large weighted stones used for the game in Qatar, frozen turkeys substituted for the curling stones. In the end, however, it is the United Arab Emirates that has the strongest reputation for organized hockey in the Gulf.

The International Terry Fox Runs²⁸⁷

If nothing says 'Canada' as much as hockey, then nothing represents the way that Canadians like to view themselves than the charity, spirit and determination associated with the iconic legacy of Terry Fox. As an eighteen-year old, Fox lost most of his right leg to bone cancer. After witnessing the pain of other cancer patients, he decided to work toward a cure. Launching what would become the 'Marathon of Hope,' Fox's goal would be to run across Canada to raise awareness and funds to battle cancer. He started his journey in April 1980 by dipping his prosthetic leg into the Atlantic Ocean in Newfoundland and then proceeded westerly towards his home in British Columbia. Through sheer perseverance, Fox covered 42 kilometers, the distance of a marathon, every day. His journey captured the imagination of Canada; as one reporter who covered Fox's Marathon remarked, "He gave us a dream as big as our country."²⁸⁸ However, some 5,300 kilometers (and 143 marathons) into his run, the young man was forced to stop when it was discovered that the cancer had returned. He died in 1981 at the age of 22. His 'Marathon of Hope' vaulted Fox into the pantheon of Canadian heroes; a statue, complete with a prosthetic leg, graces Parliament Hill in Ottawa. In 2004, the newsweekly *Maclean's* placed Fox among the 'most admired Canadians' ever and in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's country-wide referendum on the 'Greatest Canadian,' he bested Prime Ministers and Nobel laureates to place in the top tier of Canadian heroes. In life, Fox raised \$24 million for cancer research.

286- Interview with Ambassador Stuart McDowall (December 2004).

287- Much of the information contained in this section is drawn from *On the Run Around the World* (The Terry Fox International Newsletter) URL (Consulted January 13, 2005): <http://www.terryfoxrun.org/english/international>. Ms. Breeda McClew, International Director of the Terry Fox Foundation, also very kindly provided detailed background on the International Runs (Interview, January 2005).

288- Quoted in Leslie Scrivener (November 27, 2004) "Why Terry Fox finishes first," *Toronto Star*: A3.

Since his death, his legacy has raised more than \$350 million through the Terry Fox Runs which are held in Canada and 50 other countries around the world.

Dubai became one of the first locations in the Middle East to host an International Terry Fox Run. Through a joint effort spearheaded by the new Canadian Consulate, the Canadian expatriate business community and Dubai officials, a run was launched in 1994. Robert Farrell, then Canada's Consul to Dubai and one of the run's main organizers, notes that the 40 companies associated with the Canadian Business Council as well as the then-2,000 Canadians living there provided a "good base to work with" and they helped make the run a "phenomenal success."²⁸⁹ Support from the Dubai government was also important. Since its inception, the event has been held under the patronage of H. H. Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum. Among those present to start the inaugural run in 1994 was Terry Fox's mother, Betty. In the Emirate, bridges were closed down by police and traffic rerouted away from the 8.5 kilometer run site. The Dubai media carried considerable pre-event coverage about the race and Fox's life story and there was live television coverage on the day of the run itself. Since 1995, Abu Dhabi has also conducted runs; participation has increased from 500 people during the first event to over 5,000 in 2004. Together with Dubai, these runs have raised more than \$220,000 annually and attracted among the largest number of participants (Canadians, other foreign expatriates, UAE citizens) than anywhere in the world. Ambassador McDowall attributes part of this success to Canadian teachers working in the Emirates, whose efforts resulted in students and their parents being 'galvanized into action.'²⁹⁰ In February 2005, the Dubai Terry Fox Run was part of a larger 'Canada Week' schedule of events designed to "show other communities what being Canadian is all about."²⁹¹ It had over 10,000 participants who raised 30% more than the previous year.²⁹² Per the mission of the Terry Fox Foundation, money raised locally through the runs remains in that country to fund cancer research; that way, a movement started by a young Canadian will have a worldwide impact. In the UAE, funds go to the UAE University's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and Tawam Hospital, both in Al Ain. In commenting on the Dubai run in 1999, then-Minister for International Trade,

289- Interview with Consul Robert Farrell (January 2005). Mr. Farrell kindly provided considerable detail about the International Terry Fox Runs held in Dubai.

290- Interview with Ambassador McDowall.

291- Emmanuelle Landais (February 1, 2005) "An insight into the Canadian way of life," *Gulf News*. Found at LexisNexis (Consulted February 22, 2005). See also the Dubai Terry Fox Run homepage: [www.dubaiterryfoxrun.com].

292- Jay B. Hilotin (February 5, 2005) "10,000 put their best foot forward to help fight cancer," *Gulf News* Found at LexisNexis (Consulted February 22, 2005).

Sergio Marchi, stated: "Let me say how delighted we are that one of the things you have adopted from Canada is the Terry Fox Run...Terry's run inspired our nation, as it now inspires yours, and demonstrates that not only does cancer know no borders – courage knows no nationality."²⁹³

In Kuwait, the first Run was held in the capital city in 1997. It grew quickly to encompass almost 10,000 participants and became "Kuwait's largest community event."²⁹⁴ The nearly seven-kilometer run was cosponsored by the Canadian Embassy, the Kuwait University Research Centre and businesses such as the Kuwait Real Estate Bank. Local government support is also evident in that the Ministry of Interior re-routes traffic the day of the run and the Ministry of Education encourages participation.²⁹⁵ The Kuwait runs have raised over \$100,000 annually, which went to Kuwait University for cancer research. Because of the large number of participants, the Kuwait City runs have internationally ranked sixth and seventh in 1999 and 1998 respectively. Concerns over terrorism, especially with such a large gathering containing a sizable 'Western' presence, forced cancellation of the 2001 run; while a scaled-down version took place in 2002, it was the last one held in Kuwait.

By design, the International Runs are non-competitive, non-commercial and all-inclusive to children, men and women. This last requirement posed interesting challenges for a gender segregated society like Saudi Arabia; while the Canadian expatriate business community and embassy were very involved in the planning and operation of the Riyadh run, the event organizers did not seek media publicity as they would in Kuwait or the UAE to get the Terry Fox story out. Indeed, information on the event passed through word of mouth and the run itself was held 'underground' at the edge of a wadi outside the capital city as opposed to being run in the open on city streets. Men and women participated, although it attracted fewer nationals than some other places in the Gulf. Saudi officials were aware of the event, but because the organizers were not 'bold' in publicizing it, they allowed the race to take place.²⁹⁶ In any case, the Riyadh runs generated considerable funds that remained in the kingdom for cancer research. Sadly, like in Kuwait, runs were last held in 2002 because of fears of violence against a large gathering of Westerners, although it should also be noted that Doha actually

293- Marchi (25 February 1999).

294- "Terry Fox Run to attract thousands," (November 4, 2000) *Kuwait Times*. Found at LexisNexis (Consulted August 31, 2004).

295- "KREB Sponsors Terry Fox run," (November 5, 2000) *Kuwait Times*. Found at LexisNexis (Consulted August 31, 2004).

296- Interview with Ms. Breeda McClew.

started hosting a run for the first time in 2003, while Manama held one in 2001 and Muscat has had them in place since 2000. In essence, all parts of the Gulf have been touched by the Terry Fox story and his legacy has meant considerable financial support for scientific cancer research in each of the GCC States.

Conclusion

Over the past three decades, Canada and the Gulf states have actively built diplomatic, economic, political and cultural bridges between them. Over time, these relationships have incrementally grown and matured. Changes in the international environment - from the end of the Cold War to direct talks on the Israeli-Palestinian front - have removed many of the external impediments that earlier hampered closer cooperation. The challenge today for both Canada and the region is how to advance from the formative stage to a level where these ties have additional breadth and the depth. Recent public statements by the Canadian government offer partial insight into possible new avenues for the relationships.

In April 2005, Paul Martin's Government unveiled its long anticipated foreign policy review: *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*. "Foreign Policy is," the Prime Minister affirms, "how a nation best expresses itself to the world."²⁹⁷ Thus, imbedded in the IPS are 'core' Canadian values of respecting human rights, promoting democracy and the rule of law. As such, this ambitious document outlines new Canadian priorities in diplomacy, defense, development and trade. If implemented, Martin's plan would potentially address some of the shortcomings identified in Canada's ties with the six Gulf states, namely the often-expressed neglect in resource allotment in the bilateral relationships as well as the dearth of multilateral contacts between the countries in international organizations.

On the bilateral level, the report contains a frank acknowledgment of Canada's thinly-spread overseas resources while at the same time identifying the Middle East as an important area of interest to Ottawa. The Gulf states are specifically highlighted in the section on Canada's priorities in commercial ties.

297- Foreign Affairs Canada (2005) "Forward from the Prime Minister" URL (consulted May 3, 2005) <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cip-pic/ips/ips-overview2-en.asp>.

They – along with Russia – are cited for “their future economic power” and thus importance for Canada.²⁹⁸ The document asserts:

Canadian business has paid less attention to the opportunities in the Middle East than have their American or European competitors. Nevertheless, there are good prospects for long-term relationships. The nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council...are the most prosperous grouping in the Middle East, with a collective economy that is one of the fastest growing in the world, and increasingly diversified. This trend is expanding Canadian business prospects beginning with petrochemicals but moving far beyond. In particular, regional hubs are deliberately positioning themselves as strategic entry points to Middle Eastern, South Asian and East African markets, a market of approximately 2 billion.²⁹⁹

In responding to these trends, the report pledges an increase in diplomatic training support in more difficult languages such as Arabic and announced plans to assign a higher proportion of Canada's diplomatic personnel abroad over the next five years to the region. Additionally, the statement suggests “reconfiguring our network of missions, to ensure a stronger presence in regions where our interests are growing, such as Asia and the Middle East.”³⁰⁰ This reconfiguring might bode well for the establishment of a Canadian Embassy in Qatar as well as greater Canadian representation in the region as a whole.

On the multilateral level, the report places emphasis on using Canada's “diverse memberships in other global and regional organizations...to create networks in support of our objectives.”³⁰¹ Indeed, in detailing the IPS Martin stressed “we seek nothing less than a new multilateralism.”³⁰² While at first glance this seems to leave the Gulf at a diplomatic disadvantage because of its heretofore low level of multilateral linkages with Canada, in fact the report endorses the creation of a new international body called the L20 that could possibly fill the gap. Martin himself has been a major advocate of this idea over

298- International Trade Canada (2005) “Commerce: Conclusions” URL (consulted May 3, 2005) <http://itcan-cican.gc.ca/ips/IPS-commerce05-en.asp#36>.

299- International Trade Canada (2005) “Commerce: Markets and Opportunities Abroad” URL (consulted May 3, 2005) <http://itcan-cican.gc.ca/ips/IPS-commerce04-en.asp#34>.

300- Foreign Affairs Canada (2005) “Diplomacy: Transforming Foreign Affairs” URL (consulted May 3, 2005) <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cip-pic/ips/diplomacy-en.asp>.

301- Foreign Affairs Canada (2005) “Diplomacy: Global Issues Promoting a New Multilateralism” URL (consulted May 3, 2005) <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cip-pic/ips/diplomacy-en.asp>.

302- “Forward by the Prime Minister”

the past year. As he believes, “the L20 may not come easily but it will be created because it makes sense.”³⁰³ The forum, comprised of both key developing and developed countries, would address “some of the world's most pressing problems.”³⁰⁴ In many ways, Martin envisions coupling the G-8 countries with the emerging economic powers. Over time, the L20 might indeed replace the G8 itself. Saudi Arabia is one of the countries mentioned as a possible member of the L20; if the Saudis wish to play a more prominent role in international affairs, participation in this organization would link Riyadh with Ottawa and it would bring the Arabian Gulf region multilateral attachments with Canada for the first time outside of the UN and other international economic institutions. Taken together, Canada's new directions on both the bilateral and multilateral fronts have the potential to usher in a new era in Ottawa's diplomatic engagement with the Arabian Gulf states.

303- Ibid.

304- Ibid.

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