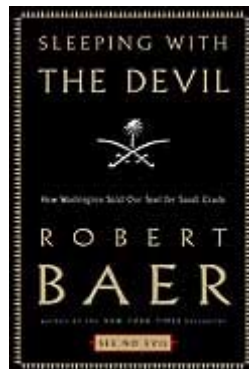




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Sleeping With The Devil: How Washington Sold Our Soul For Saudi Crude



Synopsis

“Saudi Arabia is more and more an irrational state – a place that spawns global terrorism even as it succumbs to an ancient and deeply seated isolationism, a kingdom led by a royal family that can’t get out of the way of its own greed. Is this the fulcrum we want the global economy to balance on?” In his explosive New York Times bestseller, *See No Evil*, former CIA operative Robert Baer exposed how Washington politics drastically compromised the CIA’s efforts to fight global terrorism. Now in his powerful new book, *Sleeping with the Devil*, Baer turns his attention to Saudi Arabia, revealing how our government’s cynical relationship with our Middle Eastern ally and America’s dependence on Saudi oil make us increasingly vulnerable to economic disaster and put us at risk for further acts of terrorism. For decades, the United States and Saudi Arabia have been locked in a “harmony of interests.” America counted on the Saudis for cheap oil, political stability in the Middle East, and lucrative business relationships for the United States, while providing a voracious market for the kingdom’s vast oil reserves. With money and oil flowing freely between Washington and Riyadh, the United States has felt secure in its relationship with the Saudis and the ruling Al Saud family. But the rot at the core of our “friendship” with the Saudis was dramatically revealed when it became apparent that fifteen of the nineteen September 11 hijackers proved to be Saudi citizens. In *Sleeping with the Devil*, Baer documents with chilling clarity how our addiction to cheap oil and Saudi petrodollars caused us to turn a blind eye to the Al Saud’s culture of bribery, its abysmal human rights record, and its financial support of fundamentalist Islamic groups that have been directly linked to international acts of terror, including those against the United States. Drawing on his experience as a field operative who was on the ground in the Middle East for much of his twenty years with the agency, as well as the large network of sources he has cultivated in the region and in the U.S. intelligence community, Baer vividly portrays our decades-old relationship with the increasingly dysfunctional and corrupt Al Saud family, the fierce anti-Western sentiment that is sweeping the kingdom, and the desperate link between the two. In hopes of saving its own neck, the royal family has been shoveling money as fast as it can to mosque schools that preach hatred of America and to militant fundamentalist groups – an end game just waiting to play out. Baer not only reveals the outrageous excesses of a Saudi royal family completely out of touch with the people of its kingdom, he also takes readers on a highly personal search for the deeper roots of modern terrorism, a journey that returns time again and again to Saudi Arabia: to the Wahhabis, the powerful Islamic sect that rules the Saudi street; to the Taliban and al Qaeda, both of which Saudi Arabia helped to

underwrite; and to the Muslim Brotherhood, one of the most active and effective terrorist groups in existence, which the Al Saïd have sheltered and funded. The money and arms that we send to Saudi Arabia are, in effect, being used to cut our own throat, Baer writes, but America might have only itself to blame. So long as we continue to encourage the highly volatile Saudi state to bank our oil under its sand and so long as we continue to grab at the Al Saïd's money we are laying the groundwork for a potential global economic catastrophe. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

I appreciate the personal experiences of the author and the insight they give to the internal workings of his former employer, but I would have appreciated the information without the chest beating, very little contextualization of the information given and some of the over generalizations that are surprising for someone one that seems to have a good handle on the religion and culture he is relating. My only assumption was that those over generalizations and verbal bravado was included

to capture a receptive audience and let the book have a wider audience. As a story of an independent minded member of an organization that relies on the single mindedness of their employees it probably would have sold less copies, although might have been a more focused read.

With so many glowing and in-depth reviews already on here, I'll just say that if you want an inside track into what's really going on behind the scenes in the Middle East, this is a great place to start. It's a fascinating read from beginning to end, and by the end you should be angry at how the US government has been selling us down the river for decades. A must-read.

Baer's most brutal points should make every American shudder: it is America itself that is subsidizing terrorism, as well as the corruption of the Saudi royal family. Baer's documented estimate is that \$1 dollar from every barrel of petroleum is spent on Saudi royal family sexual misbehavior, and \$1.50 of every barrel of petroleum bought by America ultimately ends up funding extremist schools, foundations, and terrorist groups.

Having first hand experience in the Kingdom, this is an interesting read that captures some of the complications of the populace and the government. Not wholly certain that all of the information is factual, but Baer states this outright and intimates this point throughout. Nevertheless, it does a nice job of capturing the past, present, and future challenges that face relations between the Kingdom and the US.

Robert Baer, a twenty year veteran case officer of the Central Intelligence Agency's Directorate of Operations (the people who have their feet on the ground in foreign nations around the world) who most recently served as vice-director of operations, Iraq, shatters the consensual naiveté of Western populace with his compelling and disturbing work, "SLEEPING WITH THE DEVIL: How Washington Sold Our Soul for Saudi Crude." In a work that spans nearly the entirety of his two-decade experiences and takes us through the dark and disgustingly murky intrigues and backroom graft that have made regime of Saudi Arabia virtually inseparable from the political process of modern America. Let's get something straight; unlike most of his contemporaries Robert Baer makes no socio-political argument within his text. The truth, as he sees it, is his only cause. Regardless of your political persuasion and the vagaries of your opinions on the social contract of the individual vis-a-vis the state "Sleeping with the Devil" will make you take a second look at the party you favored with your vote. In fact, Baer refers to the last half century of corruption within

Washington to be "the greatest bi-partisan effort in the history of Washington politics". A period which began with a briefcase containing one million dollars accidentally "forgotten" by Khashoggi, a Saudi billionaire (who is still active in Washington today), in the Nixon White house and has continued unabated and in ever growing depth to the modern day. The road to corruption is paved in black gold it seems. Baer leads us down this miasmic path and walks us through backroom deals of Washington's K Street lobbyists, intrigues in sub-Saharan Africa, the 4.6 billion dollar palace of the most corrupt Saudi Prince and pool-side meetings with Russian Mafiya arms-traffickers. How does it all come together? Baer's brutal truth should make every American reader shudder; it is our nation's political elite who have blindly subsidized the very terrorism of which we have recently become victims. Through our alliance with the House of Saud (the Saudi Royal Family) we have seen billions of petrodollars go to regime who has returned that money to us via graft and commissions to buy all the influence it needs. The rest of the western money is largely spent in two fashions. The lion's share goes to funding their own decadent excess. A Baer gives us insight into a lifestyle of depravity which includes almost ten-thousand princes, twice again as many palaces, the thousands of Filipino and Moroccan women who serve at their pleasure, and a lifestyle in which there is open competition for the greatest amount of excess. The Saud royal lifestyle has not gone unnoticed by the people of Saudi Arabia and it brings us to the far more disturbing second use of western oil-money. The Saudi's own people have suffered the most at their hands; they have no rights and referred to as property on their own passports. Religious fundamentalists have long decried the 'heretical' lifestyles of their "rulers" and here lies the truth of things. The despotic Saudi regime is holding on by the most tenuous of grips. In attempt to placate the fundamentalists who want to drag them into the streets the Saudi's have spent countless billions funding their actions. After forty-years of such protection payoffs the largest Arab nation has been transformed into a breeding ground for militant fundamentalism. The Saudi educational system has been entirely conscripted, all children save for those of royalty and their retainers are educated in madrasahs, schools of Islamic hate that enforce faith with brutality, ignorance, and censorship. 75% of all collegiate graduates earn degrees in Islamic Studies, which creates a working class who are unqualified to hold any job. This majority of educationally indoctrinated, poor, and religiously fanatical citizenry is the source for much of the destabilization of the Arab world and is a reality that is about to boil over. Is it any wonder than nearly all of the 9/11 hijackers were born and raised Saudi subjects? Worse, the Western world (and more recently China and Russia) were the ones, by proxy, responsible for its funding. This is the picture Robert Baer paints for us. These accounts aren't after-the fact punditry and are only the tip of the iceberg, Baer was there. In fact, prior to publication the book was vetted by the CIA and

significant sections were deleted due at their demand. Rather than leave gaping wholes in his arguments and making note of their removal in his epilogue Baer leaves the blacked out print in place, giving the reader a tantalizing contextual insight into just what 'the company' wanted removed. The reality Robert Baer shows us is a disturbing one and like a modern Paul Revere, "Sleeping with the Devil" is his clarion call, here is the enemy and they're coming.

Baer's background in the CIA provides credibility to his novelist-like writing of this non-fiction account of America's twisted history with the Middle East and Saudi Arabia in particular. Although written 10 plus years ago, Baer's book seems particularly relevant to today's headlines. Saudi Arabia's elite are documented to be the funding source for much of extremist Islamic terrorists, including the 9/11 hijackers. And yet. US oil interests and its dependency on that energy source is why the country's leaders have been "sleeping with the devil" of the Sauds for decades.

Interesting but suffers from poor - or no - editing.

Great book.

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