

July 9, 1976

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

President Ford and Prince Abdallah, Second Deputy Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, met in the Oval Office for 35 minutes. Secretary of State Kissinger, Secretary Rumsfeld and Brent Scowcroft were also present on the American side, and Shaikh Tuwaijiri and Ambassador Alireza on the Saudi side.

This meeting provided President Ford and Prince Abdallah a welcome opportunity to become acquainted. They were able to review the current state of Middle East affairs, including prospects for continued movement toward peace in the area. The President reaffirmed the United States commitment to do whatever it can to aid negotiations aimed at bringing a just and durable settlement to the Middle East.

The President took the occasion of this meeting to reaffirm close ties between the United States and Saudi Arabia. He reiterated to Prince Abdallah our appreciation for the constructive Saudi Arabian position on oil prices at the recent meeting of OPEC ministers and on other international economic matters. The President noted the major role being played by American technology, expertise and economic enterprise in assisting the Saudi Arabian Government in the rapid development of its country. He and Prince Abdallah reviewed Saudi Arabian plans to modernize their defense capabilities, including the National Guard which Prince Abdallah commands. President Ford assured the Prince that the United States will continue its longstanding and successful program of assisting these Saudi Arabian efforts. He reaffirmed his belief that this wide ranging cooperation between the United States and Saudi Arabia contributes to the overall stability and security of the region, and he looked forward to continuing close consultation between the two countries.

The President thanked Prince Abdallah warmly for his presentation of a gift of a coffee service and frankincense burner. He accepted this gift on behalf of the people of the United States.

The President asked Prince Abdallah to convey to His Majesty King Khalid his high regards and assurance that their shared goal of the establishment of peace in the Middle East remains a principal concern of the United States.

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