

# Al-Ahram newspaper's position on the policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia towards the United States of America 1964-1975

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## Abstract

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's position with the United States of America changed during the reign of King Faisal bin Abdulaziz. Especially since the start of the Yemeni conflict and Saudi Arabia's strong opposition to Yemen's presidential system, which coincides with a close relationship with the US. In contrast to the United Arab Republic's support for the system, which piqued Al-attention. The newspaper's position evolved following the Saudi-Egyptian reconciliation during the 1967 war and its aftermath, as well as the 1973 conflict when it became a defender of the Kingdom and an advocate for Arab causes.

**Keywords:** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United States of America, Egypt, Al-Ahram newspaper.

## INTRODUCTION

This research includes Al-Ahram newspaper's perspective on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's policies toward the United States of America from 1964 to 1975. It is a pivotal and crucial period in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's history. The study was split into the following axes: America in the area toward interference in the internal affairs of the region:

- 1- Introduction
- 2- The problem of Yemen
- 3- The 1967 war and its aftermath.
- 4- The 1973 war.
- 5- Research results.

### 1 - The problem of Yemen

King Faisal bin Abdulaziz ascended to the throne of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on November 2, 1964. He was awarded a unique role by the United States of America after succeeding King Saud bin Abdulaziz . They saw

him as a genuine leader, and his rule saw a stunning reconciliation and significant progress in relations between the two nations. When the Saudi-Egyptian crisis over Yemen erupted, it was determined to conduct a conference to settle the issue between the disputing parties; however, this conference did not take place due to disagreements over the conclusions of the summit in Alexandria.

It was agreed upon by President Abdel Nasser and King Faisal to settle the disputing parties' disagreements. And now there's a new outbreak of conflict. Washington wrote a letter to its ambassador in Cairo expressing disappointment at the failure of the conference to reach an agreement on a cease-fire . According to Al-Ahram, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant , indicated in a report given to the Security Council on the situation on Yemen's borders. In which he pushed Cairo and Riyadh to arrange a summit conference, claiming that such a gathering would result in border stability .During the second conference of the Arab Summit in September 1964, President Abdel Nasser and King Faisal met, and during the meeting a new agreement was reached for cooperation in order to establish peace in

Yemen. The agreement between the Egyptians and the Saudis provided for direct dialogue with the Republicans and the royalists. In this meeting, which took place between two antagonistic parties, an agreement was reached to stop the hostilities. Al-Ahram said that a spokesman for the US State Department said that the US government welcomed the agreement that was signed between the United Arab Republic and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on ending their differences regarding the issue of Yemen, which is an important step in a peaceful settlement that puts an end to the clashes on Yemen's borders.

The United States of America announced its support for Saudi Arabia and that it is responsible for the security and safety of the Kingdom. (After that, Al-Ahram confirmed that the United States of America came out with its position in protecting King Faisal. After the speech delivered by Gamal Abdel Nasser in which he stated:- (... that the Arab Republic will strike the bases of aggression in Saudi Arabia if it returns to work against the Yemeni revolution and the Yemeni people. It will clean them completely if the matter comes." The response of officials in Washington to that came by announcing that the states would remain committed to defending the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. US President John Kennedy also sent a message to King Faisal in which he said: (I would like it to be clearly understood that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can count on friendship. The United States and its cooperation, it may trust in the full support of the United States for the preservation of the territorial integrity of Saudi Arabia. Al-Ahram newspaper commented on this that the role of the United States as the protector of Saudi Arabia. Very clear in this announcement, which was broadcast in Washington, and added that the true meaning of this announcement is that the United States of America is not only the protector state, but it is also the instigator, because it can advise it to refrain from aggression. King Faisal began a tour to America and Spain, accompanied on his trip by Prince Sultan, Minister of Defense and Aviation, Dr. Rashad Pharaoh, his special advisor, and Sheikh Muhammad Al-Nuwaiser, head of the Royal Court. Al-Ahram expressed its opinion on the visit, as the news indicated that there was something hidden in King Faisal's talks with Lyndon Johnson. The President of the United

States of America, especially since some American officials stated that what the King holds is the emergence of communist influence in the region, and that this opinion will be one of the matters on which Faisal and Johnson are likely to differ is that he is less disturbed than King Faisal in this respect is. The position of King Faisal, who appeared to be more American than the Americans and it, is a position with manifold goals, and one of his goals is to gain the support of more Americans for his plans and projects in the light of new developments, foremost of which is the project of the Islamic alliance. Also the strengthening and support of the Arab powers and the liberation of Palestine from the hands of Zionism and the elimination of the Zionist entity. Al-Ahram followed the arrival of King Faisal on June 22, 1966 to Washington on an official visit to the United States, and he was received militarily. Johnson began his speech welcoming the king and described the relations between the two countries as a friendly, friendly and frank document and a study of the various problems of both countries. Al-Ahram correspondent mentioned what the officials said that King Faisal agreed - in his talks - that it was not appropriate to officially announce. The United States would protect him politically and militarily in his conflict with the United Arab Republic, as the king feels after his talks in America that he will certainly not be left alone if troubles arose between him and the United Arab Republic because of Yemen. The Saudi delegation was informed during the talks that any direct military links with Saudi Arabia would reduce the degree of US flexibility in dealing with emergencies in the Middle East, and would complicate US relations with the Arab world. On the same visit, Al-Ahram newspaper reported that the mayor of New York City canceled a reception that was prepared for King Faisal, and a brief statement was issued in this regard by the mayor's office, because the city wanted to punish the king just for speaking one word about (Israel). In addition, the punishment campaign began a few hours before King Faisal finished his talks with Johnson, where the king gave a speech and then answered some press questions that were directed at him. He was asked if he supports the Arab boycott of companies that deal with (Israel), and his response came (The Jews, unfortunately, support (Israel), and we consider those who provide aid to our enemies, as our enemies

alike). As a result, a campaign was launched in New York against King Faisal and a Jewish member of the city council demanded to cancel the parties allegedly held for the king because he insulted a third of New York's Jewish population . Al-Ahram said that the British newspaper, The Daily Telegraph, which speaks on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, tried to defend the position of the king, and stated that Gamal Abdel Nasser is the enemy of King Faisal, not Israel. The real threat to the kingdom does not come from (Israel) but from the United Arab Republic. Despite the US State Department's attempt to salvage the situation, the Jews were determined to cancel the celebrations scheduled for the king, and they insisted not to accept any apology or justification. Officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs returned to making comments clarifying the king's words.

First - that some of the words used by the king have disappeared in the translation.

Secondly - King Faisal said (for example) that he is not against the Jews (because we are cousins in blood). And he can not be accused of anti-Semitic.

Third - that Faisal was answering a specific question. And that he was merely echoing the existing Arab position towards Israel.

Some American officials revealed that Israeli diplomats in the United States indicated to officials in Washington that they did not agree to insult the King in New York, fearing that they would benefit the King's enemies in the Arab region. Al-Ahram correspondent stated that attempts are continuing in New York and Washington to settle the crisis that resulted from the treatment of King Faisal in New York, due to the desire of the US State Department for the king not to leave the United States in circumstances in which his enemies in the Arab region gloat and increase the chances of attacking him . Al-Ahram published news that King Faisal left New York to return to his country after the end of his visit to the United States . On the page of Frankly written by Muhammad Hassanein Heikal he wrote in this regard (... the opportunity to express the dignity and conscience of the Arabs was lost, then your personal dignity - Your Majesty - was put in the balance. With interpretation after interpretation, but they did not turn their knees and insisted on

prostration, and many Arabs in New York appealed to you to interrupt this city before it interrupts you... Please enter their airport to the international territory of the United Nations in it and then leave the United Nations building without looking around you out of New York And he left her fathers and loathing behind your back." He added, "But, Your Majesty, you did not listen, and you accepted for yourself to wait six days in New York in the hope of forgiveness and contentment.." While Al-Ahram mentioned that a new book bears the title "Secrets of American Diplomacy," which is The latest book reveals the most accurate secrets of American diplomacy, and the ulterior motives that motivate it, and most of what came in this book is published for the first time. In the first chapter published by Al-Ahram, the two writers reveal the secrets of American diplomacy in Yemen clearly and record the motives that were driving this diplomacy towards the whole Arab region, and it is decided that:-

First: How America's recognition of the republican regime in Yemen was not a friendly act, but rather - as stated in the book literally - contrary to the prevailing misunderstanding, the steps taken by the policy makers in Washington were intended to be against Nasser and not in his interest.

Second: How both Saudi Arabia and Jordan protested to Washington in private letters, and expressed their fears that the United States' recognition of the revolutionary regime in Yemen would sacrifice their safety and endanger their throne.

Third: How did America decide to protect the two kings and their thrones, because their intelligence reports were - according to them, "a cause for concern because of Faisal's shaky position", and that it decided to send a squadron of military jets in an operation that was called a secret name "Hard Cover" and issued its orders to engage With the aircraft of the United Arab Republic as unfriendly aircraft.

Fourth: - How did America see that its national interest necessitated it to try to contain Nasser's policy in the Arab countries, and to try to stop the spread of Nasiriyah, and how it started assuring Faisal - who was protesting against its recognition of the Yemen revolution that America had no intention of dealing with Nasser, and that it It will put all its weight - from

the president onwards - to work to get Nasser out of Yemen. As for the rest of the book's chapters, it included America's confrontation with the Cyprus and Vietnam crises, and the focus on the personality of President John F. Kennedy .

## 2- The June 1967 war and its aftermath

When the crisis between Egypt and Israel intensified, King Faisal announced on May 23, 1967 that his country had mobilized its armed forces in order to participate in the battle against Israel. Saudi Arabia entered its lands and those forces took their positions in the Jordanian city of Aqaba, and when the war broke out, King Faisal sent a message to President Abdel Nasser in which he supported entering this battle, and confirmed that the Saudi forces entered the land to fight alongside the Arab forces . In this regard, US President Johnson, in a letter he sent to King Faisal, confirmed the withdrawal of Israeli forces beyond the armistice lines, and Johnson informed Faisal that such a withdrawal must take place in accordance with certain measures . Al-Ahram's delegate learned that King Faisal had made a call with US President Lyndon Johnson, in which he explained the Arab view of the Middle East crisis, and the discussions during the Khartoum conference ended. This contact was at the request of the Conference of Arab Kings and Presidents, who saw that whatever the position of the United States was, it was necessary for all international parties to know the unified Arab position on the crisis . The United States pursued a more balanced policy in the Middle East, and the intent was to reduce its bias towards Israeli policy in order not to lose its long-term interests in the Arab world . But after Richard Nixon became the US president in 1969, he declared his full support for Israel's policy, while King Faisal criticized this policy towards the Middle East , and King Faisal stressed the need for solidarity among Arab countries to confront the (Israeli) danger and reduce dependence on The major countries in this matter . The US State Department issued a statement in which it tried to reduce the global uproar that revolted against it because of what was revealed that a large number of Americans are fighting in the ranks of the (Israeli) army. And that the US government opposes the joining of its citizens to the armies of any other country and does not encourage such involvement because it harms US interests, and the statement did not refer to any action taken by the US

government, nor any punishment that it could impose on its citizens joining the armies of other countries. The Supervisor of American Nationals Affairs in Cairo handed Omar Al-Saqqaf a copy of the latest American proposals. When these proposals were handed over to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, they were officially described as a complete American bias towards Israel . The Saudi government tried to follow a policy of pressure on the United States of America, in order to change its policy towards the Palestinian issue. As a result, Al-Ahram continued the visit of US Secretary of State William Rogers to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1971, during which he met with King Faisal to discuss relations between the two countries, the developments of the Arab (Israeli) conflict and the problem of the holy sites in the occupied city of Jerusalem. Rogers carried a message from President Nixon to King Faisal trying to assure the king of the United States' interest in the Middle East region . Al-Ahram newspaper added that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced its support for the United Arab Republic in its stance on the issue of (Israeli) withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands. This announcement came in a press conference, before William Rogers travels from Riyadh to Amman . She said that King Faisal decided to meet with President Nixon to discuss relations between their countries and the developments of the Middle East crisis, and to demand President Nixon to use the United States to influence (Israel) to push it to implement Resolution 242 issued by the Security Council and withdraw from the occupied Arab territories. King Faisal demanded that the American president use his authority to curb the (Israeli) aggression, and Nixon pledged to work to establish a just peace in this region and all over the world . Al-Ahram wrote on its front page (Faisal informs Sadat of the results of his talks with Nixon). President Anwar Sadat met with King Faisal, and the first meeting between them took place at the Qubba Palace. King Faisal reviewed the results of his contacts with a number of heads of state, foremost of which are the results of the detailed talks he held with President Nixon and his senior aides in Washington. King Faisal completed the presentation of the results of his contacts in the second meeting , and King Faisal presented his view regarding the requirements of the current position of support and support for Egypt in its confrontation with the enemy. In this regard, the

King declared, "I support Egypt in its stance on (Israeli) aggression, and the Arab world as a whole and the Islamic world should practically support Egypt in its stance on aggression." Al-Ahram has followed up on the United States' announcement that it intends to sell a limited number of F-4 Phantom fighter jets to Saudi Arabia, and negotiations are underway to sell other American weapons to Saudi Arabia, with a value ranging between (500-4000) million dollars. The US State Department spokesman responded to reporters' questions, stressing that the United States does not want to threaten its arms shipments to Arab countries from (Israel). The (Israeli) ambassador in Washington expressed his government's concern about the US decision to sell "Phantom M" planes to Saudi Arabia. This agreement had provoked the (Israeli) authorities, which called on the (Israeli) cabinet to hold a meeting with representatives of the United States of America for the purpose of pressure to thwart this deal, and that the Israeli ambassador told the American advisor that Israel understands America's motives behind these deals, but it does not believe Saudi Arabia needs this huge arsenal of weapons. Al-Ahram referred to what the US Secretary of State stated in June 1973 that selling arms to Saudi Arabia is necessary to support regional security in the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian Gulf . King Faisal declared in June 1973 that it would be difficult to continue close cooperation with the United States if its support for (Israel) remained at this level. He said that the real interest of the United States in the region is cooperation with the Arabs. He added that the strong traditional ties between his country - the world's largest oil exporter - and the United States depend on a more equal and fair policy in the Middle East. The king said that he opposes linking oil to politics, as Saudi Arabia prefers to continue its ties of friendship with the United States, but that this may be difficult unless the American policy, focused on the Arabs, turns towards neutrality. The spokesman of the US State Department refused to comment directly on the king's statements, and only said that the United States has a good old relationship with Saudi Arabia and that it maintains a continuous dialogue with it .

### 3-October 1973 war

During the October 1973 war between the Arabs and (Israel), Saudi Arabia took a decision

against its ally America to stop pumping oil to America because of America's bias towards (Israel) in its war against the Arabs. The United States has a 6-month period to change its biased policy (for Israel) or it must face a reduction in oil supplies . Al-Ahram stated that Saudi Arabia announced a complete halt to oil shipments to the United States, due to the increase in American military support (to Israel). Al-Ahram reported that Henry Kissinger left Amman for Riyadh in September 1973 to hold talks with King Faisal in this regard . And upon US President Nixon's visit to Saudi Arabia in June 1974 and his meeting with King Faisal and the talks that took place between them, a serious and decisive development appeared in the Kingdom's position on Arab issues, especially the Palestinian issue, where the King stated in the meeting between him and Nixon that it would not be possible to establish a lasting peace as long as Jerusalem has not been liberated and as long as all the occupied Arab lands have not been liberated and as long as those who were expelled from their lands have not been able to return to their homes and exercise their right to self-determination. Nixon's response came (we want to play a useful role, but we will not be able to use a magical method to settle all problems ). The US president called for a gradual settlement of the region's problem. Before Nixon traveled from Jeddah, he said in a press conference, that he told King Faisal that the United States intends to continue its efforts to assist the Arabs and (Israel) in reaching a just peace. After the conference, the White House spokesman stated that President Nixon discussed the Palestinian problem in his private talks with President Sadat and King Faisal, but he avoided giving a direct public response to it because he intends to play the role of mediator in the Middle East . The United States has ended its political contacts with Arab countries With the arrival of Mr. Omar Al-Saqqaf, the Saudi foreign minister, to Washington for talks with Kissinger. By visiting Al-Saqqaf, America will know the views of Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Syria. Then comes the expected visit of the (Israeli) prime minister to let the American side know his opinion on the next step in the crisis . The discussions between Omar Al-Saqqaf and Kissinger dealt with the Middle East crisis in every detail, and focused on the issue of Jerusalem, given the interest shown by King Faisal in the Holy City. "I think we've made good progress in understanding what can be

done," Kissinger said in August 1974 after the meeting. Al-Saqqaf said: (They have made great progress in our discussions on the Middle East and the steps they will take to continue efforts for a final settlement in the region based on justice and the rights of the Palestinian people.) Al-Ahram mentioned that Omar Al-Saqqaf ended his talks with the United States of America, which dealt with the next special steps. Al-Saqqaf also discussed with American officials the issue of Palestinian representation in the Geneva Conference on the Middle East and the future of Jerusalem, America's relations with the Arab world and the use of Arab oil. The outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East, an uproar aroused every time it seems that the United States is about to take a positive move in the crisis. (Kissinger declared that) he will express to King Faisal the firm intention of the United States to contribute to the progress that will be made on the road to peace in the East middle .

In 1975, when King Faisal was assassinated, Al-Ahram mentioned the wide repercussions of his departure in various parts of the world, as Henry Kissinger, the US Secretary of State, expressed in a statement his belief that relations between America and Saudi Arabia would not change as a result of the assassination of King Faisal, and Kissinger described King Faisal as He was a great friend of the United States, and he was (an element of moderation in the region).

## Results

Al-Ahram newspaper supported, in its media policy, what is issued by the United Arab Republic towards Saudi Arabia or any country that disagrees with Egypt.

- Al-Ahram used the violent channel against Saudi policy, especially in the Yemen problem.

- It changed its media policy after the 1967 war and Saudi Arabia's position on that war, which stood beside Egypt.

Al-Ahram newspaper focused in detail on the relations that Saudi Arabia's policy towards America has been linked to in all the ways that the Arab region has gone through.

Al-Ahram had adopted a focused and mostly offensive media policy towards those who stood

against the policy of Gamal Abdel Nasser and Egypt.

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