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# WITHDRAWAL SHEET

## Ronald Reagan Library

**Collection Name** BURNS, WILLIAM: FILES

**Withdrawer**

MJD 2/13/2008

**File Folder** SAUDI ARABIA (10)

**FOIA**

F03-028

**Box Number** 91893

CARSON

10

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
50677	CABLE	292317Z JUN 88	2	6/29/1988	B1
50678	MEMO	TYRUS COBB TO COLIN POWELL RE LETTER FROM PM THATCHER	2	7/13/1988	B1
50679	MEMO	COLIN POWELL TO THE PRESIDENT RE LETTER FROM PM THATCHER	2	ND	B1
50680	LETTER	PRESIDENT REAGAN TO PM THATCHER	2	ND	B1
50681	MEMO	RICHARD ARMITAGE TO COLIN POWELL RE SAUDI ARMS PURCHASE	1	7/1/1988	B1
50682	LETTER	PM THATCHER TO PRESIDENT REAGAN	2	7/1/1988	B1
50683	PAPER	RE MEETING W/PRINCE BANDAR	1	ND	B1

The above documents were not referred for declassification review at time of processing

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

8/13/86

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TO: Dennis Ross  
FROM: Bill Burns *BB*  
SUBJECT: Dialogue with Saudis

Attached are a few preliminary thoughts on the kinds of interests that could be reviewed with Bandar.

DECLASSIFIED  
White House Guidelines, August 20, 1997  
by WJ NARA, Dec. 21, 2008

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

*Saudi  
Arabia*

October 28, 1981

Dear Senator Baker:

On October 1, 1981, I formally notified the Congress of our intention to sell AWACS aircraft and F-15 enhancement items to Saudi Arabia. This sale will enhance our vital national security interests by contributing directly to the stability and security of the critical area from the Persian Gulf through the Middle East to North Africa. It will improve significantly the capability of Saudi Arabia and the United States to defend the oilfields and facilities on which the security of the Free World depends, and it will pose no realistic threat to Israel.

When this proposed sale was first announced last spring, the Congress expressed concerns about certain aspects of the sale. After analyzing these concerns in detail, we entered into a series of discussions with the Government of Saudi Arabia over the summer.

The Government of Saudi Arabia has agreed, and I am convinced welcomes the fact, that the United States will have an important, long-term role and will maintain direct involvement in the development of the Saudi air defense system, including the AWACS. We also have reached agreement with the Saudi Government on a number of specific arrangements that go well beyond their firm agreement to abide fully by all the standard terms of the normal Letter of Offer and Acceptance as required by the Arms Export Control Act.

Transfer of the AWACS will take place only on terms and conditions consistent with the Act and only after the Congress has received in writing a Presidential certification, containing agreements with Saudi Arabia, that the following conditions have been met:

1. Security of Technology

A. That a detailed plan for the security of equipment

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technology, information, and supporting documentation has been agreed to by the United States and Saudi Arabia and is in place; and

- ✓ B. The security provisions are no less stringent than measures employed by the U.S. for protection and control of its equipment of like kind outside the continental U.S.; and
- ✓ C. The U.S. has the right of continual on-site inspection and surveillance by U.S. personnel of security arrangements for all operations during the useful life of the AWACS. It is further provided that security arrangements will be supplemented by additional U.S. personnel if it is deemed necessary by the two parties; and
- ✓ D. Saudi Arabia will not permit citizens of third nations either to perform maintenance on the AWACS or to modify any such equipment without prior, explicit mutual consent of the two governments; and
- ✓ E. Computer software, as designated by the U.S. Government, will remain the property of the USG.

## 2. Access to Information

- ✓ That Saudi Arabia has agreed to share with the United States continuously and completely the information that it acquires from use of the AWACS.

## 3. Control Over Third-Country Participation

- ✓ A. That Saudi Arabia has agreed not to share access to AWACS equipment, technology, documentation, or any information developed from such equipment or technology with any nation other than the U.S. without the prior, explicit mutual consent of both governments; and
- B. There are in place adequate and effective procedures requiring the screening and security clearance of citizens of Saudi Arabia and that only cleared Saudi citizens and cleared U.S. nationals will have access to AWACS equipment, technology, or documentation, or information derived therefrom, without the prior, explicit mutual consent of the two governments.

#### 4. AWACS Flight Operations

That the Saudi AWACS will be operated solely within the boundaries of Saudi Arabia, except with the prior, explicit mutual consent of the two governments, and solely for defensive purposes as defined by the United States, in order to maintain security and regional stability.

#### 5. Command Structure

That agreements as they concern organizational command and control structure for the operation of AWACS are of such a nature to guarantee that the commitments above will be honored.

#### 6. Regional Peace and Security

That the sale contributes directly to the stability and security of the area, enhances the atmosphere and prospects for progress toward peace, and that initiatives toward the peaceful resolution of disputes in the region have either been successfully completed or that significant progress toward that goal has been accomplished with the substantial assistance of Saudi Arabia.

The agreements we have reached with Saudi Arabia on security of technology, access to information, control over third-country participation, and AWACS flight operations will be incorporated into the U.S./Saudi General Security of Military Information Agreement, the Letters of Offer and Acceptance (the government-to-government sales contracts), and related documents. These documents will stipulate that the sale will be cancelled and that no equipment or services will be delivered in the event any of the agreements is breached. I will not authorize U.S. approval of any of these contracts and agreements until I am satisfied that they incorporate fully the provisions that satisfy the concerns that you and I share. I do not foresee any need for changes in these arrangements, but should circumstances arise that might require such changes, they would be made only with Congressional participation.

I believe it is important to look beyond these agreements to their practical consequences, and to the implications of U.S. security assistance and training requested by Saudi Arabia. For example, the agreement

we have reached with the Saudi Government to protect the security of equipment also affects the nature, extent, and duration of the U.S. role in the AWACS program. Since skilled Saudi personnel available for this program will remain in short supply, the U.S./Saudi agreement that third-country nationals will not be permitted to operate or maintain the Saudi AWACS will, in practice, extend U.S. involvement in Saudi AWACS operations and activities well into the 1990s. U.S. military and contractor personnel will be required to provide extensive operational training for Saudi AWACS aircrews; it will be 1990 at the earliest before the eight Saudi crews needed to operate all five AWACS aircraft will be trained, and replacement and refresher training of individual Saudi crew members will require USAF Technical Assistance Field Teams during the 1990s. Critical AWACS maintenance, logistics, and support functions, particularly radar and computer software support, will, of necessity, be performed by U.S. personnel in Saudi Arabia and in the United States, for the life of the AWACS.

The Saudi agreement not to share AWACS-gathered information with third countries also has significant practical consequences. This agreement, combined with the standard requirement that U.S.-supplied equipment be used solely for defensive purposes, as well as the agreed-to Saudi AWACS configuration, precludes any possibility that Saudi AWACS could contribute to coordinated operations with other countries' armed forces against any nation in the region without our consent and cooperation.

Concerning the agreement to operate AWACS only inside the Kingdom, it should also be noted that the Saudi Air Force will be trained to operate the AWACS in accordance with standard USAF AWACS doctrine and procedures, which call for AWACS to remain at all times a "safe distance" behind sensitive political borders -- normally 100 to 150 nautical miles -- to ensure AWACS security and survivability. Given the physical location of the oilfields AWACS is to defend, the vulnerability of AWACS should it operate near sensitive borders, and the history of Saudi observance of U.S. Air Force tactical doctrine, we are confident that the Saudis will adopt these practices.


In a broader sense, by enhancing the perception of the United States as a reliable security partner, we

improve the prospects for closer cooperation between ourselves and the Saudi Government in working toward our common goal of a just and lasting peace in the region. Since assuming the responsibilities of the Presidency, I have been impressed by the increasingly constructive policy of Saudi Arabia in advancing the prospects for peace and stability in the Middle East. The Saudi Government's critical contribution to securing a ceasefire in Lebanon is a striking example. I am persuaded that this growing Saudi influence is vital to the eventual settlement of the differences that continue to divide Israel and most of the Arab world.

I am confident that the Saudi AWACS will pose no realistic threat to Israel. I remain fully committed to protecting Israel's security and to preserving Israel's ability to defend against any combination of potentially hostile forces in the region. We will continue to make available to Israel the military equipment it requires to defend its land and people, with due consideration to the presence of AWACS in Saudi Arabia. We have also embarked on a program of closer security cooperation with Israel. This proposed sale to Saudi Arabia neither casts doubt on our commitment, nor compromises Israeli security.

It is my view that the agreements we have reached with the Government of Saudi Arabia take account of the concerns raised by the Congress. I am persuaded, as I believe the Congress will be, that the proposed Saudi air defense enhancement package makes an invaluable contribution to the national security interests of the United States, by improving both our strategic posture and the prospects for peace in the Middle East. I look forward to continuing to work with you toward these vital goals.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Howard H. Baker, Jr.  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

*Saudi Arabia*  
NR

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON D C 20301

9 May 1978

Honorable John J. Sparkman  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

During recent conversations with you and other members of your Committee, a number of questions have been raised regarding the characteristics of the F-15 aircraft we propose to sell to Saudi Arabia and reassurances as to the purposes for which Saudi Arabia will use the aircraft. I would like to respond to these questions and attempt to resolve any uncertainties that members may have felt regarding the proposed sale.

I. The F-15 Aircraft

The F-15 we plan to sell to Saudi Arabia will have the same configurations as the interceptor model approved for the United States Air Force. During the developmental phase of the F-15, initial plans called for giving the aircraft a ground attack capability. However, the availability of other aircraft with superior strike capabilities led the Air Force to alter its plans and to limit the role of the F-15 to that of an air superiority fighter. Consequently, the development of new ground attack systems for the F-15 was discontinued in 1975.

Saudi Arabia chose the F-15 because of its extended patrol capability and superior air defense characteristics (including an advanced, all-weather air-to-air radar system). The F-15 best meets Saudi Arabian requirements for the air defense of a vast territory. In choosing the F-15, Saudi Arabia rejected aircraft with powerful ground attack capabilities such as the F-16.

As Saudi Arabia has selected the F-15 to defend its national territory, it would be folly, as the Chairman designate of the JCS, General David Jones, USAF, observed in testimony, to use the F-15 offensively against neighboring countries. This is particularly so vis-a-vis Israel, whose air strength is, and will be, so much greater. Not only would the F-15 be relatively ineffective in an offensive mode, and the risk of loss of the aircraft high, but its use away from Saudi Arabia would leave vital oil facilities, urban centers and military installations without necessary air defense cover. From the standpoint of military planning, it would make no sense whatsoever for Saudi Arabia to acquire an aircraft with the characteristics of the F-15 with an idea of using it as a ground attack aircraft. I am confident the Saudis have no such intention.

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Like the USAF model, the F-15 for Saudi Arabia will be equipped with air defense armament, namely four AIM-9 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, four AIM-7 Sparrow air-to-air missiles and a 20 mm gun.

The aircraft can carry three external fuel tanks, but the plane requested by Saudi Arabia will not be equipped with special features that could give it additional range. Specifically, the planes will not have conformal fuel tanks ("fast packs"), i.e., auxiliary fuel tanks that conform to the body of the plane, and Saudi Arabian KC-130 tankers do not have equipment for air refueling of the F-15.

Saudi Arabia has not requested that the plane be outfitted with Multiple Ejection Racks (MER 200) which would allow the plane to carry a substantial bomb load. The U.S. will not furnish such MERs, and testing and certification of a MER system for the F-15 would not be feasible by another country without U.S. authorization. While aircraft could conceivably carry three standard MK 84 bombs, they would each replace an external fuel tank; this would greatly shorten the aircraft's range and increase its vulnerability. Moreover, in contrast to the F-16, the F-15 does not have a radar system designed for bombing.

Saudi Arabia has not requested nor do we intend to sell any other systems or armaments that would increase the range or enhance the ground attack capability of the F-15.

Pursuant to our national security disclosure policy, certain highly sensitive subcomponents of the U.S. Air Force version of the F-15 (e.g., cryptologic equipment and some special electronic capabilities) will not be sold to Saudi Arabia.

In sum, it is clear that the F-15 will help Saudi Arabia deter and defend against those nations that are hostile to its role as a leading moderate Arab state.

## II. Assurances

The Government of Saudi Arabia has assured us that it has no aggressive intentions against any state, that it will use the F-15 aircraft only in furtherance of its legitimate self-defense, and that it will not employ the aircraft offensively. The Saudi Arabian Government has similarly assured us that it will not transfer the F-15 aircraft to any third country or permit the nationals of such country to train on the F-15 aircraft, serve as pilots, or otherwise to have access to the aircraft without the authorization of the United States.

We have specifically discussed these restrictions on use and prohibitions on transfer with the Government of Saudi Arabia. They have assured us that they intend scrupulously to comply with these prohibitions and restrictions. The record of Saudi Arabia in this respect is excellent. However, should the assurances be violated, the United States can take appropriate action, including suspension of services and of delivery of spare parts and other military equipment. Without such services the usability of the F-15 would degrade rapidly.

It is also important to note that the sales agreement reserves to the United States the right to suspend or cancel deliveries at any time "when the national interest of the United States so requires." Further, under Section 21(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, no U.S. person employed under Foreign Military Sales contracts in Saudi Arabia or any other country would be permitted to perform services in support of combat operations.

Questions have been raised concerning the possible basing of the F-15 aircraft at Tabuk Air Base. I would like to repeat to you the assurance given to me and other United States officials by the Saudi Arabian Government that Saudi Arabia will base the F-15 aircraft, not at Tabuk, but at Dhahran, Taif and possibly at Riyadh or Khamis Mushait. Basing the F-15 at the vulnerable Tabuk base could place in needless jeopardy these vital aircraft which will form the heart of the Saudi Arabian air defense system. In addition, Tabuk is not equipped to serve as an operating base for the F-15s, and could not be so equipped without extensive U.S. assistance which would not be provided. These practical considerations, of which Saudi Arabia is well aware, strengthen the assurances that the F-15s will not be based at Tabuk.

The question has also been raised whether the Government of Saudi Arabia intends to acquire additional combat aircraft from other countries. The Saudi Arabian Government has assured us that it does not intend to add to its inventory any combat aircraft from other countries while it is preparing for and receiving the sixty F-15s. The shortage of trained personnel in Saudi Arabia would severely constrain Saudi Arabia's ability to utilize any additional new aircraft beyond the F-15 during this period.

With respect to the security of the aircraft, the Government of Saudi Arabia has expressed its determination to provide carefully for the physical protection of the aircraft, manuals and other material related to it. Prior to the delivery of the aircraft, we will work with the Government of Saudi Arabia to ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to prevent unauthorized persons from obtaining access to the aircraft or information about it.

The proposal with respect to Saudi Arabia, like all such proposals, stands on its own merits, and I hope the foregoing information will be helpful to you and that you and the members of your Committee will join in support of the Administration's proposals to sell aircraft to Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Sincerely,

*Harold Brown*