

Unit 10: Community and Homelife

Objectives

At the end of this unit, you will

Be aware of the following

- Practical information on ground and air transportation in Saudi Arabia
- Means of implementing Islamic law in Saudi Arabian society

Identify

- Guidelines concerning dress, photography, restaurants, shopping and communications technology in Saudi Arabia
- Religious morality police
- Jidda
- Dhahran

Realize

- Lack of traditional "Western" recreation and leisure pursuits in Saudi Arabia
- Saudi Arabian attitudes to domestic help and manual labor
- Respect given elderly in Arab circles

Unit 10: Community and Homelife

1. Transportation and Travel

a. **Driving** Saudi Arabia's transportation system has undergone remarkable development in the past two decades. The Kingdom now has over 30,000 kilometers of paved roads and over 60,000 kilometers of unpaved roads.



This network connects all the cities and main towns and even extends to some remote settlements. People who dwell in the steppe lands still do without roads. However, it is not difficult to make your own way in such areas, provided that you recognize and avoid soft ground. The newer roads are in excellent condition, except for some in al-Asir Region.



There, flash floods rush through the wadis (normally dry water courses) during the rainy season and destroy pylons, bridges, and roadbeds. Apart from domestic travel, cross-border traffic has likewise benefited from expansion of the highway system. All-weather roads link Saudi Arabia to most neighboring countries; Oman and South Yemen are the exceptions. The road to Bahrain passes over a 25 kilometer causeway, which was opened in 1986.

Driving in Saudi Arabia used to be a very hazardous and nerve-racking activity. In the mid 1970s, the importation of vehicles increased along with per capita income. A large percentage of the Saudi population purchased cars or pickup trucks and started driving for the first time. Many of these new drivers had no concept of lane markings, traffic signals, speed limits, and safe driving practices. Some even used their vehicles for reckless stunts. At one point, the

traffic fatality rate for the Kingdom was 13 deaths per day. This picture has improved considerably over the last decade.

U.S. military personnel are allotted, on a pro-rata basis, sedans and jeeps for official and personal use.

Driving in Saudi Arabia is much more of an adventurous undertaking than in the United States since Saudis drive considerably faster and more unpredictably than American drivers.



One must learn to drive by "instinct" and make much more effort to judge the intentions of other drivers and pedestrians.

As mentioned previously, women are not allowed to drive within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Otherwise, all drivers are required to have a Saudi license, which takes about one month to obtain. Possession of a valid U.S. or international license will simplify that process and also sanction driving in the interim for diplomatic personnel.

New personnel may bring vehicles into the Kingdom. However, they should consider the following points before arranging any shipment. There is an import ban on pickup trucks and certain American and British cars. Personnel assigned to DAO should contact the Embassy's Administrative Officer for specifics. For rare makes, spare parts will be difficult to obtain, as will maintenance and repair services.



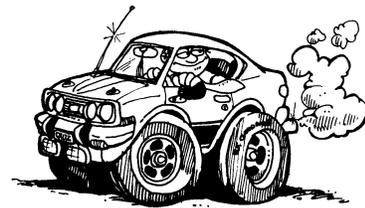
The surface of any vehicle will sustain considerable wear because of the environment--scorching sun, blowing sand, high humidity along the coasts, and debris from construction and uncovered trucks on the highway.

There are a large number of new and used car dealers in Riyadh and the other large cities. One can obtain Japanese-made passenger cars and pickups for a reasonable price.

Any vehicle purchased in the Kingdom must be registered. If a dealer is involved in the sale, he will probably expedite that process for a small fee. The registration should be kept with the vehicle at all times. In the event of a serious accident, wait at the scene until the police arrive. Be prepared to accompany them to the local station for detention, pending investigation, determination of responsibility, and assessment of compensation. Auto insurance is not required by law. However, it is advisable to have maximum third-party liability coverage.

Good highways exist between major cities, but any local excursions into the desert must be done by jeep; and even then, you run the danger of getting stuck in the sand unless you are familiar with the area and the jeep trails.

For camping or off-road travels, it is best to have either a four-wheel-drive or front-wheel drive vehicle. If you are driving in the desert it is the custom to help a person in trouble.



For personal insurance, take along some lumber for traction in soft areas. Driving long distances between cities in Saudi Arabia must be accompanied by careful planning, since service stations and rest stop locations are few and far between. Before departing, inform an associate or neighbor of your general route of travel. In case of a breakdown beyond sight of the highway, stay with the vehicle and attempt to build a signal fire.

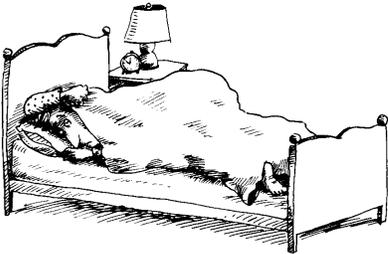


(1) Coping With Emergencies In the course of modernizing the Kingdom, the Saudi government financed the construction of many hospitals and medical centers in Riyadh and other cities. These facilities are staffed by doctors, nurses, and lab techs from various lands--the United States, Western Europe, Lebanon, Egypt, Pakistan, India, and the Philippines. Many of them have equipment of the latest technology and fairly high standards of practice. The police and rescue units are quite adept at cordoning an area,

diverting traffic, and evacuating casualties whenever catastrophe strikes. There is very little chance that an attaché, while in Riyadh, would have to take charge in an emergency or administer first aid to himself or others.

That picture changes when the linguist travels to visit remote garrisons or other sites in outlying areas. He should ensure that his vehicle is equipped with a first-aid kit and that he knows how to use it. Anything could happen on the highway. Moreover, there may not be a full-service hospital where he is going. The capabilities of the local medical staff may be minimal. The procedures or authorization for evacuation may be in doubt and therefore subject to hindrance.

Remember the following tips for travel. If it becomes necessary to stop your vehicle near the highway, move it behind a hillock or some other obstacle.



That provides protection from truckers, who are inclined to pull off the road to eat or sleep with little concern for who or what may be ahead.

If it becomes necessary to hitch-hike, there should not be much waiting. Most natives and other drivers as well are apt to pick-up people walking or standing near the highway.

Traveling off the main road can be risky. As precautions against break-down or accident, heed the following points. Try to have a second vehicle accompany yours. Take along a tow rope and some lumber for traction. Bring communications and/or signaling equipment. Take along a first-aid kit and plenty of drinking water.



(2) Forbidden Places Do not attempt to enter the holy cities of Mecca and Medina unless you are a Muslim. It is absolutely forbidden for non-Muslims to set foot in either place.

Do not attempt to enter a mosque. In Saudi Arabia, normally only Muslims may enter a mosque. It may happen that a Saudi will invite you to go to a mosque. In such a case, be sure to remove your shoes before you go in.

b. Public Streets Riyadh has in recent times become the hub of the Kingdom's ground transportation network. The city is ringed and traversed by a number of modern, multi-lane highways.

Cargo trucks transit the Riyadh area as they haul goods from Jordan or the coastal regions. There are no load limits, and so some roads have sustained heavy wear. The Riyadh-Dammam Highway has recently been reconstructed such that it passes sections of two older roads.



Riyadh has public bus service, which provides fairly good transportation around the central part of the city. Even so, few people use it. The same Saudi Public Transportation Company also operates in Jidda and Mecca and provides intercity service as well. Besides the bus line, taxicabs and rental cars are readily available in Riyadh. When using taxis, it is best to settle on the fare in advance. Most "men of affairs" drive themselves or ride with their chauffeur, and so the city streets are often congested.

c. Air Travel Saudi Arabia has three international airports. The ones at Jidda (JID-dah) and Riyadh have ultra modern facilities and occupy vast acreage. The one at Dhahran (dah-RAHN) is undergoing renovations. From any of these airports, there are numerous daily domestic and international flights to Europe and the Middle East and less frequent direct flights to North America and Asia.

Do not bring to Saudi Arabia any items which are either illegal or considered offensive to Saudis. This refers mainly to alcoholic beverages, books, and magazines of an explicit sexual nature. It also includes materials which are critical of the Arabs, Islam, and Saudi Arabia.

d. Railroads Railroads play a minor role in the Saudi transportation system. One operational line connects Dammam with the inland port of Riyadh. Most of the trains haul cargo, although a passenger train runs once daily in each direction.

2. Public Behavior and Attitudes



When in public, do not demonstrate affection for a spouse or friend of the opposite sex. Saudis never do this, and find such behavior quite unacceptable.

As stated previously, you may occasionally see Arab men walking hand-in-hand with each other. This indicates nothing more than the fact that they are good friends. If you should become good friends with a Saudi and he should reach out and hold your hand, try not to be startled. Accept it as the Saudis' customary demonstration of friendship. Keep in mind also that sexual relations between unmarried persons are strictly against the law in Saudi Arabia.

Do not eat, drink, or smoke in public during Ramadan. Since Moslems are not allowed to eat, drink, or smoke during the daylight hours of this month of fasting, an American should also abstain from these activities in the presence of Saudis in order not to offend them. Also, he or she should avoid doing these things even in private if Saudi visitors or co-workers are present, and certainly should not offer them a cigarette or anything to eat or drink.

Do not openly show anger or curse in any fashion; you can be jailed for this. Do not get overly excited in public or bust out with loud congratulations upon yours or anyone else's good fortune. If you want to celebrate, do it quietly.

Do not touch or pet a dog in front of a Saudi. Dogs are considered unclean by Muslim law. Dogs are not kept as pets and are usually filthy and mangy street roamers, so you probably won't want to touch them.



Do not voluntarily get involved in social incidents or accidents, even to give first aid. This can lead to complications.

Should you accidentally jostle or bump into someone on the street, you should try not to say "Excuse me," since this is considered unnecessary and somewhat odd. Americans seem to be singularly marked by their frequent and fervent use of this phrase at the slightest affront.

And, finally, in any confrontation, however minor, getting a seat in a restaurant, purchasing the last muskmelon, or whatever, you should always cede to age without question. This is a world where it is insulting for a man to be thought younger than he is. Age is considered a sign of dignity, of respect and wisdom, so that old people are listened to and are asked to give advice. Our overwhelming preoccupation with the maintenance of youth seems odd to people of the Gulf region, many of whom are not even sure how old they are.

a. Dress Civilian dress in Saudi Arabia is very informal (almost no one ever wears a tie) and consists of light, summer clothing. You should, however, bring along a sweater or jacket to wear at night during the winter or at various times during the year in the higher elevations such as Taif and Khamis Mushayt. Dress modestly, especially in public. Men should always wear long pants and a shirt, even when it is quite hot. Women should wear long, loose dresses with high necklines and long sleeves. To disregard this convention will offend the Saudis and, in the very conservative areas, could even lead to trouble for you.



Be mindful of the Saudi religious morality police. Their express purpose is to maintain morality. You could be accused or punished in public if an act is regarded as immoral in their eyes.

b. Photography Do not photograph people without their permission (particularly women). Many Saudis associate cameras with the "evil eye." Cameras should not be carried with the cover open and ready for picture-taking. In fact, in some towns, picture-taking of any kind is ill-advised and may result in either your camera or its film being taken away from you.

Before attempting to take pictures at marketplaces or other public places, it is best to ask around and try to learn what the reaction of the local people generally is toward picture-taking.



If you do photograph people, utilize a long range lens (135-200mm) so as not to appear obtrusive. Avoid photographing people while they are praying. If permission is granted to photograph a woman, be sure to include male family members. Children like photographs and will yell "Sura, Sura" (picture, picture). If you have a Polaroid camera, make friends first by giving them a few shots and then use a 35mm camera or other type for your own pictures.

Do not photograph airports, post facilities, or government or military installations. Saudi airports are considered military installations. Saudis are very security conscious, and even picture-taking while flying over the country is forbidden.

c. Attitudes Regarding Law, Hygiene, and Environment The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enforces traditional Islamic law (sharia) for personal, family, and civil matters involving Muslims and for all criminal matters. It also enforces supplementary administrative laws

Unit 10: Community and Homelife

(tantamount to royal decrees) which regulate matters such as commerce, traffic, and labor. Saudi citizens are generally law-abiding, for they have good reason to be.



Criminal cases are adjudicated rather quickly. Punishments are severe and deterrent, most being carried out in public. Convicted murderers are beheaded; adulterers are crushed with heavy stones. Thieves have their right hands amputated, although this punishment is usually not inflicted for a first-time offense.

There is very little theft in the Kingdom, as there is very little crime in general. Only traffic laws are consistently violated, and most such infractions are ignored by police. In any case, foreigners would do well to abide by all Saudi laws. Wrongdoing could lead to lengthy incarceration and/or deportation, perhaps even public punishment.

The cities of Saudi Arabia are now quite clean compared to conditions in the past and to other cities in the region. In Riyadh, one vast improvement came in the early 1980s when the municipality covered the sewage canal which fronted on the large market area of Batha.

Municipal authorities have more recently made headway in enforcing the use of trash containers in the residential areas of the city. Currently, municipal sanitation crews police the main streets and public areas at dawn and remove the trash to authorized dumps. Were it not for these efforts, the city areas would be extensively littered. Arabs in general are just beginning to understand the rationale for public sanitation. Many of them are still inclined to toss or deposit trash wherever it suits them. The attaché may also witness similar tendencies regarding human waste, especially in bivouac areas or cantonments where latrines are out of service for lack of maintenance.

In the course of modernizing the Kingdom, the Saudi government constructed extensive waterworks. Consequently, there was a vast increase in availability of water in urban areas. This service brought about new habits of personal hygiene.



Due to scarcity of water, the natives of inner Arabia had to forego bathing or to use sand for that purpose. Water was conserved for drinking or performing the obligatory ablution prior to prayer. That ritual cleansing inculcated some hygienic practice, as it involves washing hands, feet, and genital area. However, natives now have the opportunity to bathe completely on a regular basis, and many have taken to that custom.

Automotive and industrial pollution do not pose problems for the residents of Riyadh, yet there are other environmental nuisances. Wind and occasional rain deposit a considerable amount of sand and dust, while sandstorms bring larger quantities. Even with daily cleaning, surfaces inside buildings quickly acquire a layering of reddish-brown dust. The strong winds which originate in distant regions also bring in diseases.

The Saudis well recognize which elements of the environment can be controlled and which cannot. The municipality of Riyadh has prohibited the use of vehicle horns in the vicinity of hospitals and other areas. Actually, Saudis are not inclined to use horns much, as are Egyptians and other Arabs. Consequently, the streets of Riyadh are relatively quiet.



d. Attitudes Toward Others The coastal areas of Arabia have throughout history witnessed the arrival or passage of foreign merchants and travelers. The interior, in contrast, has for long periods been isolated. Prior to the "oil boom," the inhabitants of inner Arabia were very suspicious of foreigners.

That attitude has moderated somewhat over the last two decades and, with some natives, has given way to curiosity. However, the original suspicion has been manipulated by opinion leaders who seek to instill the following belief.

As Muslims, the people of Saudi Arabia are superior to all non-Muslims. As Arabs, they are superior to all non-Arab Muslims. As Saudis, they are superior to all other Arabs. This attitude is consistent with both traditional notions of tribal nobility and new-founded notions of Saudi nationalism. However, it also derives from a defensive outlook on the Kingdom's demography.

Many educated Saudis indeed see themselves being engulfed by hordes of foreign workers of various nationalities. The propaganda of Saudi superiority serves to bolster self assurance, yet it complicates relations with foreigners.

Regarding Westerners, and Americans in particular, those relations are further strained by ambivalent attitudes. Saudis, like other Arabs, admire the achievements of Western culture and the technical expertise of Westerners. At the same time, they criticize Western culture for its permissiveness and morale depravity, and they see Westerners as lacking true intellection and true salvation.



A considerable number of Saudis have lived and studied in the United States and Europe. Those who had favorable experiences have become more tolerant of Western ways. Those who had problems have become hardened in their biases.

3. Restaurants and Hotels Most quality restaurants in Saudi Arabia are operated by non-Saudis and cater mainly to foreigners who work in the country. Thus, they are "foreign" restaurants serving mainly non-native food and have menus in both Arabic and English. The prices can be very high, with evening meals usually costing 20 dollars or more. Unless a surcharge has been added to the bill, tipping is expected, with 15% being the norm. You will discover that your mess hall serves food which is just as good and costs only about one-eighth as much.

Probably the best and most interesting meal to have in Saudi Arabia is the traditional Saudi or Bedouin-type meal which consists of roasted meat, rice, and fruit--all served on huge platters placed in front of you. Such meals are not served in restaurants, but rather in private homes and at outdoor gatherings, and you must be invited to them.



Besides the restaurants, there are also numerous fast-food establishments in Riyadh--another consequence of modernization. Some bear the name of their American affiliates. Others have local renown like Herfi, which is the main burger chain. In any case, one finds many establishments which sell burgers (made from lamb), hotdogs, pizzas, and sandwiches. For enthusiasts of Arab culture, it's best to seek advice from an experienced "Saudi hand" before taking meals at such establishments. They might have inadequate kitchen hygiene, poor quality food, or both.

There is likewise a wide range of hotels in Riyadh. The top rated ones provide excellent service and amenities, although their rates are very expensive. Some of them serve as meeting places for local and foreign businessmen. The lower rated hotels do not normally attract Americans, as they

are often lacking in cleanliness, sanitation, or kitchen hygiene.

4. Shopping Shopping in Riyadh has taken on many new dimensions in the past decade. Besides the old market areas, the city now has numerous modern markets for groceries and general merchandise as well as a few shopping malls with specialty shops of all kinds.



Along with urban modernization, the tradition of bargaining for price has in most cases disappeared. The traditional regard for religious duty has, however, persisted. All stores and shops close during prayer time, which lasts about 15 to 20 minutes. In larger establishments, non-Muslim customers may remain inside, although they are actually locked-in. Depending on the time of year, the morning shopping is interrupted once, and the evening shopping twice. As elsewhere in the region, Saudi markets are closed in the afternoon.

The markets of Riyadh offer a wide variety of merchandise, although nearly all finished goods are imports. One can purchase good quality video, stereo, and camera equipment at reasonable prices.

Home computerware is likewise readily available and relatively inexpensive, since Saudi merchants import IBM clones and compatible peripherals. Western clothing is abundant but varies widely in quality. The well-made items are overpriced. The cheaper items are generally not worth buying because they lack durability.



Among traditional Middle Eastern goods, copperwares are priced much like clothing. As for Oriental rugs, Saudi Arabia is not a good place to buy them--contrary to popular belief. The high quality products cost more than they do in England and other countries. Expatriates were at one time

able to buy excellent rugs from religious pilgrims who would be transiting the Kingdom. However, local merchants have since intervened to stop that practice.

In contrast, gold jewelry is a particularly good buy in Saudi Arabia. Besides the traditional "gold souk," there are jewelry shops in various parts of Riyadh. One can select from a wide variety of well-crafted pieces most of which consist of twenty karat gold. The price per ounce is set by the government. However, the added value of the workmanship leaves room for haggling, and one can still bargain over the price of gold jewelry.



There are a number of large book stores in Riyadh. These sell a wide variety of English-language publications³/₄books (fiction, non-fiction, and reference), manuals, magazines, newspapers, and maps. Some have order departments; however, certain titles are proscribed. The whole publishing industry is subjected to censorship.

Books are banned, and magazine articles are censored, if their contents are deemed to be morally or politically objectionable.

There are modern supermarkets in almost every part of Riyadh. These carry fresh meat, produce, and dairy products as well as a wide variety of American and European food products--in cans, jars, and packages, both dried and frozen. Prices for comparable items are generally higher than they are in America.

Although you may have commissaries and PXs in which to shop, you or your wife will find it interesting to browse through the local stores for food or souvenirs. You will find many small food markets in which to shop, and in cities such as Riyadh, Jidda and Khobar (near Dhahran), you will be able to shop in supermarkets. You should have no trouble finding interesting items to buy as souvenirs; there will be so many! Bargaining is accepted in most of the smaller shops, but is not done in supermarkets. Local fresh produce is quite reasonable; however, as in most countries, imported goods are always very expensive. Check on restrictions by Saudi Arabia of removing antiques and other items from the country.



5. Telephone, Telegraph and Mail Service

Telephone service in Saudi Arabia is generally good, especially within and between major cities. Government housing complexes have telephones. Otherwise, the availability of service varies.

Residents of some newer parts of Riyadh have had to wait months for lines to be laid in their area. The traveler will find ample phones at the airport terminals and also at intervals along the main highways. Depending on the facility, it may be possible to make direct and long distance calls. When operator assistance is required, there may be some delay in getting through. Calls are billed on a usage basis, and bills must be paid promptly to preclude termination of service. However, Saudi Arabia has just completed an intra-kingdom telephone system in which anyone can call within the country on a commercial phone. Also, commercial, direct dial calls from the United States are available to a Saudi resident phone.

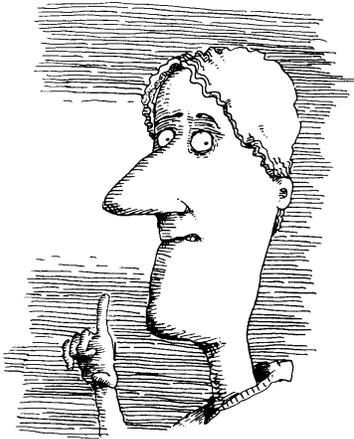
There is good commercial telegraph service between Saudi Arabia and the United States. For official business, telex service is available at the Embassy and the Consulates General in Jidda and Dhahran.

APO mail service is available to all U.S. Embassy staff members and their dependents. It takes seven to ten days for delivery of letters and packages sent either to or from the United States. Even so, this service is slightly faster than international mail service, which may also be used. All mail--even APO--is subject to Saudi customs inspections. Therefore, problems may arise if one is an addressee for contraband or black-listed materials. Aside from mail services, the State Department pouch may be used for shipment of prescription medicines, eye glasses, and other health items.

6. Domestic Help The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia did not abolish slavery until 1962. Prior to that time, the wealthier Saudis used slaves to perform menial household chores and to assist in minding children. Such functions subsequently passed to foreigners employed as domestic servants^{3/4}mostly people from poor countries, such as Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Yemen, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and the Philippines.



Male domestics are usually employed as drivers, gardeners, or houseboys. The latter attend to cleaning, washing and ironing clothes, cooking, and preparing tea and coffee. Female domestics are usually employed as maids or baby-sitters. Some household servants have live-in accommodations, that is, separate rooms within the courtyard of the residence. Others come and go as required. Domestic servants are not treated "as Kin" unless they have worked for the same family for a considerable length of time.



Wherever you are stationed in Saudi Arabia, you may be provided with a male servant who will clean your quarters and perform small jobs which you might request. He will usually come in the morning and leave as soon as his work is done. Except for a few Saudis who work in the Dhahran area, most of these servants are from Yemen, the Sudan, Pakistan, or Thailand.

7. Home Security Except for driving hazards, Saudi Arabia is one of the safest countries in the world. The incidence of crime is very low. Terrorism has become more of a problem in recent years. However, the most serious

incidents have occurred in and around Mecca and on the opposite side of the peninsula, in the Eastern Province. Riyadh has not been seriously threatened, nor have any Americans been targeted.

There have been some rare incidents of invasion of home privacy. These usually involve Arab men watching or otherwise harassing Western women. The women themselves can thwart such voyeurs and prowlers by locking the outer doors of the house or apartment, drawing the drapes over the windows, and calling the local security guard.



8. Entertainment and Recreation

As Saudi life conforms to the strictures of Wahhabi Islam, there are no public cinemas, theaters, opera houses, or concert halls in the Kingdom.

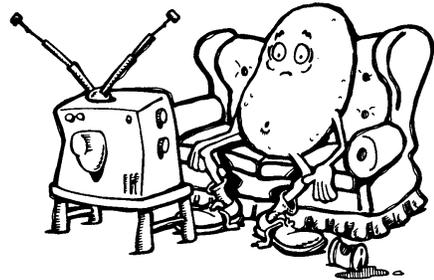
American, British, and other European expatriates have from time to time organized musical and theatrical groups, and these have performed at various foreign-managed compounds in and around Riyadh. Some government programs offer diversion, but mainly for enthusiasts of archeology and folk culture. The Museum of Antiquities in central Riyadh is worth visiting, as are the various "open" archeological sites throughout the Kingdom. In contrast, the Bedouin Culture Exhibit, located to the east of Riyadh, appears very artificial.



For radio entertainment, one can pickup various English broadcasts in Riyadh. The English service of the Saudi radio system broadcasts six hours daily, offering news, music, features, and talk shows. The English radio service in neighboring Bahrain offers similar programming for 14 hours daily. Although reception is not always good, Voice of America, Armed Forces Radio, and BBC can also be heard.

The Saudi television network telecasts on a European standard. American standard TV sets will not pick-up the signal; however, multisystem sets can be purchased locally. Saudi TV operates one channel in Arabic and one in English. The Arabic channel offers news, religious programs, talk shows, some sports, educational features, cartoons dubbed in Arabic, and some movies--mostly of the Walt Disney type.

The English channel offers similar family-oriented programs--cartoons, situation comedies, and special features. All programs are censored in accordance with the Kingdom's strict moral code. Only a few current American TV shows and movies are allowed for public viewing.



Home video entertainment has become very popular in Saudi Arabia. Shops in Riyadh sell a wide variety of recorders, and there are video rental outlets in many parts of the city. It is not advisable to bring in tapes through the airport unless one has time to spend on the premises. All tapes are reviewed as part of customs clearance. It is possible to avoid such inconvenience by using the State Department pouch, which is authorized for shipment of video tapes.

For Americans in Riyadh, tennis and swimming are probably the most popular recreational sports. There are tennis courts at the U.S. Embassy, Office of the Project Manager--Saudi Arabian National Guard (OPM-SANG) and Joint Economic Commission Riyadh (JECOR) compounds and also at numerous private recreational facilities. Serious players can join the Riyadh Tennis League and participate in tournaments throughout the year.



Swimming pools are numerous, being located at recreation centers, residence compounds, and villas. Despite the lack

Unit 10: Community and Homelife

of deep water, there is a scuba club in Riyadh which arranges for training and periodic dives at Jidda.

As for other American pastimes, jogging can be problematic. Some natives are contemptuous of the activity, while others are offended at the sight of scantily-clad people. It is best to stay away from traffic and wear full length jogging suits^{3/4}at least within the city. Equestrian enthusiasts can go horseback riding or take riding lessons at Riyadh stables. For less demanding exercise, one can choose bowling or golf. There are numerous bowling alleys in the Riyadh area and leagues sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and JECOR. There is an 18-hole golf course located near the airport, and its club membership fees are relatively inexpensive. Regarding team sports, one can participate in organized basketball, softball, and volleyball leagues. There are few spectator sports in the Kingdom--mostly soccer matches and horse races.

Clearly, the biggest event is the annual camel race, which is held at a site east of Riyadh.

Many Westerners enjoy making day trips or camping in the semi-desert areas around Riyadh. An organization called the desert Ramblers meets regularly to exchange information on desert travel and arrange outings. The land of inner Arabia is not without natural beauty or diversion. One can climb the escarpment to the east of Riyadh or search for fossils, "desert diamonds" (which are actually quartz crystals), or ancient inscriptions on rocks. Some large water holes in the Riyadh area serve as picnic sites. Other attractions include the oasis area of al-Kharj and the old (now ruined) Saudi stronghold of Diriyya.

Like entertainment, group social activity in Riyadh is rather limited. There are some organizations which do promote such endeavors. The Riyadh International Women's Group, for example, sponsors coffees, luncheons, and evening affairs. It also provides information on cooking, gardening, and other such pastimes.



For children, there are movie matinees on Thursday and Friday afternoons at the JECOR, OPM-SANG, and Corps of Engineers compounds.

9. Conclusion The above guidelines are...more or less... true, just as the American tendency to "get straight down to business" is more or less true. We have learned only the American options. There are many other equally viable options. We have to keep this in mind when associating with other people in the world.

a. Areas of Adjustment The newly arriving attaché can quickly become alienated by the strangeness of Saudi Arabia. Aside from differences in architecture, customs, and clothing, he will be affected by many subtle impressions that life is not the same as he knew it. His work week begins on Saturday, Thursday and Friday being the weekend. He hears the Islamic call to prayer broadcast five times daily, yet he finds no church in the Kingdom. Moreover, Christmas and Easter are not among the official holidays. When in search of entertainment, he finds no baseball parks, football stadiums, movie theaters, nightclubs, or casinos.



Such experiences are disconcerting and may eventually lead to extreme resentment of the natives and their lifestyle. To preclude that development, one should stay busy at work and spend leisure time on something familiar and satisfying, that is, a hobby or some other pastime.

In other words, do not allow time for negative thoughts about life in the Kingdom. As the weeks and months go by, the once strange milieu becomes more familiar and less unsettling.

b. Culture Shock Be alert for culture shock systems in yourself and others around you. When someone starts swearing at others, saying they are too stupid to learn, or crude people...culture shock is there. That person is having difficulty "getting through" to people using his own learned pattern and has not adapted his patterns.

Unit 10: Community and Homelife

While stationed in Saudi Arabia, it is a good idea to find a hobby and cultivate it, since the country has few tourist attractions and little opportunity for entertainment. You may well be stationed in a place, such as Riyadh or Dhahran, where there are many facilities set up to meet the needs of American service personnel.

But, on the other hand, you might end up in an area where there are few, if any, Americans and limited recreational facilities. In such a case, a hobby will greatly help pass the time.



Review Quiz: Community and Homelife

Fill in the blanks Fill in the blanks with the most correct word listed at the bottom. Not all words listed will be used.

When in public in Saudi Arabia, it is inappropriate to demonstrate (1) _____ for a sponsor or friend of the opposite sex. Also, openly expressing (2) _____ or cursing can be grounds for incarceration.

Pet (3) _____ are considered unclean according to Muslim law.

In Saudi Arabian society, age is considered a sign of (4) _____, respect and (5) _____. Older people are listened to and asked to give advice.

Saudi religious morality (6) _____ enforce Islamic mores within society.

Many Saudis associate the (7) _____ with the "evil eye." Do not photograph (8) _____, (9) _____ and government/military installations.

Saudi attitudes to Americans could best be described as (10) _____.

camera
airports
police

dignity
ambivalent
wisdom

anger
hostile
dogs

post offices
affection
cats



"Great leaders produce great subordinates, who, in turn, become great leaders in their own time...Your legacy will be the men and women you touch. We will all be judged by our successes and our successors' successes. We will be judged by how well they fight, and whether in fact they protect and defend this Republic...The single most important contribution we make is in developing our subordinates. Our enduring legacy to the Army and the nation is the training of tomorrow's leaders."

General Gordon R. Sullivan