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Our Saudi foes

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Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee was supposed to focus long-overdue attention on the single most important factor in the future course of the War for the Free World: Which side is Saudi Arabia on? Unfortunately, the press of other business has caused this most timely of hearings to be postponed.

The reason this question deserves urgent attention should be obvious: Since November 2001, there has been a roughly three-fold increase in the price of a barrel of oil, from \$18 to as much as \$70. As a result, Saudi Arabia -- which currently exports about 10 million barrels per day -- receives an extra half-billion dollars every day from oil-consuming nations.

If even a fraction of that \$500 million in found-money -- to say nothing of the other resources of the Saudi kingdom -- is being put in the service of our Islamofascist enemies, we are likely to face an even more serious problem in the future than we do today.

As today's Judiciary Committee hearing would surely have demonstrated, it is a safe bet that a significant portion of the Saudis' petro-windfall will be put in the hands of Islamist totalitarians bent on our destruction. That is not simply because Saudi Arabia has long had ties to Islamofascist terrorists, however.

Worse yet, the Saudis are themselves the wellspring of Sunni Islamofascism. To paraphrase Pogo, we have met the enemy and it is Saudi Arabia.

This is, to say the least, inconvenient. Saudi Arabia is the biggest single supplier to this country of oil, a commodity without which America's society cannot currently function. State Department Arabists, oil executives, some retired generals and hired public relations guns endlessly claim that the Saudis are, moreover, our indispensable allies in the war on terror, in securing Mideast peace and in keeping the price of oil from going even higher.

Had the hearing not been cancelled, senators would have received powerful evidence of the Saudis' true colors. From former Clinton CIA Director James Woolsey and a member of the International Religious Freedom Commission, Nina Shea, they would have heard the breathtaking results of a study performed earlier this year by Freedom House. It indisputably demonstrated that the Saudi government has been directly responsible for putting materials rife with jihadist propaganda and incitement in American mosques.

From Yigal Carmon, the founder of the highly-respected Middle East Media Research Institute, legislators would have seen videos of similar hate-mongering that represents standard fare on Saudi television. (It is to be hoped that, when the hearing is held, senators will examine whether such material will now be beamed directly into the United States via DirecTV. This would appear to be the upshot of a deal whereby a controversial Saudi prince, Al-Waleed bin Talal, purchased more than 5 percent of the voting stock of the satellite company's parent and of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, parent of Fox News. (See <http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=19652>).

And from Steven Emerson, world-renowned anti-terrorism expert, senators doubtless would have heard chilling details about the Saudi footprint in America. The mosques, schools (madrassas), student organizations, Muslim-American and Arab-American agitation operations, businesses and recruitment operations -- notably in U.S. prisons and the military -- that are funded and dominated by Islamist Saudi Wahhabis.

To be sure, members of the Judiciary Committee were also supposed to have heard today from Treasury

and State Department officials and at least one Muslim-American. Doubtless their message would have been aimed at allaying any concerns about what the Saudis are doing here and abroad to promote their brand of Islamofascism. Specifically, senators would have been assured that the Saudi government is now "cooperating" with our counterterrorism efforts and is cracking down on al Qaeda's operations inside the Kingdom.

Even if that were true (and both points are debatable), it surely does not begin to offset the cumulative effect of the tens of billions of dollars -- by some estimates as much as \$80 billion since 1975 -- invested by the Saudi government (to say nothing of the additional sums provided by Saudi Arabia's royal family, "charities," favored businesses and religious organizations) to spread Wahhabism. We can only imagine how much more will be going toward anti-Western and anti-U.S. proselytizing and indoctrination as our money hemorrhages in ever greater torrents into Saudi coffers.

This is not to say that the Saudis represent our only foe in the War for the Free World. Unfortunately, we must also contend with the Iranians and their Shi'ite Islamofascism, and the Islamists' friends like Hugo Chavez and Bashar Assad. In the wings are those like China and Russia, whose ambitions are served by the shedding of American and other Western blood by Islamists.

Still, we can no longer ignore the threat emanating from our "friends" in Saudi Arabia. We certainly should not be rewarding it -- either by continuing to send megabillions of dollars to enable their malevolence or by admitting the monopolistic House of Saud into the World Trade Organization. Instead, we should be seeking alternatives. Mr. Woolsey has been a leader on energy security initiatives like the Set America Free blueprint, which would dramatically reduce U.S. reliance on Saudi and other oil.

The Saudis are on the wrong side in this war. As long as that is the case, we must deal with them accordingly.

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