

Sleeping with the Devil: How Washington Sold Our Soul for Saudi Crude Study Guide

Sleeping with the Devil: How Washington Sold Our Soul for Saudi Crude by Robert Baer

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Plot Summary

Sleeping With the Devil by Robert Baer is the story of the United States relationship with Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is the world's largest oil producer and the site of the world's largest oil reserves. The United States is very dependent on Middle East oil and is the country that leased the land and developed the first Saudi oil field. Standard Oil of California is the first oil company in Saudi Arabia, and the United States has had a relationship with the kingdom ever since.

Robert Baer was a CIA case officer for many years and was stationed in the Middle East. He becomes interested in the radical Islam of the Muslim Brotherhood and tries to learn what he can about the organization and finds that the CIA doesn't have much information about them. Baer becomes interested in the links between the royal House of Sa'ud and the Muslim Brotherhood and the implications for world terrorism and stability.

The United States seeks to protect its source of oil. The United States and the world economy are dependent on it. A small fluctuation in oil prices or supply sends ripples through the world economy. When Baer begins to research the Muslim Brotherhood and the problems in the Middle East, he finds that all of the evidence points to Washington and Saudi Arabia and the oil that connects them.

Baer examines this relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia. He looks at the House of Sa'ud and its bribery and corruption, human rights abuses and funding of Islamic fundamentalist groups including terrorists like Osama bin Laden, who is a member of the Saudi royal family. He reports on the payoffs and bribes involved in doing business with the Saudi royal family and how official Washington is a part of it. The Saudis are known to be very helpful to former government people after their terms of service expire.

Baer feels that the CIA misread the situation on the Muslim Brotherhood and the danger they presented for the world. The CIA was more interested in using them in the war against Communism as in Afghanistan and helped to establish and fund training camps. These later become the training camps of al Qaeda.

The Saudis accepted the radical Wahhabis after they were expelled from Syria. Saudi funding helped build the schools and mosques in which they preached. The Saudi non-royal population lives in an oppressed society and ninety-five percent of the educated population under the age of forty-one supports bin Laden. Most of the population has contact with the radical Wahhabis sect. Baer concludes the Saudi Arabia is a tense situation that is waiting to explode. The United States continues to ignore the situation because of its dependence on oil.

Baer writes a book that is fascinating to read. The book is easy and quick reading and well worth the reader's time.

Prologue: The Doomsday Scenario

Prologue: The Doomsday Scenario Summary and Analysis

The Abqaiq extralight crude oil complex is a target for terrorist attacks. It is the most vulnerable part of the Saudi oil system. The cylindrical towers used for hydrodesulfurization are particularly vulnerable because of the hydrogen sulfide gas. It is not only dangerous to humans, it would also react with moisture to create sulfur dioxide acid, which would eat through all of the metal equipment. Because of the toxicity of the area, repairs would be delayed for months and the loss in oil output would be one third of America's daily consumption. This is the conclusion of a Reagan-era disaster planners study.

There are more than one thousand working wells, most of which are in the desert. Even the offshore targets are exposed and vulnerable to terrorist attack. Much of the oil moves through above-ground pipes and there are seventeen thousand kilometers of pipeline.

The pumped oil is first sent to five gas and oil separation plants to obtain sour crude, which is then sent to one of five stabilization plants, where it is held for desulfurization. The oil is refined in different locations and then sent to Ju'aymah or Ras Tanura for movement to oil tankers. All of the oil in the southern part of the country is sent through Abqaiq to the Red Sea or the Mediterranean.

The entire oil system infrastructure is vulnerable to terrorist attack by ground or by air. The author, Robert Baer, who had been a CIA case officer in the area, examined the vulnerability of the system and how the major economies of the world would just about be halted. The supply of oil and its price affects the United States and other countries and the United States is very dependent on Saudi oil. They control approximately one third of the world's supply of oil.

Radical Islam is prevalent in the kingdom which was once home to bin Laden. Saudi money finances many of their activities. Radicals believe the Saudi royal family has been corrupted by oil money. Baer feels that most of the problems in the Muslim world are due to the oil link between Washington and Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 1, We Deliver Anywhere

Chapter 1, We Deliver Anywhere Summary and Analysis

Baer is in Caesarea, Israel, a beach resort on the Israeli Riviera, in April of 2001. He is there to see a Russian arms dealer that he calls Yuri. His purpose is to propose a legitimate oil contract deal for a friend. Yuri is interested in Iraqi oil through Syria and is willing to pay two dollars a barrel above market. Iraqi oil is being sold on the black market outside of the United Nations imposed sanctions. Syria also profits greatly for the arrangement.

The problem with Iraqi oil from Syria is the transport because of the United Nations sanctions. Yuri makes the deal appealing by offering to supply transporter-erector-launchers and PMU-300 missiles to Syria. Baer, no longer with the CIA, is curious about the offer being made on Israeli soil and wonders what else Yuri is able to supply Baer had worked with Russian arms dealers during his career at the CIA. He decides to see what Yuri can tell him about arms deals to Saudi Arabian dissidents.

Saudi Arabia has the highest per capital spending on arms in the world, yet the United States provides for its external defense. Corruption accounts for some of the money as well as the protection of the royal family.

Baer, fishing for information, tells Yuri he needs weapons for delivery inside Saudi Arabia. Yuri says he doesn't do that kind of business but one of his associates does. He can deliver anywhere anytime for cash.

Chapter 2, Circling the Drain

Chapter 2, Circling the Drain Summary and Analysis

Baer never calls Yuri's Moscow contact, but he strongly suspects they could and have delivered within Saudi Arabia. He knows that Victor Bout has supplied bin Laden and others through Dubai. His company Air Cess is partly owned by the Russian external intelligence service.

Baer knows that smuggling into Saudi Arabia is easy because of its open borders. Until September 11, 2001 and the attack on the World Trade Center, Baer didn't think that any of the Saudis would be willing to die for their beliefs.

After the bombing of the United States barracks at Khobar, Saudi Interior Minister Na'if refuses to meet with FBI Director Louis Freeh. The Saudi government is not very cooperative with the United States after 9/11 either. American begins to realize that Saudi Arabia is not the friend they were told they were after the American invasion of Iraq when Saudi Arabia led the opposition to the invasion. Much of the Islamic terrorist activity is linked to the kingdom.

The Saudi royal family is very corrupt under King Faud. The princes supplement their royal allowances through corruption and criminal activities. The society is repressive for citizens, especially women. The Saudi princes are well known for their sexual activities.

Baer concludes that the Saudi rulers are prime targets to be overthrown.

Chapter 3, A Consent of Silence

Chapter 3, A Consent of Silence Summary and Analysis

In spite of Baer's analysis and conclusions about Saudi Arabia, Washington considers the country to be stable. Baer looks at how Washington treats Saudis. Many Saudis who are granted visas to the United States do not meet the qualifications for those visas. This is true of the fifteen Saudis who participated in the 9/11 attacks. There were no interviews with the visa applicants.

The United States State Department also supports the Saudi government and shields them from attack in areas like human rights abuses. They maintain that the Saudi government is committed to fight terrorism. The Saudis aided the Taliban in Afghanistan and gave foreign aid in the form of oil to Afghanistan and Pakistan. The kingdom provided over one billion dollars for the development of the nuclear bomb in Pakistan. The United States State Department never protested.

Saudi Ambassador to the United States, Bandar bin Sultan, always had access to President Bill Clinton. The Saudi influence is so strong that even the CIA avoids issues in Saudi Arabia.

Chapter 4, Saudi Arabia - Washington's 401(k) Plan

Chapter 4, Saudi Arabia - Washington's 401(k) Plan Summary and Analysis

Baer relates meeting the Kuwaiti petroleum minister at the Paris Ritz hotel where he is meeting with four opposition leaders from Qatar. The minister pays the bill for the group including a very expensive bottle of wine. This is also the Arab way with Washington.

Adnan Khashoggi is a Saudi wheeler-dealer who serves as the middleman for a variety of deals such as the Iran-Contra affair. The estimated cost of his lifestyle is two hundred fifty thousand dollars per day. Soon after Nixon is elected President, Khashoggi leaves a briefcase with one million dollars in cash at the San Clemente residence. Baer says this story is unconfirmed but that the Saudis believe that Washington is for sale.

Saudi money financed many think tanks and projects. There is a great deal of influence peddling. The Saudi financial situation changed during the Gulf War when it used up its budget surplus, but its influence peddling did not stop.

Many times the Saudis have given up the chance to profit from tight oil markets to help America. The United States is the kingdom's best customer and they want to prove that their oil supply is dependable. The Saudis are also good customers for United States industry. At the time of the 9/11 attacks, a group of investors known as the Carlyle Group was meeting at the Carlyle Hotel in Washington DC. In the group was Shaiq bin Laden, the brother of Osama, and other wealthy Saudis. The Carlyle Group made a lot of money with the Saudis. President G.H.W. Bush has been an advisor and speaker for Carlyle.

Chapter 5, Pavlov and His Dogs

Chapter 5, Pavlov and His Dogs Summary and Analysis

In 1994, Baer returns to Washington from Dushanbe, Tajikistan and is surprised by the rents and prices. Riding home on his bike one day, he passes the estate of Bandar bin Sultan, the Saudi Ambassador. Bandar is one of the most influential and powerful men in Washington.

Bandar becomes the Saudi Ambassador to the United States in 1983 when he is thirty-four years of age. He is an expert at both public and private diplomacy. Prior to being named ambassador, he was a military attaché and responsible for negotiating the sale of AWACs to the Saudi government. He is known to have performed favors for the United States and is known to donate heavily to Presidential libraries and other endeavors after an official leaves office.

Bandar and his wife Princess Haifa are lavish entertainers in the Washington scene and big givers to charity. The princess is said to have contributed to organizations that helped two of the 9/11 hijackers, but they contribute to many charities.

Baer compares Washington officials to Pavlov's dogs who salivate for money.

Chapter 6, The Seduction

Chapter 6, The Seduction Summary and Analysis

The first Middle East oil well was drilled in Iran in May 1908. In 1927, drilling the Kirkuk oil fields of northern Iraq began. Oil production began in Bahrain in 1932 and in Saudi Arabia in 1938. The Saudi fields were leased to Standard Oil of California, who later becomes a principal in Aramco. Saudi is the largest oil depository in the world. The engineer who drilled the first well, Tom Barger, eventually becomes CEO of Aramco.

The kingdom had only been united for five years when the first well was drilled. Ibn Sa'ud conquered Riyadh on January 15, 1902. He took Mecca in 1924 and Medina in 1925. His descendants become the royal family. They went from carrying the royal treasury around in a tin trunk in 1930 to become among the wealthiest people in the world. What began their fantastic wealth was giving SOCAL an exclusive sixty-year lease on the oil lands in the kingdom.

Saudi oil is very important in World War II. In 1945, Saudi Arabia was declared to be of vital interest to the United States. This made the kingdom available for direct and indirect aid. This guaranteed the supply of oil for the United States. They didn't want Soviet Russia or Britain to move into Saudi Arabia. At this time, the United States obtained most of its oil from Latin America, but it guaranteed a source of oil for Europe and it didn't want other countries to be influential in the kingdom.

Franklin Roosevelt and Ibn Sa'ud met for the first time in 1945. Their talks are very productive, including the approval of short term military bases on Saudi soil. This is the beginning of the long relationship between the two countries that led to fantastic wealth for many people.

The Wahhabis are follower of Muhammad ibn 'Abd-al-Wahhab, who preached a monotheistic form of Islam in the eighteenth century. He promoted a pure form of Islam. There was jihad, or holy war, for those who did not accept his teaching. Their tribesmen helped Ibn Sa'ud capture Mecca and Medina. When Sa'ud united the kingdom, Wahhabism became the state religion. When he dies in 1953, Crown Prince Sa'ud becomes king.

In the 1970s, the House of Sa'ud used its wealth to build schools and mosques. These become the places where radical Islam is preached.

Chapter 7, The Honeymoon

Chapter 7, The Honeymoon Summary and Analysis

Baer is in Amman, Jordan, in February of 1980. He is on the way to see a Syrian major whom he calls Ali, who is an Alawite, a member of the minority ruling sect. Baer is beginning to become interested in the Muslim Brotherhood at this time

Head of state Asad was an Alawite and trusted the members of the sect. The Alawites held all of the key position. A higher ranking Sunni officer had to obtain permission from a lower ranking Alawite in order to move equipment.

The beliefs of the Alawites are not written, but rather transmitted orally. Some Muslims accuse them of not being true Muslims, and in 1973, the Muslim Brotherhood tried to overthrow Asad. The attempt was unsuccessful.

Baer is stationed in India when he first becomes curious about the Muslim Brotherhood. The group was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna. Its goal was to purify Islam and expel the foreign influence from Egypt. When the group became violent in 1947, the government banned them. They assassinated the prime minister in 1949 and the government killed al-Banna in 1949. After reprisals from a 1954 assassination attempt against President Nasser, the group went underground and into exile. Many fled to Saudi Arabia. This is all the information that Baer learned from the CIA.

At the time, the CIA didn't have much interest in radical Muslim groups. They had no sources in the Muslim Brotherhood. The group was deeply underground and the CIA is more interested in Communism. Baer feels that the unofficial explanation is that Washington viewed the Brotherhood as a tool against Communism but nothing is documented about this. Baer had to delete the section on the funding of the Muslim Brotherhood at the CIA's request.

Baer doesn't learn anything about the Muslim Brotherhood or the functioning of Syria from Ali.

In 1980, the Brothers try to kill Asad. He has five hundred Muslim Brothers in prison killed. In February 1982, when the Brotherhood seizes Hama, he has the city leveled. Asad also let Saudi Arabia know that he wouldn't tolerate any funding of the Brotherhood inside Syria.

Egypt was more lax and this results in the assassination of Anwar Sadat. The attacks continue and Baer says they were responsible for the 9/11 attacks, with bin Laden receiving the publicity.

Chapter 8, Guess Who Came to Dinner

Chapter 8, Guess Who Came to Dinner Summary and Analysis

Baer is in Khartoum, Sudan in January of 1985. Several years earlier in Washington, when he was studying Arabic, a young Islamic lawyer named Khalid tutored him. When Baer arrives in Khartoum, he finds that Khalid is a judge. He talks to him and suspects that Khalid is a Muslim Brother, but Khalid denies it.

Soon Khalid is arrested with the Brothers leadership. He is held until April 1985 when Turabi comes to power.

In 1985, Baer is assigned to the CIA's Counter-Terrorism Center. He finds that there is very little information on Sunni fundamentalists. He feels that the CIA is wrong to ignore them.

Baer stationed in Beirut. He learns about Islam from Zuhagr Shawish, who he thinks is a Muslim Brother. Baer meets with him on and off for a year.

Baer is in Beirut to work on the American hostage problem. Headquarters sends a DEA informant named Jamal Hamdan to help. They keep Hamdan at a safe house and go out only to use public phones so he can call his contact. No information is obtained and Hamdan is sent back to the United States after a few days.

At this time, the actions of the Muslim Brotherhood were considered to be local problems in the countries where they occurred. They weren't views as part of a bigger picture. If they had been, they would have led to the Hamburg cell and many of the 9/11 hijackers. The same is true of Khalid Sheikh Muhammad.

Muhammad was born in Kuwait to two Pakistani refugees. Both he and his brother become Muslim brothers. He fought the Russians in Afghanistan, where he meets bin Laden.

Bin Laden came under the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood while in college. Saudi Arabia gave teaching positions to many of the brothers.

Chapter 9, Trouble in Paradise

Chapter 9, Trouble in Paradise Summary and Analysis

Baer is in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in November of 1992. Russia had no problems with Islamic Fundamentalism until 1979, when they seized control of Afghanistan. The revolt began and the Red Army invaded and the occupation last for ten years. By 1990, there were problems in other Soviet republics.

The Central Asian Republics are rich in oil and gas. All of their pipelines pass through Russia and after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States tried to find a way of bypassing the Soviet pipeline. The major oil companies ignored the political instability of the region.

Baer is touring the Central Asian Republics. He goes to Namangan, which is supposed to be the center of Islamic fundamentalism. He is in Uzbekistan where he hadn't obtained government permission to travel. That night he is guarded by two militiamen and not allowed to go out because of the danger.

In Kokand, Baer visits a mosque and talks to the local cleric in Arabic. He finds that the Qur'ans are donated by the International Islamic Relief Organization, which is the world's wealthiest Islamic charity. This charity, according to Baer, is controlled by the Saudi royal family. This is how they funded money to the Afghan moujahidin in the 1990s.

In Tashkent, an Islamic group crosses from Afghanistan and kills some Russian guards. The local Russian intelligence chief visits Baer and blames Saudi Arabia. He returns two days later with a list of names of Arabs he says participated in the attack. Baer had the names checked in Islamabad. They find nothing.

Baer has left the CIA by the time he reads Russian intelligence reports about Saudi backing of Chechen rebels. Their training camp was sponsored by King Fahd.

Chapter 10, Hard Landing

Chapter 10, Hard Landing Summary and Analysis

The United States buys oil from Saudi Arabia and the Saudis use the money to buy armaments from the United States. They are the best armaments customer of the United States. The arms are paid for through reverse collections, which means they don't show upon the books. Much of the money is kickbacks to the Saudi royal family. This is a part of doing business with Saudi Arabia. The practice is also in violation of United States law.

Boeing entered into contracts to deliver aircraft to the Saudis. They signed consulting agreements with Khalid bin Mahfouz to act as middleman. The excessive commissions of ten to twelve percent were the funds used for bribes and kickbacks.

In November of 1995, right after the deal between Boeing and Saudi Arabia was made, a car bomb exploded at a United States training facility in Riyadh. The Saudis executed four men before the FBI could interview them. Bin Laden usually favors these kinds of attacks.

The Saudis have the world's most advanced welfare state. Since the Wahhabis control the educational system, most of the people are educated in Islamic studies instead of practical subjects like computers and engineering. In addition, the Saudi economy cannot absorb all of the working age population.

The Saudi Treasury is very sensitive to changes in oil prices. There is also a tremendous increase in the growth of the royal family. This leads to more involvement in criminal activities to pay for all of their vices. The division between the ruling class and the underclass widens.

Baer is ignored in his warnings to the government regarding Islamic extremists.

Chapter 11, Kiss it good-bye

Chapter 11, Kiss it good-bye Summary and Analysis

Saudi Arabia experiences problems after King Fahd suffered a stroke on November 29, 1995. He is still clinically alive so Crown Prince Abdallah can't become king. There is near chaos as the member of the royal family come from all over the world. As long as Fahd is alive they will receive their stipends. They don't know if Abdallah will continue the stipends.

Abdallah wants reforms and an end to the corruption and thievery. He tries for reforms with Fahd, but loses the battle. For example, he wants the money from Yamama brought under Treasury control. The same is true for the expansion of the Two Holy Mosques project. The royal family tries to keep Abdallah away from Fahd.

In Saudi Arabia, succession is determined by the senior princes. The Fahd brothers are afraid Azouzi will try to interfere and they are concerned about his funding of radical causes. Na'if, in 2002, says that the Saudi and Arab problems are due to the Muslim Brotherhood. They turned against the kingdom.

Washington continues to ignore the royal families funding of radical movements but talks them into contributing billions of dollars for the Gulf War. The Saudi expenditures make it difficult for them to pay for the Boeing deal. Sultan continues to purchase arms. The American don't really care what happens in Saudi as long as they have their oil.

Chapter 12, In the War on Terrorism, You Lie, You Die

Chapter 12, In the War on Terrorism, You Lie, You Die Summary and Analysis

Before leaving the CIA on December 4, 1997, two incidents occurred that convinced Baer that the CIA was out of touch with what is really happening and to leave.

The first factor has to do with Iraq. In October 1994, Baer is deputy chief of Iraqi operations. There is a rumor that Saddam is planning to re-invade Iraq. Baer can't obtain any information because there is no good intelligence coming from Saudi Arabia or Kuwait.

After leaving the CIA, Baer goes to Beirut, which is rebuilding after the civil war. He is investigating the activities of the Qatar opposition for a friend and looking into the activities of the black prince Hamad bin Jasim. They meet at the Park Hotel in the Bika valley and continue meeting for several months. The black prince wants to try to overthrow the Qatar government again. Baer visit the prince at his Syrian home, where the prince talks about bin Laden and Khalid Shaekh Muhammad and how the Qatari government provided them with twenty passports and hide the blind Sheikh from the FBI.

Baer knows about the Bojinka plot to blow up United States airplanes. Baer passes the information from the prince to a friend at the CIA. He is told that the CIA isn't interested in the information. As Baer begins to talk to the New York Times, the black prince is kidnapped and held in Doha.

Baer pursues the story. He finds a friend of the prince and finds that he and his family were harassed by the FBI.

In 1998, Baer talks to Wall Street Journal reporter Danny Pearl. Pearl contacts him again after the 9/11 attacks. Pearl calls Qatar to talk about Khalid Sheikh Muhammad and is told they know nothing about it or him. Pearl is murdered while working on the story.

Epilogue

Epilogue Summary and Analysis

Baer feels that United States policy is that democracy will cure all of the problems. Some day the people will run the government and corruption and terrorism will end. Official Washington still supports the Saudi efforts, feeling they are fighting terrorism.

An October, 2001 poll shows that ninety-five percent of educated Saudis under the age of forty-one support bin Laden. Why does the United States think democracy will work there? Free elections would result in an Islamic fundamentalist government that would be hostile to Washington.

Baer feels it is the Saudi royals who want to keep things as they are in the country to protect their own lifestyles. The Saudi situation oppresses the population and the anger is directed at the West as a distraction away from the ruling family. The United States created this situation with its need for oil and petrodollars. The United States is dependent on Middle Eastern oil and Saudi Arabia is the biggest producer with the largest reserves.

Baer feels that Asad of Syria had the answer when he cracked down on the Muslim Brotherhood. Saudi Arabia should take steps in this direction, but there is too much division in the royal family for them to do so.

If the United States took over the Saudi oil field, it would be a tricky situation and would lead to an increase in terrorism around the world. The United States also wouldn't look good in public opinion polls. This is the opinion of a Congressional Research Service study.

Afterword

Afterword Summary and Analysis

In March 2003, Baer goes to Iraq with CBS news to cover the events. He knows the invasions will change the Middle East. There are terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis say this is a wake-up call for them. Radical Wahhabis clerics publicly withdraw their calls for jihad.

After the fall of Baghdad, Baer travels around the various countries learning what the key players think of the situation. He talks to both Sunni and Shi'a clerics. They are divided in the opinions of whether Muslims will go to Iraq to fight the Americans.

Baer concludes that the Shi'a will be the cement that binds Iraq together and that if the United States is not successful, it will be the end of the House of Sa'ud.

Characters

Robert Baer

Robert Baer is the author of the book. He is a former CIA case officer who has served in Lebanon, the Sudan, northern Iraq and the Muslim states of Central Asia. He has also served in Paris, Rabat and India in his role as a case officer for the Directorate of Operations for the CIA. In addition to being widely traveled, he speaks Arabic, Farsi, French and German. He has worked with agents who infiltrated organizations like the Hizballah, Libyan intelligence and al Qaeda. Baer has spent twenty-five years trying to understand the causes of violence in the Middle East. He wants to learn about the Muslim brothers and what it is that unites them throughout the Muslim world. He feels that the problems are due to the oil link between Washington and Saudi Arabia. Many Muslims feel that the House of Sa'ud has been corrupted by oil money, which is the cause of much of the hatred of the militant Muslims in the country and the rest of the world. He becomes interested in the Muslim Brotherhood when he is assigned to India and sees them as a threat to United States security. When he tries to learn about the organization, he finds the CIA has little information available on them. The government seems to use them in their war on communism, as in Afghanistan. They are also heavily supported by the Saudi royal family. Baer feels that Washington is only interested in oil and not in what is really happening. Baer worked for the CIA until his resignation in December 1997.

Bandar bin Sultan

Bandar bin Sultan is the Saudi ambassador to the United States. The Saudi prince has a very strong influence on United States President Bill Clinton and can always see the President whenever he wants. Because of this, Saudis have an easy time securing visas to the United States, and even the CIA avoids the internal Saudi situation. Bandar's Washington residence is an estate in Virginia, and he is the only ambassador who receives official State Department protection. He does not rank high in the Saudi royal family tree since his father is the defense minister and his mother was a house servant, but he is one of the most influential men in Washington. He was thirty-four years of age in 1983 when he was named ambassador. He had been a fighter pilot and then the military attaché. He was influential in securing the approval of the sale of AWACs to the kingdom in 1981. He deposited money in the Vatican Bank at the suggestion of the CIA director to help defeat Italian Communists and provided money from the royal family to arm the Nicaraguan rebels. His wife is Princess Haifa and they are good friends with the Bush family. Bandar contributed heavily to the Presidential libraries and other causes. Bandar and his wife are lavish entertainers in Washington for various dignitaries. His wife is said to have made charitable contributions that may have helped two of the 9/11 hijackers, but there is no way to be sure because the Saudis won't investigate. Bandar and Saudi money are a very powerful influence in



Washington. He himself is a big spender and leads the extravagant lifestyle that other Saudi royals live

Na'if

Na'if is a Saudi prince and brother of King Fahd. He is the Saudi Interior Minister. He is anti-American and refuses to meet with FBI Director Louis Freeh after the bombing of the United States barracks at Khobar. His major concern is protecting the power of the House of Sa'ud. He contributes to charities that funnel money to al Qaeda.

Osama bin Laden

Osama bin Laden is a member of the Saudi royal family. His father is Bakr bin Laden, who enjoys great wealth from his construction company. Introduced to radical Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood while in college, he is the founder of al Qaeda and the sponsor of many terrorists acts.

Sultan

Sultan is a member of the royal family and the father of Prince Bandar. He held many positions in Saudi Arabia, including Minister of Defense and Aviation and chairman of Saudi Arabian airlines. He enjoys immense wealth from business dealings.

Abdallah

Abdallah is the half brother of King Fahd and the crown prince. When Fahd is incapacitated by a stroke, Abdallah cannot become king until his death. He favors reform and an end to corruption, which is why he is not liked by the other royals.

Ibn Sa'ud

Ibn Sa'ud fought with the Wahhabis to form Saudi Arabia in 1932. He was king until he died in 1953. He formed the alliance with Standard Oil of California and the United States during World War II. It is believed that he sired forty-three sons.

Muhammad ibn 'Abd-al-Wahhab

Muhammad ibn 'Abd-al-Wahhab was born in 1703 or 1704. He is the founder of the Wahhabis movement, which became the Muslim Brotherhood, which is the basis of the Muslim fundamentalism movement.

Fahd

Fahd is crown prince of Saudi Arabia and becomes king in 1982. He is popular with the royal family because of the stipends he provides to them. He has seven sons. He is incapacitated by a stroke in 1995.

Salman

Salman is a Saudi prince. He is governor of Riyadh for forty years and in charge of Saudi charities. Some of the money from these charities goes to al Qaeda.



Objects/Places

Abqaiq

Abqaiq is an extra light crude oil complex located in eastern Saudi Arabia located about forty kilometers from the Gulf of Bahrain.

Caesarea

Caesarea is an Israeli Mediterranean beach resort located south of Haifa.

Amman

Amman is the capital of Jordan and is located in the northwestern part of the country.

Khartoum

Khartoum is the capital of the African country of Sudan.

Bishkek

Bishkek is the capital of Kyrgyzstan a Central Asian Muslim republic.

Beirut

Beirut is the capital of Lebanon, located between Israel and Syria.

Paris

Paris is the capital of France and is located in Western Europe.

Riyadh

Riyadh is the capital of Saudi Arabia and is located in the center of the country.

Damascus

Damascus is the capital of Syria, located north of Lebanon.

Washington DC

Washington DC is the capital of the United States located on the East Coast. The CIA is located in Langley, Virginia which is a suburb.

Themes

Corruption

Corruption is a major theme of the book. Corruption is a part of the culture of the Saudi royal family, according to Baer. There are more than thirty thousand members of the House of Sa'ud. They receive stipends from the king, which were generous under King Fahd. Many members of the royal family have lifestyles that exceed their stipends. They have palaces and huge estates around the world, yachts, expensive cars and like to spend their time in the casinos on the Riviera. They have to obtain money to support these extravagant life styles and many do it through corruption and crime. Bribery and kickbacks are a part of any business deal with the Saudis. Negotiating a deal to purchase aircraft from Boeing involves millions of dollars in kickbacks to the royal family member involved. The Saudis are used to buying whatever they want in terms of influence. Prince Bandar makes no secret of the fact that the way to gain the cooperation of American government officials is to make it clear that the Saudis are there after their terms of service ends for things like private sector jobs, donations to presidential libraries and the endowment of university chairs. The oil money makes them very influential in Washington and other world capitals. It is known that doing business with the Saudis involves bribes and kickbacks, but all the participants become wealthy from the dealings. The corruption also extends to the domestic Saudi economy, where a royal family member obtains any landsite he wants by having the land condemned.

Relationship - Saudi Arabia - Wahhabis

A second dominant theme of the book is the relationship between the House of Sa'ud and the Wahhabis. The Wahhabis are followers of their founder, Muhammad ibn 'Abd-al-Wahab, who lived in the eighteenth century. He believed that Muslims had strayed from the teachings of the Qur'an and preach a return to a pure form of Islam based on the Qur'an and the Sunna, the code of conduct. His followers are known as Wahhabis. They preach death to infidels. The Wahhabis are the basis for the fundamental Islam. The Wahhabis fought with Muhammad ibn Sa'ud for more than two hundred years. They helped the Sa'ud seize the holy cities of Mecca and Medina and to form the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Sa'ud established Wahhabism as the state religion. The Wahhabis settled in different countries and became the basis for the Muslim Brotherhood. In Egypt, they killed the prime minister and attempted to assassinate Nasser, who drove them underground and into exile. Many of them went to Syria and Saudi Arabia. When they caused trouble in Syria, Asad drove them out and many found refuge in Saudi Arabia where they teach in mosques and schools. Bin Laden was converted to radical Islam when he was a college student. Saudi money paid for the schools and mosques where the fundamental Islamists preach. The royal family is a big donor to charity and some of this money is funneled to radical Islamic terrorist organizations. The Wahhabis helped the House of Sa'ud gain and maintain its power.

Relationship - United States and Saudi Arabia

The relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia is a third theme of the book. The relationship dates back to the 1930s, when Standard Oil of California secured oil leases on the land and drilled the first oil well. Saudi Arabia is the world's biggest oil producer and has the largest reserves of oil. Both countries cemented their relationship during World War II, even though at that time the United States used Latin American oil. Over the years, as the United States economy grew, the country became more and more dependent on Middle East oil and particularly Saudi Arabian oil. Saudi Arabia is now the biggest supplier to the United States. The United States and the world economy are so dependent on Saudi and Middle East oil that any fluctuation in oil prices or supplies results in serious economic consequences. The United States wants to maintain the flow of oil and the recycling of petrodollars. The Saudis receive oil revenues from the sale of oil to the United States and use many of those dollars to purchase armaments from the United States. The people involved in these business dealings, like the Carlyle Group, become extremely wealthy. Because of the dependency on oil and the need to guarantee a continuous affordable supply, the United States looks the other way when it comes to the corruption and human rights abuses of the House of Sa'ud. They also overlooked the funding of various Wahhabis charities, some of which fund radical Islamic terrorist groups like al Qaeda.

Style

Perspective

Sleeping With the Devil is written in the first person point of view from the perspective of the author, Edward Baer. Baer functions as the narrator of the book. Much of the information in the book stems from Baer's years as a case officer for the CIA. He is widely traveled and has served in various places in the Islamic world and became interested in the problems in the Middle East and curious about the organization known as the Muslim Brotherhood. Baer spends years trying to find out about them and their links to the House of Sa'ud and presents this information in the book. Writing in the first person is appropriate for this kind of book because Baer is presenting his experiences. The use of the first person is not a limiting factor in this kind of book because Baer can supply all of the background and detail information that is required for the reader to understand the topic. The use of the first person also adds to the realism of the different situations when Baer is talking about his own experiences. He wrote the book because he wants the reader to know about the relationship between the United States, Saudi Arabia and the Wahhabis, or Muslim Brotherhood. This relationship is the cause of problems in the Middle East and is one that the United States allowed to develop because of its dependence on Saudi oil. Baer is more than qualified to write a book of this nature since he spent more than twenty years as a CIA case officer.

Tone

The tone of *Sleeping With the Devil* is subjective. The author is writing about his own experiences and presenting his own opinions. He obtains much of his information from conversations with people and from intelligence sources. He analyzes the information and presents his conclusions. The problem is that there is no way for the reader to substantiate any of the information, such as the story about Adnan Khashoggi leaving a briefcase with one million dollars in cash at the San Clemente home of Richard Nixon several days after he is elected President. There is no way to document the conversations he had with different members of the Muslim Brotherhood or Wahhabis clerics or anybody else. Some of the information comes from Russian and other intelligence reports, which obviously can't be documented, and in places where information could be documented, it isn't. There are no footnotes or credits in the book except for the Acknowledgments page. Because of the sources of Baer's information, it is understandable that there is no documentation presented and also because of this lack of documentation, the reader has to be careful of how the information is interpreted. Baer presents a cohesive picture of the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the Wahhabis and the oil depending on the United States but without any sources that the reader can check. The reader has to wonder how much of the information is fact and how much is opinion.

Structure

Sleeping With the Devil by Robert Baer is a relatively short book of 238 pages that is quick and easy reading. The book is divided into three parts, *Speak no Evil*, *Sleeping With the Devil*, and *Going Down*. There is a Prologue titled *The Doomsday Scenario*, in which Baer presents a scenario showing how vulnerable the Saudi oil fields are to a terrorist attack. The body of the book is presented in the three sections containing a total of twelve chapters. Each chapter has a number and title. The book concludes with an Epilogue and an Afterword. All of the chapters are relatively short in the ten to twelve page range.

There is a Table of Contents that lists the parts, chapter number, title and page numbers. There is a detailed Index at the back of the book which makes it easy for the reader to look up information presented in the book. There is also useful information presented at the front of the book. There is a detailed map of the region which the reader will often refer to. This makes it easy to find the location that the author is referring to. There is also an Abbreviated Family Tree of The House of Sa'ud that presents some information about the rank and positions of some of the characters.

There are no footnotes or sources to document any of the information presented in the book. Much of this is due to the way the information is obtained is obtained as is expected with the nature of the sources and information. There is an Acknowledgments page.

Quotes

"At the least, a moderate-to-severe attack on Abqaiq would slow average production there from 6.8 millions barrels a day to roughly a million barrels for the first two months postattack, a loss equivalent to approximately one-third of America's current daily consumption of crude oil. Even as long as seven months after an attack, Abqaiq output would still be about 40 percent of preattack output, as much as 4 million barrels below normal - roughly equal to what all of the OPEC partners collectively took out of production during the devastation 1973 embargo."

Prologue, p. xxi

"My business with Yuri, if you want to call it that, was to do a favor for a friend who wanted to know if Yuri was interested in financing an oil contract, a perfectly legitimate one. My friend figured that the Russian, with all his loose cash, might want to get out of the arms trade and clean up his reputation."

Chap. 1, p. 4

"Loose arms and open borders are never a good sign, but they don't necessarily mean that a country is about to slip into a civil war or go under. What you need to bring down a regime like the Al Sa'ud is a readiness of its citizens to pick up those arms and use them, to fight and die for their beliefs, in this instance against a heavily armed, well-paid, and very extensive palace guard ."

Chap. 2, p. 16

"Bandar was not someone to be joked with, even by the president's CIA director."

Chap. 3, p. 36

"Saudi Arabia's seduction of Washington worked the same way: They paid, we took, and everyone politely averted their eyes. It all began with a lesson the Saudis learned at San Clemente, California, after the 1968 presidential election: America might be the most powerful nation on earth, but its leaders couldn't say no."

Chap. 4, p. 41

"Washington was a company town, and Bandar had a seat on the board. If you wanted to move into even the outer reaches of his orbit, you had damn well better play by his rules."

Chap. 5, p. 63

"And oil would upend almost everything about the capital, the kingdom, and in some ways the entire Muslim world, and of course, the Western world, too, because oil, the West, Islam, and Saudi Arabia can never be wholly separated."

Chap. 6, p. 75

"Based on headquarters' messages, I gathered that the CIA knew next to nothing about the Muslim Brotherhood. My assumption was that it didn't have a source, a spy, a plant, anything, anywhere in the organization. The agency clearly had no idea how the Syrian

Brothers were organized or where they were getting their money, and frankly, I was surprised."

Chap. 7, p. 95

"Here was a guy I'd spent the better part of a year with, a friend, but he couldn't bring himself to tell me he was a Brother. I was starting to sympathize with the CIA. The Brotherhood was a nut almost impossible to crack."

Chap. 8, p. 112

"Sensing this post-1967 resurgence of faith and eager to cover their rear ends, the royal family started flooding charities with money, the IIRO among them."

Chap. 9, p. 141

"We bought oil from Saudi Arabia, refine it, and put it in our automobiles, and a certain small percentage of what we pay for it ends up funding terrorist acts against America and American institutions at home and abroad."

Chap. 10, p. 151

"The United States had made a pact with the devil and was going to stick with it until the catastrophic end. As long as Sultan kept buying American weapons and Aramco kept banking our oil, no one in Washington cared what was happening in the kingdom."

Chap. 11, p. 185

"A couple of months before I resigned from the CIA, I found myself wondering if there was anything not for sale in Washington."

Chap. 12, p. 187

"We can't get around the fact that the House of Sa'ud underwrites the mosque schools that turn out the jihadists, just as it administers the charities that fund the jihadists. It channels the anger of the jihadist against the West to distract it from the rot in the House of Sa'ud."

Epilogue, p. 205

"Washington made us lie down with the devil. It made the bed, pulled back the covers, and invited the devil in. We whispered in his ear and told him we loved him. When things went a little wrong, Washington held his hand and said it was all right. And all that time we had our eye on his bulging wallet, lit by the moonlight on the dresser."

Afterword, p. 212

Topics for Discussion

Why is Saudi Arabia so important as an oil producer? Why is the Saudi oil system so vulnerable to attack?

Why does Baer feel that the Saudi royal family is a target to be overthrown? What characteristics does he mention in the royal family and in the population?

How did the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia begin? Who benefited and why?

What is the Muslim Brotherhood? Why did Baer take an interest in the group?

How are radical Islamic groups funded through charities? What evidence is there of Saudi involvement in the funding of these groups?

What made Baer decide to leave the CIA? What are his conclusions about the 9/11 attacks?

What is Baer's opinion of the House of Sa'ud? How does he feel the war in Iraq will affect the House of Sa'ud?