

Aspects of Arab lobbying:  
Factors for winning and factors for losing

Volume 1

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as a thesis for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Politics  
In March 2014

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## Abstract

This thesis studies attempts by Arab Gulf states to effectively lobby the US government. It explores aspects of their lobbying behaviour in order to identify the factors that lead to success and those that lead to failure from their lobbying endeavours.

In this respect, the research utilizes two case studies: one in which Arab Gulf state lobbying was successful, and another in which lobbying failed. For each case study, the different elements involved in lobbying are analyzed and factors that lead to success as well as to failure are inferred. In tandem with an analysis of the strategies—or lack of them—behind Arab Gulf states' lobbying, the research examines additional relevant factors such as the organization and activism of the US Arab American community, the strategic value of the Arab Gulf to the US, and the negative image of Arabs in America. The research then considers the hurdles and obstacles facing the establishment of an effective Arab Gulf lobby in the US. As a conclusion, the research evaluates the prospects of an effective Arab Gulf lobby, and highlights the research areas that should be tackled in the future.

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# Introduction

## Background

I decided to embark on writing a dissertation in order to research a phenomenon that for Arabs almost represents a mystery: lobbying. The question that intrigued me for years is why there is no Arab lobby despite the existence of all the components that are needed to construct one: the existence of a significant Arab Diaspora in the US, the historic strategic relationship between Arab Gulf States and the US, and the Gulf's economic wealth.

Though public discourse brings up here and there the idea of the absence of an effective long term lobby that can influence US foreign policy (Mahmoud, 2003, Hishmeh, 2009, Rahman, 2011, Syed, 2011), no previous work has approached it in a scientific and systematic manner. The different materials I examined reflected cynicism about the state of Arabs and their inability to come to a collective action. Another category of works signalled the need to have a lobby without describing how to go about creating one or what a lobby should look like. But none of the works answered my questions. I wanted to conduct this research in order to shed light on a very important aspect of American politics, an aspect that Arabs generally look upon as a cabal or as a conspiracy to manipulate and which we try to stay away from, whereas in fact lobbying is a constitutional right. We have this view of lobbying because we do not understand it, it is alien to our culture and our mentality, and this fact puts the entire research into perspective. One respondent I interviewed for my research, a former American ambassador to an Arab Gulf state, said: "You need a change in mentality." The Arab Gulf views American politics from its own perspective, which is shaped by the way the Arab Gulf States conduct their politics. The concept of representation that exists in American politics on which lobbying is based does not exist in the Arab Gulf. Although traditionally the tribes, as well as individual subjects, plead to the ruler, this has not taken an institutionalized form as in the US.

I will now outline the reasons that lobbying is alien to Arab culture as this will enable me to give a fair and objective assessment of Arab Gulf lobbying throughout the research. It is inaccurate to evaluate Arab lobbying without having a thorough understanding of the prevailing Arab Gulf political culture that shapes it.

## Constitutional right as opposed to a privilege

The First Amendment of the US Constitution states that citizens have the right “to petition the government to redress their grievances” (Smith et al., 2013). At the time of the founding of the US, in Europe if a subject complained to a baron about a measure and the complaint was not to the baron’s liking, the latter could chop off the head of the former. This is why the US Constitution included this provision that gives citizens the freedom to address the government with any complaints without fearing any repercussions. This was the origin of lobbying.

In the US, when citizens reach out to their representative or elected officials, they are exercising a constitutional right, whereas in the Gulf they are seeking the ruler’s benevolence, and this constitutes a totally different ballgame. The difference stems from the contrasting psyches of the Arab Gulf and the US. In the US, the individual citizen feels he is the source of his representative’s legitimacy as his vote provided the representative with his office, unless he voted for the other candidate. In the Arab Gulf, the individual citizen accepts the legitimacy of the ruler as a “de facto” fact of life.

The ruling dynasties of the Arab Gulf states have legitimacy (Abdulla, 2010). This is one reason why, though security in the Gulf is a top priority, there has been no need for regimes that are as oppressive as in other dictatorships in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia’s “mabaheth” (Laham, 2002) is not to be compared with the brutal “SAVAK” that maintained security at the time of the Shah, or the “mukhabarat” of the Assad

regime. This acceptance of authority gives the ruler some margin in influencing public opinion and taking decisions that might not be to the people's liking.

The respect for the leader is a psychological barrier that prevents people from putting their demands in an aggressive manner. The psyche of Arab Gulf people and their relationship to the leader can be compared to the psyche of the Japanese people that is distinguished by a great respect for hierarchy. The relationship between the elected official and his voters in the US is based on a quid pro quo, whereas the relationship between the ruler and the citizens in the Arab Gulf is based on respect for authority.

### **Representation and contribution to policy making**

In the US, the system of representation has opened the door for citizens to contribute to policy making. This system has evolved over time such that interest groups have become a main source of proposing new laws, as 80% of ideas for legislation come from them (Levine, 2009). Indeed, in some states interest groups are influential to the point that they can bypass the legislative body. Twenty-six states allow some form of direct legislation where the electorate has the power to change laws. An interest group can draft a proposition and collect a certain number of signatures while presenting it to the legislature for consideration. If the legislature does not pass the proposition, the measure is placed on the ballot for voters to decide (Rosenthal, 1993).

Interest groups exert power over legislatures at different levels using two methods: through grassroots pressure that can affect a legislator's re-election prospects and through financial contributions to election campaigns (2012e). Combining influence on voting with financing enables interest groups to have a greater influence on their elected officials. Therefore campaign promises have become fully integrated with governing, and elected officials have become more vigilant and responsive to the demands of their constituencies (Smith et al., 2013).

In the Gulf, despite the introduction of elections, there is no similar pressure from interest groups. Campaigns do not depend on financial contributions from interest groups. Though election laws permit the candidate to take money from citizens (Habboush, 2011), the system has not been developed enough to have official conduits for financing like the PAC system in the US. Usually candidates are self-funded or receive funds from their close family and friends. However, in the Arab Gulf funding has a limited effect on elections. In the UAE, for example, a candidate cannot spend more than 2 million dirhams on his campaign (Habboush, 2011). In Kuwait, though financing is neither regulated nor institutionalized, the government has taken measures to limit the influence of money. It has prohibited advertising in the streets and put a ceiling of two election offices per candidate. It has also given candidates free airtime on government TV in order to limit their need to buy airtime. This is in contrast to campaigns in the US that constitute a very expensive endeavour. The general election in 2012 cost 6 billion USD in total-- 2.6 billion USD for the presidential race, the Senate and the House races cost 1.82 billion USD, and the Super PACs spent an additional 613million USD (2012f).

In the Gulf, the election system is still in its infancy (2011a). Citizens are just starting to realize that they can choose someone to represent them. However, these councils that have a representative value have a limited authority; therefore they cannot guarantee a role for citizens in decision-making. Individuals representing themselves or a group, a tribe, a professional group, or an institution can go to the "majlis" and present their case to the ruler and expect the ruler to show his benevolence and to redress their grievances. The law of governance in Saudi Arabia states in **Article 43**: "Councils held by the King and the Crown Prince shall be open for all citizens and anyone else who may have a complaint or a grievance. A citizen shall be entitled to address public authorities and discuss any matters of concern to him." However, this form of lobbying is not institutionalized as in the US and Western democracies where the citizen is given the constitutional right to contribute to decision making.

However, more and more channels of communications are being introduced to make sure the ruler is in touch with his subjects. For example, Sheikh Mohammed bin

Rashid Al Maktoum ruler of Dubai has his own website where one can leave a comment or list a case. The Dubai government has established a station “AL Bath Al Mubashar,” meaning direct broadcast, in which citizens as well as expatriates residing in Dubai can present their concerns directly on air in order for the government to answer them. However, this kind of representation does not really tackle policy-making. It mainly revolves around very minor issues such as the increase in the price of a gas cylinder, or the fact that a certain government communication provider is not being responsive enough to customers’ enquiries. The requests sometimes border on naivety, as when students went to the station and complained about Hamdan University because it was two days late in releasing students’ grades.

### **Consensual versus adversarial politics**

Another issue lies in the adversarial nature of lobbying. Interest groups compete with one another to persuade and influence policymakers with a ‘winner takes all mind set.’ This mind-set does not leave space for consensus among the different groups (Witkin, 2007). In contrast to the informal and consensual form of lobbying that is prevalent in the Arab Gulf, where the ruler shows benevolence and is sympathetic towards his subjects’ grievances, in the US interest groups view lobbying as a means to guarantee their representation. Though lobbying does not always guarantee responsiveness from the government, a lack of it makes desired responses from the government less likely (Baumgartner et al., 2009a). Interest groups stay on watch to ensure that their privileges are not negated by benefits given to others. This creates a system that thrives on conflict with a winner takes all mentality (Witkin, 2007).

Lobbying thrives on conflict. One reason the Gulf does not understand lobbying is because they avoid confrontation and adopt a more consensual approach in the way they conduct politics. The avoidance of confrontation is visible in every aspect of Gulf state politics. For example, during the first Gulf war, though by invading Kuwait Saddam Hussein directly threatened the Gulf, the US took the lead in the war and was at the forefront of the confrontation with Iraq. Though Saudi Arabia views Iran

as a threat to their security, they have not publicly and openly declared that they endorse a US strike. However, secretly, they have asked the US for such an action (Tisdall, 2010). This approach is alien to the confrontational aspect of US politics.

### **Dispersed versus centralized power**

The power structure in the US is diffused due to two factors: the first one stems from the separation of powers in which different branches exercise checks on each other, the second factor has to do with the fact that the system empowers communities (De Tocqueville, 2004).

The system offers numerous access points to affect policy making. The “access point theory” states that the multitude of access points has increased the power of interest groups as they have so many different points of entry to influence a certain policy (Ehrlich, 2008). This is different from the Gulf’s oligopolistic control over decision-making, where power is centralized within the ruling family. Also, since its inception, the American system has been characterized by the empowerment of communities. Alexis de Toqueville, the French sociologist, noticed the importance of communities as at the heart of American society. These communities witnessed the start of civic associations which became the foundation for the functioning of democracy (De Tocqueville, 2004). Civic engagement has increased the success of any program the government has launched, whether it is a program for fighting crime, poverty, drug abuse, unemployment, promoting healthcare, or education among others (Putnam, 1995). Interest groups, their membership and activities are considered to be an important part of the social capital of America. They constitute a necessary catalyst to activate democracy (Putnam, 1995).

The fragmentation of power in the US has increased since 1974. The Watergate scandal killed the parties’ authority because the “power barons” in the Congress lost their authority to “smaller” players who did not vote on a partisan basis but more according to their constituents’ preferences. This has increased the diffusion of power and increased with it the power of interest groups over policy making in the US (Smith, 1996). This contrasts with the centralization of power in the Gulf, where,

despite the introduction of elections, there has not been a decentralization of power. Even in Kuwait where the parliament, or the National Assembly, known as the Majlis Al-Umma, or "House of the Nation", has the right to veto government actions, it still does not have the authority to propose solutions to problems and hence to effectively contribute to policy making. On the other hand, the monarch has the power to dissolve the assembly, something that has become a routine in Kuwaiti political life (Kinninmont, 2012).

In addition to the fact that power is centralized, the source of information for decision-making is also centralized. The government relies on advisors to come up with strategies and public policies, unlike the US where various privately-funded think-tanks provide information for policy making (Abelson, 1996). With centralization of authority, access becomes very valuable, especially given the fact that there are no other institutions to contest any decisions made by the ruler. This is why, in the mind of the Gulf ruler, access is equivalent to influence. If one accesses the decision-maker and convinces him, one would have achieved one's goal.

However, in the US, the equation is more complex. A decision-maker who is an elected official is accountable to his constituents; therefore, he has to balance his preferences and convictions with the preferences of his constituents. On the other hand, if the decision lies with an appointed official in the administration, the executive branch is ultimately accountable to the Congress, which is accountable to its constituents. Alexis de Tocqueville said that in America all powers centre in the bosom. The nation participates in the making of the laws by electing legislators and by their execution by the choice of agents in the executive government (De Tocqueville, 2004).

### **Nature of grouping**

Another difference between the systems is the nature of people's grouping. In the Gulf, clusters are around the tribe and the clan, and the association is usually by blood rather than by personal choice. The members view their affiliation as a duty and not as a conduit for material gain or to advance their personal ideology. They

have a high degree of loyalty to the elders of the tribes. This structure that is governed by loyalty and complacency leaves very little margin for these groups to seek politicization. Though the Islamic culture is community oriented and encourages people to contribute to charities (zakat), which most of the time are run privately, these organizations remain limited to social services and do not seek to influence public policy. Additionally, the Arab Gulf permits no unions, which constitute a prime source for interest group formation (Berry and Wilcox, 1989).

A large proportion of American citizens, depending on their profession, ideological affiliation, and ethnic background are part of associations that have lobbying muscle. Seventy-nine percent of Americans are members of some kind of voluntary association, with sixty-one percent associated with a group that takes a stand in politics and just over forty percent have four or more affiliations (Rosenthal, 1993). In 2000, 92% of the adult population in the United States belonged to at least one organization (Anheier, 2005).

The main difference between the two sets of interest groups is that the ones in the Gulf are driven by loyalty whereas the ones in the US are motivated by interest. The interest can be material as in the case of professional associations that seek benefits to their members, or psychological as in the case of citizens groups who seek to promote a certain ideology such as anti-abortion groups.

### **Concept of reciprocal non-interference**

In the Gulf, given the border disputes and the “transnational” identities issue where some tribes reside across borders, the accepted protocol is that one country does not try to fuel factions or to mobilize people in his neighbors’ territory in order not to get reciprocal action. However, this does not work with the US. The US is a different system; when citizens with links to another country express their view on foreign policy, it is not seen as a foreign country interfering in American affairs. However,

Arab Gulf states' view of reciprocal non-interference has suppressed their appetite to lobby in the US. When the citizens of a Gulf state express their ties to another Gulf state they are seen as working against the government. However, in the US when citizens express their ties to their country of origin they are seen as exerting their constitutional rights and contributing to the making of public policy.

If Arab-Americans advocated stronger ties with the Arab World or the Gulf and a more balanced approach, the government of the US would not see them as working against the state. They do not see Indian-Americans or Jewish-Americans as working against the state. And hence they do not usually see India or Israel interfering in their internal affairs (in the AWACS episode, however, Reagan accused Israel of interfering in US affairs because Begin was personally taking a role and was at the forefront of the confrontation). Therefore, when Arab-Americans speak on behalf of the Arab World, they are seen as exercising their constitutional right of contributing to public policy.

For all the reasons above, which highlight social as well political differences in the two systems, the concept of lobbying remains alien to the Arab Gulf states, which fail to see the complexities in the US system and look at it from a simplistic perspective. This is probably why none of the works that have come out from the Arab region has handled the issue properly.

I am hoping that my research will shed light on the concept of a lobby and inform the reader what lobbying is about, what Arabs have done so far, and give direction on what is needed to have a long term sustainable lobby that can influence the relationship between the US and the Arab Gulf.

## **Research problem and scope**

The research is concerned with the Arab Gulf States only, i.e. it does not involve the entire Arab world. The six Arab Gulf states are chosen because they represent a rather homogeneous group, with similar overall political and economic structures.

Throughout their modern history, these countries have faced similar threats and challenges (e.g. the pan-Arab wave in the 1950s, the Iraq-Iran War, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait). Arab Gulf countries have also benefited from a strategic relationship with the US that is defined by the same paradigms for each state: defence and security, oil, trade and the Palestine issue (Abdulla, 2012). To illustrate further, countries in the Maghreb are also excluded from the study because they do not have a similar relationship with the US; Algeria for instance, has a more strategic relationship with France.

## **Aims and objectives**

As previously stated, the aim of this study is to examine Arab Gulf states' lobbying practices in the US, through two cases of success and failure.

The objectives of the research are to:

- 1- Detect patterns in Arab Gulf lobbying and provide a critical assessment of when lobbying has succeeded and when it has failed
- 2- Investigate how these outcomes occur and thus identify factors that determine the success or failure of Arab Gulf lobbying
- 3- Extrapolate from the cases of success and failure to identify and define the hurdles that face Arab Gulf lobbying
- 4- Determine the elements needed to establish a long-term effective lobby that can promote relations between the Arab Gulf states and the US

## **Approach**

This research focuses on causality between events and actions, and on a specific problem; additionally, the research is a real world oriented practice (Creswell, 2009). The study's pragmatic approach examines the dynamics of Arab lobbying, its patterns, and the instances of success or failure, and puts each of these elements into perspective in order to infer causal relationships. When assessing Arab Gulf

lobbying practices, comparison is made to other lobbies, particularly the pro-Israel lobby. The approach hence is solution-oriented, and is useful in its applicability, as it lays the basis for a general framework for a potential lobby (Creswell, 2009). A constructivist approach that studies Arab Gulf lobbying as an independent and comprehensive phenomenon is not possible. This is due to the fact that Arab Gulf states' lobbying has been sporadic and unstructured, and does not constitute a phenomenon that can be reconstructed and studied in a holistic manner (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

The study is exploratory in nature because not much has been written on the topic. Hence, the study will rely heavily on case studies of past successes and failures of Arab Gulf lobbying and on themes detected from interviews to develop propositions about Arab Gulf lobbying. Though the literature review on the topic is very thin, it does help situate the research and along with the research problem it provides guidance for my theoretical framework.

### **Research questions and their limitations**

The main question driving the research in this dissertation is: when Arab Gulf states lobby, when do they win, when do they lose, and why? The set of research questions are directed by the theoretical framework as well as by the literature review.

The sub questions are:

1-What are the features of Arab Gulf states' lobbying? Who do they use to lobby on their behalf? What are the dominant issues?

2- What are the factors and reasons behind winning or losing?

3-What are the deeper lessons for an Arab lobby illustrated by the cases of success and failure?

Since the present research takes a pragmatic approach, it will revolve around the factors leading to success and the factors leading to failure of the Arab Gulf states' lobbying efforts. It will depict factors leading to success and hence the pillars on which a sustainable lobby could be built. However, the study does not give all the answers for the establishment of a pro-Arab-Gulf lobby in the US. It lays the foundations for future research on the subject. Also limitations to the research come from the fact that analysing factors of success and failure of lobbying is confined to two case studies and to a set of interviews to accompany the case studies, which rely on the experience of the interviewees.

A further limitation stems from the fact that the study has a broad scope and therefore many aspects are not handled in detail. To some questions, the research can only give broad answers. For example, when examining the fact that selective benefits are needed to mobilize people, the case studies will confirm or refute this fact. However, neither the case studies nor the scope of the research will cover the benefits the programs needed to mobilize Arab Americans and to incentivize them to lobby to promote relations between the US and Arab-Gulf states.

Another limitation relates to the accurate assessment of effectiveness. Measuring the overall effectiveness of Arab Gulf states' lobbying is important, as the aim of my research is to study the lobbying environment and dynamics in the US, and Arab Gulf lobbying behaviour, and to investigate the basis on which a sustainable Arab Gulf lobby can be built. Though in the course of the research, we refer to other ethnic lobbies and examine their characteristics, these are different in nature to Arab Gulf lobbying. There is no organization that is in charge of pro-Arab or pro-Arab Gulf lobbying, unlike the cases of the pro-Israel, pro-Greek or pro-Armenian lobbies that are institutionalized and operate under registered organizations. Therefore, we cannot compare Arab lobbying to the lobbying done by an institutionalized organization such as the pro-Armenian, pro-Israel lobby in order to measure effectiveness. We cannot compare the sporadic lobbying that is undertaken whenever issues arise to the systematic and comprehensive work that a well-

organized, well-funded institution such as the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee has been undertaking for several decades.

Another limitation to this research is lobbying by proxy. Some lobbying for the Arab Gulf states is done by American companies that are interested in securing their commercial interests with those Arab Gulf states. One example is Lockheed Martin, which lobbied in favour of the UAE to pass the sale of the F-16 deal. The research will not dwell on this type of lobbying and will be limited to a couple of interviews with companies that lobbied to pass deals they had with Arab Gulf states.

I have divided the chapters in the following manner: in Chapter 1, I will analyse the literature review, in Chapter 2 I will detail the methodology, in Chapter 3 I will highlight the features of Arab Gulf states' lobbying and the factors that lead to success or failure. This chapter focuses on four questions: what are the patterns behind Arab Gulf states' behaviour? What are the factors that contribute to failure? What are the factors that contribute to success? And when were Arab Gulf states able to exert an influence over US foreign policy? Chapter 4 features a case of success in lobbying and Chapter 5 a case of failure of lobbying. Grounded theory is revisited in the conclusion, which highlights the problems and the prospects facing an "Arab lobby ". The Chapter analyses the implications of the problems and the prospects and gives an outlook to the future.

# Chapter 1: Literature Review

## Previous research on the topic

Not much academic research has been done on the subject of lobbying by the Arab Gulf states and how their lobbying could have influenced relations with the United States. Perhaps, the lack of research on the issue is due to insufficient interest by the Gulf States. Available studies have revolved around Arab Gulf-American relations, or on Arab Americans and their attempts to get organized so as to influence US government policies (Khoury, 1987). Unlike other ethnic lobbies, such as the Israeli lobby, that have been the focus of extensive research and attracted many academics (Zunes, 2006b, Lieberman, 2009, Findley, 1989, Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007, Mead, 2007), the Arab Gulf states' lobbying has been too small scale to attract interest.

The only work that totally focuses on the attempts of Arab Gulf states to influence US policy was Mitchel Bard's *The Arab Lobby: The Invisible Alliance That Undermines America's Interests in the Middle East*. This book was published as a response to *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy* by Walt and Mearsheimer, which stirred controversy over the influence of Israel on US foreign policy. Bard's book is an embodiment of Edward Saïed's Orientalism where anything pertaining to the region is viewed from a perspective that is influenced by political considerations.

Saïed explains: 'Three things have contributed to making even the simplest perception of the Arabs and Islam into a highly politicized almost raucous matter: one, the history of popular Anti-Arab and Anti-Islamic prejudice in the West, which is immediately reflected in the history of Orientalism; two, the struggle between Arabs and Israeli Zionism, and its effects upon American Jews, as well as upon both the liberal culture and the population at large; three, the almost total absence of any cultural position making it possible either to identify with or dispassionately to discuss the Arabs or Islam.' (Saïed, 1979)

Bard's book fails to properly define the lobby. It hints, namely, at the missionaries that went to the Arab world and fell in love with it as the core of the Arab lobby: "Missionaries held Arabs in high esteem and fell in love with the 'exotic' qualities of Arab desert dwellers...These missionaries ultimately became an important component of the nascent Arab Lobby"(Bard, 2010) . The word 'exotic' reflects Said's explanation of American interest in the Orient. This interest stems from strategic and economic considerations as well as from 'traditional exoticism' (Saeed, 1979)

Bard refers to anyone supporting a pro-Arab position as an 'Arabist'. The book depicts any action or comment by a US official, an Arab diplomat, a journalist, or an academic, that is not pro –Israel as a pro-Arab lobbying activity, even if those actions or comments were not directed at influencing public policy. This goes back to Said's interpretation of Orientalism by which any comment or issue relating to the subject matter is highly politicized (Saeed, 1979).For example, he describes having an Arab chair in an American university as a lobbying tool. Having such a chair is not a lobbying tool, as it does not affect public policy; it is merely a tool to promote cultural exchange.

Another aspect in the work of Bard is the indoctrination argument, where, in one chapter, he points to Jimmy Carter as being part of the Arab lobby; Bard makes an inference about Carter's lack of knowledge of the Bible. He says: "Carter's anti-Zionism was implicit in his strain of fundamentalist faith and has led him to read the Bible in particular ways as granting equal claims for both Jews and Palestinians." This remark is far from being an objective observation. When saying that reading The Bible in a 'particular' way led Carter to give equal rights to the two peoples, Bard implied that if Carter read The Bible in a correct way he would favour Jews.

Here again, the views of Saeed are validated. Saeed says that: 'no production of knowledge in human sciences can ever ignore or disclaim its author's involvement as a human subject in his own circumstance'(Saeed, 1979) .The ideology of the writer,

who sees the conflict in the Middle East from a biblical perspective, where it is the Promised Land for the Jews, is reflected in his writings. This aspect deprives his work of objective or scientific value.

The other element of propaganda is the noise and falsification of facts the book portrays. Bard claims: "Actually, while Christians are unwelcome in Islamic states such as Saudi Arabia and for the most part have been driven out their long-time home in Lebanon, Christians continue to be welcome in Israel. In fact, it is the Palestinians whose religious extremism has victimized Christians" (Bard, 2010) This is one example of incorrect information; Christians enter Saudi Arabia and constitute a large expatriate community. During the civil war in Lebanon (1975-1990), Muslims and Christians mutually drove each other from their homes and both sides victimized each other. Also Christians are not always welcome in Israel. A Christian Palestinian wanting to go back to the home from which he was driven out is not at all welcome in Israel. Bard's book does not seem to offer a solid counter-argument to the book of Walt and Mearsheimer, or represent the Arab Gulf States' lobbying behaviour.

While the book was praised by pro-Israel academics and activists such as Steven J Rosen (Rosen, 2012), the book did not get noticeable positive feedback from the mainstream critics. (Schneiderman, 2010). Also the book *the Arab lobby* by Bard did not receive the volume of reviews that the book on the Israel lobby by Walt and Mearsheimer received. The Google search engine only revealed 30 reviews for the Arab lobby whereas the other book had 293 reviews spread over 35 pages. Also the book on the Israel lobby received reviews in important international publications such as the *The Economist* (2007a), whereas the coverage was far less for Bard.

The literature on the topic of Arab Gulf states' lobbying in the US is thin, and the only work that directly tackles the issue is the book by Mr. Bard. However, the book appears to be inadequately researched and cannot be considered as a reliable source on Arab Gulf lobbying. The other book, *The Arab Lobby and the Two States Solution*, written by an Arab American scholar, Khalil Marrar, solely focuses on

attempts to push the two states-solution and does not look at Arab Gulf states specifically or investigate the potential of Arab Gulf lobbying.

Also very little academic work is available on Arab Americans and their potential to become a base for Arab Gulf states' lobbying in the US. The study by Khoury, (1987) is outdated and talks about the problems facing Arab Americans in getting organized and influencing the American government; however, it does not focus on Arab Gulf states, nor the relationship between these states and the Arab American community.

A paper by Shain (1996) looked primarily at the lobbying effort of Arab Americans but also looks at the relationship between Arab Gulf states and the Arab American community. It talks about how the relationship changed and factions surfaced after the first Gulf War, and how the support that Arab Gulf states were giving to Arab American organizations disappeared. Moreover, it does not analyse, in depth, the relationship between these two actors, as the focus of the paper is not the Arab Gulf states but the Arab American community.

Other papers indirectly tackle the topic. Slaita (2005) talks about the efforts of Arab Americans to get organized and the effects of 9/11. Considerable research was conducted on the effects of 9/11 on Arab American community attitudes and perceptions, but this research was peripheral to the issue of lobbying and no research handled it directly. The Economist magazine spoke about the potential of an Arab-American lobby and the potential of Arab-Americans in the US to emerge as a major voting bloc but not really about their influence on public policy as an interest group (2000).

Other studies focus on the issue of Arab identity and the relevance of the Middle East to them. Although the studies do not handle the issue directly, they are important as they contribute to depicting the potential as well as highlighting the challenges of having a domestic Arab-American lobby focused on Middle East affairs. Kenneth Wald considered the issue in his paper, 'The diaspora project of Arab Americans: assessing the magnitude and determinants of politicized ethnic identity' (Wald, 2009) The paper discusses the issue of Arab ethnic identity and the

possibility of bringing the Arab American community together around Middle East issues. It highlights a very important point, namely political activism as being a cornerstone around which to build an ethnic identity and to gather the community. Another paper by Nassar Mc Millan (2011) researches the issue of identity in the Arab American community and their potential to be mobilized.

Because my study is an exploratory one, and since almost no serious academic work has been done on the issue of Arab Gulf state lobbying, I will focus more on contextualization which will give direction to our research.

## **Definition**

Lobbying political representatives is an age-old practice in the Euro-American tradition, going back to the 1870s in Britain when favour-seeking constituents would wait in the lobby (hence the name lobby), outside the chambers at Westminster, to collar their elected parliamentarians, demanding close attention be paid to their wishes. Lobbying goes back to the lobby of the Willard hotel where favour seeking citizens and groups used to meet with the President Alexander W .Randall-1869 1866for a cigar and some brandy (Gelak, 2008).

The right to lobby existed even before the United States got their independence from the British. The Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress in 1765 asserted that lobbying is a constitutionally protected right: "it is the right of the British subject in these colonies to petition the King or either House of Parliament." This principle was reaffirmed in the first amendment to the constitution. Citizens have the right " peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" (Mathias, 1980)(Mathias, foreign affairs, 976).

However, a lobbyist as formally defined by the Lobbying Disclosure Act in 1995,"is any individual who is retained by a client for financial or other compensation for services that include more than one lobbying contact." This contact is defined as any oral or written communication, including electronic communication to a federal government official with policy-making responsibilities--including members of

Congress, their staffs, and high-level executive branch officials, regarding the formulation, modification of legislation or regulations, or regarding the adoption of a contract, the nomination of an individual, or the execution of some regulation.

The act excludes several formal processes of lobbying--testifying at hearings, filing lawsuits, and submitting reports under notice and comment--since this information is often available to the public in the form of lists of witnesses or files of public comments. In addition, the list of "covered officials" includes virtually all congressional staff, but only the highest levels of the executive branch. The legal definition of lobbying also excludes grassroots lobbying as well the use of paid media (Baumgartner and Leech, 2001).

The definition of lobbying describes it as mainly the effort to influence the legislative branch, i.e., the American Congress. The expression 'influencing legislation' is defined by Internal Revenue Code IRC 162 c 4 A as any attempt to influence any legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or with any government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of legislation (Reilly et al., 2003).

The IRC defines lobbying communication as 'any communication (other than any communication compelled by subpoena or otherwise compelled by federal or state law) with any member or employee of a legislative body or any government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation that does either of the following :communication refers to specific legislation and reflects a view on that legislation, the communication clarifies, amplifies, modifies or provides support for views reflected in a prior lobbying communication' (Reilly et al., 2003).

Whereas the act of lobbying is well defined and its definition is standardized, the word "lobby" remains more obscure. What constitutes a lobby? The Oxford Dictionary defines it as a "body of people" trying to influence legislation. However, Walt and Mearsheimer provide a more practical definition of the Israel lobby in the US as a 'loose coalition of individuals and organizations that actively work to shape US foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction'(Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007) . Extrapolating from this definition, a lobby can be defined as a loosely based coalition

seeking to influence certain policy making areas in its preferred direction. Lobbying could be confused with advocacy. Advocacy, however, has a broader meaning than lobbying; (Chetkovich and Kunreuther, 2006)define s advocacy as promoting change on the behalf of marginalized groups through the courts, the legislature, or administrative agencies.

## **Context of lobbying**

The executive branch, general events, as well as the general mood in the US sets the scene for lobbying. The executive branches and judiciary, whose members are appointed, are less influenced by direct pressure from interest groups (Gibson, 2010).The executive branch sets the context and mood for lobbying. Depending on the administration, the lobbying effort is either accelerated or blocked. During the Clinton years there was a serious effort by civil rights groups to eliminate the racial bias in the judicial system. These groups had a fertile environment in which to lobby, but when Bush took over, especially after September 11 and the enactment of the Patriot Act, and the appointment of John Ashcroft as Attorney General, their lobbying efforts became futile (Baumgartner et al., 2009a).

In addition to the administration, the political and socio-economic environment, as well as catastrophic events such as terrorist attacks or natural disasters, can set the scene to accelerate decision making. It was fairly easy for Bush to go to war on Afghanistan following the September 11 attacks, while in 2008, at the time of the financial crisis, it took president Obama three weeks to pass the \$800 billion incentive package (Herzenhorn, 2008).

## **Effect of lobbying on policy making in the US**

Though lobbying is an incarnation of the freedom of expression in a democratic society and the conduit through which citizens “petition the government to redress their grievances” (Gelak, 2008), it has created a system where policy makers are

highly dependent on campaign contributions and are closely monitored by interest groups, and this has affected their positions as statesmen. Legislators are more concerned about the votes and the money they get from satisfying interest groups than the outcome of the policy or bill they advocate (Le Breton et al., 2012). It has created a system that is highly dependent on financial contributions, and thus where the affluent and the organized can have a grip on certain policy areas. It also has created a system that is highly sensitive to special interests at the expense of the general interest of the US (Davidson et al., 2011).

The most flagrant example of the hijacking of general interest by special interests is the failure of the proposed legislation by Senator Hagel to regulate the two mortgage giants, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Hagel could foresee the consequences of the toxic loans that the two companies were extending. However, the two companies properly organized a lobbying campaign to get enough opposition to defeat Senator Hagel's proposed bill.... The narrative was that the legislation will make it hard for lower middle income group to own homes. There was no lobby for the overall American economy to back Senator Hagel and this led to an economic crisis that had severe consequences on the US and the world (Smith et al., 2013).

Proponents of lobbying such as Riker, state that the various lobbies pull legislation in different directions in order for the legislation to end up with a happy medium; however this scenario is only valid when the lobbies with conflicting interests are of equal muscle. However, conflicting lobbies can be of unequal sizes: the Azari lobby is not equal to the Armenian lobby, and Arab groups are not as strong as the pro-Israel groups, and policy ends up being tilted in favour of the stronger lobby (Paul and Paul, 2009).

But even if antagonism is present, and no interest can push its agenda at the expense of other groups, lobbying does not necessarily ensure a cohesive and consistent policy. This is simply because the national interest is not a sum of special interests. The problem of lack of cohesiveness mostly arises in foreign policy, where ethnic groups' aspirations do not always coincide with the US national interest. Even if the antagonistic groups are of equal power, their fight does not necessarily mean a

cohesive foreign policy, because a consistent foreign policy needs to be looked at from a broad long term perspective and cannot be drafted in a piecemeal manner (Mathias, 1980, Smith, 2000).

On the other hand, some issues are too complicated or too narrow and the national interest is not well defined. For example, is giving the right to optometrists to prescribe drugs or deregulating the financial markets in the “national interest” of the US? In such areas, interest groups using several outreach methods such as the media can shape public opinion (Brill, 2010). This is also very visible in world affairs, where the American public, which has very little knowledge of international affairs, becomes very sensitive to manipulation by the elite and the media (Holsti, 2009). Also, in areas of low salience and where the average citizen is not well informed, elected officials tend to respond to the demands of interest groups without taking into consideration the preference of their overall constituency (Brill, 2010, Levine, 2009). This “rent seeking behaviour” occurs as the official knows that his decision will not affect the rest of his voters whereas, if he goes against a certain interest group, he is most likely to lose the support of a faction of his constituents.

For example, by unconditionally supporting Israel, the average American does not know the repercussions on foreign policy. This is due to two factors. The first one is the lack of information presented to the American public. The second one lies in the fact it does not affect his or her day to day life. Israel/US relations will not capture his attention as much as other major domestic issues such as tax reform, healthcare or the economy. Therefore, when candidates compete, the issues they raise to the public and on which they compete are healthcare, tax, and plans to improve the economy. (Levine, 2009).

While pluralists believe that interest groups enhance the representation of the people in the realm of the American system, rent seeking theories highlight the ‘antidemocratic’ nature of these groups. “Rent seeking behaviour” refers to the practice of a group trying to push the cost of projects on the whole, while solely retaining the benefits (Leech, 2006). For example, when the pro-Israel lobby pushes to keep aid to Israel, the cost compared to the benefit each of the members of the

pro-Israel group will reap is small as all American taxpayers are paying for the aid. However, the aid to Israel paid by everyone will only benefit a specific group. Similarly, since the cost is spread among the public at large, the cost to the individual taxpayer is actually quite small (3 billion spread over the entire US population).

Rent seeking behaviour is difficult to negate due to the cost of counter-lobbying. It is much easier to block than to pass legislation: it takes 3.5 lobbyists working on passing a bill to counteract the effect of one lobbyist working on blocking it (McKay, 2012). Reversing the process involves high cost to the individual tax-payer relative to the expected gain. Therefore a rational taxpayer would likewise not have any incentive to try to stop such behaviour. This is why lobbying has favoured the status quo in the American system. Supposedly, lobbying allows dynamism in the system; however, because lobbying to pass a proposal initiates counter-lobbying to stop it and the counter-lobbying is more efficient than the pro-lobbying, legislators tend to prefer the status quo (Berman, 2010).

Therefore even if other interest groups see that that \$3 billion donated to Israel every year is at the expense of other priorities such as healthcare, creating jobs, or education, the cost for them to reverse the trend will be too high. At the same time, the amount (\$3 billion), if relocated to another area, such as healthcare for example, will not make a significant impact on the national scale. Therefore, to reverse the trend, a larger group should be involved in order to spread the cost and effort of lobbying (Atieh, 2009).

Lobbying has favoured the most organized and affluent. While the poor are the ones in most need of government help, they have the least voice because of their limited financial capabilities and their ability to organize. Mills (1956) and Schattschneider (1960) are among those who believe that legislators are more responsive to rich and influential groups than to less privileged ones (Tichenor and Harris, 2005). Contemporary examples include the federal unconnected PACs that make "independent expenditures only," and are unlimited in size, and super PACs, which allow the groups with the most affluent means to have more visibility and to promote their cause to the general public (Berman, 2010).

## Who are the interest groups?

Interest groups have played an important role in the heart of the American system since its inception. Alexis de Toqueville noted in his book *Democracy in America* the importance of community in the American way of life. Social scientist Putnam calls the sense of community in America the country's 'social capital' (Putnam, 1995). President Obama, in his victory speech in the 2012 elections, praised America for its diversity. Communities become interest groups whenever they seek to influence policy making. Ordinary associations or institutions become 'interest organizations' whenever they try to influence the political process to promote their interests (Baumgartner et al., 2009b).

Usually a political entrepreneur works to organize a latent group. The role of the entrepreneur usually has two aspects. The first is internal and is concerned with maintaining the cohesion of the group and overcoming the collective action problem (Olson, 2009). The second role involves obtaining benefits for the group through the political process (Leech, 2006)

Interest groups are an important source of information and policy ideas for executive agencies as well as for the Congress. In 1946, the Administrative Procedure Act was passed to allow groups to help in drafting regulations (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986). These groups can serve on advisory committees, which are created by agencies to provide advice on a continuous basis for regulating activities or industries within the agency's jurisdiction.

The American system has encouraged the formation of interest groups. It saw in them channels for the provision of goods and services to citizens (Ainsworth, 2002).). Additionally the system, characterized by separation of powers and where power is very disbursed, has provided many points of entry to interest groups and has facilitated their contribution to policy formulation (Paul and Paul, 2009). The relationship between interest groups and the government is reciprocal. Governmental activities lead to the mobilization of interest groups, while interest groups' activism mobilizes the government (Baumgartner et al., 2011). Each \$100

billion increase in government spending witnesses an increase of five registered interest groups (Leech, 2006).

“Proliferation theory” suggests that as society becomes more complex new groups are created. For example, with the industrialization of society, the environment is affected, which leads to creation of groups that seek to protect the environment (Ainsworth, 2002) Another theory, “disturbance theory,” posits the nature of unstable equilibrium among groups. If something disturbs the equilibrium such as technological innovation, or the emergence of new concerns, e.g., proliferation of obesity among youth, a major terrorist attack, new groups emerge (Davidson et al., 2011).

Robert Salisbury in 1969 came up with the “theory of exchange”. It states that groups form due to the efforts of entrepreneurial community organizers to rally people around issues. Community members get a benefit in return for joining the group, which could be material or non-material, such as belonging to a group that shares values and causes and promoting these values in the legislative system (Salisbury, 1969).

Interest groups fall into different categories, of which the most prominent ones are citizens groups, such as the American Association of Retired Persons. This group represents a subset of American citizens, who are elderly people seeking to protect their interests with the American government, or the gay and lesbian lobby whose goal is to make sure that people do not face discrimination as a result of their sexual preferences, and that gays and lesbians can express themselves freely. Citizens’ groups started in the sixties; in the next 20 years they multiplied at twice the rate of occupational groups (Walker, 1983)

Walker did a survey of interest groups. The first wave interest groups emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century. It took almost a century to create the first half of

these groups, the second half were founded following World War II. The fifties witnessed the emergence of labour groups and unions (Walker, 1991)The 1960's and 1970's witnessed the "Big Bang" of interest groups. In addition to the growth in size, scope and character of these groups, the lobbying that came with these developments was more diverse and professional(Tichenor and Harris, 2005).

Ethnic groups emerged mainly in the 1970s, when the melting pot concept was challenged by proponents of multiculturalism, who asserted that cultural differences within society are valuable and should be preserved. They proposed the salad bowl concept, where different cultures mix but remain distinct. The salad bowl mix witnessed the revival of ethnicities among Americans. The notion of being Arab American, Hispanic American, Jewish American, and Greek American came to the surface (Salaita, 2005)and Americans started getting organized along ethnic and religious lines. Ethnic and religious groups started proliferating and became increasingly prominent in American society, such as the Council of American- Islamic relations (CAIR) and the Armenian National Committee of America. Ethno-religious lobbies who seek a favourable public policy for their coreligionists or kinsmen have had an effect on American foreign policy. Indian Americans organized under the US-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC) have played an instrumental role in the Indian American nuclear cooperation treaty of 2005 (Freedman, 2009).

Another category is business lobbying, where an individual or a group of businesses present their interests to the government. In addition to individual companies this involves business lobbies or trade lobbies. The difference between the two is that trade lobbies represent single industry members whereas business lobbies represent members from different industries. Examples of business lobbies are chambers of commerce, manufacturers associations, state businesses associations, and associations of tax payers. Such associations are usually state based but can also have a nationwide scope. The problem with associations is that they represent different businesses and sometimes different industries whose interests might diverge at times when members also have different priorities. Sometimes different members can have different positions on the same issue, which makes taking a stand and lobbying for it hard. Small companies are most likely to rely on business

and trade associations for representation. Larger companies, in addition to having their own lobbying arm, are at the core of business associations (Rosenthal, 1993). Professional associations and unions are another type of interest groups. Think tanks, foundations, and educational institutions are interest groups that lobby.

Another type of interest group represents a coalition of several groups that work on one major issue. The Israel lobby is an important example. As mentioned before, it is a coalition of individuals and organizations in support of Israel. This coalition includes different interest groups such as Jewish Americans (Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations) as well as Christian Evangelical Americans (Christians united for Israel). It has civil rights groups such as the Anti-Defamation League, as well as think tanks such as the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Although the individual interest groups differ in nature, they coalesce to form one large interest group lobbying for one issue: Israel (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007) .

### **Arab American Activism**

Arab immigration to the US witnessed many waves. The early wave consisted of immigrants who came from the Levant Area and were mainly Christians. These spread across the nation and were involved in different kinds of trades and professions. They worked in factories, opened groceries, enrolled in the military, formed baseball leagues, and built churches and mosques (Malek, 2010). The description of Arab Americans varied at different points in time. At the same time they started arriving in the late nineteenth century, the Arab world was part of the Ottoman Empire, so they were known as Turks (David, 2007). The classification of Arab Americans posed a dilemma to immigration officials who saw them as 'not quite white' (Gavrilos, 2002).

In 1909, Arabs were denied entry to the US as regulatory practices included the Arab in the nationalities that fell under the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act that barred the 'Yellow race' from entering the US. In 1923, after a long and hard battle with the authorities, they were granted status as white and hence the right to citizenship

(Nagel and Staeheli, 2005, Suleiman, 2010) Described as white, which is a racial privilege, helped Arab Americans get assimilated into the American society (Gavrilos, 2002).

The early wave of Arab Americans, which mainly consisted of Christian immigrants, has been completely assimilated. Inter-marriage and similarity of religion facilitated this assimilation (Nagel and Staeheli, 2005). Despite this assimilation, they had a few instances of activism where their ethnic identity was reaffirmed. Since the early twentieth century, the most salient single issue for the Arab community as a whole has been the fate of Palestine. This could be seen from the Arabic press in the US that reflects the views of the community (Suleiman, 2010). Arab Americans were active as early as 1917 and protested against the Balfour Declaration (Salaita, 2007)

There are many turning points in the history of Arab Americans. The first major turning point was 1967. Strong feeling of nationalism were sparked in large part by glaring Arab dispossession in Palestine which was reinforced by a new wave of Muslim Arab immigrants who had been politicized already in the Arab world and had no need to hide their ethnic-religious identities. However, one can say that the Arab awakening in the US was due to the Palestine issue and a reaction to Zionism (Salaita, 2005, David, 2007, Shain, 1996, Gavrilos, 2002). Also this ethno-political awakening coincided with the civil rights movements and the increasing tolerance of ethnicity in American society after the 1965 Immigration Act (David, 2007, Salaita, 2005, Gavrilos, 2002) This encouraged Arab-Americans to get organized.

Five years after the 1967 Arab defeat, the National Association of Arab Americans was established. The NAAA was formed on the AIPAC model and had as its main goal to influence foreign policy (Shain, 1996). It was established by prominent professionals of Arab descent 'to protest and to register their disagreements with American policies of unquestioning support to Israel and total disregard for the security of Arab states in the Middle East (Mathias, 1980).

The second turning point is the ABSCAM in 1978, or the so called Abdul Karim scam, when Federal agents disguised as the mysterious sheikh from the Gulf tried to corrupt members of the congress (Khoury, 1987) The environment was fertile for an

operation like ABSCAM as the oil embargo of the 1973 was used to portray Arabs as greedy sheikhs. According to Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor for President Jimmy Carter, the embargo, "had an acute effect on the daily life of virtually every American never before had we felt such an impact in peacetime"(Gerges, 2003)( 76). Following the ABSCAM, Senator James Abourezk and James Zogby established the Arab American Anti-discrimination committee (ADC), as they saw in ABSCAM a deliberate act of racial profiling (Khoury, 1987)However, differences between the two led to an organizational crisis and Zogby left to establish the Arab American Institute (AAI)(Shain, 1996). Unravelling is very common among citizens' groups as it only takes a mailing list and an enhanced tagline to create a splinter group (Ainsworth, 2002).Another problem that such organizations face is that their recorded membership does not reflect their active membership. It is very common in citizens' groups to have a largely silent membership (Shain, 1996). Zogby viewed the Arab American Institute (AAI), as complementary to ADC and NAAA. AAI has an electoral focus: "trying to project Arab Americans into the political mainstream" by helping to organize them within the two main political parties and to encourage Arab-Americans themselves to run for office (Khoury, 1987).

The third pivotal point was the first Gulf War. The war sparked division among Arab Americans and the drying up of funds coming from the Gulf. A survey of Arab Americans during the first week of February 1991showed that Arab Americans of Muslim origin were one and half times more likely to oppose the war than non-Muslims. Those of Palestinian or Jordanian origin were twice as likely to oppose the war as other Arab Americans. This divergence in positions on the first Gulf War created a rift among Arab American organizations; the AAI and NAAA who were highly dependent on Gulf connections supported the war, while ADC opposed the American build up in the Gulf (Shain, 1996). Arab Americans' opposition to the war was due to the fear of death and destruction that the war would inflict on their fellow Arabs, rather than because of support of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait (Gavrilos, 2002).

The 1993 World Trade Centre bombing, as a result of which seven Muslims were convicted and an alleged plot to destroy the United Nations building and other landmarks in New York was uncovered (2008) contributed to the association of Arabs or Muslims with terrorism. The blast enticed the Clinton administration into a more forceful policy against terrorism. The Oklahoma bombing in 1995, although it was the work of a white American, Timothy McVeigh, was initially linked to Arab Muslims and Middle Easterners by the media. As a result, the Omnibus Counterterrorism Act was passed, allowing the US government to use evidence from undisclosed sources to deport aliens suspected of terrorist acts. A second provision of the act allowed the government to deport aliens who made charitable contributions to organizations that were suspected to have terrorist links (Gerges, 2003). This was a setback for Arab American political activism.

The terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on September 11, 2001 (2008) represented another turning point for the Arab American community, by increasing racial profiling and scrutiny facing Arab Americans and Muslim Americans. The Patriot Act that followed was signed on the 26th of October 2001, and, with John Ashcroft as Attorney General, racial profiling became the norm. In 2003, the US government required all men between the age of 19 and 45 from Middle Eastern countries except Israel to register, and many were arrested and deported following registration (Nagel and Staeheli, 2005). The Patriot Act put any activity by Arab Americans under scrutiny, which frustrated previous efforts of Arab Americans to get organized and form a sizable voting block and to be able to put pressure on government (2000, Salaita, 2005).

Following September 11 the profiling put both the notion of Arab and Muslim in one boat, all Arabs being viewed as Muslims (Shammas, 2009). Sally Howell and Andrew Shryock from the University of Michigan describe the racial profiling that was inflicted on Arab Americans following September 11: "In the aftermath of 9/11 Arab and Muslim Americans have been compelled time and again to apologize for acts they did not commit, to condemn acts they never condoned, and to openly profess loyalties that for most US citizens are merely assumed" (Howell and Shryock, 2003).

On June 20, 2012, Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., who chairs the House Committee on Homeland Security, highlighted the committee's key findings about severity of the threat of radicalized American Muslims to homeland security, the presence of al-Qaeda recruitment in the country — specifically in prisons and military communities — and a lack of cooperation between American Muslims and law enforcement to "confront the Islamist ideology driving radicalization(2012a). Although the American media depicted the Arabs as hijackers, terrorists, and religious fanatics (Gavrilos, 2002, Saeed, 1979), not all Arab Americans experienced discrimination. Many Arab Americans look "white" and cannot be identified as Arab Americans, unlike Asians who can be clearly identified by their physical appearance and hence could not conceal their ethnicity in order to avoid discrimination (Gavrilos, 2002, David, 2007). Also Christians faced less harassment and discrimination than Muslims (Howell and Shryock, 2003) which contributed to the lack of cohesiveness in the Arab community (David, 2007). However, September 11, the Patriot Act and the ensuing racial profiling created a sense of solidarity among Arab Americans and brought Arab Americans closer to each other and pushed them to offer clarification about their heritage (El-Aswad, 2010).

September 11 created an unprecedented racial profiling that was translated into the 'normalized judgment' observed in the media as well as in government policies, for example in the profiling of Americans of Arab descent in airport, or so called 'flying while Arab' (Jadallah and El-Khoury, 2010). The profiling was not only racial but mostly political and social, trying to control anyone who might have the slightest affinity with a state that does not conform with US policies (Jadallah and El-Khoury, 2010). Three authors, Nassar McMillan, Lambert, and Hakim –Larson researched the ethno- identity of Arab Americans at three consecutive times, beginning shortly after September 11, 2001. On average, each of the respondents across the three samples reported having one or two discrimination experiences (Nassar-McMillan et al., 2011).

The Arab-American community is characterized by a multitude of factions. Arab-Americans are Muslim and Christians. Muslims are Sunni and Shia as well as other sects such as Druze and Baha'i. They belong to twenty two Arab countries. In their

lifestyle they vary from very liberal and westernized to very traditional and religious (Salaita, 2007). Each Arab community has its own religious, social and organizational setting. Author Gary David did a study in 1998 in the metropolitan area of Detroit and found over 60 organizations. He also found that, even in organizations such as the churches or mosques, people would self-segregate into subgroups based on elements of similarity (David, 2007). On this Howell and Shyrok, who studied the Arab American community in Detroit following September 11, said: 'The overrepresentation in Detroit of Arab minorities and politically disenfranchised populations (Palestinians for instance and thousands of Iraqi Shiaa, displaced when their US inspired uprising against Saddam Hussein failed in 1991) contributes to internal fragmentation. The inhabitants of Arab Detroit often find it difficult to imagine themselves as a unified Arab American constituency: the divide between Muslim and Christian Arab is a stable feature of the community politics(Howell and Shryock, 2003).Despite the divisions among Arab Americans, the Arab element remains an important element of their ethnic identity. This identity is based on reconciling the values, belief and behaviours of the country of origin with those of the host country (David, 2007).

Caroline Nagel and Lynn Staeheli from the University of Colorado wrote a paper that investigated the issue of belonging, assimilation and citizenship among Arab Americans. They observed that. even though identity differed among the respondents, the Arab element remained an important part of their identity (Nagel and Staeheli, 2005). In a study by Nassar McMillan, Lambert, and Hakim –Larson most respondents scored ethnic identity between somewhat important and very important (Nassar-McMillan et al., 2011).

However, even if the Arab element is important and Arab Americans do have an ethnic identity, this identity is not politicized. 'Politicized ethnic identity' is defined as 'the tendency of members of an ethno-national diaspora to perceive the socio-political landscape from the vantage point of the ethnic group' (Wald, 2009).Even for those who succeed politically, such as George Mitchell or John Sununu, their political success was based on their personal effort and their cross ethnic support; their ethnic identity was not the foundation for their political careers. Even when it comes to voting, since 1959 legislators of Arab background have voted on Middle

East issues similarly to Senators and Representatives who are not of Arab descent. James Abourezk is considered the only exception (Suleiman, 2010). Indeed, some Arab-American politicians have taken positions against their country of origin (Weisman, 2006).

The natural grouping as a community has been more around charities, social clubs and churches rather than around political entities (Khoury, 1987). Comparing the political activism of the Arab American community that comes from the Middle East to the political activism of the Jewish community that essentially comes from Europe, a discrepancy is noted. Between 1990 and 2004 pro-Israel political action committees gave nearly \$57 million dollars to candidates and parties, while Arab-American and Muslim PACs gave slightly less than \$700,000 (Walt, 2010).

Arab-Americans show variance in salience when it comes to Middle East related issues. A candidate's position on Middle East issues is not always a determining factor when they are making a choice for election.. Muslim Arab Americans have more of an ethnic disposition to American politics than their Christian counterparts. Also members who have friends in the community, who are proficient in Arabic, and who live in Arab American neighbourhoods, tend to show more affinity with Arab issues. A common feature of the Arab Americans' communities is that they have a low political activism .They are usually mobilized when there is a crisis or a tragic event such as the bombing of Qana in Lebanon or Gaza. However, their activism does not constitute a continuous and coordinated effort (Wald, 2009).

The Arab -American community has tried to play a role to facilitate relations between Arab countries and the US. In the 1980's the NAAA had an agreement with Jordan to facilitate Congressional visits to Jordan (Khoury, 1987). Following September 11, Arab American business leaders joined Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick in welcoming ambassadors and trade ministers from the Arab League countries in order to promote investment and trade between Detroit and the Arab world. The American Arab Chamber of Commerce has been working on promoting trade and investment between the US and the Arab world (Howell and Shryock, 2003).

In 2000 there were about 300,000 Arab-Americans in Detroit, which represents the biggest concentration of Arabs anywhere in the world outside the Middle East (2000). Arab Americans have the potential to wield strong political power and to be very influential in presidential elections. Like their Jewish counterparts, they are concentrated in swing states, such as New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan. In the 2000 presidential elections, Gore lost many votes in Michigan, because of his Vice President Lieberman who was seen as very hawkish on Israeli affairs. A poll conducted after the election showed that 69% of Arab American votes were lost because of Lieberman (Helmreich, 2001, Gavrilos, 2002).

Besides the candidacy of Gore, where the pro-Israel stance of Lieberman led to the ticket losing Arab American votes, the candidate's stance on the Middle East is not the only factor that affects the community voting choice. Also, Arab Americans are not seen by candidates as being as important as the Jewish bloc is. Though they are comparable in size, they have low activism and are not important campaign contributors. Therefore, even when a candidate courts the community, he tries to appeal to Arab American concerns that are not contradictory with his stance on Israel as did Bush and Gore in the year 2000 (Helmreich, 2001).

## **Regulation**

Lobbying has incurred several rounds of regulation that have increased its transparency. Every scandal was followed by a new regulation to correct the flaws in the system. Unlike in the 1930's, lobbying no longer solely depends on the skills and the connections of the lobbyist because legislation has rendered lobbying more transparent and more institutionalized (Rosenthal, 1993) . The most important regulations are the FRLA (the Federal Regulation Lobbying Act 1946), FARA (Foreign Agent Registration Act 1938) the LDA (Lobbying Disclosure Act 1995) and HLOGA (the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act 2007)

The first general law applicable to lobbying at the federal level, the Federal Regulation Lobbying Act (FRLA), was passed in 1945. This law was, however,

overshadowed by the Administrative Procedure Act and the Federal Tort Claims Act that were enacted during the same year. FRLA became irrelevant and was ignored on all sides (Fried et al., 2011). In 1954, The Supreme Court, in the case *United States versus Harris*, weakened the law even further by narrowing its jurisdiction. Finally, the Department of Justice abandoned attempts to enforce the FRLA.

The Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 was put in place after many public disclosures of lobbying abuses (Levine, 2009). In 2007, following the Indian Casinos scandal, in which Jack Abramoff and Michael Scanlon illegally gifted and made campaign donations to legislators in return for favours, as well as secretly orchestrating lobbying against their own clients in order to force them to pay for additional lobbying services, came the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (HLOGA) (Suzan Schmidt, 2005). The act enforced the LDA which had no real sanctions (2010b). However, in the case of Arab Gulf lobbying, FARA is the most important regulation. The law is characterized by vast amounts of disclosures that registered lobbyists must file as well as by control over the activities they undertake.

The law arose specifically in response to a perceived propaganda drive by Adolph Hitler to promote the Nazi movement in the United States. The Nazis strongly lobbied with the Congress in order to prevent the US from joining the war. President Franklin Roosevelt and many members of Congress believed that Hitler was helping finance the Nazi movement inside the United States.

Registration is required under the Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA) (22USC 611 et seq) for those who lobby the US government on behalf of a foreign government or political party. Those lobbying for foreign companies, however, may register under the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) instead. Foreign principals include a foreign government, a foreign political party, or a foreign government majority-owned company; (Bogardus, 2011) As of July 2, 2007, there were approximately 1433 registered foreign agents (Gelak, 2008).

FARA's primary purpose was to limit the influence of foreign agents and propaganda on American public policy. According to the Department of Justice, "FARA is a disclosure statute that requires persons acting as agents of foreign principals in a political or quasi-political capacity to make periodic public disclosure of their relationship with the foreign principal, as well as activities, receipts and disbursements in support of those activities." FARA not only involves traditional lobbying, namely contacts with lawmakers by a registered lobbyist on behalf of a foreign entity, it also involves any attempt to influence U.S. policy on behalf of a foreign principal, which goes beyond traditional lobbying and often means public relations, strategic consulting and legal work for foreign interests. All such activities should be disclosed to the Department of Justice (Bogardus, 2011).

However, the role played by foreign lobbyists varies a great deal. To some a foreign lobbyist is only a contact point between a foreign diplomat and the US lawmaker; to others, the lobbyist acts as initiator of a relationship. FARA does not include everyone representing a foreign interest [22 U.S.C. §613]: Diplomatic personnel do not register under FARA. The same applies for individuals working on soliciting funds from the US for medical and humanitarian purposes, and those who promote non-political causes such as religious, academic and scientific causes. Foreign companies can also avoid FARA and register under LDA if they are not majority-owned by a foreign government. In short anyone eligible to register under LDA is exempt from FARA (Atieh, 2009).

The case of foreign private companies is interesting as not only are they are not required to register under FARA, but they can create their own PACs and fund elections as long those who contribute to the PAC are American citizens (2013a).

Countries that engage in the most intensive lobbying campaigns include long-term allies like Turkey and previous adversaries like Libya. Wealthy countries like the oil-rich United Arab Emirates are also players, but so are poor nations like Ethiopia. Even tiny countries such as Monaco have a lobbyist to represent them with the US government. Every six months FARA compiles the disclosures and sends a report to Congress to ensure transparency and accountability ( 2005).

FARA is also used to protect the US from agents acting on behalf of terrorist organizations. Rob Kelner, who leads the political law practice at Covington & Burling, the business and corporate law firm, said Justices use FARA as “a convenient tool in espionage and terrorism cases.” In 2010, former Representative Mark Delo Siljander (R-Mich.) was convicted on a FARA-related charge after not registering his work on behalf of the Islamic American Relief Agency (IARA) in Columbia, Mo. IARA is an American organization that was established in 1985 in Missouri. However, in October 2004 the FBI and the Joint Terrorism Task Force raided its offices and its operations were shut down as it was indicted because of its connection to the Taliban (Bogardus, 2011). FARA was used even though the Islamic American Relief Agency is an American organization. But the alleged links to a terrorist group meant the case fell under FARA. Therefore the lines between FARA and LDA are not very clear. Though FARA excludes many categories such as charitable contributions, humanitarian and scientific projects, some countries deliberately disclose all their activities in order to safeguard themselves from scrutiny

The dilemma regarding disclosure is ongoing. Though, for example, President Obama introduced additional disclosure requirements to limit the influence of lobbyists on decision making (2010b), some claim that by increasing the requirements for disclosure the government pushes lobbying underground (KIRKPATRICK, 2010). Also given that lobbying is an integrated process that involves many elements it is difficult to keep it totally under control (Fried et al., 2011).

On the other hand, though FARA was put in place to monitor the activities of foreign principals trying to influence policy making in the US, this is a difficult task given that many countries have engaged their kinsmen who have established ethnic lobbies and that influence the US government and public in favour of their country of origin. These ethnic lobbies file under LDA as they are American organizations representing a faction of American citizens (Paul and Paul, 2009, Smith, 2000).

In addition to government regulation under LDA and FARA, some non-governmental associations were created to monitor lobbying activities and ensure that lobbying is done in a transparent manner. The Sunlight Foundation was established in 2006 for this purpose (SunlightFoundation.com). Besides this governmental and non-governmental regulation, today's lobbying world involves more lobbies who check on each other. The big business lobbies are kept in check by labour lobbies, for example. Therefore lobbies are very careful in disclosing their activities in order not to entice their opponents to attack them (Smith et al., 2013)

## **Factors for success**

Lobbying has become an integrated effort with several dimensions: grassroots, direct contact with legislators, issues of concern, coalition building, media and public relations, direct lobbying, information to legislators, strategy (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986) According to Schlozman and Tierney the elements that lead to success of lobbying are: a large membership, expertise and organizational capabilities, financing, well known leaders, good reputation and a good image, a wide circle of contacts, strategically placed allies and an appealing cause (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986). Today lobbies have grown in influence and the way they interact with the government is more sophisticated. Their role has grown beyond representing interest groups; lobbies contribute to campaign financing and provide information to legislators (Witkin, 2007). In a nutshell, the factors for success can be divided into three categories: the grassroots, the approach, and the financing

## **Grassroots**

The most important factor for success is the grassroots. The US is a democracy and legislators tend to be very responsive to their constituencies. The surest way to influence a legislator is through his constituency. This is because the number of votes he receives is the sole determinant of his election. Even Baumgartner, who studied the effects of money, found that money has effects only because it is a

means to reach out to a legislator's constituency (Baumgartner et al., 2009a). Some legislators have refused funds for their campaigns offered by groups for fear that it will be badly seen by their constituencies (Khan, 2000). Therefore a lobbyist can never ask a lawmaker to vote for a bill that is unpopular among his constituents (Levine, 2009) .

Lobbies try to mobilize their own members or sympathizers in order to influence legislators. Ideological lobbies have high rates of activism among members such as in anti-abortion groups. Grassroots support is very important in ethnic communities that are politically active. Some communities do not have activism in their culture such as the Arab American community (Khoury, 1978). Associations and citizens' groups are more likely to have grassroots organizations than businesses because they have a large number of members. However, businesses sometimes have a grassroots base. Businesses usually use their suppliers, their subcontractors, and their employees as grassroots. These are very helpful in the case of companies that have a negative image, such as arms contractors or alcohol manufacturers.

This is why arms manufacturers try to spread their subcontractor base as much as possible to make sure they have enough grassroots to guarantee support for their positions with the Congress (Smith, 1996). Similarly, alcohol companies that have little sympathy from the media, and are fought by many citizens' groups that are against drunk driving, find grassroots support very helpful. Their political strength is where they have bottling plants as they employ a large number of people. Additionally to their employees, they use their network of wholesalers who themselves have a large constituency of employees (Rosenthal, 1993). Grassroots lobbying is exempt from the Lobby Disclosure Act of 1995 which requires lobbyists' to identify clients' money that they spend and the policies they influence.

There are two types of grassroots for an issue: one is spontaneous and one is induced. The first type of grassroots is of existing groups such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) or the pro-Israel lobby and these are

mobilized whenever an issue pertaining to them is raised. The other type of grassroots is formed as a reaction to an issue. When DP World tried to manage ports in the US, a large portion of the public was against the deal, which created a grassroots base. The lobbyists in such cases press the “hot buttons” to direct public attention towards a certain issue or to raise its salience (Smith, 1996).

## **Approach**

In addition to having a significant constituency, a sound comprehensive approach is needed to make a change in policy. The approach should include a public relations campaign as it is very hard to lobby for an issue that has a negative image. Additionally, the group should have a sound and consistent narrative that is appealing to the general public and they should approach legislators in a strategic manner i.e., they should be very attentive to the venues chosen for lobbying.

The best strategy to go hand in hand with a grassroots campaign is a strong public relations campaign and issue advocacy in which media is used to shape public opinion. The media’s role is to inform people. A study by Grossman and Helpman (1996) showed that, the more informed voters are, the more likely that their preferences will be reflected in their election choice, whereas an uninformed voter will be most likely to respond to campaign rhetoric and to make choices that do not totally reflect his preferences (Chowdhury, 2004).

Media has evolved to become an important tool in lobbying. Interest groups’ representatives are sources for major TV networks. Media is used to increase the salience of an issue to constituents as well to officials (Cooper et al., 2007). When policy makers are not receptive to demands by the lobbyists, they usually try to increase the salience of the issue to the general public so as to put pressure on the legislators (Victor, 2007). Some advocacy groups establish a website, radio or a TV station to disseminate their views and to mobilize grassroots. This blurs the distinction between media and propaganda (Birnbbaum, 2012) . This was visible when

Fox News promoted the agenda of the advocates of war on Iraq and skewed reporting in their favour (Kitty, 2005). Also media is used by candidates. This is why candidates when campaigning keep raising the salience of issues in their favour and those that disadvantage their opponents. Additionally, media can generate interest group activity with significant news about a bill (Dusso, 2010). In a nutshell the media is a main element in building a positive image of a group or an issue. It is very hard to lobby for an issue or a group that has a negative stigma (Baumgartner et al., 2009a).

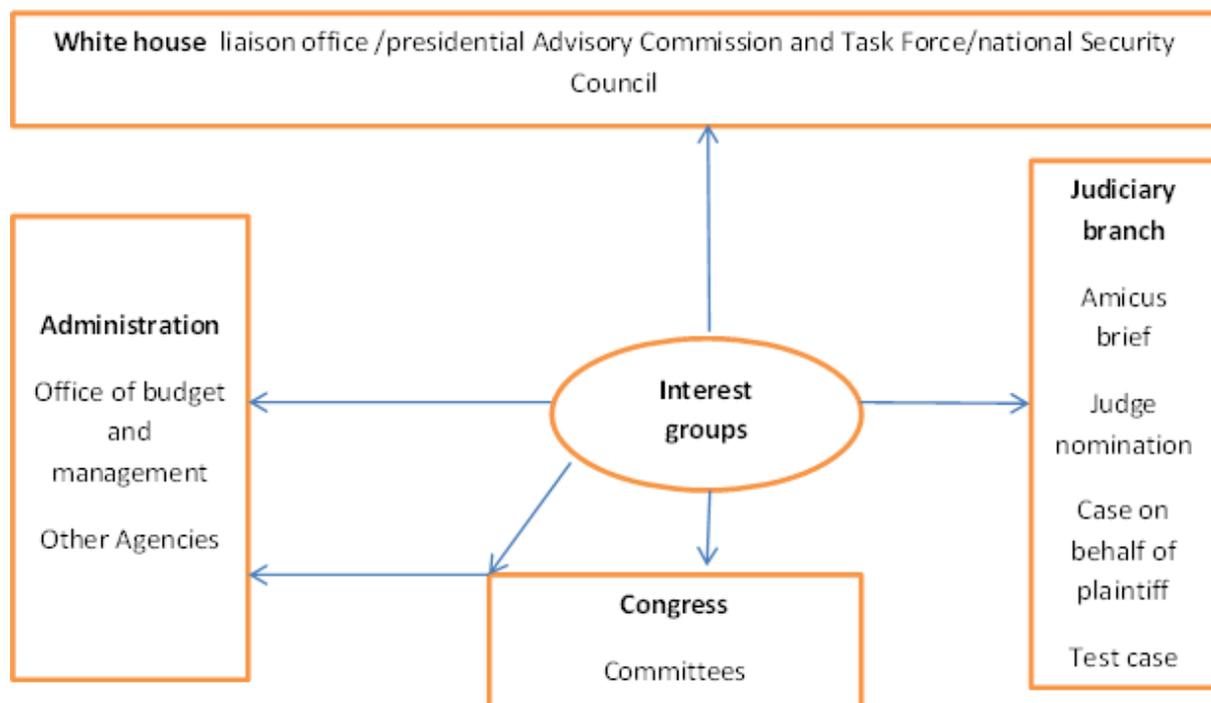
Technology offers an additional important tool of information and has rendered the role of grassroots even more important as it enables them to closely monitor their representative (Smith et al., 2013). 39% of Americans follow politicians online (Suwaidi, 2013). Technology also gives interest groups a better tool to communicate with their members and to mobilize them whenever needed.

In addition to its own constituency, successful lobbying involves gathering as much support as possible. This is why coalitions are an important element in lobbying. They increase the uniformity of the messages sent to policymakers and increase their impact. Coalition size provides a signal to officials on the viability of the proposals presented, given the strength of the opposition or of the support for a bill. Also a coalition allows for lobbying to be enriched with input from several sources (Nelson and Yackee, 2012).

A study by Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball and Leech (Baumgartner et al., 2009a), found that citizen groups can earn the general public sympathy and can captivate the media, therefore they are an important element in coalitions that target major issues. The study concluded that favoring a strong coalition to achieve an important policy outcome often involves recruiting some major citizens' groups to come along. This is despite the fact that citizens' groups do not have the resources that business groups have and despite the fact that the federal reports for the year 1996 showed that businesses make up 40 percent of registrants, with trade

associations in second place and citizens' groups a distant third comprising only about 14% of registrations (Baumgartner et al., 2009a) .

One factor in the success of lobbying is choosing the right venue or “access point”. (figure 1) It is very important to find the right access point to raise the issues. The US has a system that is characterized by the separation of powers and by a disbursed power structure, which offers numerous access points to affect policy making (Ehrlich, 2008). The main venue for lobbying is usually the Congress, though interest groups can also lobby the executive and the legislative branches. The fact that the legislators are elected and are responsive to their constituents gives the interest groups a greater impact (Davidson et al., 2011).



The former speaker of the House, Sam Rayburn, used to say that ‘a legislator's first duty is to get re-elected’ (Mathias, 1980).Although Congress is the most receptive venue for lobbying, there are other factors that drive lobbying activity. When there is opposition in a certain venue, lobbyists are likely to lobby in that venue to counteract the effect of negative lobbying. Lobbyists tend to choose the venue for two reasons:

first of all, to maintain their relations with the policy maker, and second, to show their group that they are active and vigilant (McKay, 2012, Hojnacki et al., 2012).

However, it is important for a lobbyist to know who to approach. The access point has to be chosen strategically. Intuitively, lobbyists would look for easy access points, i.e., points that are most receptive to their demands, and try to use them to influence other decision makers (Ehrlich, 2008).

In addition to the relationships interest groups have with different officials, the right choice of access point is based on the knowledge of the stakeholders involved in making a decision, such as the committees or agencies considering the issue and their members as well as the drivers behind the position these members take (Leech, 2006, Victor, 2007).

Sometimes the drive behind a committee member's choice of committee is ideological, sometimes it is populist driven by his constituency preferences, sometimes the choice is partisan (Levine, 2009).

The choice of the lobbying venue also depends on the nature of political relations between Congress and the executive branch. In a time of little conflict between the two, or when the government is unified, interest groups tend to focus on the executive branch. In times of conflict, interest groups usually have more influence in their opposition to the administration as they have more leeway in lobbying Congress to push their agenda (Bennedsen and Feldmann, 2006).

The executive branch is also an important venue for lobbying; the President needs support from interest groups for his policy initiatives. The National Security Council provides the president with expert advice (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986). In the seventies, President Ford realized the importance of interest groups and established the White House Public Liaison, a staff agency designed to reach out to organized interests (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986). Another channel in the White House is the

Presidential Advisory Commission and Task Force, on which interest groups can serve.

Agencies are another important venue that interest groups can use. Congress has delegated policymaking rulemaking to executive agencies. It has also set up mechanisms to limit executive agencies' discretion. The courts review the executive agencies' decisions to make sure they abide by Congress' limitations. One way to guide rulemaking is by having the proceedings open to the public, under 'notice and comments'. This allows interested groups and their lobbyists to contribute to drafting proposals. Under this formula, interest groups negotiate a rule with the concerned executive agency, but the latter has the ultimate decision to implement it or not. This type of lobbying is considered less adversarial than lobbying Congress (Witkin, 2007). As a consequence of rulemaking, executive agencies become an important venue for lobbyists (Bennedsen and Feldmann, 2006) .

One very important agency that interest groups can approach to influence legislation is the Office of Management and Budget. This office oversees any rule that implies an outlay of \$100 million and over (Smith et al., 2013). This is one way to indirectly influence Congress. Reverse lobbying is also practiced by executive agencies, by using interest groups to exert pressure on Congress. Sometimes the opposite applies and interest groups go to Congress to influence the executive branch because of its supervisory powers (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986) . . However, to remove the grip of interest groups on executive agencies, Congress opened the proceedings to the public. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) passed in 1966 requires agencies to provide citizens with access to public records upon request. However, too much material was considered classified. In 1974 Congress modified the law and made it easier for the public to get information (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986).

The last resort of interest groups is the courts. They use the courts when the executive and legislative branches are perceived unfavourably (Hansford, 2004) .But courts take a long time to solve issues, which is an important reason why interest

groups try to avoid them. Moreover, the justices are appointed for life which makes them insensitive to interest groups' pressure. However, interest groups try to influence the nomination of Supreme Court judges (Findley, 1989).

The most common way to influence a court decision on a lawsuit is by filing an 'amicus brief'. This is usually part of counteractive lobbying, by which interest groups try to influence the environment in the court by providing justices with information on the case in front of them. They usually couple it with an interpretation of the law that is relevant to the case. Alternatively, they may present the court with information on verdicts concerning similar cases, which is very compatible with the common law tradition (Solowiej and Collins, 2009). The Administrative Procedure Act encourages interest groups to go to court to overrule agencies. Interest groups can do this by either filing a test case by which the constitutionality of the legislative or executive act under consideration is contested, or they can plead on the behalf of plaintiffs (Schlozman and Tierney, 1986).

On the other hand, when an interest group lobbies, it should know at what level it should lobby, whether at the local or state level. Too often advocates spend their time lobbying at the wrong level of government. For example, one should not approach Congress to have a stop sign installed on a street, nor contact the mayor for the Alternative Minimum Tax (Shaw, 2001). However, the different levels are interconnected as Congress issues legislation that affects the fifty different states and provides a framework for these states to issue their own legislation.

At the state level, lobbyists can bypass the legislative body by taking an initiative and submitting a proposal directly to voters. Twenty six states allow some form of direct legislation in which the electorate has the power to change laws. Therefore, an interest group can draft a proposal and collect a number of signatures and present them to the legislature for consideration. If the legislature does not pass the ballot it is put before the voters to decide. The voters' initiative can either be to propose a new measure or to oppose a bill that has already been passed by the legislature (Rosenthal, 1993). Those who use such an initiative are usually citizens' groups that

enjoy public sympathy and whose issue is of general interest such as limiting taxes or governmental reforms (Baumgartner et al., 2009a).

In addition to choosing the right level and access point, a strategy involves the degree of lobbying. The lobbying level, or how aggressive it should be, depends on many factors. Interest groups tend to lobby more aggressively when an issue has high salience among the general public (Victor, 2007). Also interest groups tend to be more aggressive when they have support from policy makers and have a sizable number of allies inside the beltway. The more controversial an issue, the more intense the lobbying that will be needed (Leech, 2006).

## **Funding**

Since lobbying is an integrated process that involves several elements, each of these elements requires funding: campaign contributions, media, research, and internal communication/incentives to keep the cohesion of the group. Therefore funding is an important element to any lobby and securing a continuous source of funds is necessary to the success of any lobbying effort. Non-profit organizations, that can engage in lobbying directly such as the 501(c) (4) category, or indirectly, such as the 501(c)(3) category, obtain their resources from dues, fund raisers, state and local government grants and contracts. Research and advocacy organizations and social welfare organizations receive a third of their revenues from the government .However, politically active organizations rely less on government funds than non-political organizations (Leech, 2006) .It is noteworthy that their start-up funds come from private donors, while government funds are usually solicited for the maintenance of the organization (Walker, 1983).

Some non-profit organizations have profit-oriented sister organizations. The costs of the non-profit organizations are shifted to the latter. Such costs are tax deductible for the profit-oriented organizations. In this case, the profit organization subsidizes the non-profit while drastically reducing its tax burden. (Ainsworth, 2002).

On the other hand, in Walker's (1983) survey, membership dues were mainly from occupational groups, since these groups could shift the cost of the membership to their agencies. Citizens' groups had little revenue from selling selective incentives or from dues. Most revenues came from outside sources.

Walker found that for non-occupational groups most leaders set up the group by attracting funds from outside the group. The first preoccupation was to bring the group into being and to keep it going until revenues were large enough to meet operating expenses. This is difficult for citizens' groups where memberships are large; it is more difficult to reach all potential members than for occupational groups. Leaders must begin with a fairly large staff to create a far flung membership base (Olson, 2009). Also dues come mostly from occupational groups; in citizens' groups dues are less important. Dues of occupational groups are usually charged to employers. Without such subsidies, a lot of the members would drop out.

Walker divided group income into three categories: routine income that includes dues, conference and advertising fees and constitutes the largest source of income; non-recurring contributions from non-members which include donations from government, foundations and individuals; and miscellaneous income that can include various sources such as loans, sale of assets, and investment among others (Walker, 1983). Another point worth mentioning regarding the dues is the so-called Black theorem. As shown in Walker's sample, dues make up a large percentage of the income of many groups. The theorem states that the dues that a member is willing to pay is equal to the utility of the benefits he gets from the membership (Ainsworth, 2002).

The contributions to influence the election are channelled through the PAC system. The PACs are called political organizations or 527s. So by law they don't engage in lobbying, but only in political activity. Only American citizens or immigrants with green cards can contribute to a federal election. However, foreign-owned companies with branches in the US can have their own PACs as long as their employees who donate money are American citizens (2013a).

Federal election committees are federal PACs that influence elections and report to the FEC (Federal elections commission). The federal unconnected PACs that make “independent expenditure only” are not limited in size and are called Super PACs. The 527s do not have to file to the FEC but must register with the IRS (Schadler, 2012). PACs act like single issue groups: they select a candidate based on his loyalty to the industry or the issue and usually allocate contributions based on the voting record. PACs are more likely to contribute to the candidates in their districts, or to candidates serving on committees of interest to them (Gopoian et al., 1984).

The structure of the American system has given to lobbying a crucial importance in policy making. Despite the different views on lobbying , it a fact that groups who lobby have higher chance of tilting public policy in their favour .However, lobbying is a complex phenomenon that is governed by multiple factors. And those who have the most effective and successful lobbying are those who have a vocal constituency, the proper approach, have the adequate funding, and plead for a cause to which the general public is sympathetic.

## **Theoretical framework**

Identifying the key areas of concern for the research is a prerequisite for building a theoretical framework. The literature review will help identify the current state of knowledge in the key areas on which the research questions will be based. As discussed before, the only previous work dealing directly with the issue of Arab lobbying. is *The Arab Lobby: The Invisible Alliance That Undermines America's Interests in the Middle East* by Mitchell Bard.. The book assumes that Arabs Gulf States do have a lobby that influences the US foreign policy in the Middle East however Bard also states that do not have an indigenous support base for a lobby (Bard, 2010). Those two assumptions will partly direct this research. Thus I will examine a set of theories on group formation and mobilization, and the barriers that prevent pro-Arab groups from becoming a strong lobby. Hence, the relevance of “subsystem theory,” which states that certain policy areas are exclusively controlled by some groups, will be examined.

## **Group formation and mobilization**

The literature on interest-group formation and mobilization underlies the theoretical framework for this research. In large groups, that Olson also calls latent groups, where no single individual's contribution makes a difference to the group as a whole and will not affect the benefit of any single member of the group, different individuals will not be motivated to work towards the collective good unless there is coercion or external inducement (Olson, 2009).

Another problem which arises and which is different from that of the free rider, or of those who benefit from the collective benefit without making any contribution, this is the problem of organization of the larger group. The creation of a group involves organization and communication costs. These costs, which represent a hurdle that must be overcome before any collective good can be obtained, are necessary to ensure the cohesion of the group. Also large groups need to create a certain ideology. This undertaking is called farming the ideology. It needs mass media and cannot be achieved by interpersonal relations alone, hence, the need for funds. If members are continuously bombarded with propaganda, over time social pressure incentives develop within the group, which can help the latent group to work for the collective good rather than individual self-interest. The larger the group, the more coercion or outside incentives are needed (Olson, 2009).

Olson also explains that such incentives cannot be restricted to the collective good. They have to be separate and selective, in order to stimulate a rational individual in a latent group to act in a group-oriented fashion. Selective incentives mean that only those who join the group will benefit from it. However, such incentives need not be material. They can be emotional or social, like peer pressure or the appearance of being socially accepted (Olson, 2009).

Olson's practical explanation of his theory extends to the success of certain lobbies in overcoming the collective action problem. He explains that these lobbies are successful in overcoming this problem because beyond their political objectives they are involved in non-political activities that provided direct benefits for their members and hence they have a captive membership. The lobby in such a case is a by-product of whatever function an organization performs, that enables it to have a captive membership. He states that "an organization that did nothing except lobby to obtain a collective good for some large group would not have a source of rewards or positive selective incentives that it could offer to potential members. Only an organization that also offered private or non-collective products, or provided social or recreational benefits to individual members would have a source of these positive inducements. Only such an organization could make a joint offering or 'tied sale' of a collective and non-collective good that could stimulate a rational individual in a large group to bear part of the cost of obtaining the collective good" (Olson, 2009).

Olson illustrates his case by comparing the American Medical Association (AMA) to that of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The AMA's political influence is much stronger than that of AAUP, although both organizations represent important constituencies. The structural difference between the two organizations is that the AMA performs two kinds of functions for its members. In addition to crafting unions and protecting the interests of physicians, the AMA provides services to its members. These services include publishing of scientific journals, standardizing drugs, and organizing conferences, among others. The AAUP, on the other hand, has only a political dimension, which consists of unionization and protecting the interests of the professors. For scientific and professional services, members of the AAUP look for professional organizations in their subject fields (Olson, 2009).

Another way to overcome the collective action problem is for a large group to have a federal structure, or be formed of small closely knit groups. Small groups do not have the free rider problem and the organizational costs are small. This is due to the fact that individuals know each other and are geographically close, so communication costs are minimal. Federal groups consist of a number of small groups each of which

has a reason to join the umbrella group. The small group, since it is closely knit, has social leverage, or can use social inducement to mobilize its members to act towards the goals of the federal group to which it belongs. Olson draws on the works of George Homans, a leading American scientist, who argues that small groups have more durability than large groups. In Homans' words: "formal organizations that articulated the whole have fallen to pieces" (Olson, 2009). Olson explains that in a small group it is highly likely that voluntary action can solve the group's collective action problem. However, a large latent group cannot act according to the common interest of the whole group as long as members are free to further their individual interests (Olson, 2009).

Olson gives as an example the way national unions draw their power from small local unions. The federation members who belong to small local unions have the advantages of the small group (Olson, 2009). The federation concept is a bridge between Olson's theory, where a latent group can overcome the collective action problem by acting like a small group, and Salisbury's (1969) theory of mutual exchange. Salisbury's theory complements that of Olson. Olson talks about the maintenance of groups, whereas Salisbury focuses on how to motivate a group of people to act as an initiator for a policy change. Salisbury's theory implies that rallying people around a cause for a sustainable period of time is almost impossible. The only way for an interest group to remain mobilized is when there is a beneficial exchange. This means that both the leader and the members benefit from the relationship.

To overcome the collective action problem Walker (1983) came up with a middle-ground proposal between Truman (1958) and Olson (1968). Whereas Truman said, that groups form spontaneously, and are driven instinctively to act in their own interests to protect themselves from threat, and whereas Olson refuted this theory by demonstrating how difficult it is to get people to act together, Walker found a solution to Olson's dilemma. His research showed that groups resort to outside help in order to get funds and resources to pay for the organizational costs of the group as well as to induce people to get mobilized. Walker based his theory on the changing typology

of organizations in the American system. The sixties witnessed a growth in citizens groups that did not have the incentives discussed by Olson.

Walker tested and confirmed this fact from a sample of 913 organizations, 564 of which came back with answers that helped him come up with his research conclusions. From the analysis of the surveys, Walker concluded that the main problem facing interest group organizers is how to bring these groups into being and to keep them going until revenues are large enough to meet operating expenses. He adds that unlike professional communities that are closely knit, and where members can shift the costs to the companies or agencies that employ them, citizens groups' memberships are extremely large and the members do not know each other. Their common interest is not clear to everyone; therefore, they need to start with a large staff and sizable funds to reach enough of their far flung potential membership and to create a stable organizational base (Walker, 1983).

Walker also found that providing start- up funds to an untested political entrepreneur, or patronizing a cause that might cause controversy, requires boldness. The data he collected showed that among all patrons, private individuals are most likely to provide backing for new organizational ventures, much more than organizations and governmental agencies (Walker, 1991). Walker also mentions the legal/ taxation system in a country. The fact that contributions can be tax deductible encourages the provision of resources from outside organization/business (Walker, 1983).

The theory of Walker on building successful grassroots organizations and on resource mobilization ties in with the theory of McCarthy and Zald (1973, 1974), who demonstrated how successful social change entrepreneurs build access to needed resources from elites outside their immediate constituencies. Critics of this theory, such as McAdam (1982), say that the resources should be internal. McAdam gives the example of the civil rights movement, where indigenous black organizations such as churches and colleges and chapters of the National Association for the

Advancement of Coloured People, provided communication channels and the needed resources to mobilize people (Nyden, 2008).

In a way, the theories of Truman, Olson, and Walker are compatible with each other. Although an initial shock is necessary to create awareness among a latent group, and give an opportunity to entrepreneurs to create a political interest group, the theory of Olson focuses mainly on maintenance and survival of the group. Other social scientists, Eldeman (1964), Gamson (1975), Lipsky (1970), Salisbury (1969), and Wilson (1973) have elaborated further on Olson's work by demonstrating how difficult it is to organize groups whose members have nothing more in common than an idea or a broad cause.

The originality of Walker's research stems from his investigation of how groups were able to overcome the collective action problem without resorting to Olson's solution, which consists of providing selective positive or negative incentives. He explains that even if a group, such as a citizens group, cannot provide incentives to draw membership, such groups have flourished due to the existence of patrons. He states that "the key to the origins and maintenance of interest groups in the United States lies in the ability and willingness of the patrons of political actions to expand the representative system by sponsoring groups that speak for newly emerging elements of society and promote new legislative agendas and social values" (Walker, 1983). Graziano adds to Walker's findings by saying that, in addition to locating funds outside the immediate group, the Olson dilemma can be circumvented if the group is faced with a threat (Graziano, 2001).

Walker also found that financial support is provided to a group for a purpose, as patrons expect to receive a return for their aid (Walker, 1983). Here, the theory of Walker meets that of Salisbury, stating that mutual beneficial exchange is the basis on which groups can be maintained. This is affirmed in Friedland and Alford's theory of the utilitarian economist which states that people operate with means to an end and that they are rational in their choices. Thus, they evaluate their participation in

social relationships based on cost versus the benefits they get from these relationships (Friedland and Alford, 1991).

## **Barriers to entry**

The decision of a group to be active politically is related to the socio-economic and political environment, and whether or not this environment promotes such behaviour or raises barriers to entry and prohibits new groups from lobbying. Two relevant theories to be examined in this context are: 1) subsystem theory, in which one small group has control over certain policy areas; and 2) the theory of how to break this subsystem and allow for new entrants.

The first theory is the one of the dominant system; whereas one interest group has developed a special relation with legislators which create a kind of barrier preventing other groups from accessing those legislators and hence they become the prime source of information and funds to those legislators. As a result, they dominate the discourse in this specific policy area. The dominant subsystem or the inertia is broadly discussed by Roger Friedland and Robert Alford (1991). They speak of organizations exploiting niches that the political environment provides in order to create inertia, a state of 'isomorphism' in order to preserve their interests (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). The theory of 'isomorphism' states that in certain fields the government works through private organizations. It also explains the 'homogeneity' in certain government institutions, the lack of change and the 'irrationality' in certain decisions that the government makes (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991).

Di Maggio argues that in the process of creating a system, organizational actors develop practices that in the long run create a certain environment that constrains their ability for further change (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991). So as legislators start relying on certain interest groups to fund their campaigns, get information, and liaise with their constituencies, they create a system to which they became captive. Di Maggio speaks of 'structuration' of certain policy areas. Due to the increase of

interaction of organizations with government actors, an 'inter-organizational' structure emerges. This structure is dominated by patterns and set coalitions therefore the decision makers tend to take their information from fixed sources. This is how some groups control the discourse in certain policy areas, such as the pro-Israel lobby and the discourse on Middle East policy. This creates a common understanding among the different stakeholders that they are together in a 'common enterprise', which makes it difficult for new players to penetrate such set structures (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991).

Additionally to the pre-established relations, the dynamics of lobbying favours the status quo as it is harder to lobby for a change than to lobby to keep the existing status. McKay noticed that it takes four times the effort to introduce change than to fight it. It takes 3.5 lobbyists to work towards a new proposal in order to counteract the effect of one lobbyist opposing it. (McKay, 2012). Dominant subsystems are referred to as 'iron triangles', and involve issues of low salience to the average American, i.e. issues that have little importance to the life of the average American. In such a situation, the legislator can respond to the lobbyist's narrow interest, act ideologically, or return a favour to a colleague. He can do that because he knows that whatever position he takes, it will not affect his re-election (Thurber, 1996). This subsystem can be linked to Ken Kollman's theory, which examines shared policy preferences among legislators, the executive branch, and interest groups. He concludes that these shared preferences create inertia in certain areas of public policy. For example, agricultural committees are manned by members coming from agricultural areas. Those members usually show interest because such committees have a direct relevance to their constituencies. These elected officials, who occupy a position on the committees, will tend to steer public policy in a way that is favourable to the interest groups in their constituencies. Kollman finds the relationship between committees and interest groups to be rather consensual. He also finds a correlation in ideology between interest groups and the committees they lobby. This correlation does not stem from a choice to lobby with friends but from the fact that interest groups and committee members that share jurisdiction with these groups tend to share a similar ideology. He states that "what looks like friendly lobbying is biased representation by interest groups and committees" (Kollman, 1997).

Therefore subsystem theory represents an embodiment of the control of a narrow interest over public policy in certain areas. However, Luigi Graziano has found that lobbies have broken down 'triangles', which has led to more democratization. The entry of new groups and their interest in certain issues has broken the congressional monopoly over some areas. This has led to the disruption of 'safe havens' for many interests. The 'triangle' as described by Graziano has a defined program, people with direct interests and well-defined actors. However, he introduces a new concept, namely the issue network, where there are new policies with vast social implications and direct and indirect interests but where the actors are not well defined (Graziano, 2001).

Another consequence that stems from the sub-government model is rent seeking behaviour. This behaviour, as highlighted by Olson and Krueger (1974), refers to the practice of a group trying to spread the costs of a project while solely retaining the benefits for themselves. The theory has two aspects: one has to do with the costs of a certain policy, and the second part is concerned with disclosure of information regarding a certain policy. However, on such issues reversing the trend involves a high cost to the individual payer relative to the expected gains due to the costs of lobbying or campaigning against such policies. A rational taxpayer would likewise not have an incentive to try to stop such behaviour. Olson's problem then re-occurs because in order for the total expected gains of the collective to outweigh the costs, the group of taxpayers must be significantly large (Atieh, 2009).

Therefore, to reverse the current pre-established relations between policymakers and interest groups, a larger group should be involved and affected by the policy in order to spread the costs and efforts of lobbying. One example Thurber gives is oil policy. Prior to the 1973 embargo, oil politics were controlled by producers. The embargo, which affected the average American through long waiting lines at petrol stations, and led to an increase in the costs of air tickets, among other effects, launched oil policy into public discourse. A policy that was controlled by well-

organized subcommittees and administrative agencies became television headline material and started affecting the day to day life of the average American. (Thurber, 1996). Thus, Thurber concludes that one way to break through the monopoly over a policy area created by the subsystem is to increase the salience of an issue in the eyes of the average American.

From the literature review we see that there is no real lobby in action for Arab Gulf state. The Arab Gulf does not have an indigenous base; the Arab American activism cannot be considered as an important force in US politics. Therefore, the theories that guide the research revolve around what it takes to mobilize people and what can prevent them from taking this action. This theoretical framework as well as the literature review will direct the research questions and will frame the objectives of the dissertation that will be fulfilled by a mixed methodology. The methods used to conduct the research will be detailed in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology**

### **Synopsis of the research project**

This project aims to investigate the lobbying patterns and practices of Arab Gulf states in the United States. To that end, it considers two cases—one successful case of lobbying and one failure—examining the factors behind these cases of success and failure and draws broader conclusions from them. The case studies as well themes that will be detected from interviews conducted will be reconciled with the theoretical framework and the literature review in order to come up with proper propositions and conclusions as well as recommendations regarding Arab Gulf lobbying.

### **Methodology**

Since this study is exploratory in nature, and since not much has been written on the topic of the Arab Gulf state lobby, a qualitative approach to the research is used .A qualitative approach is used to explore new areas and develop hypotheses, while the quantitative comes later on to test and validate those assumptions (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Triangulating the findings using different methods is a good way to check for validity. This is similar to looking at one topic from different angles and seeking complementary information at different stages of the research to get rigorous evidence (Wolf, 2010). Triangulation may be used at the theoretical, methodological and data levels. The theories comprising the theoretical framework will be triangulated with themes that are extracted from the research through a grounded theory method (Stake, 1995). The research will try to find whether the general theories in lobbying are applicable to the Arab case or not, and also whether the

themes identified conform to existing theories. Three qualitative methods will be embedded and integrated: cases studies, discourse analysis, and grounded theory.

On the design of a mixed methodology there is no blueprint because there is no ideal structure to mix subjectivity and objectivity, deduction and induction (Evans et al., 2011). Frieder Wolf reviewed literature that uses mixed methodology, and recommended not to subscribe to a 'one-size-fits-all' solution, but to use 'tailor-made triangulation strategies' that fit the research questions in hand (Wolf, 2010). My study starts with grounded theory guided by a theoretical framework. Case studies are used to validate and elaborate on the propositions extracted from the "grounded theory". This methodological triangulation minimizes a researcher's subjectivity (Parmelee et al., 2007). Discourse analysis will be used to analyse elements of the case studies, including interviews, media coverage, official statements, and official documents.

"Grounded theory" is the anchor method for the present research. Grounded theory is used when there is very little research on a subject (Creswell and Clark, 2007). From in-depth interviews I will generate concepts or themes or propositions regarding the Arab Gulf states' lobbying in the US. However, the concepts generated from the grounded theory are contextual. The data collected from interviews is value laden and subjective and is governed by many factors such as the socio-economic and political environment, the interviewee's perception of the issue under research, personal experience, even the interviewee's mood at the time of the interview. Hence, on their own they cannot be used for generalization. Triangulation is needed to enhance the validity of the findings.

I start with grounded theory to try to detect patterns or features in Arab Gulf lobbying. Then I go back to some of the grounded theory propositions and test them with another qualitative method which is the case study. The case studies show how the different elements of lobbying interact with each other and affect each other to lead to a case of success or failure.

The purpose of triangulation is to offset the biases from one method by cross checking with other methods in order to converge towards a single perspective regarding an issue or a phenomenon. However, mixed methodology sometimes results in contradictory findings which require further in-depth analysis for resolving such inconsistencies (Jang et al., 2008). At the data level, triangulation will be undertaken to improve the validity of information used in the analysis. The same information will be checked using different sources. For example when inferring that Arabs have a negative image in the United States the statements of opponents of the deal that were given in the Congress will be analysed in addition to coverage in the US media. This will increase the validity of my findings.

### **Grounded theory**

The research problem, literature review, and the theoretical framework make the conceptual framework of the grounded theory. Those components also give a perspective to the themes emerging from the grounded theory. The emerging themes give an indication of the elements to be examined in the case studies. These patterns are verified in the real life situations that the case studies represent. Some of the findings from grounded theory will be checked by consulting records from the Sunlight Foundation (a watchdog that records all lobbying activities of foreign lobbyists). For example, when one proposition of the grounded theory states that Arab Gulf states do not work jointly on any issues, I consult with the records to see whether this proposition is valid.

Grounded theory was developed by Glaser and Strauss, who saw it as a more systematic procedure to collect and analyse qualitative data (Charmaz, 2003). The phrase means the theory is grounded in the behaviour, words, and actions of those being studied, and that the theory is grounded in data that have been systematically obtained through research. Grounded theory derives from a general abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction that is grounded in the views of the participants (Creswell, 2009). Grounded theory has an inherent tendency for verification as the

researcher stays in the field until the interviews/observations become repetitive and no more new themes are generated (Goulding, 2002).

Grounded theory enables prediction and explanation of behaviour. It comes up with well-defined categories and hypotheses that can lay the foundation for future research. Also grounded theory is used when the area of interest has received little attention in the literature.

Grounded theory was a reaction against grand theory that couched sociological theories at a very abstract level. It is grounded in the behaviour and the action of the group investigated, hence the name (Goulding, 2002)

According to Corbin and Strauss, a theory is not absolute it is rather an interpretation made from given perspectives (Charmaz, 2003). A theory is provisional and subject to future elaboration. It is limited in time and may become obsolete. From this perspective about theorizing, grounded theory emanated. So subjectivity and limited validity are common elements between discourse analysis and grounded theory.

The method is also useful in detecting patterns, which makes it appropriate for the identification of patterns in Arab Gulf states' lobbying. David Ellis employed a grounded theory approach to derive models of the information-seeking patterns of academic researchers, for example. Although academic researchers had received a good amount of attention in the research literature, the problem itself was not adequately investigated in the literature (Ellis, 1993). Therefore the focus of the research was novel. The research problem was depicting the factors that affect the retrieval of information in social sciences from computer-based systems. The findings of grounded theory derived inductively from empirical data gave an indication about social scientists' information seeking patterns. The findings were applied to give recommendations for an enhancement of the information retrieval system design (Ellis, 1993). Grounded theory provided clear propositions that led to

further research and resulted in practical recommendations to enhance computer systems (Goulding, 2002).

One difference between discourse analysis and grounded theory is that grounded theory allows the conceptualization of data, therefore raising the level of thought about data to a higher level, whereas discourse analysis only allows us to analyse causality in a situation in which discourse is being analysed. Grounded theory transcends previous theories by inclusion and integration of data to come up with a dense integrated theory, while discourse analysis uses such previous theories only as frames to explain a situation (Goulding, 2002).

Grounded theory presents a theoretical conceptualization of the patterns of interaction of the different social units or actors. It reveals processes as well as causality in incidents (Goulding, 2002). The data used for grounded theory has to be sufficiently large to allow constant comparison and theoretical sampling. What characterizes grounded theory data collection is that it is done simultaneously with analysis. The research in this dissertation relies on in-depth exploratory interviews.

The conceptual framework is the basis on which questions are compiled and the initial sample is chosen. The interviews are in-depth interviews with respondents whose experiences can give us different perspectives on Arab Gulf lobbying: lobbying experts, Arab Gulf diplomats, US statesmen with experience in the Gulf, and Arab Americans...

Interviews were transcribed line by line, and NVivo was used to extract "codes". Codes are similar ideas that can be aggregated into a theme. The first batch was fully transcribed and codes were extracted; however if repetition was noticed in the second batch of interviews, I only transcribed and extracted codes when there was the potential for a new concept to emerge (Charmaz, 2003). Also interviews of the first batch were in-depth and covered all the range of questions handled in the

research. The second batch was more targeted and interviewees were asked questions pertaining to their experiences and of relevance to the case studies. As the research progressed the interviews became more targeted.

I analysed the data using Nvivo, software that supports qualitative as well as mixed methods in research. Nvivo helps to depict the themes emerging from the interviews as well as to organize and analyse unstructured information in the interviews. When analysing interviewees' answers, similar ideas and themes are grouped under one node. New nodes can be created as new themes occur. The analysis is done question by question, synthesizing the different emerging themes.

I follow the approach that David Ellis (1993) used to display his analysis of the information-seeking pattern of academic researchers.

## **Case Studies**

To test the theoretical framework, as well as the themes generated from grounded theory I use case studies. A case study represents a real life situation; therefore it offers a critical test for a theory. It gives a concrete real life reflection of the theory (Biketine, 2008). Case studies also are an experiential method of research, representing an overall empirical experience (Stake, 1995) as they feature how the different elements involved in a case interact with each other. I follow the instrumental approach where the case offers a mean to come out with findings concerning elements of the research, and is not by itself the object of research (Stake 1995). This contrasts with an intrinsic approach, in which all contents are important, as the aim is to deal with the case as an independent phenomenon. In this research, the unit of analysis is what makes lobbying succeed and what makes Arab Gulf lobbying works regardless of the country (UAE, Oman, KSA, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar) and regardless of the sector (defence, oil, trade, foreign policy , human right).. Therefore, I chose one case of lobbying success and one of lobbying failure. The AWACS episode is the case of success. This deal was different from other arms

deals, such as the sale of the F16 to the UAE. The AWACS deal was passed despite strong opposition from the pro-Israel lobby. In this case, the Saudis used their lobbying muscle to the full and it resulted in an iconic victory. The other case, the Dubai Port World (DP World) deal, in which the Dubai-owned company was denied the acquisition of six US ports, represents a failure in lobbying. Also the issue of DP World was not restricted to the business deal, as it had public relations repercussions on the UAE, and it was used to vilify the UAE and the Arabs.

The two cases, one representing an arms sale and the other a commercial transaction, do not represent all the elements of lobbying. Though each of the case studies represent a holistic view of the lobbying process (Stake, 1995), the elements that can be studied are limited to the content of the case. Therefore, the findings of the case studies will not provide complete answers, however they are more of an attempt to rationalize the facts with knowledge of the subject matter (Hamel et al., 1993).

One important element I will study is having grassroots interest: in the case of the arms sale it was workers who were involved in the deal who supported the deal and greatly contributed to its success, while in the case of DP World it was the American people concerned about the safety of mainland America who opposed the acquisition and led to the failure of the transaction. Neither of the cases involved an Arab American constituency, the constituency that is usually needed to have an ethnic lobby such as the pro-Israel, pro-Greece, pro-Armenia lobbies. In addition to the domestic base, the other variables I will examine are the role of foreign lobbyists, strategy and planning, support from the administration, the role of the media and the salience of the issue, and the strategic value of the Arab Gulf to the US. Analysing these elements gives an important input to critical assessment of the factors that have led to the success or failure of Arab Gulf lobbying.

In addition to the fact that the elements to be studied are limited to the content of the case and hence can only give partial answers to the reasons for success and failure

of Arab Gulf lobbying, the cases are circumstantial in nature; therefore they cannot be used to deduce with certitude a proposition (Stake 1995). Yinii states that an explanatory case study cannot prove anything with the certainty of true experiments. However, it is better than not making any inquiry at all (Yin, 2003a).

In this research I resort to theoretical replication as a means for triangulation. One theory or proposition generated from grounded theory will be checked in different situations to ensure its validity (Yin, 2003b). For example, to check the proposition about the importance of an indigenous base, I examine the F15 case, in which there was a domestic base to pressure the government, and contrast it with the DP World case, where such an indigenous base was lacking but where highly paid lobbyists were used. Comparing those two case studies that had contrasting elements allows me to build an explanation of the importance of having a constituency.

Cross case analysis involves validating findings across several explanatory cases. This analysis starts by clarifying the proposition, the unit of analysis, and the nature of the relevant outcomes related to the difference in episodes (Yin, 2003b). My research presents two different episodes: one revolves around selling arms to another country and the other episode involves another country coming and managing ports in the mainland US. One is a case of success and one is a case of failure. In one case, the Arab Gulf states had an American constituency speaking for them and countering the opposition (AWACS). In the other case (DP World) no domestic constituency supported the deal. In both cases the deal had the support of the White House, however Reagan and Bush faced different circumstances. Making the comparison will allow me to more rigorously analyse my findings.

## **Discourse analysis**

Discourse analysis is used in the case studies, namely in Chapters 4 and 5, that feature cases of success and of failure. It is used to analyse the interviews,

documents and media reporting (Alba-Juez, 2009) surrounding the cases. It is also used to test and validate the themes extracted from grounded theory regarding the factors that lead to success or failure.

Discourse analysis is important as it helps to give a meaning to a certain phenomenon. It is based on the fact that the way people talk, and the way documents are drafted, reflect social relations among people. Discourse analysis explores patterns in oral and written statements, as well as in related practices (Scollon, 2008).

In the process of analysis, the research will not stick to the linguistic oriented approach to discourse analysis but will use a broader approach, focusing more on the content of the discourse (Alba-Juez, 2009). Focusing on the content more than on the structure is more appropriate given that not all interviews were conducted in English. Some were translated; therefore applying the linguistic version of discourse analysis would not be appropriate. Critical discourse analysis bridges the gap between micro and macro levels of social order (Alba-Juez, 2009) i.e., from analysing a certain discourse one can conceptualize the bigger picture that this discourse represents. For example, at the hearing of the DP World case the transaction was questioned, however the larger picture the discourse represents puts into question the relationship between the US and the UAE. The discourse analysis method allows us to understand what arguments underlie the Arab Gulf states' approach to lobbying. Through analysing interviews, hearings, and the course of actions in the two case studies I am able to develop a rational explanation for the Arab Gulf states' approach to lobbying (Wodak and Meyer, 2009).

I use critical discourse analysis (CDA) as it depicts power relations among people. This is crucial when undertaking stakeholder analysis, and when identifying who and what determines the course of events. For example in the course of the DP World episode, Eller& Co, a commercial company who had a legal feud with P&O, highlighted the acquisition to Senator Schumer and to the press. Schumer was a main stakeholder as he raised the salience of the issue and brought it to the level of public discourse. The interview analysis depicts the social language, the dominant themes, words, omissions, rhetorical strategies, or whether the interviewee uses an

anecdote or statistics to validate his/her point. The flow of argument, the strength of the arguments presented, the confidence shown by the different interlocutors, shows who is in the position of power.

Studying the discourse of UAE officials, the language and expressions used, the information revealed, and the arguments presented and their sequence can show why the UAE was not able to defend its position before the American public, which at the time was generally against the deal. Similarly, in a study by Hanrahan, textual analysis of the discourse in science classrooms was used to see why teaching methods were failing. Discourse analysis was used assuming that the nature of the discourse in secondary classes could be a factor leading to the failure of the teaching methods (Hanrahan, 2006).

Critical discourse analysis also shows how subjectivities are shaped and how the background and general perception of people makes them frame issues in a certain way. Discourse analysis reveals people's perceptions. The strength of discourse analysis resides in its ability to analyse opinions and attitudes, put them in proper context and to understand the subjectivities that underlie them. Moreover, it allows the analysis of a certain situation without coming up with a generalization<sup>iii</sup>.

This is done by analysing the hearings in which the different officials presented their opinions on the issue, as well as official statements and reporting by the media. By examining reporting on how the American people viewed the DP World issue, we can see how their perceptions of Arabs shaped their opinions about the deal. In the same vein, the social and material conditions that influenced their view of the deal will be examined, such as the fact that the US has been subject to terrorist attacks, or the fact that the acquisition might mean a loss of jobs for American workers.<sup>iv</sup>

Critical discourse analysis also deals with the issue of social power from the perspective of the ability of members of certain groups to control the acts and minds of members of other groups. Here, Van Dijk (1993) introduces the concept of ideology. Ideologies are like languages, they are a shared social tool to solve communicative problems among members of a group. They constitute a basis to

coordinate social interaction with members of other groups (Alba-Juez, 2009). DP World shows how the political elite represented by Schumer and members of the Democratic Party were able to force a direction on public discourse that incriminated DP World, Dubai and the UAE.

I will show how politicians took over the public discourse in the case of the DP World deal, and how they shaped the general image regarding it. To illustrate this statement, Nancy Pelosi claimed that the ports' "security" could not be in the hands of a foreign government, even though the contract with DP World did not involve ports' security as it was restricted to operational aspects (Zunes, 2006a). However, the general perception was that the UAE would be in control of the security of six American ports. Van Dijk defines ideology as "the basis of cognitive beliefs that are the basis of social representation shared by the members of a group" (Alba-Juez, 2009) v

The negative reaction to the DP World deal can be explained by the ideology that regards Arabs as terrorists. My research will also analyse how much of what is said is applied in practice. This application of discourse analysis is used to study policy making in a multi-actor context. Runhaar, Dieperink and Driessen used this interpretation of discourse analysis to study the improvement of educational programs. They analysed perceptions and opinions of the different actors involved in the policy making process, looking at the discourse emanating from the different actors and saw how it affected the policy that was put in place (Runhaar et al., 2006).

In my research, in order to give background information on the case under study, key incidents that shaped it are identified and put in chronological order at the beginning of the analysis. Then discourse analysis is used to see how those incidents/actions created frames that shaped the course of events. Scollon used a similar approach when he analysed Alaska's Beaufort Sea sale. (Scollon, 2008).

## **Outcome of mixed methodology**

In the conclusion, the theoretical framework, the inducted pattern, and the findings of the case studies are analysed to come up with a set of lessons about Arab Gulf states' lobbying. The most important questions that the conclusion will address is the factors that make Arab Gulf states lose and what makes them win and why. The conclusion will also enforce external validity as propositions extracted from case studies and interviews will be set against existing theories. The academic contribution of this study lies in incorporating its findings with existing theory to come out with a dense theory regarding Arab Gulf lobbying (Charmaz, 2003). Internal validity will be ensured through methodological triangulation where several methods come out with the same finding.

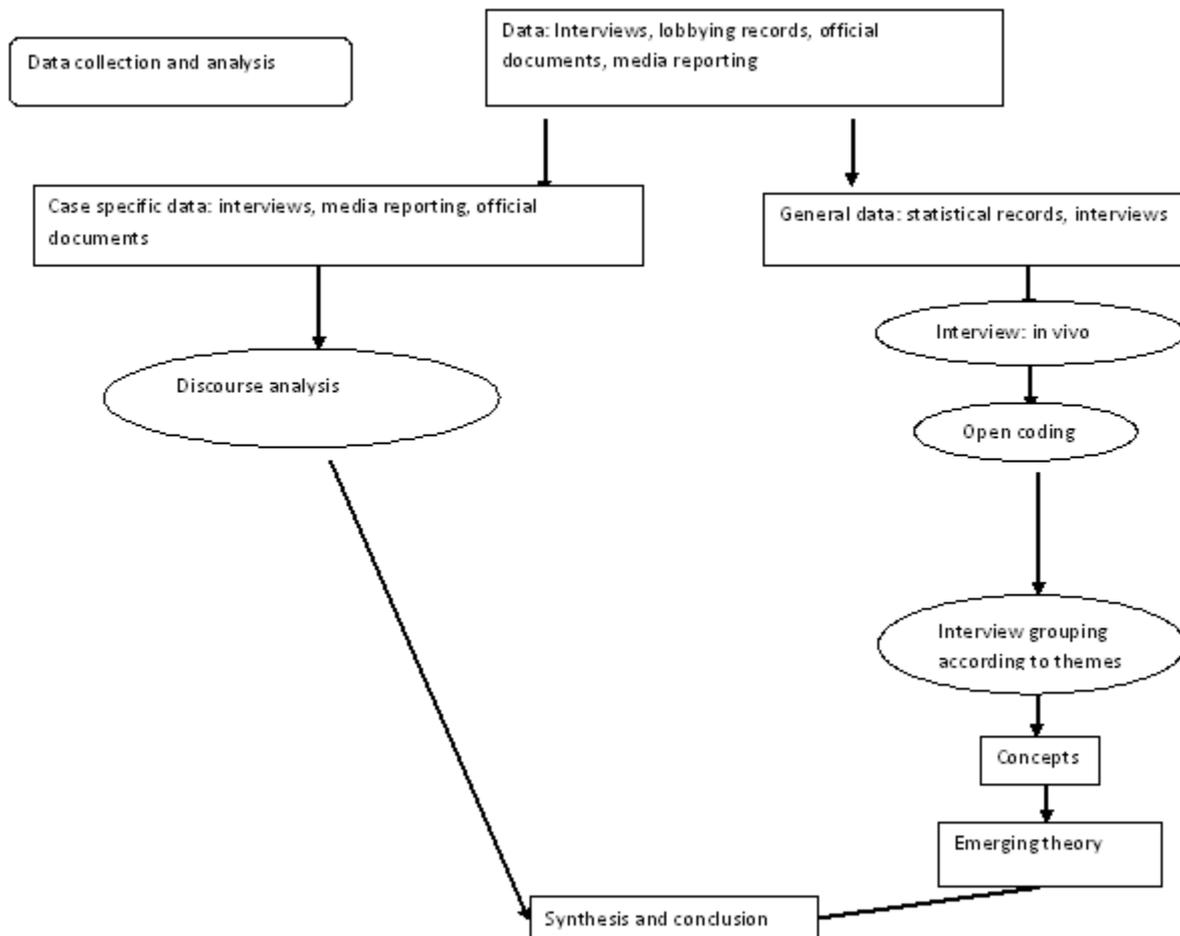
## **Data sources and collection**

The first set of data is derived from interviews with stakeholders in the lobbying process. The initial interview sample consisted of Arab diplomats in the US, American diplomats who worked in Arab Gulf countries, Arab-American heads of organizations, lobbyists handling Arab Gulf States clients, and lobbying experts. They were asked a set of eighteen questions that covered all of my research questions. Those are the core of my in-depth interviews from which I detected the patterns that govern Arab Gulf lobbying.

The case specific data set consists of interviews with insiders who were directly or indirectly involved in the cases. The interviews cannot involve all the main people who took part in the lobbying for two reasons. One reason is that they may no longer be on the job. The DP World issue happened seven years ago, while AWACS happened in the eighties. As for DP World, given that the case represented an embarrassment for the UAE and Dubai and the Bush administration, all my interview requests for people involved in the transaction were rejected. However, I was able to interview a member of the media who covered it and two "outsiders" who were familiar with the issue. For the AWACS case study, though it happened in the

eighties, I was able to interview two people who were involved in the transaction, in addition to observers.

Figure 2



## Interviews

Since grounded theory is the anchor method used in this research, I use the theoretical sampling by Glasser and Strauss, where the sample choice evolves as new concepts emerge in the course of the study. Ellis used this strategy when he researched the information-seeking patterns of academic researchers (Ellis, 1993). Therefore, the exact number of interviewees or the exact groups that make a sample was not determined in advance. Basically, interviewing stopped when interviews became repetitive. However, the theoretical framework and the research issue

dictated the first batch of interviews. I took the snowballing approach, in which by highlighting a fact, one interviewee guided me to interview someone else.

Initially for the case study, two or three interviewees were identified as “helicopter interviews”(Runhaar et al., 2006), since these people gave an overview of the situation. The rest of the interviewees fell into two groups: the “insiders” and the “outsiders”. The insiders’ group is composed of people who were involved directly in lobbying for Arab Gulf states and includes lobbyists retained by Arab Gulf states or organizations, Arab diplomats and former diplomats in Washington, and congressional staff in the US government that dealt with Arab lobbying among others. Individuals who were directly involved in each of the case studies were potential interviewees and were targeted for interviews. The category of “outsiders” consisted of people who had observed Arab Gulf states’ lobbying and could give an informed opinion, though they did not participate directly in the lobbying process. These included journalists who covered issues such as DP World or had covered US-Gulf relations, heads of Arab-American organizations, prominent members of the Arab-American community, and members of “watchdog” organizations that oversee and regulate lobbying. It also included academics who have either conducted research on lobbying and its dynamics, or who have interests in Arab Gulf-American relationships.

Interviews were conducted face to face or by telephone. Most interviews were recorded for convenience. The research featured three types of interviews. The first ones were long and went over all Arab Gulf lobbying and the case studies. The second type of interviews only posed questions regarding the case studies. A typical respondent of the second category was a journalist who covered the DP World case; he was informed on the DP episode, however he was not eligible to be asked questions about Arab Gulf lobbying. The third type of interviewees were asked very specific questions, such as for example, calling a political scientist in Kuwait to ask him about funding elections in the country, as literature on the subject was not available.

The nature of the research and the scope of the interview were revealed to the interviewee at the time of the request for the interview and a consent form was signed by both the interviewee and the researcher. However, in the case of the interviews conducted over the phone, the interviewees did not send back the consent form filled in and signed. In the case of very targeted and short interviews I obtained the verbal consent of the interviewee. Upon request, a copy of the transcript was sent to the interviewee. Also, upon request, one of the interviewees asked for the information sheet and the questions were sent prior to the interview. Unfortunately, in this particular case, after receiving the questions, the interviewee changed her mind and declined the request for interview.

I used a semi-structured approach in my interviews, which gives flexibility while retaining some structure. Structure is needed for NVivo analysis. The semi-structured approach ensured some consistency across the interviews, and enabled me to identify trends, and to compare and contrast the findings while giving a chance to the interviewee to become a participant in the study and not a mere respondent to a set of questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Sometimes the interviewee gives the researcher a new perspective on issues as well as flagging up new ones that were not on the researcher's agenda.

The duration of the in-depth interviews lasted from half an hour to two hours depending on how much the respondent elaborated, and how much time he was willing to allocate. As discussed before, some interviewees were asked a few, very specific questions. In their cases, the interviews were very short.

## **Media coverage**

Media coverage is an important source of secondary data for the case studies. It allows me to gauge perceptions of the general public or the salience of an issue as well as giving me an account of events. The recurrent themes, the terms used, and the facts highlighted reflect public discourse on the issue at the time. In addition to

the reporting, interviews conducted by media outlets are an important source. I was able to retrieve interviews with Sheika Lubna Al Qassimi and Mohammed Sharaf with Wolf Blitzer on CNN. These interviews reflect the position the UAE took in its defence. It also shows what sorts of accusations it was facing.

## **Foreign lobbying database**

Records of the foreign influence tracker are prepared by the Sunlight Foundation and ProPublica. The information that the tracker features includes the date of the contact, name of the lobbyist, the firm, country, client, issue, level, method and the office, and the name of the lobbyist initiating the contact. The method reveals how the contact was made, e.g., by email, telephone call or meeting. At the field level they show the contact and, in the case of contacting a congressional office, whether it was with a staff member or with the congressman himself. The information in the influence tracker is compiled from the updated lobbyist registrations in the Department of Justice. The Sunlight Foundation reports the names of members of the Congress and of the administration and their staff that were contacted by a registered foreign agent. However, the activities reported under FARA by those foreign lobbyists to the Department of Justice include all contacts with government officials, reporters, policy analysts at think tanks, academics and others (Shaheen, 1997) An additional table lists the fees and expenses paid to each lobbyist. However, the data provided does not allow me to conduct a statistical analysis in order to infer patterns of Arab Gulf lobbying. The issues related to the contacts were not very clear. For example, a telephone call for a senator is recorded as bilateral relations. But contacts that do not involve lobbying are also recorded, such as invitation to a wedding reception. In addition, the table for fees was not consistent. However, consulting them allowed me to make broad inferences such as about the intensity of lobbying of each country and the bodies that lobby in each country.

## **Original documents**

Some original documents were also retrieved to enhance the accuracy of the information about the cases. In the case of the AWACS deal, different accounts do not detail the role of the lobbyist (Bronson, 2006, Simpson, 2008, Levins, 1983) and some works contradict each other. Therefore I retrieved the registration form for the Department of Justice of Fred Dutton in 1978 and the Crawford registration in 1981 to see the scope of work the fees paid. This enabled me to evaluate the role of lobbyists and to see how Saudi lobbying evolved in terms of sophistication and scope.

In the case of the DP World case, since the basis on which Eller & Co. started the whole issue was not very detailed in the media, and was blown up by Schumer and the Congress, I retrieved the case from the Florida court and compared it to the case in the British court. The lawsuit was presented to the British court as a business feud whereas in the US it had a completely different basis. In the US, the UAE was portrayed as being associated with terrorism and therefore as an ineligible business partner.

## **Hearings records**

Hearings and Congressional reports constitute another extremely important source for my case studies. The hearings contain the arguments presented by each actor and enabled me to analyse the narrative that the Arab Gulf countries as well as the opposition used. The hearings are important as they allow me to see the different stakeholders in action and the position of power among them. While in the AWACS episode I can see that the Saudis represented by NAAA had a confident assertive approach and a comprehensive narrative, I show a weak narrative in the case of DP and that the DP representative got intimidated by opponents of the deal.

However, due to the large numbers of documents I could retrieve from the Congressional library, I was selective in the analysis. In the case of DP World, I focused on a hearing in which DP executives testified and one in which the administration testified and tried to link the arguments of both parties defending the

deal and see the arguments of those opposing it. In the second case study, from the 1978 episode, I analysed a speech by Jim Abourezk, as he was instrumental in securing approval from the Carter administration. In the AWACS episode, I focused on a hearing in which NAAA (National Association of Arab Americans) testified supporting the Saudis facing AIPAC (American Israeli Public Affairs Committee) who were defending the Israeli side.

In a nutshell, given there is little literature on the topic and given that lobbying has been sporadic, I used grounded theory. Grounded theory is used when little research is available on a certain topic. This method will help me detect the patterns of the features behind Arab Gulf lobbying namely the factors that lead to the success and to the failure. The grounded method is the anchor method for this research and it will be the base which I use to check the theoretical framework. The next chapter is the product of grounded theory where various interviews were analysed to come up with themes regarding Arab Gulf lobbying.

## **Chapter 3: Patterns of Arab Gulf states' lobbying and factors for success and factors for failure**

### **Patterns of Arab Gulf States' Lobbying**

Patterns of Arab Gulf lobbying were inferred from the various interviews using a grounded theory approach.

### **An Overall Poor Lobbying Effort**

The general impression of Arab Gulf lobbying is that it is poor. In a series of interviews held in 2012 and 2013, the following comments were relayed: "Based on my 12 years of experience on The Hill from 1982 -1994, I did not sense there is an active lobby"; "I have not seen any serious lobbying"; "There is no interaction"; "Zero". The general impression is that Arab lobbying is poor to the point that is not a noticeable phenomenon. Another respondent, a former American statesman, said that the concept of the Arab lobby, or the fact that the lobbying is substantial enough to constitute a lobby, is an invented concept; he said: "I don't think the Arabs do lobbying in any serious sense. It is a joke. I think the Israel lobby invented 'the Arab lobby' because they need to pretend there is an opposition. But there is not anybody else on the other side of things."

### **Lack of a Coherent and Unified Strategy**

The other theme that emerged from the interviews is that the Arab lobbying effort is sporadic, unorganized and does not have a consistent strategy. "Even today Arab Gulf lobbying is very sporadic. It is not organized. It is, and I use the phrase a hit or miss. It is not sustained by a strategy, whether economic or military". The same respondent, a lobbying specialist, characterized Arab efforts as "spurts of energy", or a "blitz", and as "not sustainable." Further, as soon as the interviewees discussed Arab lobbying, they compared it immediately to the Israeli lobby in order to show the disparity in power. The same respondent who characterized Arab lobbying as "not

sustainable”, “sporadic”, and described efforts to date as a “blitz” said that Israeli lobbying is “very sustainable”. An American scholar that I interviewed said that Arab lobbying happens in a “piecemeal way”. He spoke of the initiative by Prince Al Waleed Bin Talal to fund the building for the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee as one good gesture to promote Arab Americans in the US but commented: “There are not many gestures like that”.

A former Arab Gulf diplomat who participated in this research, acknowledged the different efforts by various Arab governments and individuals to promote a positive image of Arabs and the Gulf; however, he said that the problem does not lie in the lack of effort or will, but in the lack of a coherent strategy. He said: “I think there is an effort by everybody, but what we lack is a strategy of combining the best of what we have and going forward with that, so it comes out fragmented, because of that it is not effective”.

To illustrate this point, one respondent, a communication specialist who works on Arab Gulf governments’ clients, compared the sporadic and case-by-case Arab lobbying effort to someone who has holes in his wall, and tries to stop the leakage by spreading his fingers to plug each hole. She added: “There is no strategy; there are incidents based on incidents. I need to do some work, I run and try and fix that, meanwhile there is another incident taking place that is also damaging; but they are busy with this one and go to that other one and try to do both of them but not fully right.”

In describing the patterns behind Arab Gulf lobbying in general and how it fits within the dynamics of lobbying in the US, the response was almost unanimous: there are no patterns to talk about. The interviewees’ responses were: “I don’t know if there is a pattern”;

“I don’t think there is a pattern”; and “It is almost nonexistent”. One communication specialist said strategic Arab lobbying should be done by a body similar to the Arab

League and pointed out that the Arab league unfortunately has no money and is a dysfunctional organization. Arab countries do not typically channel money through the Arab League and that each country does its own bit separately. She said: “They do it individually, bit by bit”.

The inconsistency and lack of a unified and coherent strategy or position as described by one of the respondents is more of a reflection of the overall behavior of Arab countries and has filtered into their lobbying efforts. He gave as an example the case of joint anti-ballistic missile discussions between Arab Gulf states, saying, “To enable [a joint Gulf] anti-missile system to intercept Iranian missiles, interoperability and integration of the different systems are needed. The problem is that Arab Gulf states do not want to give up their sovereignty or decision making to Saudi Arabia. Despite GCC promises of unity, the project is facing difficulties. The UAE and Saudi Arabia are beginning to work together pretty well. Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman have to follow and they are not jumping into this. The Pentagon has been pushing since the eighties for a joint anti-missile system. The Saudis are all for it but the other Gulf partners are not”.

## **Bilateral lobbying**

Most of the lobbying on the part of Arab Gulf states is bilateral lobbying. None of the issues are pan-Arab in nature such as the issue of Palestine. One respondent highlighted the lack of “collective work” between Arab states, and said that neither the Arab world nor even the Gulf countries are “on a single page”, and that they do their lobbying individually. One participant in this research commented that bilateral lobbying is a by-product of the way the Arab Gulf countries conduct their foreign policy with the US. This respondent mentioned as an example the antiballistic missile system that for years, the US has been trying to convince the GCC countries to adopt. One respondent, a former statesman who worked on this issue, said: “I was unsuccessful because they fight among each other”. He explained that each Gulf country independently, has a “wonderful lobby with the US”, working on narrow national interests. The respondent related this style of conducting foreign policy to

the tribal nature of the GCC societies. When asked about the UAE, he said, “Their tribe is doing fine; they don’t want to share anything with any other tribe. In a lot of ways it comes to the question of pan Arabism”. He explained further that if multilateralism was working in the Gulf, why is the GCC not as strong as NATO? Where is the GCC lobby?” Although there have been calls by different heads of state to have a common stance on certain causes such as the Palestinian issue (WAM, 2012), each country conducts its foreign policy in an independent manner. From the [www.foreignlobbying.org](http://www.foreignlobbying.org) data base records, lobbying is limited to bilateral lobbying; issues listed include UAE-US relations, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia –US relationships. There is no lobbying for US-Arab Gulf relations.

This is a feature that does not exist in the pro-Israel lobby where the lobbying effort is focused on a single country. In the case of the Arab world, or even the Arab Gulf countries, with the latter constituting a smaller and more homogenous universe, each country has different priorities as well as country specific interests it wants to push in front of the US administration. The general impression from the interviews is that each country tries to excel in its relations with the US, and does not seek to cooperate with its neighbors in order to have a better and collective bargaining power with the US.

### **Short Tenure of Lobbyists**

Another feature of Arab Gulf lobbying efforts that came out of the interviews is the short tenure of lobbyists. A lobbying specialist that I interviewed said: “A lot of them [lobbyists] are short term, [hired] for a specific issue. The classic [case] was Dubai Ports World; they hired Bob Dole and a bunch of people very quickly because they realized they have a public relations problem”. This comment provided a clear example that lobbyists are hired by Gulf States on an ad-hoc and short term case by case basis. Due to the lack of a long term strategy, lobbyists have been hired as the need arises. Lobbyists have therefore not been hired to promote an overall narrative about the Gulf or any specific country. Their function is narrowed down to serve “tactical” objectives, most often commercial ones, and is complementary to bilateral

diplomatic relationships. Because the use of lobbyists depends on a specific tactical objective, they need to specialize in certain areas of expertise, depending on the issue at hand. The word “situational” was used by one of the respondents to characterize Arab lobbying. He said: “It seems situational; there are many [lobbyists] who had the embassy as a client for a long time. They hire a firm for a couple of years for a certain purpose, then go to another issue and [hire another] firm; that is somehow smart. Not every lobbying firm has the same strength and expertise and connections to government officials, so in a way, it makes sense”.

Nevertheless, there have been some exceptions. Some lobbyists have developed relationships with embassies and have been working for them for a number of years. For instance, Patton Boggs has been the lobbyist for the US Saudi embassy since 2001. This, however, is the exception rather than the norm.

### **Inconsistent Messaging**

In addition to the features of Arab lobbying listed previously, another respondent, a lobbying specialist pointed out that messaging is sometimes contradictory, which “leads to people questioning [it]”. She added: “It gives the signal of weakness or inconstancy, and that is not acceptable”. Even with an individual Arab country’s lobbying efforts, the messaging is not consistent. One of the respondents, a communication specialist, said that Arab countries’ messaging does not have “continuity” since it tackles specific business interests, and does not include a narrative or general message of that individual country. To illustrate this, one of the respondents, a former senior congressional staffer, said that Arab countries spend money on hiring the top firms and focus on a specific issue they want to resolve, whereas the right approach is to build a “narrative”, a story that encompasses the issue at hand.

Previously, the chief of staff of a prominent senator, and currently heading a lobbying organization, this respondent said that Arab countries give priority to high profile contacts over the message to be conveyed, and that this is a mistake. He added: “In

my opinion, I view Arab states make the number one mistake in lobbying; they hire some big name and pay them a lot of money and get little results. We want to have some big meetings! And they think that will make things work, as opposed to building the narrative.”

A consistent long term narrative is related to the previous issue of the short tenures of lobbyists hired to accomplish tactical objectives. This has not allowed lobbyists to develop an overall narrative for their Arab clients. A lobbying specialist said that “the general trend among Arab Gulf States is to hire a big name”. He added that, “They think if we [Arab Gulf States] hire an important firm, then they will be able to take care of things. But this is not the way things work. The truth is you do a lot of education”.

Moreover, clinching a meeting with a US congressman does not guarantee the passing of a deal. The key is to help the staff, who are mostly young graduates, formulate the proper brief to the congressman. The lack of a comprehensive message or “coherent narrative “, on the part of Arab countries was sharply contrasted by respondents to AIPAC’s messaging. One communication specialist said: “If you look at AIPAC, their narrative is promoting the Arab-Israeli relationship; but underneath the big tagline you have many small stories.”

Another respondent, a former senior congressional staffer, highlighted that the lack of messaging is contributing to misconceptions in the minds of legislators, as well as in the mind of the average American. He gave the Pakistani ambassador as an example of a good diplomat who can portray a “positive image” of her country. When the respondent was informed that Pakistan is not an Arab country, he answered: “This shows you how badly the job is done; there is no discrimination. In the Middle East, there is Israel, then everybody else. So you have Israel [on one side], and every other nation is lumped into this other category. [In the] example of Pakistan, any country that is a Muslim country gets lumped into the Arab world. There is no coherent narrative”. He added: “there is no story. There is this sense of this undifferentiated mass that Americans think of in the Arab world“. “You need to develop your own story. You want Lebanon to be lumped with Pakistan? That is

what people think”.

Furthermore, the Arab voice in the US is described as “quiet”, which leads to Americans viewing Arabs as a monolith. “They think Arabs are all the same”, one interviewee said. He asked: “How many congressmen have passports? Not many”. Therefore, given the nature of American society where the majority of Americans are engulfed in their own culture, Americans need to be taught about the Arab world.

According to various respondents, the US needs continuous and consistent messaging about the Arab world. Neither Arab Americans nor Arab governments have accomplished this task, which remains an obstacle to lobbying. A former American statesman participating in this research characterized the ministries of information in Arab Gulf countries as ministries of non-information, and that all that they are interested in is protecting the image of their respective royal ruling families rather than promoting the image of the country as a whole.

Another theme that emerged from the interviews is that the reason why Arab Gulf States have not focused on their messaging is that they see no pressing need to do so. This is in stark contrast to Israel whose mere survival depends on US support. This was evident in the 1973 war. One respondent, a former senior congressional staffer said: “Israel’s got to do it because Israel is a small country. Their sole mission in their opinion is to survive; fear is a better motivator than greed. So they are very fearful. This bands their vision together. When you have an abundance of wealth, you’re not so motivated. When you are starving for a piece of bread, you are willing to do anything.” Contrary to Arab states, Israel has expended significant efforts over decades to promote a good image of the country and reaching out to Americans at various levels (Friedman, 1995). As a result, Israel has reaped the rewards: the Gallup polls conducted in February 2012 found that 61% of Americans sympathize with Israel (Mendes, 2012).

An inability to differentiate Arabs as distinct from other Muslim countries was sensed throughout the interviews with American respondents. When asked whether they were aware of any active Arab American organizations, respondents identified the Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR), even though CAIR is a representative organization of Muslim-Americans and not Arab-Americans. To exacerbate this problem, profiling procedures adopted by the US government following the September 11 events have put Arabs and Muslims in one boat, with the perception that all Arabs are Muslims (Shammas, 2009). According to one respondent, an American scholar, Arabs are all lumped with “terrorists, wahabis, jihadis, or Salafis.”

Another respondent, a former American diplomat to the Arab Gulf, described the messaging of Arab Gulf governments as a “narrow band of communication” seeking to reach out only to the US State Department, with no attempt to reach out to the US Congress and to the American public at large. This is a key deficiency, because lobbying is a comprehensive and integrated effort. A former ambassador to an Arab Gulf country, commented by saying that the “supreme example is Prince Bandar Bin Sultan. He had such a close relationship with the White House. If something happened, he could get the White House to fix it. But that does not work anymore. You have to communicate with the masses -- with the whole country. There is no one-stop shop anymore....There has been no lobbying with the political system. There have relations with the Secretary and Department of State.”

### **No Domestic Support**

Another feature of Arab lobbying is that it does not have any domestic US support, as opposed to other country lobbies such as the Israel lobby and the Armenian lobby which have a domestic support base they can rely on to advocate a specific issue. The general impression therefore is that Arab Gulf states have distanced themselves from Arab American communities. The head of an Arab American organization tried to explain the lack of the Arab Gulf engagement in Arab American communities by saying: “I think the Arab Gulf has great interest to have the US protect it and work

with it. I want to say they need each other, I think they feel in their own way that they have been taken care of in the United States, they don't need us." One respondent stressed that Arab states prefer to hire Jewish lobbyists rather than Arab Americans. She said that the general idea is that Arab American lobbyists are not as well connected as Jewish lobbyists. Another respondent, formerly the chief of staff of a Jewish senator, confirmed this point by saying Arab diplomats would be eager to meet with his employer, the Senator, because he is Jewish, and because their general idea is that Jews have the access and the connections.

The answers given by Arab American groups reveal a yearning for support from Arab Gulf governments. One Arab American activist, explained: "You have to convince the Emiratis that Arab Americans are sophisticated, they are active and know their stuff, and that is what you have to convince them of". This distant relation or bond between Gulf States and Arab Americans is in stark contrast with long running Israeli efforts to nurture relations so to create a bond between Jewish-Americans and Israel. The classic example is the youth that spends summers in Israeli Kibbutz. There is no similar effort by Arab Gulf governments to appeal to the Arab American youth.

When asking whether Arab American organizations have historically pushed politicians on Arab Gulf issues, the general answer was that they keep a low profile. The only exception from the responses was when one interviewee highlighted the crucial role of Senator Jim Abourezk in pushing for the F-15 deal. His role will be detailed further in the following Chapter. Abourezk used his bargaining power with the president, and gave a concession on another issue, in order to garner the support of the White House for the F-15 deal.

This is not to say that Arab American organizations have not had any role in connecting Arab Gulf governments and the US. One respondent, an member of an Arab American organization, gave me the example of a trip organized by the National Council on US Arab relations (NCUSAR) for several US intelligence

analysts to come and visit the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, a UAE government sponsored think tank. The government of Abu Dhabi covered all costs of their visit to come to exchange ideas on intelligence gathering to fight terrorism. The interviewee described this activity as a “subtle” way to influence policy. She added: “These people have never been to the Middle East; their job is to analyze the Middle East and they have never been there. Here they are in Abu Dhabi. Here is a perfect example of the government using their money for educational purposes that influences policy. That is the perfect example.” The respondent gave another example where the NCUSARs took twelve American women to visit Saudi Arabia in the hope they could become advocates of Saudi Arabia in the US. These two examples are instances where Arab American organizations helped educate the US public and government on the Arab world. As good as these initiatives are, they pale in comparison with the role the American Jewish community or Evangelical Christians have played and continue to play in promoting Israel. The Israel lobby has a multitude of American organizations that work on creating a bond between Israel and the US (JINSA, Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs). To illustrate, JINSA is an institute dedicated to bringing US military personnel, ranking from retired officers to cadets, to visit Israel, as opposed to the one-off US intelligence officers’ trip to the UAE that was organized by the NCUSAR. In summary, past efforts using Arab American organizations to educate the US public about the Arab world and the Arab Gulf have not been consistent and continuous.

## **Reliance on Diplomatic Relations**

The general response gathered from the interviews is that Arab Gulf states work their issues “quietly in Washington”. US relations with the Gulf were characterized by one respondent as varying from “very good” to “quite good” saying that Arab Gulf states have got their issues addressed through diplomatic relations. Some of the responses included the following: “They don’t need a lobby”; “Why would they need a lobby?”; “You have to ask them whether they really want a lobby”. The general assessment was that the Gulf has enough leverage through oil and military cooperation not to rely much on lobbying; it is seen as secondary to their diplomatic

effort. All the responses conveyed an idea in line with the following two quotes: “They send their officer when they have an issue”; or “They work through their established contacts with the State Department”. Again, this approach / attitude differs greatly from Israel’s, where reliance is placed heavily on the Israeli lobby to strengthen and govern the diplomatic relations between the US and Israel (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007). One respondent said that Arabs do not lobby using the US system effectively, including building grassroots support, media relations, drip-feeding the US Congress with pertinent information, and so forth. Instead, Arab Gulf states rely on their relations with the US State Department through normal diplomatic channels. The respondent, a former American statesman, added: “They do not build support for any particular idea”.

Nonetheless, Arab Gulf states seem to have been able to push their interests forward with the US through normal diplomatic relations. The strategic importance that Arab Gulf states have through supplying the Western world with a large part of its oil requirements, and the permanent US military bases stationed in the Arabian Peninsula has provided these countries with strong leverage with the US. One respondent, a former statesman, said that even when the ambassador of a country as small as Bahrain addresses the US State Department, politicians pay attention. This is because the US military has a base in Manama. Another respondent described US relations with Saudi Arabia as follows: “A country like Saudi Arabia has a lot to offer financially in term of its oil industry”. Therefore the United States, even if it disapproves of some of the actions or policies of Saudi Arabia, the respondent said: “It weighs its options and thinks very carefully before coming out with a critical statement vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia.” The US will not compromise its relationship with Saudi Arabia simply because this is not viable; you cannot cut off the person or the country providing most of your oil” A further example where diplomatic relations have been successfully used, according to another respondent, was the Emiratis who were able to achieve their objectives of signing an Aerospace agreement with the US. He said DP World was an exception to the smooth relations between the US and the UAE.

On the US front, decisions are driven by strategic objectives or concerns on certain key issues. It is diplomatic relations between the US and Arab Gulf states that set the mood for lobbying. For example, in the case of the F16 arms sale to the UAE, clearance was given for the deal because senior officers from the UAE interacted with senior officers in the US and explained why the deal was important for the stability of the UAE and the region. One respondent, previously a lobbyist for a military company said: "Yeah... at a very senior level, what matters is the relationship between the Arab Gulf states and the United States, at the diplomatic, foreign, and military policy levels. That had some good effect".

Another instance where diplomacy was successfully used according to a respondent, an Arab American activist is the 123 Episode, which is an agreement between the United States and the UAE on nuclear power development. She said that the success of the deal was not due to lobbying, but to the fact that the UAE government hired American advisors on the deal. These "smart" Americans created a program that is pro-American. She used the expression, "They served a program that they knew Americans will eat". Then lobbying came as a formality. The respondent qualified the lobbying for the deal after it had already been negotiated and agreed upon through diplomatic channels, as an "easy job".

Despite the previous examples of successful Arab Gulf achievements through diplomacy, diplomatic relations are not always a guarantee for a flawless relationship. One respondent, a former statesman, was of the opinion that the relations Arab Gulf states have with the White House or the US State department are not sufficient to allow them to promote their issues or to "fix" the damage in case "something happens". He said: "That does not work anymore. You have to communicate with the masses -- with the whole country. There is no one-stop shop anymore."

A case in point is the DP World example, where even the US president was not able to "fix" the damage caused by the anti-Arab campaign that criticized the deal on

security grounds and targeted the UAE. The DP world debacle made the UAE government aware of the importance of having good relations with the US Congress, as well as portraying a positive image of the UAE to the general American public. A former American statesman who currently holds a position in a lobbying firm said, “Dubai was trying to buy ports in the US. They were rejected because they were labeled. We can’t deal with them because we can’t trust them; we are giving our security to an Arab nation that can fund or overlook terrorist attacks. That was huge blow”. After the DP World debacle, the UAE government started hiring lobbyists and giving consideration to this approach; prior to DP World, the UAE had only relied on commercial advertisements to promote Dubai as a tourist destination.

Another factor, according to one communication specialist, that pushed the UAE to be more aggressive in its public relations and lobbying efforts, is the Dubai (property) crash. The UAE government wanted to rebuild international investor confidence in the UAE and in Dubai in particular. To accomplish this task, the UAE did not use Arab American organizations or constituencies to promote their interest. The UAE created hybrid entities to further their economic interests. The National US Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSAC) is run by a seasoned lobbyist named David Hammoud. NUSAC goal is “to strengthen Arab US business economic cooperation”, working with individual Arab countries and the US, or companies that want to expand overseas (wamda, 2011). The US-UAE Business Council has a similar function, as well as the Harbour Group, a quasi-lobbying, quasi PR firm that serves the business interests of the UAE. The latter handles public relations issues in order to improve the image of the UAE; examples include publicizing the UAE Embassy funding of a soccer field for the Boys & Girls Club of East LA in 2011. Other more politically focused issues include launching a website dedicated to support President Bush’s visit to the UAE in January 2008.

Moreover, there are other entities involved in lobbying and PR efforts such as Qorvis, an offshoot of lobbying firm Patton Bogs. One of the respondents said: “Saudi Arabia made Qorvis a [full-fledged] company by investing so much money in it”. In a nutshell, even though Arab Gulf states do not have the PR and lobbying machinery that the pro-Israel lobby has, and that comprises a host of non-profit

organizations under 501C(3) and 501C(4) status to promote Israeli-US relations on various levels, there has been some investment in commercial outfits to promote Arab Gulf business interests.

Throughout the research I noticed divergence between those who think that the Arab Gulf are well represented and have their interests well taken care of by their diplomatic staff and their hired lobbyist and those who think that the Arab Gulf is not being well represented and is not exerting the influence it should have . The difference also lies on the level the different respondents view Arab Gulf interests. Those who define the interest of the Gulf as the sum of each country's narrow trade and security interests seem to be satisfied with Arab Gulf lobbying. However, those who view the Arab Gulf interest as their ability to affect the US foreign policy on major issues such as its position from Iran or the Arab-Israeli conflict, tend to view Arab Gulf lobbying as deficient.

### **Hiring Star Lobbyists**

“They hire lobbyist to do their bidding for them”. One respondent said that Arab Gulf states hire big names, thinking they can get influence in US policy circles, whereas these big name lobbyists do not provide influence but merely secure access. Describing the hiring of star lobbyists, a former chief of staff of an influential Senator explained: “They give access, but influence, not as much as you think”. The factors that drive the choice of lobbyists were judged by respondents as a “simplistic way” of looking at lobbying. The general impression by respondents was that Arab Gulf states are impressed by the big names, and they have the misconception that having access means achieving the desired influence. One respondent, an Arab American activist, said that one Arab Gulf embassy was interested in hiring someone to go and play golf with members of the US Congress.

There are cases when a lobbyist can influence issues, such as job creation, when

dealing with a US Congressman on a particular committee; in this instance the lobbyist is not only representing the interests of the foreign government, but he or she is also indirectly representing the thousands of employees who might lose their job if the deal being lobbied for does not go through.

One respondent, an Arab American activist, criticized Arab Gulf states for hiring lobbyists who were anti-Arab in their former government posts. She said Arab Gulf states hire people who do not know or care about the Arab world; they are only hired because of their perceived “connections”. The respondent gave Bob Dole and Jack Abramoff as examples; both were hired by Arab Gulf governments although they had adopted an anti-Arab stance at certain times. She added that “money talks”. Instances like these showcase the fact that lobbyists are used to achieve tactical goals rather than promoting an idea or supporting a narrative, whereby lobbyists’ negative stance towards the Arab world is irrelevant to their Gulf states clients.

Another respondent, the head of an Arab American organization said that Arab Gulf states hire large prominent companies, but end up with a twenty-five year old doing the work for them. He thought that Arab Gulf states would actually be better off hiring smaller firms where the main person or partner behind the organization handles their account. He added: “They pay a lot of money but they end up ill-served by the companies they hire.”

Furthermore, Arab Gulf states hire several lobbyists at a time. A member of an Arab American organization I interviewed said: “The United Arab Emirates, do you know who lobbies for them? They have 5, 6, 7, 10 lobbying organizations. They have many people on their payroll to get their interests forward. Heather and Tony Pedesta, Patton Boggs, they represent their legal interests, but they also lobby for them. There is DLA Piper; there is a law firm they created: the US-UAE Business Council, which takes money from the Emirates and lobbies for them. They go to the firm and say we want the 123 agreement; we want the free trade agreement with the UAE; they hire, they hire...”

On the issue of money, Arab governments usually pay what a respondent qualified

as, “a handsome amount of money for a public relations organization, legal firm and so forth to work on their behalf.” Asked whether the big names are worth the money they are being paid, most of the respondents said hiring the big names does not make a substantial difference. What actually matters is the narrative that a particular lobbyist is working on rather than his prominence as a person. The respondent added that value for money is not an issue for Arab Gulf countries because money is not an issue for them. Another respondent said: “It is stupid of them to spend so much money, but they do have money. I agree it is a waste of money, but money is like water to them.”

### **Lobbying by Proxy**

Other than the hiring of lobbyists, there is a large amount of proxy lobbying on commercial issues of interest to Arab Gulf governments. These governments depend on their US counterparts to do their lobbying for them. One respondent who was involved in a military deal with the Arab Gulf said: “We used to do the lobbying for them”.

One other respondent, a former UAE statesman who was involved in the F-16 sale to the UAE, said the lobbying for the deal was totally delegated to the three main contractors: Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin and General Electric. He said the UAE military was more involved in the technical specifications of the warplanes.

Lobbying by proxy is effective because companies that indirectly lobby for Arab Gulf governments are domestic American companies. However, these companies’ lobbying is restricted to their economic interests and is focused on the deal at stake. Arab Gulf states’ reliance on their American counterparts to do the lobbying on their behalf is, according to one of the respondents who is a former statesman, a reflection of the nature of Arabs who, “don’t do things for themselves, they get others to do things for them. He added: “They don’t like to air their differences in public. So they don’t come here and argue.”

## **Dominant Issues**

With regards to the issues that have been lobbied for by Arab Gulf governments, these have consisted of the issues that frame the relationship between the US and Arab Gulf states and they fall in the following categories: oil and trade, security, overall US foreign policy, and human rights. Most of the effective lobbying has revolved around commercial issues and military sales. UAE lobbying has been more sophisticated than that of the rest of the Arab countries, covering foreign policy issues such as Middle East policy and Iran sanctions. Lobbying by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has involved areas such as the war on terror, Middle East issues, and the Arab-Israeli Peace process.

Bahrain's lobbying was only initiated following the start of turbulence in the country in 2011, and has mainly revolved around public relations efforts in order to improve the country's tarnished image, accused of oppressing the opposition. All contacts reporting in the foreign lobbying influence tracker were contacts with the media.

Arab Gulf states' lobbying typically revolves around an arms deal which is vital for the particular country's national interest, as well as around commercial issues. To push these issues, Arab Gulf governments adopted a much more targeted lobbying approach and they were able to achieve success. In these areas they were judged as "effective". A lobbying specialist I interviewed said: "They were able to work their issues quietly in Washington". He added: "They were trying to get into the stock market and were able to do that". One respondent focused on UAE issues said: "The only issue where Arabs were not able to pull anything off was the Dubai Ports World. They were sand bagged and a company [Eller & Company, a Florida firm] was not able to work with them and play the terrorism card with [Senator] Schumer. Otherwise their lobbying has been effective lobbying."

On trade issues, Arab Gulf governments were able to score some success. One respondent said: "The most effective Arab Gulf lobby is that of the US-UAE Business Council, set up by Sheikh Mohammed himself. Danny Seabright did put forward the

123 agreement, [the nuclear agreement between the UAE and the US] he is the most effective lobbyist in town”.

However, one lobbying specialist that I interviewed, pointed out that “it is a bit tricky” to say whether Arab Gulf states lobbying is effective or not, because of the nature of the issues that have been advocated. These issues are mainly commercial or relate to an arms deal, and are usually negotiated and agreed upon before they reach the approval stage. So saying that Arab Gulf states have been effective in their lobbying is misleading; again the issues they have typically opted to lobby for are “small issues” and none of these has an effect on US public policy. This could also be a result of the Arab Gulf’s mainly apolitical stance towards lobbying, and therefore the general attitude is to restrict lobbying to narrow national security and commercial interests.

## **Client**

On the typical client representing Arab Gulf states, a lobbying specialist said: “Most of the time the client is the government itself, because it has enough money to pay for the lobbying effort, and one big reason for lobbying is to bring in more business trade or change [the country’s] image or perception; or it can be a group of companies that forms a group, and then hire a lobbying company in [Washington] DC to help them.”

The foreign lobbying database shows that the different Arab Gulf countries have different strategies when it comes to the entities lobbying on their behalf. Each of Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait is represented by two entities. For example Qatar is represented by the Government of the State of Qatar and the Qatar Financial Authority; Bahrain is represented by the Bahrain Economic Development Board and another entity registered as “Bahrain through Bell Pottinger”; and Kuwait is represented through the International Counsel Bureau and through the latter, the Kuwaiti Counsel for the Families of Kuwaiti Citizens at Guantanamo Bay. Oman does not have any lobbying representation as it does not show up on the records of the database ([www.foreignlobbying.org](http://www.foreignlobbying.org)).

Saudi Arabia and the UAE are a different case since their lobbying is more decentralized. Whereas each of their embassies is registered as a client, other Saudi and UAE government entities lobby separately. Examples comprise the King Abdulla University of Science and Technology or the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The UAE appears with the largest number of clients. In total, the UAE features 30 registered clients. It was described by one of the respondents as the most “active” embassy in Washington. In addition to lobbying at a UAE federal level, different emirates such as Dubai and Ras Al Khaimah are registered as clients (the UAE is a federation of seven emirates). Various government organizations are listed, such as the Dubai Civil Aviation, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, Borse Dubai Limited, even RAK ceramics, the publicly listed company. In addition to the various entities mentioned, some high profile personalities are listed as clients, such as The Executive Office of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (Ruler of Dubai), or his wife, Princess Haya Bint El Hussein.

### **Factors for winning**

As one respondent said, winning cannot be attributed to one element; it is a number of factors that come together and that result in success. He said: “I think the win cannot be attributed to one or two things; it is many things, and all the things have to come together to present a really effective story.”

The key to successful lobbying and to winning on key issues advocated is to have a comprehensive strategy spanning the different aspects of lobbying. One respondent, a former Arab Gulf diplomat, said: “strategy, singleness of purpose, not deviating from the strategy, and not having a retort to any surprises”. He added that the reason they won on the F15 fighter sale was that they had a “clear strategy” that encompassed multiple fronts. “Not just money! People, media companies, everything, and publications, etc.” This respondent added that they had a comprehensive plan, and a contingency plan to manage unexpected incidents.

One respondent said that the most effective form of lobbying is aggressive lobbying. Lobbying is an art that revolves around confrontation. The landmark case where aggressive lobbying was effective was the AWACS fighter sale to Saudi Arabia. One respondent described the attitude at the time as follows: “We marshaled our resources to the fullest extent.”

A case illustrating the need for aggressive lobbying to win is the case of DP World, where one respondent said the way they handled the crisis was by keeping quiet and maintaining a low profile, which ultimately led to failure. DP World was advised by its lobbyists to keep quiet and to let the US president handle the issue for them. Despite the president’s efforts, the US acquisition of ports did not go through.

Grassroots support is a crucial factor in winning issues. A former senior congressional staffer said “America is not so driven by money but by people and organization. Labor unions are very powerful because of their [grassroots] organization, not so much money. So many people are out there [Arab-Americans] but they are not organizing their message out. This is very important, this is more important than writing a cheque for 50000 USD, much more important.”

In the case of arms deals, Arab Gulf States have a constituency represented by people in the defense industry whose jobs are at stake. With regards to the F-15 jet fighter sale to Saudi Arabia, Prince Bandar Bin Sultan, Saudi Arabia’s ambassador in Washington DC, went to the different unions and organized them to voice their interests to their representative and push for the deal. This goes back to what Thomas Philip "Tip" O'Neill Jr., the former speaker of the US House of Representatives (1977-1987) once said: “All politics is local”. Each representative is interested in getting re-elected and therefore the grassroots are a crucial factor.

One respondent said: “The arms sale is the only one [Arab issue] that has a constituency; it is not an arms constituency, it is an American constituency for jobs.”

Another respondent, a former long-time advisor at the US Ministry of Defense said: “These big programs like the F15 AWACS, and other large defense programs; these are usually related to defense issues and are important because there is an underpinning of jobs. Those kinds of things prevail when other things elude”. This quote highlights the importance of having a constituency. Nothing can beat the argument of the interest of the average American. When the respondent said “other things elude “, he indirectly pointed to other factors such as strategic considerations or opposition. This can be linked to the National Rifle Association (NRA) in the US; though many opponents have linked the rise in crime to arms possession in America, there has not been any action against arms possession due to the strong pro-gun movement that is supported by a large grassroots base.

Coming back to the AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia, closing this deal represents an iconic victory. Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia was able to link the deal with the jobs created or preserved in the making of the fighter jets and effectively conveyed it to the relevant constituency so to gain grassroots support for the deal. Success in gaining grassroots support was achieved on other arms deals, such as the UAE’s purchase of F-16 planes. A former advisor at the Ministry of Defense explained the reasons behind the success of the deal by saying: “The F-16 deal was won because the companies that make those machines employ a lot of people in a lot of congressional districts. This is why Gulf countries were able to get concessions and win on arms deals, whereas they were not able to achieve the same results in other fields. The key here is the grassroots [support] they were able to garner for the arm deals.”

However, when Arab American organizations were asked whether Arab Americans played a role in achieving grassroots support for the Arab Gulf arms deals, the response was: “We had no dog in the fight”. The Arab-Americans had no interest, whether economic or ideological, that motivates them to push for these arm deals. They are however interested whenever the issues deal with the general US policy towards the Middle East, such as the war on Iraq, which according to one respondent breached “the American principles of democracy and freedom”; or the

plight of Palestine. In summary, for arms deals, grassroots support was by an economic constituency and not an ethnic one.

Another factor in successful lobbying is to garner the vote of the Senators and members of the House Representatives who are on key committees. According to a former senior staff on the foreign relations committee, “The point is if you can get few key senators and House of Representatives people in key positions; a committee head or people on the Armed Services Committee make a big difference”. This is very visible in arms sales where the defense companies build factories in districts whose representatives serve on key committees.

One respondent pointed out that arms companies have directors and shareholders who are in government, which helps to give a push to the deal they want approval for. She said:” The arms companies have a big lobby, and have people who have shares and who are on their board who are from the Congress”.

Another respondent said that having a senator whose constituency benefits from the arms sale is key, as the politician will push hard for the sale and try to convince other members of the US Congress, the executive branch, as well as the Pentagon of the importance of the deal. This is a phenomenon that applies to foreign arms sales as well as to domestic sales. A former advisor to the Ministry of Defense who participated in this research said:” getting some key senators that control committees on your side is important; we constantly see a Congressman pushing an arms sale for the Pentagon that the Pentagon does not want. But there is so much pressure from state delegations or combinations to build weapons that the Pentagon does not want.”

Another factor is the importance of the issue being lobbied. Going back to the AWACS deal to Saudi Arabia, the issue was “too big”, “to cave in to the opposition”, and therefore the magnitude of the issue and the multiple and important interests

involved superseded the counter-lobbying effort. One respondent, a communication specialist who worked for Arab Gulf clients said: “If the deal is too big to lose, they will not agree with AIPAC; but if the deal is too small, like the Lebanese artillery deal, they will go along with AIPAC.” In the case of the F-16 fighter jet deal to the UAE, the argument that was presented to the Bush administration by the defense companies, as well as by the representatives of the districts where arms companies housed their factories, was that these fighter jets were made in America, during a time when Americans needed jobs. “It was the question of America; American jobs and the American economy”, she added.

The same respondent pointed out an area where Arab Gulf states can exercise leverage: “Let me tell you what is tied to that issue in the US; because of our downturn, you are cutting spending on all defense fronts across the board. No more defense spending. So all of those big companies like Boeing, BEA are going to lose a lot of money because the government is cutting spending; they are going to the Gulf to make up for this money. The Gulf has got to keep the companies afloat; the Gulf has got to buy; the Gulf is going to create jobs. If the Gulf buys their product, it is going to keep American factories working. That is a very positive thing between Arab Gulf countries and Americans.” So in a time of downturn and defense budget cuts, arms sales to the Arabian Gulf have more salience because the manufacturing jobs are needed, and there is no other client to replace the lost orders. Hence, the salience of the issue increases, and can be effectively marketed to the general American public; in addition, the political representatives in the relevant districts tend to be more aggressive in defending a particular deal. There is a clear opportunity since, when times are better for the US economy, the orders placed by the US government are sufficient to create jobs and generate profits to the defense companies, and political representatives are not as adamant about supporting arms deals with Arab Gulf states.

One respondent explained the key driver behind the support as follows: “How much money can they get out of it if the [defense] industry is working, jobs are being created, the planes are being sold? It is a lot of money. In front of AIPAC, you have

lobbyists for the planes, the engines, the Department of Defense (DOD); all these people go and lobby. When the deal is too big, those people have a strong case.”

One common occurrence on big issues is the sort of negotiation that takes place with the opposition on arms sales to the Arabian Gulf, namely the pro-Israel lobby. One lobbyist detailed how the dynamics of lobbying work: “They say this is good for America; then they give up to AIPAC on something else if there is something else. They tell them we will refuse this deal but we can’t refuse that [other one]. Bottom line it is a business. It is not going to let go the billions in arms sales, or upset unions, the DOD, and defense companies.”

One key factor that leads to the success of a lobbying effort or the passing of a deal is the sidelining of the opposition. A former statesman highlighted the role that Israel plays in arm sales to the Arab Gulf, he said: “In order to be successful in arms sales to the Gulf, you have to work with Israel, because the Israelis have always tried to veto weapons sales out of their fear at some point it would turn against them. I suggested to look at this arms sales deal for sixty billion dollars because of the way it was negotiated; it took three to four years to do it. The Saudis, through the Americans, explained to the Israelis what was going to be sold; what it would be used for. The Israelis agreed, and AIPAC did not put up a fight to stop it. That tells me that is an interesting way to lobby when it comes to arms sales to an Arab country anywhere near Israel; you have got to see how to work with the Israelis so they don’t oppose it”. A similar situation took place with the F-16 jet fighter sale to the UAE; although the planes requested were quite advanced, the deal went through because the Israelis were sidelined. At the time of that deal, Iran was the common enemy; therefore Israel was not interested in blocking the deal and denying the UAE an instrument to defend itself in the case of a potential confrontation.

In describing how the military sales are conducted, a former staff of Ministry of Defense said: “There have been very few military sales that have been denied”. So prior to reaching the “public discourse” or the issue that is to be voted in the US

Congress, a consensus will have usually been reached and a “story” will have been developed. This story will typically include “answers to the question”, in order to respond to the concerns of the possible opposition, namely opposition from AIPAC.

In summary, the impression from the interviews is that there is a tacit agreement between Arab Gulf states and the pro-Israel lobby, that Arab Gulf States will keep a low profile on Pan-Arab issues, namely the issue of Palestine, and in return the pro-Israel lobby will not block any deal that serves the national interest of Arab Gulf countries, such as an arms deal.

Besides highlighting the impact of arms deals on the American economy, Arab Gulf states have relied on their diplomats to convince the American administration of the importance of the different arms sales. The strategic considerations are an important factor when legislators make decisions. This is what a respondent described as a “convergence of arguments”. He pointed out that the United States is interested in keeping its allies “stable” and in maintaining their security. The fact that certain weapons are necessary for the security of an Arab Gulf country is an argument that is frequently used when those sales are being lobbied.

One interviewee, previously the chief of staff of a US Representative, said that when she wanted to convince the legislator of a certain issue, she would say: “You have to vote this way because of all the Arab Americans back home in Michigan that are waiting for you to vote that way. You have all those Arab Americans that we raised a lot of money from, and you have to vote that way if you want to continue to raise money from them. And it is in the best interest of the United States; I would never want him to vote on an issue that is not in the best interest of the United States. Most of times this approach worked, but sometimes it didn’t, because there was pressure from the other side”. Our respondent thus placed strategic US considerations on equal footing with votes and money.

Nevertheless, US national interests or strategic considerations are presently more complex and more difficult to gauge, especially after the fall of the Soviet Union and the absence of a “concrete” enemy. A professional working for a lobbying watchdog and a former journalist said that there has not been a rewriting of US foreign policy following the cold war, which leaves a lot of margin to domestic lobbies to steer foreign policy. In this case, think tanks and lobbyists have a lot of room to present their ideas in order to “define” US strategic considerations. The pro-Israeli groups have been very active on this front, where they have promoted Israel as America’s ally in the “war on terror”. One respondent said: “Here, comes the role of Arab Americans who can work as one voice or through one organization to brief Congress and the American public”. However, the respondent noted that neither Arab Gulf States nor Arab Americans have presented the US government or public with a narrative in order to promote their views.

An Arab American communication specialist elucidated that it is not really the ability of Arab Gulf governments and their American counterparts to define and position the strategic importance of a certain deal to the US government that matters, as much as it is the desire of the US government to engage with certain Arab Gulf countries: “Basically it is not an Arab nation’s ability in lobbying the congress as much as it is government thinking and weighing their options, when it is good to accept and when it is good not to accept [a certain deal]. The DOD is the department of defense; why would the government lobby the executive branch to clear an AWACS or F-15s deal? Because they have a base there, and if those planes are sold, they can send their teams to train and maintain the planes. It is a big thing for them.”

So these deals are looked at as foreign policy tools to cement US relations with its allies. Another respondent said: “The government decides that it is in the best interests of the United States to provide this technology to Arabs. Many other countries consider it as an industrial issue; in the US it is a tool of foreign policy”. President Bush, when trying to veto the blocking by the US Congress of the DP World acquisition, argued that the Congress’ decision would alienate the UAE from the US, and would distance a strategic ally from the US (Zunes, 2006a).

Under arms sales, technology is sensitive to strategic consideration. Buying arms is an easy task, however getting the advanced technology is the hard part. A respondent who works for an arms contractor said that when approving an arms deal, the question that the US administration asks itself is: “If you are going to engage a country and give it advanced technology, what are you going to get out of that? The US takes a real-politics look at the arm sales”. The technology transfer, whenever approved, has to support US foreign policy and national security interests.

Technology transfer is also dependent on the specific relationship between a country and the US. One respondent said: “My personal opinion is that it comes out of hard politics: I mean what is the standing that this country has with the US government?” Another respondent said: “The US is not likely to release important technology to a country it looks at with suspicion”.

One of the key factors that lead to the passing of a US arms sales deal is the support of the executive branch, namely the White House and the State Department. One respondent said: “This arms sale to Saudi, at some time, will require congressional approval. On this front, they are quite successful, although I don’t think the deal goes through due to lobbying; the dominating factor is that the Secretary of Defense goes to the Hill and says Saudis need these F-15 planes”. An American scholar added: “They win when the White House is with them; this is crucial.” In order for Saudi Arabia to get the F-15 planes, at the time President Reagan exerted great pressure on members of the US Congress. However, in the mid-eighties, when the Saudis requested add-ons, Reagan retorted by saying he had used all his political capital on this issue, so the Saudis were not able to get what they wanted. One respondent explained why the support of the White House is “very important”. He said that the US Congress has 535 members; among those there is always going to be some opposition, and in order to achieve balance on a particular matter it is important to have one strong ally, and that is the executive branch.

Having a US partner is an important factor for winning on an issue and this is

prevalent in arms deals. Typically in military sales, the US partner helps push the deal with US legislators. One respondent, a former staff of the Ministry of Defense said by acting “selfishly”, the various US partners help the cause of the Arab Gulf States.

Another said that having a US corporate partner “makes things easier because you have lobbying on both sides.” Here the respondent indicated how the lobbyist usually joins US defense companies together with their foreign clients when they want to make a case. She gave an example of how the Livingston Group and Pedesta Group met with US military leaders and five US defense contractors that included Lockheed Martin and GE, to discuss Egypt purchasing US weapons. The lobbying firm represented the interests of both the Egyptian government and of all those US companies. She said: “They are facilitating a meeting between two sets of their clients; the domestic clients and the foreign clients. And that is why those arms deals work so well because there is a mutual interest represented.” One respondent said about the F-16 deal: “It was not the UAE that supported that deal as much as it was the aircraft manufacturer.”

Arab Gulf States can benefit from the equity their American partners have built throughout the years with members of the US Congress. These American companies have employed a significant number of their constituents and have created segregated PACs to contribute to these members’ political campaigns. As further proof of the importance of having a domestic partner, DP World lost out on the US ports acquisition because the Dubai-based entity did not work the political channels with a domestic partner.

In a nutshell, Arab Gulf states win “when they play on the same playing field; or when they play by the same rules and use their advantages, of which there are many”.

## Factors behind losing

The overall reason why Arabs have lost out on issues in the US according to an interviewee is that they have not played by US rules. One respondent elaborated on this point by saying: “we are a county run by institutions and not by families”. This is a fundamental difference between the American system and Arab Gulf states. According to various participants in this research, one reason why Arab Gulf states lose is due to their ignorance of the American “rules of the game”. Politics works in a very different way in the US when compared with the Arab Gulf, and Arab Gulf states are not in sync with the American system. They said that Arabs act in a reactive, tactical way as opposed to Israel’s strategic proactive way. For example, the Israelis have set up the Jafee center to study the dynamics of American politics and follow closely its developments and to forecast and influence events before they unfold whereas Arabs do not have a similar structure to keep up with the American system (Terry, 2005).

Arab Gulf governments have not worked on the narrative and their image, they have not used the system the way Israelis have used it. A former American statesman said that the Israeli lobby “is not a wizard of Oz”; it is simply well organized and well planned. He added: “Play by their rules, quit (complaining), play by their game (American), and set up a lobby as effective as AIPAC so you can present the same argument as they can”. He added: “Why aren’t Arabs there, convincing Americans that they have better values? This is Coca Cola versus some [unknown] product you can buy at Cosco. You have to put energy to it, so the Arabs become the Pepsi to the Israelis’ Coke, and frankly you have got a better story, or as good a story, as the Israelis do. So quit [complaining], grow-up, and take responsibility. Quit saying ‘I have no influence in Washington DC’. Go there and lobby. Arabs lose when they don’t play by the rules, if you don’t play, you don’t win.” All of the American respondents in the interviews blamed Arabs for their failure, because of not putting in the requisite effort, nor designing a strategy and marshaling resources the way the Israelis have.

The majority of respondents said the American system has no inherent preference for the Israelis, but that the Israelis have gained the privileges they have with the US because they play by American rules and they use the system. The Arabs have not even seriously tried. A former statesman who has worked with Arab Gulf government thought that Arabs have imposed double standards on themselves. He said: “If you have a game of football, and you have a bunch of Israeli kids out there, and you have people cheering for them, it is because they are a better team. The way [to win] is not to put artificial rules to weaken them; it is to be a better team.”

Another respondent criticized the way Arabs fight the system instead of using it. He said: “The Arab boycott: what a silly, silly way. Makes you look small don’t you think? Don’t you think you can compete on any basis?” An interviewee pointed out at the embargo which alienated the US instead of winning it over. Several participant to this research said the oil embargo of 1973 was a byproduct of the Arab governments’ ignorance of the way the American system functions, and in the end it had an adverse effect. The embargo contributed to portraying Arabs and the Gulf as “greedy” and seeking to blackmail the US using oil. This increased the strategic value of Israel as a surrogate fortress to protect American interests and to keep Arabs in check (Laor, 2013).

From the interviews, one respondent said that one of the main deficiencies of Arab Gulf states’ lobbying is the lack of strategy and of long term planning, as well as consistency in messaging. This has led to failure of the lobbying effort according to him. Another one added: “That is a very important component. Most Arab Gulf states are very short sighted”. Another comment was: “The fact is that they don’t have a strategy, that they don’t follow through, and in some cases that they don’t prepare.”

One important factor that stems from having a strategy is organization; organizing all of the existing assets in pursuit of a goal. Another contributor to this research, a former chief of staff of a prominent Senator, elaborated on the value of money. He

said: "Raising money is important but not that important. AIPAC is very well organized; it raises money broadly all over America. It is not their money that is so important, it is their organization." As mentioned earlier in this chapter, one of the respondents described Arab Gulf lobbying, in contrast, as someone trying to stop leaking in a wall by inserting their finger: as soon as they close one hole, another hole opens. So Arab Gulf governments don't have a team to fix the whole leaking wall, and only do "periodic maintenance". That respondent said that is why Arab Gulf states are overwhelmed whenever multiple issues arise, and therefore fail to deal with them properly.

In contrast, with the pro-Israel lobby, every move is well researched and well designed. One head of an Arab American organization gave as an example of coordination an organization called "the Israel Project". He said it is "Israel's best kept secret". The Israel Project undertakes periodic polling of US public opinion, and, based on the poll results, provides recommendations to the Israel lobby as well as the Israeli government on the type of statements they can issue. Neither Arab Gulf governments nor Arab American groups have reached that level of organization or level of coordination to have such well-planned and strategic messaging.

The various interviewees highlighted that Arabs negative image has created a barrier to lobbying. However, this misconception is partly caused by the failure of Arab Gulf States to reach out properly to the American public and government. A respondent said, comparing the image of the Israelis to the image of the Arabs: "They [Israelis] did a fabulous job with politics and media whereas we let ourselves be associated with Bin Laden".

One respondent spoke about his experience with the Arab League that commissioned his organization to conduct a study and put a public relations plan to improve the image of Arabs in the US. Shortly after the research was finished, 9/11 happened. Instead of rushing to put the plan into action to counter the post 9/11 effect, the Arab League decided to put the plan on hold. Until today, the plan has not

been activated.

Respondents said that the Israelis were able to portray themselves “just like Americans” while Arabs remain alien to them; therefore Arab issues do not have the same kind of appeal as Israeli ones and are not easily defensible. One respondent said that the prevailing mentality in the US is a Judeo-Christian one; Israel can always play on the biblical background to create a sense of familiarity and resemblance with Americans, whereas Arabs, seen as Muslim, don't have this advantage.

An Arab American that I interviewed said: “They are afraid of Muslims and of Islam. Islam is alien to them. Islamophobia increased after September 11. It was there but before 9/11 it was not so bad before.” However, the misconception does not only block lobbying, it also blocks any initiative to engage with American society. An American scholar spoke about the local population's opposition to the opening up of a school in Virginia by Saudi Arabia; the residents of Montgomery Maryland refused the idea saying they did not want a school for “terrorists”. He said: “Even something as benign as that has been politically sensitive.” He added: “any gesture can be misinterpreted” and “It is extremely difficult for them to help”.

An Arab American activist gave the example of the current trials by Arab American Muslims to integrate some of their material into the schools. She described their trials as “a tough battle”. She said: “Americans that are Muslims are fighting the battle of building a new mosque. Even though we have freedom of religion we don't want to see a mosque coming out”. One respondent used the term “deeply rooted hostility and a suspicion” to describe the reaction of mainstream Americans to anything Arabs or Muslims do.

One respondent said that she went to a fund raiser of a Republican candidate and she told him that she had visited the region. When she spoke about the Muslim

Brotherhood getting elected he was appalled and he said that it was “terrible” and that all “Muslims want to kill us”. The remark of the respondent was that “this is a politically active person” which means that the reaction of the average American is likely to be even worse.

Even though politically Saudi Arabia is an ally of the US, one of the people I interviewed said that if you conducted a poll you could be almost certain that most Americans do not think of Saudi Arabia as an ally. This misconception is across the board. An Arab American communication specialist said: “The think tanks, the journalists, the politicians they say things that are so, so off mark.” Arabs have a negative image in comparison to Israel. As mentioned previously, the polls conducted by Gallup in February 2012, found that 61% of Americans sympathize with Israel (Mendes, 2012). However, respondents signaled that Israel is currently facing a public image crisis due to the continuous building of settlements and to the lack of commitment to human rights.

An illustration of the misconceptions and negative image in the minds of Americans is the DP World case. One of the interviewees summarized the issue by saying: “One company was not able to work with them so they played the terrorism card with Schumer”. To illustrate the misconception, one respondent said about the DP World case: “The issue politically had a lot of problems associated with it. So we, the United States are going to allow a third party, a non-American entity to manage our ports”. However, if the Dubai Company did not win the bid it would have been a Singaporean company which is also a foreign company. An Arab-American activist said cynically: “Does it matter what the facts are? After 9/11 it is a very sensitive topic.”

Also another factor featured by respondents is that “they let others define them”. One of them highlighted the issue by saying: “Debate has been defined by the pro-Israel side”. Whenever there is bad publicity about Arab there is no coordinated effort to respond to that the image, which makes them more vulnerable to any negative publicity.

Also there is ignorance about the Arab world. One respondent described how Americans think of Arabs as a monolith. He said: "There is this sense of this undifferentiated mass that Americans think of when it comes to the Arab world." One respondent highlighted this fact by saying the DP World loss was due to the fact that Americans are "uneducated" about the Arab world; therefore it was very easy to vilify the UAE and to block the deal. This is despite the fact that the UAE is one of the US' staunchest allies, especially when it comes to fighting terrorism. He said: "The big loss was because the DP World was caught off guard, they did not realize how uneducated American policy makers are about the Arab world and misconception about terrorist activities that flow through there. They thought Dubai Port was not secure enough as an institution."

However, some respondents said that the way Arabs face bad publicity does not help in educating the American public. The head of an Arab American organization mentioned to me the DP World case as an example. He said that when the bad publicity started spreading around, instead of going to every media outlet and trying to correct the prevalent misconception, the UAE kept quiet and waited for the president to "fix" the damage. The respondent said that at the end the UAE agreed to send Sheikha Lubna Al Qassimi to the US to talk to the media and to the Congress.

A former journalist mentioned CAIR and he said they lose many battles to AIPAC. He described the way they function: "When CAIR gets on TV it is because there is some outrageous MEMRI video about a crazy cleric saying about stoning women who don't wear the veil. They say what is wrong about the Arab world, then the CAIR person is trying to defend the indefensible or trying to say this is not what all (Arabs) are like, but then they get one expert who will say but this is exactly how (Arabs) are all like they make blanket assertions. But it does not do anything to advance anybody's agenda or cause." Though CAIR does not represent Arabs by defending Islam, indirectly it defends the image of Arabs, since as explained before Arabs and Muslims are seen by the American public as well members of the government as one.

The respondent described CAIR as “ineffective” as opposed to pro-Israel groups who are judged “very effective”. They work in a targeted way; they get their message out through social media to the right people in order to advance their ideas. The respondent mentioned MEMRI (Middle East Media Research Institute) as a nemesis to CAIR. MEMRI promotes news about the Middle East in a very pro-Israeli manner. Basically there no one on American soil to present a consistent narrative that can be sold to the average American. One respondent said there is no “counter-narrative” and “there is this quiet Arab voice”.

Regarding the misconception there are two views that converge at a certain point. The first view is that misconceptions about Arabs hinder their lobbying and that any effort to appeal to the American public gets blocked by these misconceptions. So if they want to fund Arab American groups in order for them to be vocal in promoting a positive image of the Arab, due to prevalent misconceptions they risk tarnishing their image. A American scholar spoke about the risks of associating with a foreign government, he explained: “Well looking at it the other way, if you are the head of ADC or another Arab American group you want to be careful about how much money you get from foreign governments if you are engaged in any business of political work then you have this foreign registration act. You don’t want to be scrutinized and people say you are the tool of Saudi government or Qatar or whatever that does not help you whether that is technically legal or not”. He added:” it is little bit tricky because you cannot have Arab government coming in and throwing money around without tarnishing the image of those who they are trying to help”. So the misconception issue in trapped in a vicious cycle. The other view is that there has not been serious, well planned, long term work on the image of Arabs in the US in order to correct this misconception.

It is easier to oppose a deal then to let one pass. Therefore having an opposition makes the deal much more prone to being blocked. This is why the F 16, though the technology granted was quite advanced, did not require intensive lobbying. The lobbying was mainly conducted by the arm contractors. The UAE government did not have to put an effort to lobby for the deal, similarly to the Saudis at the time of the

AWACS. This is mainly because the Emiratis did not face the opposition that the Saudis faced in the eighties. Paradoxically, this applies to the DP World deal; the deal was blocked due to the presence of an opposition.

Given that the Arab Gulf States do not have a constituency to vouch for them, they make their case by promoting economic interests. Therefore the deals that have the most chance of getting passed are arms deals because of the impact they have on job creation. However, when the deal is small and has no economic impact then it can very easily be sabotaged by the opposition. One respondent said it would be difficult for the pro-Israel lobby to stop a multi-billion dollar deal such as the F16, however they can easily block a small deal for the Lebanese artillery because the deal itself will not have an economic impact and will not significantly contribute to job creation. One respondent summarized this fact by saying: “If you say something is the right thing to do but you don’t show how it will benefit the United States or ordinary Americans, you don’t get it.”

### **Perceived Subsystem: An Arab State of Denial**

However, when asked whether there is a subsystem that is putting the Israelis at an advantage over Arabs, which in some cases leads allegedly to failure on the part of Arab Gulf states, one respondent, a former American statesman, said: “The nice thing about a conspiracy theory is that it explains a lot, whether there is a validity to it or not. Don’t they say this it is beyond my control? It is not my fault?”

The lack of strategy, the lack of follow up, and the lack of organization have been pointed out by American respondents to the interviews as key factors leading to failure. They said this failure is a natural and obvious result of Arab Gulf states’ practices. These respondents added that whenever Arabs fail, it is a result of their incompetence and not of any perceived barrier to entry erected by the system or based on prejudice against Arabs. One respondent dropped an object on the floor and asked why it fell; he answered his question by saying: “What would Arabs say? Inshallah”. He added: “Isn’t inshallah a sort of a denial?” He explained that Arabs are

in denial about their incompetence, and justify their failure to have any significant influence to the opposition or the subsystem that is preventing them to lobby. This however, is not true.

In order to investigate the above topic further, respondents were asked about the existence of a subsystem or a barrier to entry that has hindered the establishment of an effective pro -Arab Gulf states lobby similar to the pro-Israel lobby. All respondents claimed that there is nothing that can stop Arab Americans from establishing a lobby to influence foreign policy. One respondent said: “That is a shame; the US is set up in a way that even minorities have their rights protected and can influence foreign policy. They [Arabs] should be able to be part of the public discussion; there is nothing preventing them from doing that”. Another respondent said: “Anybody can lobby the [US] government, especially going to your point of building a grassroots organization. Let us say you are an Arab American; you are an American citizen. Not only can you lobby, but it is a constitutionally protected right as part of the First Amendment, so there is definitely not any impediment to doing that.” Other respondents gave similar responses: “A complete misconception: anybody can lobby”;

“That is ridiculous, anyone can lobby”;

“There is no prohibition”; and “it is absolute nonsense”.

The unexpected feedback from the interviews was the enthusiasm Americans expressed for an Arab lobby to help create a balance in US public debate. Several American respondents said that a pro-Arab lobby would be welcome as it would create a balance in the public discourse regarding the Middle East and it is needed as American politics thrives on confrontation. These comments contradict the implicit theory in the minds of Arabs and what is conveyed by certain anti-American politicians and public figures that the US uses Israel to keep Arabs under control (2012b).

Nonetheless, some respondents admitted that if Arab Gulf governments were to have a sustainable lobby that seeks to influence US foreign policy, they would face opposition from the pro-Israel lobby. One respondent said: “No one can prevent them (Arabs) but probably they will fight them”. However one respondent said that usually the existence of an opposition should offer an incentive to lobby in order to preserve their privileges from competition. The Turks established a domestic lobby after the Armenian lobby gained momentum in pushing for the issue of the Armenian genocide by the Turks. A former staff in the Congress said: “I assume if you have a local opponent that will encourage you to lobby”. In the Arab case, the existence of an opponent has created a disincentive to lobby instead of enticing them to push their views forward.

### **Conclusion: Arab Gulf Lobbying’s Impact on US Foreign Policy**

On Arab Gulf lobbying’s impact on US foreign policy, a lobbying specialist I interviewed said: “I don’t think they have had an impact in the sense people think differently about the Gulf or the Middle East. In fairness they are effective in what they are focused on. In terms of having a wider impact on the US, no, they have no impact at all”. All of the respondents gave similar answers with regards to the effect of Arab Gulf lobbying on US foreign policy. Comments included: “not so much”; “In my experience they did not have a major impact”; “It is not in existence”; “I don’t think it has been very effective”; “I can’t point to anything specific where the Arab lobby changed the mind of the US Congress or the government; I can’t see it had any effect on the Palestinian talks, I can’t see.”

A former Arab diplomat was categorical: “Absolutely not, they have no strategy, no common effort, no follow through“. He said that changing or affecting US foreign policy requires a long term consistent effort, and this has never existed, whether through lobbying or normal diplomatic relationships, namely because of the lack of a strategy and of long term planning. Another respondent, a lobbying and communication specialist, explained this lack of strategy by saying the Arab Gulf

states' effort "has not been strong enough or targeted enough, or funded well enough, or consistent enough" in order to affect US foreign policy. However, the fact that the Arab Gulf states have not had a major impact on US foreign policy is due to the fact that their lobbying never focused on overall foreign policy, and that they did not work on building a consistent political narrative. A former American statesman said: "They stay away from politics, especially those that put them at cross purposes with Israel".

The respondent said that the reason why Arab Gulf countries have avoided lobbying on US foreign policy matters and hence "to influence [policy] developments in the US" goes to the fact that: "Gulf Arabs don't do things for themselves; they get others to do things for them". In case of commercial interests or arms sales, Arab Gulf governments rely on their American counterparts and take the back seat. In the case of US foreign policy, they have to do the talks themselves, and this is something they avoid as it puts them in a direct confrontation with other parties, namely the pro-Israel lobby. One respondent said: "They spend money like water on that but not on support for broader efforts to promote US-Arab relations. They will spend money to put through specific weapons purchases but they will not spend it on US-Arab relations."

The respondent mentioned the Gulf Arab summit meeting in Doha in 2000 in order to showcase the reluctance of Arab Gulf countries to work on any broad issues. During the summit, GCC member states agreed to contribute \$2 million each to a common fund of \$12 million, to be administered by the embassies of the 6 Gulf countries for the purpose of educating Americans about issues that are important to Arabs. Only two out of the six countries funded their pledged amount, and failed to fund similar amounts the following year. A former American diplomat told me: "You pay nothing you get nothing". The respondent meant by paying not only the monetary amounts, but also efforts invested in the matter.

Again, whenever Arab Gulf States have had foreign policy demands, they have pursued them through personal contacts their embassies have with US government officials. One respondent, a former American diplomat to the Arab Gulf, said: "In my experience with the Gulf, it was more personal contact with embassies than a lobby

for the Gulf". Another respondent explained how Arab Gulf lobbying has never aimed to influence US foreign policy to take a certain direction and said: "There has been no lobbying with the political system. They have relations with the Secretary and the Department of State. That is normal diplomatic relations. It is not building any support for any particular idea."

In some instances, there have been situations that one respondent described as a "coincidence of interests" in US foreign policy. So when the US adopts a position advocated by say Saudi Arabia, it is "not because the Saudi lobby is powerful and can change people's minds; it can't do it, it is because the Americans know it is important for America's strategic interest." An American scholar added: "I don't think it (lobbying) provides value added to the relationship; they don't have an organized constituency". Affecting general foreign policy needs to have a domestic constituency. Another respondent, a former statesman, said: "Effective lobbies, like the Israeli lobby, have deep domestic roots". These domestic lobbies work on strategic issues that set the frame for US foreign policy.

On the issue of domestic lobbies that can steer US foreign policy in a certain direction, one of the respondents, a former statesman, mentioned the Qualitative Military Edge. The pro-Israel domestic lobby was able to advance the Qualitative Military Edge policy, which states that for all arms sales to any Arab Gulf country, Israel would have a qualitative comparative advantage. This policy was devised to protect Israel in case one of these Arab Gulf countries were to reverse its current policy and decide to use US acquired arms to fight Israel. In 1968, with strong support from Congress, U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson approved the sale of F-4 Phantom II fighters to Israel. This act created a precedent for U.S. support to ensure Israel's qualitative military edge over its neighbours .

When Arab American groups were asked whether Arabs have affected US foreign policy issues, the answer was no. One respondent, an Arab American said: "I don't think it is doing that much; if it were, we wouldn't be in the situation we are in right now. Foreign policy is so tainted against us, because no one is doing anything". When asked why there is no effort by Arab American organizations to influence US

foreign policy, the general answer was that these organizations focus on their issues as a community; they focus more on improving their status as an ethnic community. They are struggling with money; therefore they prefer to channel their scarce resources to promote their own welfare as Arab Americans. In order for such organizations and groups to focus on US foreign policy issues, they would need additional funds. The respondent, who is the head of an Arab American organization, said “to move forward Arab issues to the Congress, we need funding to be able to do that”. Another respondent said to tackle Arab issues at large help from Arab Gulf countries is “crucial”, however he said: “They [Arab Gulf Countries] are not doing it”.

Another interviewee, a specialist in foreign lobbying, said that the more immigrants from a particular country migrate to the US, the better relations this country has with the US. The natural development of lobbying by a community starts with local issues related to its own welfare as a community, and then the political activism evolves to tackle US foreign policy, or relations between the US and the community’s country of origin. Therefore, the general impression is that Arab American organizations have enough domestic issues, such as discrimination that they are struggling with, and as a result have not dedicated efforts to tackle foreign policy.

Furthermore, respondents had a common answer that US foreign policy is skewed against Arabs because Arabs have not put in a serious effort to influence foreign policy. The Arab Gulf has not tried to use the lobbying mechanism with all its elements (media grassroots, direct briefing to legislators, and so forth) to influence US foreign policy.

Arab Gulf states have been very effective in getting US support on their own security issues, which are crucial to US foreign policy. A former American statesman said: “So when Saudi Arabia talks to us about their concerns, their attempt to influence the United States to get us to understand what threat they are facing and what weapons they need. We have to pay attention to them because they have oil. We have very good relations with most countries in the Gulf, except Iran, and it is getting better. There is military interdependency, against common threat, and a military

interdependency to ensure economic prosperity in the Arab Gulf region. We have economic interdependency between the Gulf and the US; it is called oil. If you can't sell oil, our economy collapses, your economy collapses. I would rate military interdependency as strongest with Saudi and UAE; the UAE very much so, along with Kuwait, and very strong with Bahrain."

When US companies that transact with Arab Gulf States were asked whether they would use their lobbying muscle to help their partner on issues that do not involve them directly, the answer was that they usually limit their lobbying to the issues in which they have a vested interest. US companies can help, however it depends on the issue. They usually help on smaller issues and would not flex their lobbying muscle for issues related to US overall foreign policy towards the Middle East. One response was: "We consider the relationship with the UAE to be an enduring relationship; we look at ways to assist this partner, but it depends. It is on a case by case basis. The lobbying by proxy is exaggerated [by the Israel Lobby], which claims that through oil and defense interests, the Gulf has control over US foreign policy in the Middle East". This was suggested by Bard in his book *The Arab Lobby: The Invisible Alliance That Undermines America's Interests in the Middle East* (2010).

However, as inferred from the interviews, US companies' influence on their government's foreign policy is very limited. When asked if they can help steer US policy in a favorable manner to their Arab Gulf partner, the answer of a respondent who works for an arms company was: "In my experience it is not true. It would be nice if it were that easy". He added on the issue of US foreign policy: "We will not have a meaningful effect. We are a US company; it is easy to think that we have this kind of influence but we do not." He added: "We engage the US government only in things we do". As such, US companies work within the boundaries of US foreign policy; they do not seek to influence it. When asked about the general perception that US companies influence US foreign policy in order to win concessions from their Arab Gulf partners to whom they sell arms, he answered: "It is a strain of conspiracy theory but I don't think it is quite common, but it is out there."

This chapter came out with many propositions regarding Arab Gulf lobbying. The most important ones are that their lobbying is weak because they are not well

organized and have no domestic base and that they suffer from a negative image. These propositions will be revisited and checked in the next two chapters.

Chapter 4 and 5 represent cases of failure and of success of Arab Gulf lobbying. Hence, I will be able to see whether the propositions generated from the grounded theory are applicable in real life experiment that the case studies represent. The following chapter embodies a story of success where lobbying was effective because Arabs had a comprehensive strategy that involved grassroots as well as full-fledged communication plan in addition to other external factors that played to their favor.

## **Chapter 4: AWACS (Air Warning and Control System) Sale to Saudi Arabia Case Study**

### **Value of the case study**

The only case that represents real success for Arab Gulf lobbying is the F15 and the AWACS from thirty years ago. This was the time when Saudi Arabia marshalled its assets to influence the making of public policy in the US. I am taking this as a case of success, as ousting an opponent is a reason to evaluate winning... In this case, the Saudis were able to win, despite strong opposition from the pro-Israel lobby, by virtue of orchestrating a constituency in support of the sale. The pressure exerted by the coalition of American businesses and unions that the Saudis put together resulted in breaking up the opposition.

Throughout this chapter I will analyse the different factors that led to the success of the deal, starting with the strategic considerations that played out in favour of Saudi Arabia, then moving to the gaps in the approach of the opposition, before discussing the well planned strategy of the Saudis. The Saudis were successful because they had a strategy and were aggressive in their approach. The core of their strategy relied on garnering domestic support for the deal, whether from unions and the business community or Arab American organizations. Finally, I will discuss the crucial role of the President who pushed for the deal by pressuring the Congress and by publicly endorsing the deal in front of the American public.

Despite several factors that led to the success, the key factor, I will argue, was the constituency. This case study is important as it illustrates how the Saudis were able to beat the opposition by creating a constituency to support their issue and by marketing it to the average American.

The case study handles briefly the 1978 F15 sale that took place during the time of Carter, with more emphasis on the 1981 sale of AWACS that occurred at the time of the Reagan administration. These two episodes are related and will therefore be analysed as one case study. The subsequent attempts to upgrade the AWACS arsenal in 1986 will not be analysed.

## **Background**

In an interview with a member of the Saudi Royal family, the respondent said that the F15 was the first effort made by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to lobby the US government. President Nixon visited Saudi and Egypt in 1974 and agreed to sell the Kingdom F15 airplanes. However, when he resigned, prospects of the deal died out. When President Ford took over, the Kingdom applied for the purchase of weapons. More than 76 senators brought a letter to Henry Kissinger, the Secretary of State, expressing their opposition. Because of that, the package did not get approved. President Ford asked the request to be deferred until after the elections (Smith, 1996). Eventually, Ford lost the 1976 election. During the Carter term, Saudi Arabia renewed its request. Carter refused their request for Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS), however he was cooperative for the F15 request (Bronson, 2006).

In an interview with a member of the Saudi Royal family, the respondent explained that when President Carter came to power in 1977, he had a very good meeting with Crown Prince King Fahd and he agreed to the Kingdom's need to purchase the weapons. The US government expressed approval to pursue this request, but it explained that the deal would face a lot of opposition in both houses of Congress.

On January 1978, Carter announced his intention to sell sixty F-15s to Saudi Arabia and fifty F-5s to Egypt and fifteen F-15s, along with seventy five F-16 fighter bombers to Israel (Levins, 1983). The late King Fahd ordered Prince Saud Al Faisal,

the foreign minister, to set up a team that would come to the United States to lobby. The lobbying started with a team of three headed by Prince Turki Al Faisal, and later on Prince Bandar, who was a pilot, joined the team (Bronson, 2006). The team set up an information office in Washington to dispatch information as promotion to the sale. This was the first effort to lobby. The effort involved producing booklets and leaflets setting up a meeting program with senators and congressmen of all sides, Republicans, Democrats and independents. The Saudis also used business connections as they asked for the help of American companies that worked in Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom was experiencing a boom and companies like Bechtel had many projects in Saudi (Bronson, 2006).

Prince Bandar-Bin Sultan became unexpectedly immersed in helping the Saudi team provide assistance and information to the Carter administration in securing approval from Capitol Hill for the sale of sixty F-15 aircraft, which were at the time the world's most advanced fighters. President Carter presented the bill on 28 April 1978 to the Senate. It included a proposal for arms sales to Saudi Arabia, Israel and Egypt (Simpson, 2008). On 15 of May, the Senate by a vote of 54-44 rejected a resolution disapproving the sale, therefore the sale went through (Grimmett, 1981). As the Saudis got the sale for the F-15 approved, they started planning for the next phase: the AWACS (Levins, 1983).

On March 6 1981, the Reagan administration announced that it would sell an F-15 enhancement package to Saudi Arabia in order to face the Soviet threat. On July 1 1981, due to a campaign by the pro-Israel lobby, both houses announced opposition to the sale (Laham, 2002). Therefore, Reagan decided to postpone the vote until October (Grimmett, 1981).

However, a new dimension was added to the equation. The debate that was in the public discourse during the AWACS sales was aggravated by the Israeli invasion of

Beirut, there was a change in public opinion, and the special relationship of the US with Israel was brought into question (Levins, 1983). This had an effect on lobbying, with each camp becoming more aggressive in its approach.

On October 1 1981, as required by the Arms Export Control Act, the Pentagon defense security assistance sent document 81-96 for approval by the Senate and the House. The initial 3-year cost of the AWACS sales had a total of \$8.5 billion (1981h). The same document said the Administration regards Saudi Arabia as "one of the most stable Arab states." The paper adds that "concern about Saudi stability is more a reflection of regional developments and the increasing importance of Saudi Arabia and the West rather than any domestic development within the Kingdom" (1981h). The document says the Pentagon found no reason for refusal for the arms deal which consisted of five AWACS aircrafts for 8.5 billion, however the overall deal with the support amounted to \$85 billion (Simpson, 2008).

The pro-Israel lobby had successfully mobilized a strong opposition in the House, in contrast to the Senate where the opposition was not as strong (Smith, 1996). The House rejected the deal by a margin of 301 to 111. Reagan lost any hope in the lower house and focused on the Senate. During the month of October, one by one the votes started to shift (Sperling, 1981). On October 28, 1981 the Senate voted favourably for the package and the deal went through (Laham, 2002).

## **Context**

The oil boom endowed the Arab Gulf with immense wealth. This "dubious blessing" as described by Charles Yost made the region the center of attraction of the superpowers (Wolfe and Abdul-Rahman, 1980). This was enforced during the Kissinger years whose main goal was to isolate the Soviets from reaching the oil fields (Lateef, 1974). Jimmy Carter announced in his 1980 State of the Union address that any attempt by outside powers (the Soviet Union, at the time) to gain

control of the Persian Gulf would be met with military force (Stork, 1980). The subsequent administrations adopted the same approach and expressed their interest in the maintenance of a stable flow of oil, stable prices, security of oilfields, and in increased cooperation between producing and consuming states (Pridham, 1985),(Safran, 1985).

Another factor that increased the importance of Saudi Arabia was the skyrocketing oil prices that were caused by two oil shocks in 1973 and 1979 (Bronson, 2006). The US was unprepared to deal with an oil shortage. The 73 oil embargo and the 79 oil shock due to the Iranian revolution had severe repercussions on the US. The administration viewed any potential shortfall in oil as a threat to national security (Levins, 1983). The AWACS sale was framed as the need for Saudi Arabia to have an early warning system to protect the oil installations. This argument was discussed in the course of the 1st of October hearing (1981i).The report provided to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in September highlighted the possibility of an attack on oil facilities. It stated: “The Saudis feel themselves surrounded by states with ties to Moscow. Among the likely threats against which Saudi Arabia must guard, the most demanding involves an Iranian air attack on Saudi oil facilities and marine shipping terminals in its Eastern Province”(1981h).

Another factor that helped the decision to empower the Saudis was the trend of the American government that started with the Reagan administration, which favoured funding third parties over direct intervention such as in Vietnam and Korea, in order to protect the US interests around the world. The US was starting to “diffuse power” to other states as a by ‘proxy” mode to fight its enemies (Pierre, 1981).In addition to this tendency to empower allies, major events that occurred between 1979 and 1980 had put the Arab Gulf under major threat which provided another reason for the US to help Saudi Arabia enhance its defence capabilities. The events were: the fall of the Shah, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the hostage crisis, and the Iraq-Iran war (Laham, 2002).

The revolution in Iran gave more importance to Saudi Arabia. Iran during the time of the Shah was a major ally to the West. Nixon's policy in the Arab Gulf consisted of encouraging Iran's primacy in the region (Alvandi, 2012). The rising Iranian threat that emanated from the Iranian revolution and the hostage crisis terminated the US friendship with Iran. This gave Saudi Arabia a greater strategic value as it became the only US ally in the Gulf (Grimmett, 1981). In addition, the war that broke out between Iraq and Iran created a source of threat for the oil fields. Khomeini, who was talking about exporting the revolution, was fighting in Iraq, the neighbour to Saudi Arabia (Cobban, 1980).

During the Carter era, the US was falling back from any active engagement in Africa, while the Soviet Union expanded its influence into Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda, and in south Yemen. Therefore the argument presented by Kissinger that Israel was a buffer against the Soviet Union did not pan out. A respondent, a member of the Saudi Royal family, said: "at the time the Soviet Union was up and well and up to no good." The Soviets were increasing their influence and the danger to the monarchy increased (Grimmett, 1981). During the Cold War, the Arab-Gulf, described by Dr. John Duke Anthony as "profoundly anti-communist"(Pridham, 1985), saw a benefit in an alliance with the Soviet nemesis, the US.

Therefore the AWACS were necessary to achieve a "strategic consensus"(Pridham, 1985). From the US administration's perspective, the Saudi AWACS/F-15 enhancement sale as well as the strategic relationship with Israel were essential to achieve a 'strategic consensus' among the states in the region, whose security was threatened by the Soviets(1981h). Saudi Arabia was viewed as a partner in containing the Soviet expansion and Reagan saw how his predecessor failed to prevent the Soviet expansion in Angola, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan (Bronson, 2006).

In the seventies, the view of Arabs in the US changed, with Sadat going on his historic visit to Jerusalem and the 1978 Camp David accords (Smith, 1996). The Saudis were seen as pro-peace as they called for the creation of an independent

Palestinian state with pre-67 borders and the right of refugees to return or to obtain compensation. This plan was well received by the American administration, and there was a belief that granting Saudi Arabia the warplanes they wanted would encourage them to help the US in its peace efforts in the region(1981h).

The peace was viewed as serving American interests as it would prevent radicalization that could encourage Soviet encroachment in the region, which would put them in the vicinity of the oil wells on which the West depended for its daily functioning. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was seen as the first alarming sign of this potential scenario, as according to an American official, it provided them with “access”(1981h).

However, looking at the peace process prospects, the report presented by the Committee on Foreign Relations in the Senate in September 1981 showed doubt on this point, as it signalled the possibility that a rift might occur between Saudi Arabia and the US, if the US was seen as siding with Israel: “However, the Saudis will continue to be wary of aligning themselves with the United States on issues which seem to have the United States and Israel on one side and other Arab nations on the other. They will hope for and seek U.S. cooperation but go separate ways when they believe their relations with the other Arab states make that necessary” (1981h) d.

The report emphasized the importance of Saudi Arabia as a regional player which funded the Lebanese and Jordanian Government, the PLO, and the Syrian forces in Lebanon. However, their support for the US peace effort was put in question as they were seen as not supportive enough of the Camp David accords.

Saudi Arabia was active in pushing for peace, as they were responsible in 1982 for the Fez communique that rejected the 3 “no”s of the Khartoum summit in 1968: “no recognition, no negotiation , no reconciliation with Israel”(1981g). They were also supportive of the Lebanese government’s effort to negotiate directly with Israel their withdrawal from Southern Lebanon (1986).

## **The opposition**

In his biography, Prince Bandar says: “The key to understanding the recurring obstacles, objections and rejections encountered in attempting to sell advanced weapons to Saudi Arabia is the special relation that exists between the United States and Israel” (Simpson, 2008). The Jewish community had a record in preventing or amending sales to Arab countries (Feldman and ‘al Šēm, 1988). As soon as president Reagan announced the sale, the pro-Israeli lobby represented by the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations issued a statement on April 23 1981 claiming that the deal would undermine US national security (Laham, 2002).

The opposition was very strong in the House. House members have relatively small constituencies; in these limited territories it is easy for strong, organized interest groups such as the Jewish groups to use their financial and organizational resources to defeat members hostile to Israel. However, in the case of the Senate, constituencies are larger and it is therefore harder for pro-Israeli groups to have the same effect. It takes much more financial effort to defeat a Senator. The pro-Israel lobby has this capability in the states that have major Jewish populations such as New York, Florida, Illinois and California (Laham, 2002).

US relations with the Middle East have been complicated by the existence of the Israel lobby. Menachem Begin, the Israeli prime minister, enjoyed more support in the Congress than the president himself, so any American diplomacy which aimed at improving the relationship of the US with the Arab world, even though they had an immense strategic importance, was unable to “circumvent the Israel lobby” (Rabinovich and Reinhartz, 2008). This point was emphasized by Senator James Abourezk who said: “The policy planners for Israel have for years seen it in their interest to disrupt the relations between the United States and the Arab world. It is not in their interest to have a close relationship develop, especially between the United States and Saudi Arabia, whose oil reserves gives it a great deal of clout throughout the Arab World” (1978).

The Israeli opposition to arms sales to Saudi Arabia goes back to the Kennedy era. Then, the Kingdom wanted to buy the F104 Starfighters as the Egyptians and the Russians were in Yemen, where they had deployed their MIG 21s. However, the Kennedy administration, knowing it would not be able to pass it through Congress, advised Saudi Arabia to buy from Britain (Simpson, 2008). In 1976, President Ford agreed to the sale of advanced Maverick air to ground missiles to Saudi Arabia in order to secure lower OPEC prices for oil. However, AIPAC opposed the deal and the proposal fell apart (Simpson, 2008). The F-15 deal, which was part of a tripartite package, passed with a limited amount of resistance. However, the AWACS deal was much harder to pass (Findley, 1989).

The bill that President Reagan proposed faced resistance from both the Senate and the House. On June 25, fifty five Senators, representing a majority, opposed the sale and sent a letter to the president. This was spearheaded by Tom Dine the executive director of AIPAC and Bob Packwood of Oregon, a Republican senator (Findley, 1989). On the same day Clarence Long, a Democratic U.S. Congressman who represented the 2nd congressional district of Maryland, and Norman Lent, a Republican representative from New York, presented a House resolution signed by 224 members, disapproving the sale. AIPAC openly said it would oppose the deal (Emerson, 1985, Smith, 1996). Given the fact that House members expressed their opposition at an early stage and that the bill had a large number of co-sponsors, Reagan gave up on the House and focused on defeating the resolution in the Senate in order to pass the bill (Laham, 2002, 1981i).

The opposition had achieved a success by passing the two resolutions in both houses of the Congress, and two weeks before the vote John Glenn announced that there were 57 Senators against the sale (Webbe, 1981). However, attitudes started to change quickly as the president and the pro-Saudi lobby intensified their pressure as it was getting closer to the voting date.

## Arguments

The opposition, AIPAC and its supporters in the Congress presented several arguments against the sale. The first one was that the sale of advanced jet AWACS meant that the Israelis could no longer have “the freedom of movement” nor the “invincibility” they had before (Levins, 1983). This was conveyed by representative Brigham during the 1st of October hearing, who said that putting these capabilities in the hands of the Saudis “worries the Israelis tremendously” as “the AWACs could easily deprive Israel of the ability to surprise its enemies, and when Israel faces the numerical odds it does, surprise can be essential to security” (1981i). The report presented to the committee said though the sale “does not shift the air balance” it makes Israeli “preparedness more costly” in case of any confrontation(1981h).

The second argument was that Saudi Arabia was an unstable regime that could collapse anytime and be replaced by an Islamic regime hostile to the US, modeled after the Islamic republic in Iran, as declared by Thomas Dine in his hearing (1981f). Dine said that the US thought the Shah had a strong rule, however, he fell. He also described Saudi Arabia as an “inherently unstable regime”. Dine presented the argument of a possible change in regime at the time when Khomeini’s ideology promoted the concept of “exporting the revolution” to other Islamic countries (UPI, 1981).

During the hearing, opponents of the deal mentioned the comments made by president Sadat that the Saudi Royal family was unstable and the pressure for a regime change was internal as well as regional (1981f). This argument was supported by the report given to the Committee on Foreign Relations in the Senate that said that the Shia population, estimated to be to be 250000 to 270000, was concentrated in the Eastern Province, the home of oil installations, and was dissatisfied with the regime (1981h). The opposition claimed that providing Saudi Arabia, with its limited personnel to deal with this sophisticated weaponry, would be of no use when the threat to its fields was internal (1981b).

Additionally, opponents to the deal questioned the sincerity of Saudi Arabia’s alliance

with the US. Senator Patrick Moynihan pointed to how the GCC condemned the attack on the Gulf of Sidra, which they described as “medieval piracy”. He even presented a communiqué from the GCC to the Soviets in which the GCC expressed their condemnation (1981a). On the other hand, Dine presented King Khalid’s statement that the loyalty of Saudi Arabia is not to the Eastern or to the Western block but to the Muslim people around the world (1981f). Senator Jespen declared that Saudi Arabia had financed the Syrian presence in Lebanon, which was at odds with American policy (1981g). Questioning the relationship was an argument that opponents to the DP World deal also presented. At the time of the AWACS episode, Saudi Arabia was an important Cold War ally and at the time of the DP World episode the UAE was an important ally in the war on terror. However, in both cases, opponents brought up ad hoc incidents and statements to discredit Saudi Arabia and the UAE and to put their alliance with the US into question.

The opposition tried to frame the sale not as a litmus test for Saudi friendship but as “blackmail” as there were no quid pro quos. Saudi Arabia, unlike Israel, does not share bases with the US. The opposition framed the issue as the start of a process. Dine asked “How will the Congress respond when the Saudis ask for nuclear technology?” His argument reinforced the argument of his opponents that Israel was scared of a developing friendship with Arab countries (1981i).

Another argument presented by the opposition was that even if they got the AWACS, the Saudis could never defend themselves against the Soviets in the case that they decided to raid oil installations. Therefore, in any case, the security of oil installations depended on American protection and not on Saudi capabilities.

Bingham said in the 1st of October hearing: “Underneath there is always the implication that the Saudis need the new planes as a deterrent against Soviet aggression, but again there is no attempt to discuss the reality of the situation: The fact that the risk of global conflict operates as an infinitely more powerful deterrent to the Soviets than the addition of some capacity to the Royal Saudi Air Force, and the fact that there is no way the Saudi forces could be strengthened to the point where they could cope with a Soviet attack.”

In the House, the deal faced great opposition as members were skeptical of the Saudi assurance that the planes would be used solely for defensive purposes. The opposition presented a statement by high ranking Saudi officials who stressed that Israel was a greater threat than the Soviets (Zablocki, 1981). Bingham said: "True, the Saudis insist the aircraft are not intended to be used against Israel, but in the world of the military it is not intentions but capability that counts." However this argument was destroyed by Reagan, as on October 28, hours before the Senate vote he "pulled off the last master stroke" as he announced publicly the limitation of the use of the planes (Simpson, 2008).

The opposition of Israel was so fierce, not only because of the technical specifications involved in the weapons but because they were afraid it would tamper with the US-Israeli special friendship (Bronson, 2006).

Opponents to the deal mentioned that the 1978 sale that included a tripartite package to Egypt, Israel and Saudi included a promise by Secretary Brown not to sell enhanced arms to Saudi (1981i). Opponents of the deal said that the sale would alter Israeli confidence in American reliability (1981i).

Opponents to the deal downplayed the role that Saudi Arabia could play in the peace process and highlighted the fact that Saudi Arabia rejected the Camp David accords (Zablocki, 1981). Lee Hamilton and Benjamin Rosenthal mentioned that since the sale of the F 15s in 1978, Saudi Arabia had not made any serious effort to push for peace with Israel.

AIPAC lost that round to the Saudis, however Bard mentioned that on the issue of arms the pro-Israel lobby has a 50% success record because arms deals involve American economic interests and usually the opposition they face comes from the arms contractors and their employees who have a vested interest in letting the deal pass. Therefore it was not totally unusual for AIPAC to lose. Their loss was partly due to some flaws in their tactics but it was due in greater part to the constituency that the Saudis were able to put together that outweighed AIPAC influence on the Congress.

AIPAC took an early stand against the AWACS sale. Two days after the announcement of the deal, the Conference of Major Jewish Organizations issued a memo saying that US interests in the Middle East were at risk (Laham, 2002). AIPAC started publishing full page ads in newspapers to raise the anti-AWACS stakes (Levins, 1983). At the same time, they employed their mailing list to raise money for the anti-AWACS campaign (Levins, 1983) asking for a \$1000 donation, for which they promised a free subscription to their newsletter and a book signed by the AIPAC founder, along with other perks (Levins, 1983). The pro-Israel lobby mobilized their grassroots who flooded the media with letters expressing their opposition and describing the sale as anti-Semitic (Levins, 1983).

The other self-inflicted hurdle facing the pro-Israel lobby was the fact they were waging a confrontation with the President. The head of B'nai B'rith accused the administration of waging an anti-Semitic war against the Jewish community (1981e). However, these attacks were perceived as cheap attempts to discredit Reagan, who was known for his perfect record in supporting Israel (Laham, 2004). Some accused the president of abusing his power as he was trying to coerce the Congress to support the deal (Emerson, 1981). Laham recalls: "By September 1981 the relation between the White House and the pro-Israel lobby deteriorated to such a level that the two sides were talking past each other rather than to each other; and both sides, rather than attempting to reconcile their differences, were determined to do battle with one another" (Laham, 2002).

The fact that Begin, the Israeli prime minister attacked Ronald Regan (Godsell, 1981a) pushed the latter to retaliate in order to safeguard his prestige as a president. Also a strong president will not allow a foreign country to interfere in his own internal affairs (1981b). The charges that he did not deliver on his campaign promise to protect Israel did not pan out, as by pushing for AWACS he was delivering on his campaign to boost the economy (Laham, 2002).

The methods adopted by the pro-Israelis were also used against them. Every time Begin appeared on TV to criticize the sale, he gave the Saudis a chance for a media appearance, to defend it and to launch to the public the slogan: “Begin or Reagan”. President Reagan confronted Begin by saying that Israel cannot dictate US foreign policy and he asked him to stop lobbying the Congress (Simpson, 2008). In his October 1, 1981 statement, when he notified the congress Reagan said “It is not the business of other nations to make American foreign policy.” (Laham, 2004).

Also, the fact that the Israeli prime minister was personally involved in lobbying senators and talking to media looked like a foreign intervention. In the case of Saudi Arabia, it was a Lt Col, a low ranking officer and a registered lobbyist who did the lobbying. It was not King Khalid or Crown Prince Fahad who did the lobbying (Laham, 2002).

The arguments that Dine presented were either weak or theoretical. The argument that Saudi might shift to the Soviets or that there might be a regime change were purely theoretical as there was no indication that either of the two situations might occur. On the other hand, the fact that Saudi Arabia condemned the attack on Libya, a fellow Arab country, was not strong enough to question the US-Saudi alliance.

Dine also could not substantiate his argument that the scenario that happened in Iran—when the Iranians shared the technology of their American planes with the Soviets after the revolution—could happen in Saudi. The Chairman asked him if he had proof or an indication that this could happen. Dine said that he had no listing but that “history” has shown that this could happen. His answer was “look at their government”. His defense was hypothetical, based on vague comparisons (1981i).

However, the comparison does not stand as the Shah was isolated from his people and he took power by a coup (Cole, 2009). The house of the Sauds, on the other hand, is entrenched in the Saudi society and enjoys legitimacy. They also used the wealth from oil to enhance the lifestyle of citizens (Abdulla, 2010). The use of unsubstantiated arguments weakened the opposition’s overall narrative. Instead of focusing on a few valid arguments, they diluted their defences by using several weak

arguments. Dine's discourse presented arguments that were inconsistent. For example, talking about Saudi Arabia's commitment to the US he said: "A true partnership is based on commitment. Both Israel and the United States have demonstrated their commitment and capacity to defend the region against Soviet expansion. Saudi has yet to show a commitment to peace with Israel. Saudi Arabia has yet to show a commitment to a two way relationship." He defined Saudi Arabia's commitment to US by peace with Israel, and then he mentioned the Soviet expansion which is unrelated to the peace with Israel. This paragraph represents how inconsistent was the Israeli narrative (1981f).

Also the speech of Dine was judgmental, or even derogatory, of Saudi Arabia when he said it is a country with "tribal rivalries" where blood relations, not elected representatives, command the ruling hierarchy" and he said, "Do you want to leave the airplane in the hand of "dissident tribesman and disloyal soldiers"? He also described the sale as "wrong" and the rationale that the Saudis could go to competitor nations as "immoral".

### **Problems with opposition**

At the outset, the pro-Israel coalition was fragile and had a meagre majority of 54 in the Senate: it "lacked strong popular underpinning" (Smith, 1996). The pro-Israel lobby was weak in the South West, the home of the conservative Republican states (Smith, 1996). The loss of Roger Jespen the Republican from Iowa had been a big blow to AIPAC as he had been one of the core AWACS opponents. The pressure on the Senator was immense to the point that this staunch opponent of AWACS changed his vote. He was influenced by farmers, manufacturing equipment makers, farm coops, and defence contractors. (Emerson, 1985). The Saudis hyped on economic interest. This factor was used in all ways possible. It was used positively with the promise of a gain via employment and negatively by the threat of depriving a party of an existing privilege or an income.

The Saudis used their business connections to influence legislators. Directly there was the influence of arms contractors and their employees, and their subcontractors and their employees. This represented grassroots as well as grasstops. The employees would represent a constituency to the legislator and the contractors were the grasstops as they were an important source for funding campaigns. The Saudis were able to influence entities such as farm coops that had no direct stake in the deal. Also, the argument was that if the deal went through, jobs would be created in the district and money would pour into the district, which would be to the benefit of everyone. Therefore, even those who were not directly affected by the deal had an interest in pressuring their representatives to support it. Here, the economic benefits were a strong argument that helped Saudi Arabia build a coalition of business and their employees.

Since Jespen was considered part of the backbone of the anti-AWACS coalition, his change of mind had a psychological impact on others who started, one after the other, backing off their opposition positions (Simpson, 2008). The biography of Prince Bandar describes Jespen as a cornerstone of the opposition. He was the most vocal about it and he was rallying people against the deal. When, under the influence of pressure of his constituency, he changed his position, this gave the signal to others that the opposition to the deal was a losing cause; therefore legislators started one by one changing their positions.

The other problem the pro-Israel lobby had was that they could not counter the pressure that came from the President as well from the pro-Saudi coalition. The deal was simply too big for any Senator who could get a chunk of it to refuse. The arms companies had spread their subcontractors to cover all the states (Smith, 1996). The pro-Israeli lobby could not balance the economic gain involved from the deal. At the outset the lobby had to face the president who, as explained below, had great popular support, especially for his foreign policy. To add to that, the Saudis were able to orchestrate a constituency to support the deal by using their business connections and highlighting the economic benefits which left no chance to the pro-Israel lobby for a success.

Every senator had the option of upsetting AIPAC or upsetting multiple other interest groups in his state. According to Emerson, even the florists had a stake in the deal as, when it passed, people would have more money to spend on flowers. This narrative even gained the florists, who put pressure on their elected officials to support the deal (Emerson, 1985). In the course of my interviews one respondent, who works as a communication specialist for an Arab Gulf country, said that when the deal is too big and success is not certain, AIPAC backs off. They do not push forward their opposition in order not to waste their capital with politicians; however they usually trade their retreat for concessions on other issues. This is what happened with the 1978 sale. However, in the case of the AWACS, given the implications of the sale, they fought adamantly.

Another problem for AIPAC was the surprise factor. They did not expect the Saudis to be so well prepared, to have gathered and coordinated so much support domestically. A respondent who was involved in the 1978 sale recalls: "We were faced with opposition, at that time AIPAC who were not expecting us to be that organized, so all their reaction was off key. Simply, they were 2-3 steps behind us, when they tried to ambush us we had answers. So, as I told you it was well thought out and we learned a lot from their methods in applying these issues in Congress and Senate." This "off key" reaction is visible in the hearing before the Senate Armed Services committee. Opponents of the deal could not present valid arguments to counter the arguments of witnesses from the military who supported the deal and who had the technical knowledge and presented scientific explanations in their defences.

For example, when he was at the forefront of the opposition, Jespen tried to ambush General Jones, who had said the technology provided to the Saudis was off-the-shelf technology and that the communication could be jammed in order to defend the proposition that, once the Saudis had their own aircraft, the US would no longer be able to control their usage, therefore those aircraft would give the Saudis the ability

to attack Israel and go against the will of the US. In order to prove his proposition, Jespen brought a Senate Appropriation Committee document from the year 1976 saying that the AWACS radar is the hardest to jam. General Jones responded that it was still true. Jespen was confused as he thought he had scored a point against his opponent, and asked: "Pardon?..but.. in line 4 of the slide.you say the communication link could be easily jammed." General Jones answered: "That's not the radar that's the radio." (1981g).<sup>1</sup>

### **The role of Arab Americans**

The F15 and the AWACS coincided with the rise of the Arab American organizations that emerged following the 1967 war and the ABSCAM (Findley, 1989, Shain, 1996).

The help of Arab American Senator James Abourezk contributed to a great extent to securing President Carter's support of the F15 deal. A respondent who was involved in the 1978 sale recalled: "Of course the NAAA (National Arab American Association), the ADC (Arab American Anti-Discrimination committee) was coming alongside Senator Abourezk, (the Arab American senator from South Dakota). He founded it (ADC), at that time he was still Senator, it's funny he played a crucial role in getting the deal through. At that time, the US was negotiating with Panama on the withdrawal of American forces from the Panama Canal. The US wanted to do that and reach an agreement with the Panamanian government. The Congress opposed it, and the one who opposed it vehemently for his own reasons was Senator Abourezk. He was from South Dakota; he wanted the government to give him something for the South Dakotan farmers in order to get his vote for the Panama deal. He was adamant. So President Carter called Prince Bandar at the time and told him: "This fellow Arab of yours is giving us a hard time. He said if I don't get the deal on Panama not only will I lose face but I might not be able to get the deal on the F15s". So Prince Bandar talked to James Abourezk and persuaded him to vote for Panama, and it went through." Prince Bandar's mediation led Abourezk to change

his position on the Panama deal and in return for this favour Carter backed the F 15 deal. However, the attitude of Abourezk did not reflect the attitude of all elected officials from Arab ancestry. Toby Moffett, an Arab-American representative from Connecticut, who was known to be against the oil companies and to be aligned with trade unions, stood against the sale in 1978 and 1981.

Part of the mandate of the foreign agents contracted was to reach out to Arab American organizations. The contract awarded to Crawford, a foreign lobbyist in 1981, states: "The corporation shall be responsible for broadening the participation of the Kingdom with Arab American organizations whose goals and ideals are generally consistent with those of the government of Saudi Arabia, such as the National Association of Arab Americans" (1981d).

The Saudis, who encouraged the NAAA, realized that an indigenous American organization would have more credibility in sending studies and research to the Congress than a report prepared by a foreign agent. The report prepared by the Library of Congress on the AWACS included as sources of information AIPAC, the Middle East Research Center, and NAAA (Vajs, 1981).

David Sadd the executive director of the NAAA helped Prince Bandar to organize the support of US industries that had an interest in Saudi Arabia to lobby for the sale (Simpson, 2008). The NAAA, like AIPAC, coordinated the lobbying activities of more than an half a dozen Arab American groups (Levins, 1983). The important feature of the NAAA was that it represented a domestic American organization. In the hearing, Sadd said that his organization represented American citizens of Arab ancestry. The NAAA stressed the same themes as the Saudis: the fact that the refusal would "undermine" Reagan's "credibility" in the region, the fact that these weapons would be used to protect installations and hence would contribute to the secure flow of oil necessary to the West's daily functioning, the Saudi's "responsible role" in the region, and described it as "a force of moderation" that would generate job creation from the sale.

At the end of his speech he attacked Israel by saying: “Why then, is Israel opposed to the sale? Israel has grown so dependent on its relationship with the United States and so accustomed to having this military domination in the Arab world assured by the United States that it has come to view a close American relationship with any Arab nation as being automatically a threat to its own interest. Israel’s real intention in attempting to block the air defence package is to drive a wedge between the United States and its closest Arab friend.” He terminated his speech with the very strong Begin or Reagan argument by saying: “The American people would like to know whether the congress will support President Reagan or Prime Minister Begin in determining what is in America’s best interests and what American foreign policy should be to achieve those interests” (1981f) .

### **Limitations of the role of NAAA**

In the course of the hearing, NAAA director Mr. Sadd started his speech by saying : “As American citizens of Arab ancestry, NAAA members across the country are particularly concerned that the broad outline of foreign policy conducted by the United States best serves America’s national interest” (1981f). Though Arab organizations were involved and they appeared in the hearing as a domestic faction to counter the views of AIPAC, the broader Arab-American constituency was not so involved.

This was the reason why the coalition that rose from the AWACS was short lived and the so called “pro-Arab” lobby did not prevail. The support from Arab American organizations had no constituency of Arab Americans behind it. When I was interviewing one head of an Arab-American organization, he said: “we had no dog in the fight”, to signal the fact that Arab Americans as a community had no stake in the sale, though the NAAA was involved as an organization and with it Sadd coordinated the work of half a dozen other organizations (Simpson, 2008). However, the Arab American community as a constituency was not involved. Emerson quotes Fred Dutton, the main consultant for the Saudis, downplaying the role of domestic lobbying and saying: “You don’t see Arab lobby groups going up and down the

corridors of Congress. Why? Because we can't rely on a nationwide constituency, nor can they provoke a flood of telegrams" (Emerson, 1985).

Though there was a constituency, the constituency was around jobs rather than an ethnic one. Their lobbyist would go to a Senator and tell him how many jobs the deal would create and the unions would pressure the Senator and tell him to support the deal, but they could not replicate the American Jews who had emotional ties with Israel, who identified with Israel, and who, as individuals would call their representatives or send telegrams to their local newspapers. The support for the Saudis did not extend beyond the deal, whereas the opposition that American Jews expressed was part of their overall position on Middle East issues and part of their support for Israel.

At the time, most Arab Americans came from Lebanon and were not so concerned whether Saudi Arabia renewed its arms arsenal or not (Laham, 2002). This element was highlighted by works written by pro-Israeli authors, who said that these organizations represented an artificial constituency, as the average Arab American, who most likely was a Christian from the Levant, had no ties with Saudi Arabia and did not care whether the package passed or not (Levins, 1983).

In addition to the fact that the issue of Saudi armaments had low salience to the Arab American constituency, the NAAA did not seek to engage them by raising the salience of the issue. When asked why the NAAA did not mobilize Arab-Americans, the respondent who was involved with NAAA at the time said that they did not have to do it as they viewed the support from the President and the American business community as more important. Even the NAAA did not see in the AWACS an opportunity to build a constituency or an issue to rally the community around it. Rallying a fragmented community around an issue that had low salience to its members was seen as a long shot, as opposed to rallying the business community, which was easy to identify and had direct interest in the deal.

## **Saudi approach to lobbying**

### **Comprehensive approach**

The Saudis had a multilayered approach. According to my interview with a respondent who was involved in the 1978 sale, and according to Prince Bandar's biography, the Saudis' reversed the methods that the Israelis used against them. They asked the President to exert pressure on the Congress at the same time that they used the business coalition to pressure members. They did inside-the-beltway politics by approaching the senators directly and explaining to them the benefits of the sale, using the media to make the idea acceptable to their constituency, and basing every move on previous research. The Group for International Study and Evaluation was set up as a subsidiary of the Insurance company of North America, whose main objective was to gather intelligence and pass it to the Saudi government (Levins, 1983). They initially kept a low profile and let the president take the lead, then when they saw the dissent in the Congress, they started aggressive lobbying (Simpson, 2008). The pace of lobbying started to increase six weeks before the deal (Emerson, 1981).

### **The coalition**

The pro-Arab lobby had support from oil based corporations including Fluor, Bechtel, the Computer Science Corporation, Mobil and all Houston based giants of the oil industry, who joined the campaign to support the sale (Simpson, 2008). Bechtel was involved in intense lobbying for the deal as it had many projects in Saudi Arabia, which was going through a boom with 100 billion USD in oil revenues, and everyone was interested in tapping into the new market. The president of Boeing and the Chairman of United Technologies sent more than 6500 telegrams to subsidiaries, vendors, contractors, suppliers, and distributors to support the sale (Emerson, 1985). Together these two companies were responsible for generating 70% of the grassroots support for the deal (Emerson, 1985).

As well as the companies directly involved in the deal, the business coalition had a snow ball effect. Companies interested in starting business relations with Saudi leaned towards support for the deal. In addition to the contractors and their subcontractors, companies and unions in districts where the arms were to be produced supported the deal, as it would boost the district economy and would indirectly boost their business (Emerson, 1985). The business coalition secured the grass tops for the deal. Prince Bandar, by highlighting the economic effect to the business community, rendered the issue domestic.

The Saudi team used economic incentives in all possible ways. They used them positively with the promise of a gain or employment and negatively by depriving a party of an existing privilege or income. In his biography, Prince Bandar mentions he got the support of Rockefeller, a Jewish banker, by using negative incentives. He closed the account he had with his bank and did not reopen it until Rockefeller spoke to New York senators to support the deal. As stated by a member of the Royal family in an interview, the Saudis marshalled all their assets and capabilities in order to get support for the sale.

On the day of the vote on the AWACS, 23 of America's top executives from IBM, TWA, Procter and Gamble, and American Airlines sent what became known as the "Riyadh Telex" saying that failure to pass the deal would impair US interests in the Middle East (Levins, 1983). However, the role of oil companies and business interests is seen as exaggerated by Dr. Kemp from Carnegie's Endowment for International Peace. He said, "It was more Prince Bandar himself who convinced more people of the wisdom-if that is what you want to call it-of supporting (the sale of) AWACS than oil (executives) who always seem embarrassed at the concept of lobbying and are never good at it" (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). The lobby that Prince Bandar formed was multilayered. It worked with American organizations that had an interest in the Middle East, and it also worked with newly founded Arab American organizations (Levins, 1983).

Actually the F15 deal and the AWACS deals gave an impetus for the formation of Arab American organizations. In one interview with an activist in an Arab American organization, the respondent recalled that the support that Saudi Arabia was willing to provide encouraged political entrepreneurs to start Arab American organizations with a focus on Middle East affairs

## **Grassroots**

Though many factors played in favor of the Saudis, such as having an aggressive approach, securing the support of the president, the cold war, the constituency that they were able to gather and to mobilize was crucial in winning that round against AIPAC. According to Prince Bandar's biographer, at the beginning they kept a low profile and waited to see whether the President could secure the deal by himself; however, when they saw that the President was facing hurdles and that his support was not enough to let the deal go through, they quickly used their business connections, engaged the unions, and orchestrated a grassroots base (Simpson, 2008).

Here the view of Smith prevails that there are two kinds of grassroots. There is long term permanent grassroots, such as the base for the lobby for retirees or the base for the pro-Israel lobby. This base is spontaneously mobilized whenever an issue of concern to them is raised. On the other hand, there are temporary grassroots that are usually "inseminated" by a lobbyist who raises the interest of a faction of an American society when an event occurs. In this case, Prince Bandar and his team inseminated an economic constituency that was interested in the benefits that would come from the sale. Paradoxically, in the DP World case, the lobbyist of Eller & Co was able to generate a constituency to oppose the takeover.

Prince Bandar understood the techniques employed by AIPAC. He knew that AIPAC had a constituency that could exert pressure on the Congress and wanted to counter this pressure. Fred Dutton prepared a brief for him on the AFL-CIO. He knew that spending by Saudi Arabia meant jobs, therefore he took the case to the unions at McDonnell Douglas, who took it to their subcontractors (Simpson, 2008). They just substituted the Jewish votes with the votes of the workers who would benefit from the sale (Simpson, 2008). According to Prince Bandar's biographer the constituency preference and pressure were more important in persuading the Congress than the strategic value of Saudi Arabia.

In his biography, Prince Bandar says that he was influenced by Tip O'Neill, the speaker of the House, who said "All politics are local politics, it doesn't matter what you take, the bottom line is its local politics" (Simpson, 2008). The economic interests involved and the grassroots were a main factor in support from the Congress. It had in Prince Bandar's opinion more weight than the strategic interest of the US.

He knew he could not take the issue on a strategic level only; he had to present it as a domestic issue or as an issue with relevance to the average American, therefore the ethnic constituency was replaced with an economic one. However, this was a temporary constituency as it was related to the sale and not to any link to Saudi Arabia. Additionally, the President presented the argument of the strategic value of Saudi Arabia in the struggle against communism in order to get public endorsement of the deal.

### **Direct contact with the Congress**

In addition to outside lobbying performed by pressure groups, the inside lobbying was very important and the messaging was consistent. The Kingdom took Representatives and Senators on trips to Saudi Arabia. They met with senior officials, especially with Prince Fahd, who later on became the King of Saudi Arabia.

One respondent, a member of the Royal family who used to be involved in the deal recalls: "Having them come to the Kingdom and talk to leadership, played an important role in convincing them". The Saudi lobbyists would go to a Senator, ask him for a few minutes and tell him that the deal would employ several thousands of his constituency. This argument was the main narrative behind getting support from the Senate (Simpson, 2008).

### **Hiring foreign agents**

Though foreign agents cannot win a losing case, when there is a good case, their expertise and connections can make winning a sure outcome. In the case of DP World, they were not able to save the deal. However, in the AWACS deal they were able to secure meetings with media and members of the congress and they helped structure a coherent narrative and to frame the issue. The 1978 sale did not require the effort that the 1981 sale required. In the 1978 sale, foreign agent records show they had only one registered lobbyist, Frederick Dutton who retained three people with him. His role was to provide legal services and counseling as well as analysis and research. He was assigned to help in negotiating as well as drafting documents regarding contract business relationships (1977). However, in the 1981 sale, the registered principal was J Crawford Cook. He was hired by the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs and his duties included, besides trade and liaison with US government, outreach to the Arab American community as well as an educational role.

Comparing the two registration forms, one can see a maturity in the role of foreign lobbyists. During the first phase, their lobbyist was an adjunct lawyer advising on contracts. In the second phase, the lobbying was integrated; it encompassed public relations, strategy, research and media, hence the lobbyist played a bigger role. His role included conducting an education program to inform the general public on the importance of energy and the problems it faced with the needs to conserve energy, while emphasizing the role of Saudi Arabia in conservation plans (1981d), (1977).

The Saudis did not want to be looked upon as purely the producers of raw oil, they wanted to portray themselves as a main player in energy policies around the world, and as a responsible player concerned with conserving energy for the future. Although Saudi Arabia is the last country to worry about a shortage in energy, it wanted to portray itself as a true partner to the West in its quest for energy.

Spending on lobbying increased from 1978 to 1981. In 1977 the amount paid was 100 USD per hour, in addition to a 100 USD of expenses. The figure that was reported in the foreign registration act for the 1981 contract that included public relations and education was 470000 USD.

On the issue of AWACS, the Saudis also joined forces with other Arab countries. Other Arab countries' lobbyists were also lobbying for the arms sale for Saudi Arabia. Therefore, in addition to its own hired agents, Saudi Arabia benefited from other Arab countries' agents—Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Algeria, Libya and the UAE had enlisted 25 foreign agents altogether (Levins, 1983). The lobbyists also played the role of liaison as they organized meetings for members of the Saudi family with senators, similar to the visits that Begin and Dayan paid to senators (Levins, 1983). The different accounts show that Saudi Arabia hired a team of ex-statesmen to give them access to the Congress and American administration (Simpson, 2008).

## **Narrative**

The other aspect of the education program included a plan to teach the American public about the history of Islam and of Saudi Arabia. This was an important element as, following the 1973 embargo, Saudi Arabia was portrayed as greedily blackmailing the US with oil. This image was intensified with the ABSCAM scandal, where federal agents disguised as mysterious Sheikh Abdul Karim tried to bribe

Congress people. This led to the stereotyping of Arabs in general and Saudis in particular (Shaheen, 1997). The program also informed the general public on the advantages that the US would reap from Saudi investments. The economic advantage was the main theme that Bandar used when aligning a coalition to support the deal.

The peace angle was also used. The American public was open to the Arabs; the Nasser era where he kept threatening Israel was gone. With Sadat's overture to Israel and his signing of the peace agreement he projected a "peaceful Arab face to Americans" (Smith, 1996) (298). Saudi Arabia had offered a peace plan to the administration and used this angle in their communications with the American public. One of the objectives of the communication plan was to promote the need to the American public to have a long lasting peace in the Middle East. Though all these points seem unrelated to a military sale, they helped to set the mood among the public to accept the fact that the US was to sell state of the art military technology to Saudi Arabia.

## **Media**

The Saudi lobby had cultivated good relations with top journalists and publishers in the mainstream media, which helped the Saudis voice their opinion to the public (Levins, 1983). Crawford used media in order to effectively deliver on his plan. The mandate of the firm included research to find conduits for effective implementation of the program. The Saudis even used advertisements to promote their positions. Their supporters in the business community also advertised: Mobil put out an ad saying that 200 American businesses would get 35 billion in business from Saudi Arabia (Emerson, 1985), (Levins 83) .

Mentored by Dutton, who was a special assistant to Kennedy and was appointed as secretary of state for congressional relations in the State department, Prince Bandar would provide a lunch for the press in a Kalorama Park town house, "lacing the

conversation with well-timed and tasty news”. Prince Bandar would invite the cream of the press and give them some inside information on the deal (Simpson, 2008). This kept the arms sale in the public discourse. The AWACS sale became a dominant theme in the US media (Al-Zuhayyan, 2012). Prince Bandar was able to raise the visibility of the issue, which made it more difficult for the Israelis to lobby against it. The AWACS became the center of the Middle East debate, as opposed to the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, this new debate not only included foreign policy, it also involved domestic policy as it highlighted the benefits of the deal for the US economy (Emerson, 1985).

### **Support from the White House**

Both presidents had strong motives to support the sale. Carter was focused on energy, a theme that translated later into the Carter Doctrine (Stork, 1980). This concept was adopted by subsequent administrations. Carter, who brokered the peace following the 1973 war, was eager to pursue peace efforts and he saw in Saudi Arabia a potential partner for his endeavor (Rabinovich and Reinharz, 2008). He sent letters to every senator claiming, that vetoing the sale would be a devastating blow to Sadat’s efforts for peace (Bard, 1991).

On the other hand, in addition to the importance of the safety and secure flow of oil emphasised by his predecessor, Reagan emphasized containment of the Soviet threat. In addition to the economic interest that was a strong argument in the districts where the contractors and their subcontractors were based, the containment of the Soviet threat was an appealing argument to the overall American population. This created an incentive for Reagan to back the deal as well as to promote the argument to the public.

Both presidents received concessions in return for supporting the deal. Reagan, who was an advocate of supply side economics with his “Reaganomics” policy, wanted to keep the price of oil low in order to encourage production (2013b). The Saudis

accepted keeping oil at a low of \$32 a barrel until the end of 1982 (Dorsey, 1981), while Carter got a concession from Abourezk on the Panama treaty.

The military was in favor of selling AWACS, which provided a rationale for Americans to build airbases for the US in case of a crisis (Smith, 1996). One respondent, who was involved with NAAA at the time, said that the military saw an extension of their influence in the sale as it was to be followed up by technical support and training which gave them a wider access to the region. They also supported it as a large order of planes would accelerate their production, which would facilitate their re-equipment (Bard, 1991). The stance that the Pentagon tends to take on US sales is that they endorse sales that increase their readiness and they oppose sales that diminish their stocks or delay their re-equipment (Feldman and Šēm, 1988).

Both presidents provided assurances that the warplanes would not be used against Israel. Carter said to the Senate that the F 15s would not be used against Israel but would be for defensive purposes and would not be complemented by offensive equipment (Emerson, 1985). Reagan topped his lobbying campaign by sending a report that detailed the limitations of the sale and that provided assurances the planes would be solely used for defensive purposes on the day of the vote. He outmaneuvered his opponents as he was able to gain wavering senators and did not leave time for the pro-Israel lobby to answer the report (Laham, 2002). This was an act that Prince Bandar in his biography described as a “master stroke” (Simpson, 2008).

### **Reagan’s approach**

From April to September, President Reagan took a defensive stand by simply answering any arguments or letters he received, whether from his supporters, the pro-Israel lobby or the Congress. However, as the opposition mounted six weeks before the voting on the sale, he decided to take a more aggressive approach (Laham, 2002). Given that the US was at the height of the Cold War, patriotism was

strong in the US and the president had high leverage with members of the Congress, who tend to be more supportive of the president when there is a perceived potential threat (Lindsay, 2003). President Reagan had the war on communism as a narrative for the Congress as well as the American public (Bronson, 2006). This was a weapon that he also used against opponents of the deal, when he described them as putting Israel's interests before their own national interest (Simpson, 2008). The element that allowed Reagan to have such an aggressive approach and not face a backlash was the fact that he had high popular approval for his foreign policy (Holsti, 2009). Reagan was successful in persuading Senators for several reasons. Reagan was a strong president at the beginning of his term, and he had strong approval ratings as he was seen as forceful on national security. This emboldened him to use coercive measure with Senators who did not tow the line, such as depriving a state of a provision without fear of public backlash. This tactic was not open to President Bush in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina because he had very low public approval and was vulnerable to scrutiny. In addition to the pressure that Reagan exerted on the Senate he had support from the Saudis, who as explained before, were able to generate a constituency in support of the deal. Bush had no similar support. Though Bush tried to pressure the Congress to let the deal go through, the Emiratis were not able to generate a constituency in support of the deal to back him up. Additionally, Reagan was able to put pressure on the Senate, as the Republicans had taken control by winning twelve seats and defeating nine Democrat incumbents. As Smith argues in his book *The Power Game*, Reagan was very good at showing the image of the winner. He showed firmness and strength facing the opposition, but gave concessions whenever he needed to.

To encourage the Senate to reject the Packwood resolution, Reagan started by lobbying the committees that had a say on the issue and that could influence the Senate: the committees on Foreign Relations and on Armed Services (Laham, 2004). On the Foreign Relations Committee two senators, SI Hayakawa and Larry Pressler of South Dakota, were among those who opposed the deal; later on, they changed their mind and joined the proponents of the deal.

The opposition went from attacking Reagan's position on the AWACS deal to attacking his foreign policies in general. Congressman Benjamin Rosenthal described the president's interventions in El Salvador and Libya as "ill-advised" and "disconnected episodes". From this overall attack on his policies he went on to say that the Reagan administration could not reconcile the pillar of the Middle East policy that revolved around commitment to Israel and the strategic flow of oil (1981i). On the 14th of September 1981, Reagan invited twenty-seven senators to the White House to persuade them on the arms deal. In that month another bipartisan petition came against the sale signed by fifty six senators (Emerson, 1985).

Reagan used all methods to get the approval of Congress: he "resorted to cajoling, persuading even threatening "(Simpson, 2008) . One respondent who was in the military at the time, said that Reagan used the "carrot and stick approach" with the Senate: he gave positive as well as negative incentives to persuade Senators to vote for the AWACS. In the same way he would promise senators budgetary concessions, such as promising a representative a new post office in his district, he would deprive those who opposed him of existing privileges in their states (Bard, 1991). Prince Bandar was quoted as saying:"We aren't fighting this battle, the president is" (Emerson, 1985).

As for those he could not persuade, he tried to make them lose credibility in order to alienate them. On September 11 1981, Reagan tried to persuade Packwood, who introduced the anti-AWACS resolution in the Senate, but Packwood did not change his mind. On the contrary, Packwood raised funds for GOP Senate candidates, saying that Jewish contributors were unhappy with the AWACS. When Reagan saw that he was unconvincible, he leaked the accounts of his meeting with him, which put the latter in an embarrassing position in front of his supporters. Reagan also played on the partisanship theme, as on October 7 he gathered 43 Senators from the Republican party and stressed the need for party loyalty (Simpson, 2008). Reagan even addressed the American public and televised his defense by explaining why the deal was important to US national interests (Levins, 1983). He also used support from Nixon and Carter, and from sixteen prominent former foreign and national

security officials (Laham, 2002). These high calibre officials helped him frame the issue to the general public as a foreign and national security issue of great importance to American national interests.

Since he knew that opposition from the Congress was motivated by pressure from the pro-Israel lobby, Reagan decided to face the pro-Israel lobby directly. He initially started by sending a letter to B'nai B'rith clarifying the content of the package and assuring his administration's commitment to Israel (Laham, 2002). At the same time he offered the Israelis and their supporters enough assurances that the warplanes would not be used against Israel. Reagan's pitch was that the security of Israel would not be affected as Saudi Arabia would not attack Israel. He also assured the pro-Israel lobby that the upgraded warplanes would not be based in Tabuk which is located in the proximity of Israel (Bronson, 2006). Similarly, he showed firmness facing the Saudis. Though he needed to keep oil prices low for the success of his "Reaganomics", and though he recognised the economic boost that would come from the cash injected into the US economy, he still dictated the terms of the sale.

Although Reagan catered to the Saudis' demands, he did not want to be seen as manipulated by them and being totally "blackmailed" by oil, as the media was suggesting (1981c). Reagan sent a letter to the Senate majority leader explaining the terms of the sale. On the 21 of October, he published the letter in the *New York Times*. The letter stated: "Should the Saudis adopt the policies which are disruptive to the prospects of stability of the region and detrimental to US interests, I will not hesitate to exercise my right to cancel the sales agreement or withdraw the support essential to the continued operations of any AWACS that may have been delivered to Saudi Arabia" (Grimmett, 1981).

## **Conclusion**

### **Value of success**

Prince Bandar says in his biography, “A thorough understanding of the workings of the American political system, and an immensely effective and well organized lobby in the form of American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) provides Israel with considerable influence over US foreign policy in the Middle East” (Simpson, 2008). The AWACS sale proved that the pro-Israeli lobby was not invincible (Laham, 2002) and that Arabs can have an influence inside the US if they prepare properly.

As discussed before, the issue of the airplanes had aspects larger than the technicalities of the military balance; it defined the special relationship between the US and Saudi Arabia at the same time as it defined the relationship between the US and Israel (Tillman, 1982). It was a test for the strength of the two alliances. This aspect was mentioned in the various works handling the issue of AWACS as well as the hearings. The sale period was characterised by a period of tension between the US and Israel (Rubin, 1981). The arms sale was an acknowledgment of the strategic importance of Saudi Arabia to the region. This strategic importance was downplayed during the Nixon/Kissinger era that saw the protection of the oil fields from any potential Soviet invasion as best achieved by fortifying Israel, which would stand as a surrogate fortress for the US (Lateef, 1974). The AWACS sale came to shift this perceived responsibility from Israel to Saudi Arabia.

### **Factors for success**

One respondent, a member of the Saudi Royal Family, summarizes the factors behind the success of the Saudis in securing the sales. He said: “I can talk about F15s, we had a clear strategy, we marshaled our resources to the fullest extent. Not just money people, media companies, everything, publications etc...” They had a

strategy and planned well. According to Levins, the plan for AWACS started the day they got the F-15 deal approved, which was three years prior to the deal. This is considered a departure from the reactive way Arab governments usually conduct their relations with the US.

In addition to being proactive and aggressive, they were well organized and used every resource they could. However, the most important element of their lobbying was their ability to generate a constituency that, along with the support of a strong President, was able to pressure the Congress into approving the sale. Additionally to these two elements, they had other factors that played in their favour: the Soviet threat and a relatively positive image. As stated before, the Sadat peace accord had a positive impact on the image of the Arabs and the sale coincided with the Israeli invasion that helped in tipping opinion against Israel (Levins, 1983).

They had all the elements needed to have comprehensive lobbying: the grassroots, the funding, the issues of concern, the coalition, the media, the necessary information, the direct lobbying. And it was all put together and coordinated in one overall strategy (Shlozman and Tierney 1986). Most importantly, they made informed decisions based on in-depth research. They had a study group, the Group for International Study and Evaluation, which was set up as a subsidiary of the Insurance company of North America whose main objective was to gather intelligence and pass it to the Saudi government (Levins, 1983). But the two most important factors were the constituency that the Saudis were able to create and the support of a strong president (Reagan) who had high public approval on foreign policy matters (Holsti, 2009).

### **Limitations of the success**

Everyone expected the Arab lobby to flourish, especially at the beginning of the 1980s with the Israeli invasion of Beirut when public opinion started to tip against Israel. However, after the AWACS sale, the Arab lobby started fading away. Success

was temporary and ended rather than began with the AWACS episode. The lobby was not institutionalized. Prince Bandar, as described by his biographer, was a “lone ranger”(Simpson, 2008) (59). Though the lobbying for AWACS was comprehensive, it stopped with the closing of the sale. The basis of the coalition could not stand beyond the deal. The Saudi lobby rose to power quickly and faded away quickly after the sale (Levins, 1983). A top congressional aide said “The Arabs just suddenly appeared in Washington in 78, it was quick, boom!” (Levins, 1983).

Though there was a strategy for AWACS, there was no strategy underneath it for foreign policy. The coalition was not sustainable for subsequent issues, and there was no underlying general issue to hold the coalition together, in contrast to the Israel lobby that had the maintenance of the state of Israel as an overarching issue. This stance prevailed even when the AWACS episode was closed.

On the contrary, AIPAC learned from their deficiencies and from the weakness of the Saudi success and they rose after the AWACS sale like a “phoenix” as described in Bandar’s biography. AIPAC learned from their defeat and adapted to the new Washington politics: the spread of power in Congress, the potency of grassroots lobbying, the need to be bipartisan, the need to give financial support to friends and defeat enemies and then to advertise the results (Smith, 1996). The AWACS deal was an impetus for the transformation of AIPAC from a lobby to a “super lobby” as it increased its activities, funding, and reach (Smith, 1996). The change in fortune of the Israel lobby was due not only to increased AIPAC activity, but also to the fact that the lobbying game changed, with inside lobbying needing support from outside lobbying. Lobbies could no longer rely on high priced sophisticated lawyers/lobbyists; they had to generate grassroots to influence their representatives (Smith, 1996)<sup>1</sup>.

At the time the pro-Israel lobby gained muscle, the pro-Arab lobby or pro-Saudi lobby did not see continuity, because it was based on an artificial constituency that revolved mainly around the AWACS transaction (Bard, 1991). The Arabs had no

long term cohesive constituency: the coalition was not institutionalized with a long term infrastructure. With the sealing of the deal, the coalition broke up.

In the course of an interview one respondent, who used to be an American diplomat in Saudi, said: “There has been a pattern of narrow band of communication. The supreme example is Prince Bandar bin Sultan. He had such a close relationship with the White House. If something happened, he could get the White House to fix it. But that does not work anymore. You have to communicate with the mass -- with the whole country. There is no one-stop shop anymore.”

Once the deal finished, instead of focusing on the Arab American organizations and on creating a sustainable grassroots base by engaging the Arab American community, they decreased the funding for NAAA. One respondent, who used to be involved with NAAA, said that with the decrease of foreign money, the domestic money that was linked to Saudi interests also dried up, which signalled the start of financial problems for the organization. The success of the AWACS should have been the beginning of the lobby and not the end of it. Though the fact that Saudi Arabia acquired fighter jets was not of great importance to the Arab-American community who, as stated before did not come from the Gulf, the success of the AWACS could have been a good anchor to rally the Arab American community and to create pride in being of Arab ancestry. The Saudi disengagement from Arab-American organizations coincided with AIPAC reinforcing its engagement with grassroots. So, whereas AIPAC worked on increasing their grassroots base and captivating this base by social services and institutionalizing the relations, and coupled grassroots with financial contributions, Saudi Arabia started slowly disengaging from the Arab American organizations who had the potential to create a permanent base for Saudi Arabia.

AIPAC used its power to defeat Charles H Percy from Illinois and Charles JR Mathias, both of whom supported the AWACS deal. AIPAC made it no secret that it was responsible for their defeat in the elections (Findley, 1985). In this action AIPAC

intimidated any other Senator into not taking any anti-Israel positions (Laham, 2002). On the other hand, the Saudis or the Arab American organizations did not or could not support their friends to make sure they won the elections.

Though hiring lobbyists is sometimes fruitful, and lobbyists were hired both during the 1978 F 15 and the 1981 AWACS sale, it does not come without scrutiny. Their success attracted attention to foreign sources of funding and this was exposed in the media (Roberts, 1978). The Israeli side relied on ordinary Americans expressing their view in foreign policy, whereas Arabs were viewed as relying on professional, sophisticated, highly paid agents with no grassroots support (Goott and Rosen, 1983).

Though the pro-Israel lobby was not successful in preventing the sales in 1978 and 1981 to Saudi Arabia, it caused the administration to drain its political capital on the issue and was able to prevent it from approving subsequent sales (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). In the mid-eighties Saudi Arabia asked for an add-on, but Reagan, who wanted to mend his relations with an important political faction, informed the Kingdom that he had spent his political capital on the issue and therefore the Kingdom had to seek arms from somewhere else.

The role of both Carter and Reagan was crucial. The F15 and the AWACS deals would not have gone through if it were not for presidential support. AIPAC stated: "Paradoxically, the F 15 and AWACS battles revealed the value of a large grassroots constituency and the weakness of relying heavily on agents paid by foreign governments" (Goott and Rosen, 1983).

In the course of this chapter I have analysed the different factors that led to the success of the Saudi lobbying, arguing that the ability of the Saudis to garner a constituency to push for the deal and their ability to present the deal as in line with the US national interest was crucial. However, I also analysed some of the

drawbacks of this success and why it was fragile and short lived and did not lead to a subsequent success in 1986 when the Saudis needed an upgrade for their fleet. In the following chapter, I will analyse the case of failure and the main factors that led to it, mainly the lack of a comprehensive strategy, the negative image and the absence of a grassroots base to support the UAE.

*1 Though the sale was a gain to Saudi Arabia, it was not a total loss for AIPAC. They got compensation from the government for not answering their wishes. In return for the 1978 deal, they got 15 F15s and 75 F 16s to Israel (Bard, 1991). During the Reagan time it included 600 million free credits to Israel and dropping the bomb rack from the Saudi order*

*1 1974 with the Watergate scandal in the US the party structure received a major hit. No longer was power concentrated with a few party "barons" and more congressmen began to deviate from their party and depend more on their constituencies. This was accompanied by a rise in the power of interest groups and hence the power of grassroots.*

## **Chapter 5: The Dubai Port World case study**

### **Value of the case study**

The main aim of this chapter is to show the importance of grassroots and of public opinion. The reason why the DP World acquisition, an issue that usually involves only technical people and that was going smoothly, got stopped was due to the popular opposition.

The chapter shows that hiring lobbyists does not result in success when the issue or the group for which they lobby has a bad image, as a lobbyist cannot ask the legislator to vote for an unpopular bill. It also shows how legislators first and foremost tend to respond to the preferences of their constituencies, therefore at many times strategic considerations are downplayed by local preferences.

### **Sequence of Events**

In October 2005, the London-based Peninsular & Oriental (P&O) Steam Navigation Company agreed to be purchased by DP World, a Dubai-based ports company owned by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (2006k). Before finalizing the acquisition, on October 17, 2005, a team of lawyers from DP World and P&O informally approached the Committee of Foreign Investment in the US (CFIUS) to discuss the initial stages of the transaction. The Committee was established within the Treasury Department by executive order in 1975 to evaluate the impact of foreign investment in the United States (Jackson, 2006). This informal contact was established in order to identify any issues that might emerge before the actual formal process began. In this case, Treasury staff identified port security as the primary issue, and immediately directed the companies to the Department of Homeland Security. On the 31st of October, the Homeland Security and Department of Justice officials met with DP World and Peninsular & Oriental executives to informally discuss any issues that might arise prior to the official filing of the transaction (2006o).

On November 2nd, Treasury staff requested an intelligence assessment from the Department of National Intelligence. The department sent its assessment to the Treasury on December 5th, which circulated it to the staff members of CFIUS (2006o, 2006b). Based on this assessment, on December 6th the CFIUS staff met with company officials to request additional information. On that day, DP World and Peninsular and Oriental held a pre-filing briefing for all CFIUS agencies. In the meantime, while undergoing all these consultations, DP World made the acquisition public by announcing it in a press release on the 2nd of November (Shah, 2005).

On that same day, Treasury circulated the filing to all CFIUS member agencies for review. The documents were also sent to 17 agencies at the Department of Defense for review and comment. The review conducted by the Department of Defense was described by witnesses from the Department of Defense as “in depth and comprehensive”(2006g). Usually, acquisitions by foreign companies that might trigger a national security threat undergo a 45 day review; the review did not reveal any national security threats that required the 45 days investigation (2006g).

DP World filed the official notification on December 15th, 2005; and CFIUS commenced a 30-day review, as required by statute. The notification took place after 2 months of informal hearings and 45 days after the CFIUS requested intelligence assessment of the companies. During the course of that review, DP World responded to all of the CFIUS’ requests and their questions (2006m). As part of this process, the Department of Homeland Security negotiated an assurance letter that addressed the security concerns that had been raised during the review. The letter was circulated to the committee on January 6th, and CFIUS concluded its review on January 17th (2006o).

Everything was going smoothly until a Miami company, Eller &Co, hired a semi-retired lobbyist in a “last minute bid” to block the deal (Overby, 2006). Eller &Co. had a legal feud with Peninsular and Oriental with whom it had a joint venture in the Miami operations. The lawsuit was held in UK courts and in the US. The dispute in the Miami court started 3 years before the acquisition (2006m).

According to the company's lawyer, Eller & Co had to go to "its court of last resort, Congress". They hired the semi-retired lobbyist Joe Maldoon as they could not afford "a team of big name lobbyists". Maldoon took the month of January when the Congress was out of session to do his research. In February, he started going to Capitol Hill. "He had just a laptop, a cell phone, and a binder full of information" (Overby, 2006).

Maldoon was a sole practitioner; however, he knew how Washington works. He started with the members of the Banking Committee (Overby, 2006). According to an interview with a lobbying specialist, Maldoon had worked with the Republican Party before. He went first to John Warner who was not interested; afterwards he targeted Kelly Hutchinson. Both were Republicans. He finally landed on Chuck Schumer, a Democrat. Schumer was interested and the whole controversy started when he and a business reporter from the Associated Press gave Maldoon attention (Overby, 2006).

On February 10, DP World outbid the Singaporean company PSA International, with a final bid of 6.8 billion USD and the acquisition of P&O became final. The P&O operations included the rights to operate in six major U.S. ports, including terminals in the New York/New Jersey area, Philadelphia and New Orleans {, 2006 #135}. On the 13th of Feb, Schumer took everyone by surprise when he gathered journalists on the New York harbor and held a press conference to protest the deal publicly. The press conference received what the WRMEA (Washington Report on the Middle East) described as a bonanza of publicity when he announced that the sale was "a grave security risk" (Curtiss, 2006).

The "political storm" as described during a hearing by Bilkey, the COO of DP World, started with the Democrats then quickly gained the interest of ranks of Republicans. On February 21st, Republicans joined Democrats in demanding the president block the deal, while George W Bush stated that he would veto any similar bill (Stanley Reed, 2006). On the 23rd of February, representatives from the departments and agencies present on the Committee of Foreign Investment in the US (CFIUS) presented a briefing to the Congress on the national security implications of the

acquisition. Three days after the briefing, on the 26th of February, DP World voluntarily asked for a 45 days review.

However, neither testimonials by the agencies nor DP World's gesture was enough to calm the political and public protest over the deal. The day following the DP world request for a 45 day review, Schumer introduced a bill under the title "Foreign Investment Security Improvement Act of 2006". The bill required investigation under the Defense Production Act of 1950 of the Acquisition by Dubai Port World of Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (2006h). The bill (S. 2333) by Schumer would ask the president to put on hold any existing decision by CFIUS and to conduct a 45 day investigation. However, DP World had already asked voluntarily for the 45 days review. The same bill was introduced the following day by Peter King in the House of Representatives (2006i).

On Feb 28th 2006, Schumer sent a letter asking the Homeland Security Department why the demands of the coastguard had been ignored (Schumer, 2006b). On the 28th of February, another senator, Dorgan, from North Dakota, introduced a bill (2006a) to prohibit the merger acquisition or takeover of Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company by Dubai Ports World.

On the 2nd of March, Edward Bilkey the Chief Operating Officer of Dubai Ports World testified, accompanied by George Dalton, the General Counsel of the company, along with Robert Scavone, the Executive Vice President of P&O Ports North America in a hearing before the Committee of Armed Services in the House. On March 8th, 2006, the House Appropriations Committee nullified the decision of CFIUS regarding the DP World transaction by attaching an amendment (H. Amdt.702) to a supplemental appropriations bill for defense activities in Afghanistan and Iraq and emergency relief for the victims of Hurricane Katrina (H.R. 4939). The amendment blocked any fund that could be used to allow "the acquisition of leases, contracts, rights, or other obligations of P&O Ports by Dubai Ports World." The amendment prohibited DP World or any other entity controlled by it from acquiring any lease or rights or contracts in the US. The measure was passed by a huge majority of 62 to 2 in the committee (Jackson, 2006).The following day DP World announced the sale of its US operation to US-based AIG Global investment

(Graham, 2006). On March 15th, 2006, a measure to remove the ban failed by a vote of 377 to 38 whereas the following day the measure to block the deal passed the full house by a margin of 348 to 71 (Jackson, 2006).

## **The opposition**

Unlike the AWACS episode, where the opposition represented by the pro-Israel lobby was identified before pitching for the deal, the opposition in the case of DP World was unexpected. In this case, the UAE was “taken by surprise” as the acquisition did not infringe on any other lobby interest. “They were simply taken by surprise,” as one respondent who works for a lobbying watchdog said. The opposition was a coalition between a business who had no way of achieving its goals via regular channels and hence looked at politicizing the issue and a politician who wanted to raise his public profile and score points with his opponents (Curtiss, 2006). The opposition was a coalition of unexpected interests and it took a snowball effect as it had a reception among the public and more and more politicians wanted to show that they were adamant on safeguarding national security. On the other hand, UAE was unprepared and had a negative image associated with terrorism, therefore it was vulnerable to the most unsubstantiated accusations.

Eller & Company, which started the opposition, was described by Israel Klein, the spokesperson for Senator Schumer, as the "canary in the mineshaft for many people on the Hill and in the media." (2006). Like a canary that the miners send down a mine to detect the dangerous zones, Eller & Co signaled the danger that the deal represented to the media and the Congress.

## **Basis for the dispute**

For three years prior to the transaction, Eller & Co had a dispute with P&O with whom it had a joint venture in Florida. It claimed that the company was trying to increase its control over Continental Stevedoring & Terminals Inc. a portion of the port operations

which is a division of Eller & Co in South Florida (HITT, 2006b). However, when the news about the takeover came to light, it became the core of a lawsuit that the Eller & Co subsidiary filed on Feb. 17th (HITT, 2006b).

The comparison between the filing in the UK court and the filing in the US court shows a great deal of discrepancy. In the UK, the lawsuit was filed on a purely business basis. The objection raised in front of the higher court that was responsible for approving the deal was that Eller & Co had some unsolved financial issues with P&O. Eller knew about the acquisition on Jan 18th, they bought stocks in P&O and, once the sale was concluded, they tried to stop it on the basis that they were owners of shares in P&O. However, the British court ruled their objection as “irrelevant” as they were present in all of the relevant sale sessions (2006n).

On the other hand, the objection in the US took a totally different turn. The lawsuit included quotes from various federal commissions that investigated Sept. 11th, 2001, which signaled that the hijackers traveled through the UAE on their way to the US. As a result, the lawsuit said that Eller and Co. did not want "to become involuntarily a business partner with the government of Dubai." Eller knew that the American public post-September 11th was very sensitive to issues of security and it knew that the UAE could be easy prey for a terrorism accusation. The case in the Florida court was that Eller did not want to become an involuntary partner to Dubai, a city that is associated with terrorism.

## **Tactics**

According to my interview with a lobbying specialist, given that Eller & Co knew they had no solid basis to stop the takeover, they resorted to “unscrupulous” methods by generating hype on the general fear of terrorism. Eller & Co. looked for “hot buttons in public opinion” in order to generate a grassroots movement against the deal. Some grassroots bases are spontaneous, such as the rifle group or retirees, so that, whenever any issue is raised regarding gun control or benefits to retired people, there is a grassroots base that automatically reacts when issues related to them arise. However, lobbyists sometimes “inseminate” this grassroots base by looking at

“hot buttons” in public opinion and raising the visibility of the issue at stake and framing it in a way to generate a reaction from the public (Smith, 1996). This is the way to create a grassroots movement for an issue that does not have a natural base. There is no interest group against direct investments by Arab Gulf states or by the UAE. However, by flagging the issue of security, Eller & Co generated a grassroots base to oppose the deal.

This guaranteed a reaction from the public: Maldoon was able to create a grassroots base by using Schumer as a conduit to disseminate the message and raise the visibility of the issue. His message was that ports are key to US national security and they cannot be left in the hands of a country that is promoting terrorism. His action had a snowball effect, as when the issue became public, the American public as well as the Congress opposed the deal. Following that, accusations against DP World, Dubai and the UAE started to flow.

## **Arguments**

In order to analyze the different arguments presented by the opposition I used the discourse in the different hearings in Congress. The arguments presented were as follows:

The analysis of the discourse of the different opponents of the deal presenting the 45 days review argument shows that the Congress is not really familiar with the review and what it entails. The opponents stuck to the form of the review though in reality all the necessary due diligence that is usually conducted in a 45 days review was undertaken prior to the official filing. The process was described by Senator Reed as a “faceless and amorphous operation” as very few people really know what it entails (2006 h). The analysis shows that the people on the Hill were raising the issue just because it had the appearance of a breach of a procedure to safeguard national security after the 45 days review, though in fact it was not a threat to national security, as extensive investigation was undertaken prior to giving the approval.

The 45 days review was the first argument that opponents of the deal raised, as DP World did not undertake the 45 day review that companies owned and controlled by foreign governments usually undertake; it went for the 30 day investigation that privately owned companies go through whenever they are making an acquisition in the US. The CFIUS was accused of not doing the background check it should normally do whenever it is facing a foreign acquisition and that it simply rubber stamped the deal (Holzer, 2006a).

In the hearing of the 27th of February, that included a briefing by CFIUS to discuss the national security implications of acquisition, Schumer questioned Stewart Baker, the Assistant Secretary, Policy, Department of Homeland Security, who was testifying in favor of the deal at the hearing: “So, in other words, it would be fair to say that you relied only on internal governmental people in the agencies and did not ask anybody from the outside about these concerns, Mr. Baker. I think that would be fair. Senator Schumer. Is that typical?”

Mr. Baker; “That would be typical.”

Senator Schumer: “I think that is really wrong. Will you not be able to do it in the 45-day review for Dubai Ports World?” He then adds that if the 45 day review had been conducted “these checks would have been done” (2006f). These questions show how Schumer wanted to frame CFIUS and DP World. Schumer asked about the 45 days assuming that if a 45 day review was conducted it would have involved additional security checks without specifying what security checks were missing and what “people from outside” could have added to these security checks.

Schumer introduced a bill under the title “Foreign Investment Security Improvement Act of 2006”. The bill required investigation under the Defense Production Act of 1950 of the Acquisition by Dubai Port World of Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (2006h). The bill (S. 2333) by Schumer would ask the president to put any existing decision by CFIUS on hold and to conduct a 45 day investigation. However, DP World had already asked voluntarily for the 45 days review. The bill asked for additional measures to be taken such as the provision by the Department

of Homeland Security of intelligence and security information to the Congress, to be studied while taking into consideration the Exon Florio provision that governs foreign acquisitions (Jackson, 2006). The bill also required the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide CFIUS with intelligence and other information collected by the Department, and it required CFIUS to report its findings to Congress.

The investigation would encompass foreign ports that Dubai Ports operated, backgrounds checks of officers at DP World, and a security evaluation of the impact of the acquisition on the ports' security as well as national security. The report would contain the determination of the president and a briefing to specified members of the Congress. Following this investigation, if the president determined not to block the transaction, it could be blocked by Congress if it passed the joint resolution within 3 days of receiving the report (Jackson, 2006). Basically the bill's language was negative. One senator said: "I am pleased that the Administration has finally agreed to conduct a review of this matter. However, I am disappointed that it took a massive public outcry, congressional pressure and a request from the Dubai Ports World company itself for the administration to agree to conduct what unquestionably should have been done in the first place" (2006g). The discourse shows that the Congress distorted the facts, as the security checks were done, though not through the formal 45 days review, and all the security concerns were answered. However, Congress people were sticking literally to the requirements as this allowed them to show their vigor in safeguarding national security.

Clay Lowery, Assistant Secretary, International Affairs, Department of Treasury, who serves on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S, said that the 45 day investigation is usually requested to address security concerns that were identified but not resolved during the initial 30 days period. Upon the completion of the 45 day investigation, the Secretary of the Treasury sends his recommendation to the President who has 15 days to take action. He explained that the transaction was "not rushed through the review" but was approved after 3 months of investigation (2006m).

National security, especially following September 11th, became a salient topic for every American. Therefore it was very easy to have what Senator Reed described as

groupthink on the issue of the 45 days review. He said: "Like so many of my colleagues, I have been trying to understand this process and understand this particular decision. And I must say, my impression is that this is a rather amorphous and faceless operation. I mean, it is hard to tell who made the decision; hard to tell what was the definition of national security, was it consistent across every department that looked at this? And I think we have a lot of work to do. Again, I have immense respect for the gentlemen here today and particularly Secretary Kimmitt, but the impression I have is that perhaps it is not national security that pervades this decision-making, but it is the notion of getting these deals done as expeditiously as possible, which means, effectively, do not invoke the 45-day investigative phase, because that raises it to a very high public level, involving Congress. And perhaps I am wrong, but those types of groupthink to me might account for a situation today, we are looking back all of us, stunned, saying how could this happen? This seems so simplistic that at least you would want to ventilate this deal." (2006g). The statement of Senator Reed summarizes the furor that took over the Congress and in which the CFIUS was framed as incompetent and DP World as non-compliant with the US Law.

Since the deal was vetted by the responsible bodies and judged not to create any threat, it was given the green light without the 45 days review (2006g). However, the DP world willingly asked for the 45 day investigation on the 26th of February as stated by Lowery and by Bilkey in the course of the hearing, but even this gesture did not calm the politicians. In the course of the hearing, the filing was described as "too little and too late" (2006m).

Another misperception is that this deal was conducted in secret. Although the Exon-Florio statute requires the CFIUS to safeguard business-confidential information while the transaction is pending, companies tend to announce these transactions publicly. On the 29th of November, 17 days before the formal filing, DP World announced the deal by carrying out a press release (Candappa, 2005). However, the news was circulated even prior to that date: the Independent newspaper reported on the 31st of October 2005 that Dubai Port World was launching a takeover of P&O (Shah, 2005). Though the deal was mentioned according to the White House 162

times between 2005 and 2006 (office, 2006), in February the Congress was appalled that they were not informed and claimed that the deal was kept secret.

However, as stated before, the uproar about the deal being secret goes back to two factors: one of them is that the Bush administration and DP World were taken by surprise as they did not expect this reaction; the other factor is due to the lack of knowledge of the CFIUS workings as explained by Kimmitt, the Undersecretary of the of Treasury, in a written letter presented at the hearing of the 23rd of February. CFIUS conducts its investigations in a confidential way in order not to embarrass any foreign entity in case their transaction gets denied. Communication with state and local officials regarding such transactions remains on a need to know basis (2006b).

The 2005 report of the Government Accountability Office signaled that CFIUS members were concerned that the stigma of an investigation could discourage foreigners from investing in the U.S, especially if the investigation was not resolved by the end of the 45 days and by then the president had to make a decision and submit a report to the Congress. This is why the process was “shrouded in secrecy”. It was not secrecy but, "It's a privacy issue," according to David Heyman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Confidentiality was needed to encourage foreign investment and preserve international relations (Holzer, 2006b).

Schumer stated in his press conference held on the 13th of February that the deal: “was quietly cleared by a government panel without public scrutiny. The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) cleared the deal, without a public report or evaluation,” (Schumer, 2006a). The discourse of Schumer represented an action that initiated a series of events. It raised the salience of the issue and framed it in a way to affect public opinion. Following Schumer’s action, the issue became very difficult to control. As described by one respondent, who works for a lobbying watchdog, the issue was no longer a transaction to be vetted by the concerned body; it became the UAE versus the American public. In contrast to the AWACS case where a faction of the American public supported the deal, representing businesses and workers that would benefit from the deal, here they had no one to counter the opposition. The acquisition was not going to create new jobs, on the contrary, usually take overs result in loss of jobs, as the acquiring company

fires some of its existing employees and replaces them with its own employees. On the other hand the AWACS had a strong ally in the President. Though Bush was for the deal he was not as aggressive as Reagan in defending it to the public and was not as aggressive as Reagan in attacking those who opposed it. Schumer used the strongest words in his discourse, to vilify the UAE, whether while talking to the press or in his testimony at the Congress. In the 2nd of March hearing, he said that the CFIUS had left the most vital assets open “to infiltration and attack” (2006g).

In the beginning of the, hearing his concern was that the 45 day review was not initiated by the CFIUS and that the approval of the transaction was given without such an investigation. However, after DP World re-filed on the 26 of February, Schumer’s argument changed from why CFIUS did not conduct a 45 day review to why the Committee or the Congress was not informed when the 45 day review was initiated.

Given that the review argument was answered he started focusing on the second argument, which was the secrecy and the transparency of the process (2006g). When analyzing how the discourse of Schumer evolved, one can see that every time DP World or the government gave him assurances to answer his concerns he would move to another argument and raise other issues. It was apparent that these arguments had no intrinsic value to him; they were just tools to incriminate DP World and the Bush government.

The secrecy issue and the fact they were not informed was a concern among Congress members. Senator Clinton said: “Now, one of the concerns that we have in the New York/New Jersey area-Senator Menendez and I have been working, along with my colleague Senator Schumer, Congressman King, Congressman Fossella; it’s a completely bipartisan, bicameral concern-is that-there is no requirement that the Federal Government consult with, or take into account, the views of State and local officials. Do you think that we should look at providing some kind of requirement, especially when we get to the area that we’re most concerned about, a government-owned entity, a potential effect on national security, that there ought to be consultation with State and local officials?”(2006b).

Though it had been in place since the 1970s, the whole process of CFIUS and its confidentiality was put in question when it involved DP World. To explain further her concerns Clinton said, “We live in a post September 11 world. Sometimes that’s used as a declarative statement, and sometimes it’s used as a political attack. But the fact is, we do live in a post-September 11 world, and I think it’s important that, whatever the interpretations of the statute was in the past, that there is now a necessity for a heightened scrutiny. I don’t think this has to do with the nationality of the company so much as the track record that Senator Levin and others have laid out, and the fact that it is a foreign government-controlled and -owned entity. Senator Menendez and I will be introducing legislation to prohibit government-owned entities from controlling, owning, and managing our ports. We don’t let them do it to our airports. There’s a very different standard. Yet, the potential for danger and damage to our country is as high, or higher...” (2006a). Clinton’s expression of “post September 11 world” re-contextualizes the whole situation. One respondent, a journalist who covered the deal, said that the deal came a few years after September 11th when the American people were questioning US relations with the Gulf and were very sensitive to national security issues. Therefore, though the deal was mentioned in the press several times (office, 2006) they still felt that they were not fully informed. He added that since DP World was in such a delicate position they should have made a larger effort to disclose the deal in order to seem “above board”. He added that sometimes companies just issue a press release thinking they have informed the public but in reality the information does not get to the general public. Therefore these companies, especially those in the “delicate” situation of DP World, should make more effort in disclosing their activities.

From analyzing the discourse of Clinton we see that September 11th is mentioned frequently as a summary of the base condition governing the DP World deal (Scollon, 2008). The base condition revealed in Clinton’s statement is that Arabs, the Gulf and the UAE are more prone to scrutiny because of September 11th. Therefore, the transaction that in normal conditions and as per the CFIUS requirements should have been dealt with confidentially, in this specific case should have been disclosed to a larger extent to the American public and the Congress. This expression overshadowed all the other arguments at the same time as it explained the driver behind them. When analyzing the discourse flow throughout the

different hearings one can see that the arguments were presented only to veil a major concern, which was the distrust in the UAE as an Arab country created by the tragic September 11th event. Given that such an argument on a stand-alone basis could not be bluntly presented as it reveals discrimination, different arguments were used such as secrecy of the deal and 45 day review to discredit the approval process.

In addition to secrecy, the Congress had a concern that they were informed too late. Their take on the administration was that it did not communicate with them directly; instead they knew about the deal like everyone else from the news. Carl Levin said, “The White House Press Secretary recently said that, ‘In hindsight, perhaps Congress should have been notified sooner.’ We weren’t notified at all, unless watching CNN and reading the morning paper constitute notification. More to the point, Congress should have been consulted, and not merely notified.” (Kersh, 2000). Jon Corzine, the Senator from New Jersey, told NBC: “We were told that the president didn’t know about the sale until after it was approved. For many Americans, regardless of party, this lack of disciplined review is unacceptable,” (2006k).

The arguments presented by opponents of the deal were security related. Though the security concerns that were flagged when DP World approached CFIUS were answered, these concerns were highlighted by legislators who opposed the deal as well as by the media. CNN stated in the subtitle of the article announcing the hearing in which executives from DP World would testify, “Coast Guard initially raised issue of ‘intelligence gaps’ in review “ (Ted Barrett, 2006b). The media reported statements by legislators opposing the deal such as, “‘There are many intelligence gaps concerning the potential for DP World or P&O assets to support terrorist operations that precludes an overall threat assessment of the potential merger,’ the Coast Guard report on the potential deal stated ”(2006p). “Intelligence gaps” concerning “the potential” for DP World to “support terrorist operations”—is vague language at the same time as it conveys a sense of danger. NBC News stated in its headline that the Department of Homeland Security first objected to the ports deal. The opening paragraph had statements such as, “It is the lone protest among

members of the government committee that eventually approved the deal without dissent.”(2006k).

In another subtitle, “the company declines to comment,” the first paragraph states: “The company earlier had struck a more conciliatory stance, saying it would do whatever Bush asked to salvage the agreement.”(2006k). This, and similar reporting enforce the idea of “secrecy”; they give the impression that DP World had a sort of a secret agreement with the Bush administration. A representative from Minnesota (Congressman Jim Ramstad) pointed to the Coast Guards’ intelligence assessment of Dubai Ports World and its owners in the United Arab Emirates on December 13th 2005. Ramstad relayed the report’s “warning”: “There are many intelligence gaps concerning the potential for DP World assets to support terrorist operations that preclude the completion of a thorough threat assessment of the merger.” The intelligence assessment also stated: “The breadth of the intelligence gaps also infer potential unknown threats against the large number of potential vulnerabilities.”(2006e)

U.S. senator Susan M. Collins (R-ME) held a meeting of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to be briefed on the Dubai port deal. During the meeting, Senator Collins made the following statement: “ Because on the face of it, these unclassified questions and the use of the word ‘intelligence gaps’ that preclude an overall threat assessment of the potential merger and that it involves potential unknown threats against a large number of potential vulnerabilities, that language is very troubling to me. And I commend the Coast Guard for raising the tough questions. I think that's your job. But we do need to get to those issues.” (2006p).

However, this meeting and the memo issued took the press by storm. Following this meeting, the panel released the memo of the coast guards that included the expression “intelligence gaps” and suggested “a large number of potential vulnerabilities” that could be raised by the deal. The memo, coupled with Senator

Collins' comment that she found the Coast Guard report "very troubling," had a strong echo in the press which escalated the opposition to the deal (HITT, 2006c).

Though the Coast Guard commented on the release of the memo by saying :“This transaction, when taking into account strong security assurances by DP World, does not compromise U.S. security,” and that the document released did not "reflect the full, classified analysis" and was "taken out of context " the damage was already done (Ted Barrett, 2006b). The media intensified the fear that was initiated by Schumer. As reporting flowed highlighting the coast guards' concerns, the American public was bombarded with titles such as “Dubai deal had coast guard at sea-pol”(Kenneth R. , 2006), “After hearing, GOP chairwoman calls review process 'truly flawed': US Coast Guard warned on Dubai ports deal” (Ted Barrett, 2006a). One article had the following abstract: “The US Coast Guard warned before Dubai Ports World was given clearance to take over five US port terminals that “intelligence gaps” about the company made it impossible to assess whether the deal posed any threats to national security, according to a document released by the Senate on Monday.” (Kirchgaessner, 2006).The use of strong words such as “intelligence gaps” intensified the public opposition to the deal. When analyzing the different media reporting, none explained how the approval was acquired and what screening DP World went through. On the other hand as background almost every report mentioned that two of the September 11 hijackers were Emiratis. This fact was put next to expressions such as “intelligence gaps”, a combination guaranteed to generate opposition to the deal.

## **Accusations about the UAE and Dubai**

In addition to the deal itself and the security of the port, Dubai and the UAE were framed as unreliable partners to do business with. They were accused of links to terrorism or at least of being soft on terrorism. They were accused of breaching US law and of applying double standards when it came to trade. The bill that Senator Dorgan introduced to prohibit the acquisition (2006a), stated the following in its opening:

(1) It is essential for the security of the United States that United States maritime ports be protected against terrorist attacks. Then it adds;

(7) Two of the hijackers involved in the events of September 11, 2001, were from the United Arab Emirates.

(8) According to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (the 9-11 Commission), the banking system of the United Arab Emirates was used to help finance the attacks of September 11, 2001.

(9) The United Arab Emirates has also been a way station for the trafficking of nuclear components to state sponsors of terrorism, including Iran and North Korea.

Initially the bill says that the deal was approved without undertaking the 45 days investigation, and then it mentions the Exon-Florio provision and the fact that the President can block any deal that threatens national security. It goes on to say that DP World requested the 45 days review, "In response to strong public and congressional opposition to the impending acquisition" but in the following item, it states: "In view of evidence already on record, it is clear that the proposed acquisition of P&O Ports by Dubai Ports World poses a serious threat to the national security of the United States."

The language of the bill clearly frames the UAE as a country that is soft on terrorism. The deal was doomed to be blocked no matter what assurances DP World gave to the US government. The second section states that: "The President shall exercise the authority under section 721 of the Defense Production Act of 1950 (50 U.S.C. App. 2170) to prohibit the merger, acquisition, or takeover of P&O Ports by Dubai Ports World." The language of the bills introduced is patronizing and marginalizes the authority of the President.

Since Arabs have a negative image and have a stigma that is engraved in the mind of the Americans since September 11th, it was very easy to keep bombarding DP World with accusations. In the hearing held in front of the Committee of Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs to check whether the deal was secure enough to go through or not (2006g), Senator Elisabeth Dole stated that the trade issue got politicized.

In his opening statement, Richard Shelby said that, though the UAE was an important ally in the war on terrorism, it was a country in the Persian Gulf, an area that had strong support for Al Qaeda and a region from which the funding of terrorist activities flowed, and it was the location where the smuggling of dangerous nuclear weapons operated (2006g). His statement summarized the attitude of the Congress towards the deal that did not focus on the track record of DP World or on the assurances it could give, but on the fact it was an Arab-Gulf company. The area that produced the September 11th hijackers was not to be trusted; therefore anything or any deal that came from this area was subject to suspicion.

In the same hearing Senator Jim Bunning from Kentucky said: “The UAE is an important trading partner. In fact, we have a large trade surplus with them, one of the few countries that we do. The UAE is also a partner in the war on terror. They have provided critical assistance to our military forces, including port facilities for the Navy. They are actively participating in our efforts to bring democracy and freedom to the Middle East, both in Iraq and Afghanistan. They even donated \$100 million to help those affected by Hurricane Katrina. But there are troubling questions that we need to resolve. For example, the UAE was one of the three countries to recognize the Taliban in Afghanistan prior to September 11. There are reports of censorship by their government, and the parent company of Dubai Ports World may participate in the Arab boycott of Israel. How do we know if the UAE's friendship with the United States is sincere or if it is just good for business?” Here the UAE alliance with the US was put to question. As mentioned before, the DP World case came at a time when the American public was questioning the US relationship with the Arab Gulf. The deal, with the publicity that Schumer created around it, was the catalyst event for policy makers and the public to re-launch these questions in the public discourse.

The different members stated that Dubai was being used by Pakistani scientist A Q Khan as the clandestine trans-shipment point for nuclear material to Libya and Iran (2006b) and they accused its government of “acquiescence”, of “informed involvement”, and of “one of the greatest systematic cases of negligence that the world has ever seen” facing the grave security risk that nuclear trafficking represents (2006m).

Issues that were not related to security and that had existed for a long time, such as the boycott of Israel—a resolution of the Arab League, of which the UAE was a member, were also put on the table. The UAE was also accused of double standards. This was because the laws in the UAE did not allow foreigners to have full ownership of business unless they were based in a free zone, however the UAE seeks to own businesses in other countries. Turner, in the hearing in front of the Senate Armed Services committee said: “Except for companies located in one of the limited free zones, at least 51 percent of a business establishment must be owned by the UAE national. These are matters which I think should be of economic concern to us in terms of the fair play that our government goes out of its way to provide for others” (2006m).

In the opening statement of the hearing of the Armed Services Committee, Duncan Hunter, the chairman of the committee, accused the government of Dubai of being negligent and of creating “an environment of deniability” that allowed illegal nuclear weapons to be smuggled through the Emirates. He described Dubai as a hub for Nazis to transship illegal material to rogue states. He said: “That is the nature of Dubai. It is a bazaar for terrorist nations to receive prohibited components from sources from the free world and from the non-free world.” Even when acknowledging the UAE effort with the US on the war against terror, negative issues were mentioned in parallel. Issues such as the Pakistani scientist or the fact that two of the hijackers were Emiratis were mentioned throughout the hearing. The quote from the 9/11 report stating that the UAE was “both” a counterterrorism ally and a counterterrorism problem was cited at several instances during the hearings (2006b).

Dubai was accused of being unreliable and of doing whatever it took to get money. Duncan Hunter, the Chairman of the hearing of the Committee of Armed Services said: “Let me stop you on that. If you had-let's say you had the British ownership of this particular port, and you had people who had been strong allies of the United States and were people whom you felt you could trust, isn't that different from having an ownership which reflects basically the desire to do whatever it takes to acquire money, which I think is a good description of Dubai's foreign policy? Their foreign policy is, they will sell Winchesters to the good guys or the bad guys. They are not too interested who it is as long as they get to be the bazaar and they get to have the

money. So are you sure you can say, from a security standpoint, that the ownership is irrelevant?" The analysis of the accusations shows that many of them were hypothetical. In their discourse Clinton and King used words such as "would" and "may", as in DP World when operating in the US "would be able" to provide visas or relocate hundreds of people and "some of those" might be Al Qaeda sympathizers (2006b). These hypothetical accusations show the lack of trust in the UAE as a government and as a people.

### **The American public, the media and DP World**

Professor Gary Oren from Harvard University said "One should never underestimate the disinterest, the apathy, the lack of information the Americans have towards international affairs .., the consequence of this ignorance is the elites become more important and the public becomes more sensitive to threatening or dramatic events." (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). On world affairs issues the American public has little information and is subject to elite manipulation (Holsti, 2009) (Aldrich et al., 1989).

In this case Schumer was able to manipulate the masses and to hype on their fear of terrorism by signaling that two of the hijackers were Emiratis. He was able to create a grassroots base to oppose the deal. On the other side of the equation there was no base to support the deal. The Arab American community did not actively defend the deal, though some Arab American leaders (2006c) addressed the media and defended the deal. However, they did not represent a faction of American people to face off the opposition. This is in contrast to the AWACS where the prime politician, the President, hyped on the popular fear of communism in order to create a grassroots base in support of the deal. In addition to the President, contractors and employees who would benefit from the deal defended the AWACS sale. In the DP World case, no new jobs were to be created as a result of the acquisition; on the contrary acquisitions usually lead to a loss of jobs, an issue that DP World clarified during the hearing would not happen if the takeover took place (2006m).

The language used by the politicians created a fearful mood among the American public. On 28th of Feb 2006, Schumer sent a letter asking the Homeland Security department why the demands of the coastguard were ignored (Schumer, 2006b). The text of the letter had statements such as, "If this isn't a smoking gun, it shows that there might be one undetected by the CFIUS committee. We need to know why Homeland Security objected and then backed off their objection given this devastating report. This memo in no uncertain terms, shows that the CFIUS evaluation of the DP takeover may have been dangerously incomplete." His use of dramatic words such as "devastating" and "dangerously" shows the effect Schumer wanted to give to his demands. This letter was sent in a press release that was circulated to the media.

Schumer stated: "On the issues of national security, the American people expect that the federal government to take every conceivable step to protect our homeland yet unfortunately, when it came to the approval of the Dubai World deal national security concerns seem to have been given short shrift given the revelation yesterday that the coast guard had concerns about intelligence gaps. This is particularly disconcerting in light of the fact that Secretary Chertoff was unaware of either the deal or of these concerns until well after his department approved the transaction." (Schumer, 2006b). The discourse presented in the document gives the reader the impression of a grave danger, whereas the whole matter was that the coast guards had some concerns that the DP World had answered.

Though the US government had already vetted the security of the deal, and though officials such as Michael Chertoff, Homeland Security Secretary, went on ABC News to state that DP World provided the necessary assurance, Schumer had a great reception among the Congress, the press and the general public (Curtiss, 2006). The statements of Schumer and his actions took the Congress by storm as he was playing a very popular tune: security. Schumer initiated a wave in the Congress where each official wanted to show that he or she was the most caring and protective over the US national security.

Initially, Senator Schumer launched the issue into the public discourse when he held a press conference and issued a press release titled: "Multi-billion dollar company

that operates NYC port to be taken over by United Arab Emirates government-owned firm.” (Schumer, 2006a) .This was an attractive issue to the press and to the American public and it got him a “bonanza of publicity” (Curtiss, 2006). After Schumer launched the issue in the media, the story witnessed a snowball effect and the media carried Schumer’s accusations uncritically. For example, CNN stated: Critics have said the deal raises concerns because DP World is owned by the United Arab Emirates, a nation that has had questionable ties to terrorists in the past (Ted Barrett, 2006b).

Even articles that defended the deal and that demonstrated it did not impair security, such as the article by the distinguished think tank, the Council on Foreign Relations, mentioned that the main objection of critics was that the hijackers were Emiratis (Kaplan, 2006). Every time the deal was mentioned it revived painful memories for the average American. Therefore, every time the deal was mentioned whether in a positive or a negative way, it ignited public resentment towards the UAE and DP World. This falls in line with what John Zaller calls a one-sided message from the media, which would indeed affect public opinion (Zaller, 1992).

The Miami Herald, the hometown of Eller &CO, which started the whole controversy, published the headline: Dubai Deal on Ports Draws Fire. The deal was described as “jeopardizing national security”. The article stated: "Six of our largest commercial ports are being handed over to a country that is seeking to be Iran's free trade partner and has been linked to the funding and planning of 9/11," Foley said. "If our ports are the most vulnerable targets for terrorism and if we are at war, as the president says, we should be overly critical of handing over the management of our ports to any foreign countries, post 9/11. Instead, this was done in the dead of night." (2006d). The Wall Street Journal described Dubai as the “Chameleon of the Persian Gulf” in its 23 of February article “In Ports Furor, a Clash Over Dubai Where Bush Sees an Ally, Foes in Congress See Links to Terrorism New Wealth From an Oil Boom.” (BILL SPINDLE, 2006).

The reporting carried information in an anti-Arab way but also suggested a distrust of the Bush administration. This is in contrast with the AWACS deal where the media

was used as a channel to reach out to the American public. Though some of the reporting was negative, the general tone was in favor of the President. The reporting stated the following: "Lawmakers raised alarms about the potential security risks of giving an Arab-owned company access to U.S. port facilities." (HITT, 2006b). The opening paragraph of the article in the Baltimore Sun stated: "No wonder so many people across political lines went ballistic when they heard that a company owned by an Arab state, from which two 9/11 hijackers had come, was taking over operations at six U.S. ports. They had little reason to trust the White House when it said everything was fine." (RUBIN, 2006).

This was how the acquisition was portrayed in the press in the states that housed the ports to be acquired. It was with this language that local representatives and the American people read the news. One representative during a hearing quoted the New York Times saying : "Now, I want to read to you a reference one of you made to A.Q. Khan, and I want to read to you from a New York Times article, which I think summarizes a point on this question, that "the Emirates was also the main transshipment point for A.Q. Khan, the Pakistani nuclear engineer who ran the world's largest nuclear proliferation ring from warehouses near the port, met Iranian officials there, and shipped centrifuge equipment, which can be used to enrich uranium, from there to Libya," referring here to the port in Dubai (2006b).

When the media highlighted these issues and the UAE was framed as being soft on terrorism and the deal was framed as a threat to national security, no elected official would dare to back it and to risk a loss in popularity. Though in the AWACS case opponents had security concerns as they were not sure of the future direction of the Saudi government and they were not sure of the stability of the regime, however the base condition represented by the cold war played in favor of the Saudis, unlike in the DP World case where September 11th created an environment that was hostile to the UAE. Additionally, there was one main difference in the two cases: one is exporting arms technology to a foreign country, while the other case was about a foreign country with which the average American did not identify coming to run critical facilities in mainland America. AWACS opponents mentioned national security but they could never say that these warplanes could attack America; their concern was that these planes could attack Israel. On the other hand the DP World

opponents claimed that these facilities could be used as a platform for another terrorist attack on mainland America and that this represented a totally different level of concern to the average American. The security concern in the case of DP World was much stronger than in the case of the AWACS, therefore counter-lobbying was difficult. It is very difficult to convince an elected official to take a position negatively viewed by his constituency. The security of Israel does not have the same salience as the security of mainland America, especially given that, a few years before, mainland America had been attacked by Arab individuals. One interviewee said that at that time DP World was facing public opinion. Therefore no matter how skilled and connected that lobbyist was, he would not have been able to present a plausible argument to back up the deal as the public was against it. Both Assistant Secretary Baker for the Department of Homeland Security in the hearing in front of the Committee of Banking, Housing and Urban affairs in the House (2006g) and Chairman Warner in the briefing to the Committee of Armed Services in the Senate (2006b) said that if you read the news you would think that the US government was selling the ports and outsourcing security to a foreign company, which was not true.

In the briefing in front of the Committee of Armed Services (2006b), Senator Clinton said that according to the Associated Press, the transaction was approved “without many of the conditions” that are usually placed on similar investments. Congress people were conveying the message that a “balance has not been properly struck” between the open investment policy and the national security of the US. Senator Reed said: “Certainly, that is what I am hearing from my constituents throughout Rhode Island, and I think my colleagues are hearing the same thing throughout the country” (2006g).

Mr. Jones, the Representative from North Carolina in the hearing held on the 2nd of March in front of the Committee of Armed Services in the House said: “In 2 days I had 127 phone calls. That is not a lot out of my district of people, but, again, it is 127 phone calls from people who took time to call and only 6 were in favor of this arrangement. I had people who professed to be Republican, I am a Republican, and they are just outside themselves irate.” He added: “I apologize. Mr. Bilkey And again, I don't fault you, I don't fault your company or the people that you represent, but I will tell you that this is an issue that maybe has galvanized the American people to

understand that we are selling America out, and it is time to stop.” Therefore it was difficult for any elected official not to toe the line and object to the deal because he/she would be leaving room for opponents to attack him/her as being soft on national security issues.

Though some did come to the defense of the UAE stating the UAE’s record in supporting the US counterterrorism effort, none had adequate support in the Congress nor from the Bush administration to face the negative campaign that was launched against the deal and no one dared to defend it aggressively.

### **The response of the UAE**

In the hearing in which executives from DP World testified (2006m), the bias against Dubai and the UAE was very clear from the opening statement. In the opening statement, Dubai was framed as being a bazaar for terrorism and its government as negligent. Ike Skeleton, a representative from Missouri, said: “We must be able to reassure the American people in every case that we will not allow the fox to guard the chicken house.”

The UAE kept a low profile. One respondent, who is the head of an Arab American organization, said that at the time of the crisis he was constantly in the media conducting interviews defending the deal while the UAE officials kept a low profile. They were advised by their consultant to keep a low profile and to let the president “fix things”. It was after the controversy reached its height and after the respondent himself asked them to send an official to clarify the UAE position to the media that they sent Sheikha Lubna Al Qassimi. The two interviews that I was able to find that came from UAE officials and that were the most representative of the UAE responses and attitudes are an interview with Mohammed Sharaf, the CEO of DP World, and an interview with Lubna Al Qassimi, both of them with Wolf Blitzer of CNN. In the interview with CNN, Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi took a defensive, rather passive, stand trying to tone down, show cooperation, and avoid any possible confrontations with her host.

In another interview with the CEO of DP World, Mohammed Sharaf Blitzler started by saying that 67% were against the deal. He repeated statements by officials that discredited the company and Dubai and asked Sharaf to defend them. He presented rhetorical propositions such as what if Dubai was “clandestinely supporting terrorists?” Such suggestions served more to frame Dubai than to defend the deal. He even indirectly showed skepticism about their willingness to cooperate with US authorities as he asked him the same question twice: Blitzler: “So you'd be willing to cooperate with the U.S. Government...”

.Sharaf: “Definitely.”

Blitzler: ... “Whatever they want, you'd be willing to say, DP World, from your perspective as a businessman, you'd be willing to cooperate?”

The way he conducted the interview showed cynicism and sarcasm. In the course of the interview, Blitzler asked: “The White House press secretary, Scott McClellan, says that you've made some concessions; you've made some agreements to bolster security. He says, “One thing that is key is that this company agrees to additional security measures that they will take beyond what some others do in transactions like this.”

Sharaf: “Yes we do.”

Blitzler: “Do you know what he's referring to?”

Sharaf: “Yes, yes...”

Blitzler: “What is he referring to?”

Sharaf: “What we have said is basically that within the 45 days we will not interfere in the running of the terminals in the U.S....” In this exchange, the host was trying to make his interviewee feel uncomfortable by asking him whether he knew what the requirements were and then he asked him to recite them. Also Sharaf tried to evade any confrontation and avoid any criticism of the US when Blitzler asked him whether he felt the opposition was a result of an anti-Arab discrimination. Sharaf replied it was the result of misunderstanding (blitzler, 2006). Studying the discourse of UAE officials, the language and expressions used, the information revealed, and the arguments presented and their sequence, can show why at the time the UAE was not able to defend its position before the American public, which at the time was against the deal.

In the hearing the person representing DP World was the Chief Operating Officer

Ted Bilkey, who himself is an American citizen. The Emiratis stayed in the background. The themes generated from the interviews revealed that the Arab Gulf do not like to plead their case. They prefer to stay in the background and to get people to talk on their behalf and “to do things for them”.

In his response, Bilkey focused on the track record of the UAE in supporting the US, namely in its counterterrorism effort. He mentioned also a recommendation sent by the head of an Israeli company Zim to Senator Clinton praising DP World as a reliable partner. This also ties up with the themes generated from the interviews that the Arab Gulf worked their issues quietly through the Israelis by getting their support or by sidelining their opposition on deals. Bilkey said: “Our Company has long-standing business relationships with all the major shipping companies, including Israeli companies, among our diverse international clients; and actually Zim Lines is one of our larger clients and a highly valued one.”

Though here the issue was not defense but a commercial issue, the Israelis were involved for mediation. This confirms the theme generated from the grounded method stating that they like to hire pro-Israeli lobbyists or deal with pro-Israeli people, thinking that these individuals have better access and a better influence than an Arab-American. So in the response of Bilkey, the Israeli company was mentioned and the various Arab American companies or companies that had relations with Dubai were not mentioned. Although she was against the deal, Senator Debbie Stabenow mentioned that Michigan and Detroit had many positive relationships, “business relations, city to city relationships, with Dubai.” She added “And it’s been positive”. However none of these relationships were mentioned by Bilkey, none were activated to pressure representatives or to talk favorably on behalf of DP World. On the contrary, the two elected officials representing a large Arab-American constituency, Debbie Stabenow and Carl Levin, stood adamantly against the deal. Though in the case of the AWACS, Toby Moffett, a Connecticut senator of Arab, origin stood against the deal, however the NAAA supported the deal. In the testimony David Sadd presented the organization as representing Americans of Arab ancestry. There was no one in the hearing representing “people of Arab ancestry” to support the deal.

On the other hand, the direct business relationship that Dubai had with Secretary Snow was used against them. DP International, an affiliate of DP World, bought, in February 2005, container freight facilities previously owned by the American CSX Company, the company that Secretary Snow headed before becoming Secretary of the Treasury. In this case, Secretary Snow was accused of a conflict of interest since he had business interests with the company at stake (2006m).

Bilkey mentioned that they had approached the committee in “good faith” and that he was confident that the review would reveal that they posed no threat to the US. His response included first a listing of DP World’s record of cooperating with the US government. He said in the beginning of his statement that he wanted “to dispel myths and establish facts.” However, his speech did not include any new information. He mentioned that DP World would not buy the port but merely obtain the lease and that the security would be under the control of the US government and that the deal was not sealed “secretly in the dead of night or without review”.

However, all these points were already clarified in the previous briefing; the only point he added was that DP World was not in a capacity to enforce a boycott on Israel and that they followed the rules of the countries in which they operated. His statement did not represent a comprehensive narrative; it was merely a reply to some of the accusations.

Later on, following his questions to Bilkey, the chairman mentioned the nuclear triggers in 2003 that were transferred to a Pakistani businessman via Dubai. He also mentioned that in 1996 the German government named six firms in Dubai acting as a front for companies for Iranian efforts to import arms and nuclear technology. The chairman went on listing other instances where Dubai was used as a location for illegal operations. Facing these strong accusations his reply was, “I do not know” or “I am not sure I was in Dubai at the time”. Bilkey’s replies were evasive, lacked assertiveness, and did not provide the necessary assurances.

Given this weak defense, the Chairman concluded: "It appears from the hearing that the sole stockholder of this company is the Emir of Dubai...I guess the point that I am making is he is in charge of the government which shapes Dubai and it appears that Dubai specializes in masking transfers..." He added: "If you want to mask the seller and mask the buyer you take things through Dubai." Even from the exchange between Bilkey and the Congress people, one feels the discomfort of Bilkey, for example when asked about the CEO of DP World. Skelton the Representative from Missouri, asked Bilkey "Where does he live?" Bilkey's first reaction was "Excuse me". Bilkey felt perplexed facing this rhetorical question, since the CEO of a company whose headquarters is in Dubai will naturally live in Dubai.

Another point worth mentioning is the fact that they were not well prepared. For example the nuclear trafficking conducted by scientist Khan was mentioned in the briefing held on the 23rd of February, one week before Bilkey was asked the same question. If they were well prepared they should have reviewed all the concerns that might arise and found plausible arguments to defend their position. Evasive answers only validated the arguments of the opponents. The grounded theory method generated a theme that they are disorganized and lack a strategic approach. These themes were confirmed in the DP World case where all the response and the actions of the UAE were off key. On the other hand, the AWACS case shows completely the opposite: the Saudis were well prepared; they made informed decisions, and had a strategic approach.

Then Bilkey was asked questions that were impossible to answer. Both Kline, the Representative from Minnesota, and Skelton asked how DP World could guarantee that some of the workers of DP World do not have "sympathy" with radicals. Skelton said: "How do you know that people working for DP World at the management level and the operational level do not pose a security threat?" and "What type of background checks or other investigations have been conducted regarding potential security threat for the corporate people who work for the corporation?" (2006m).

Bilkey was asked questions that indirectly denigrated the company. Skelton asked Bilkey to what countries the managers at DP World belong. He also asked vague questions to perplex his interlocutor, such as: “Would you tell us how does the government of Dubai own the corporation?”

Bilkey: “I am not sure I understand the question.”

The team of lobbyists that DP World hired that was described as a “heavy-hitting line up”, could not properly counter the effect that the semi-retired lobbyist that Eller&Co hired **created** (HITT, 2006b). At the time of the crisis, DP World hired Alston & Bird, the lobbying firm headed by Bob Dole (2006g). Even the fact they hired highly paid lobbyists was treated with skepticism. During the course of the hearing Mr. Weldon, the Representative from Pennsylvania asked Bilkey: “Why did you hire lobbying firms?” He added “I assume you hired them for a reason”. This was the spoken message but the unspoken message was that if you know you are totally legitimate and you know the deal is totally clean why do you need to hire a lobbyist? Weldon added that if they had a strong case and if they were not in breach of any law or any requirement why did they need these high priced lobbying firms? The facts should convince the Congress, not these lobbyists. The names involved were a firm Downey and McGraffin, a gentlemen by the name of Jonathan Winer who had been an aide to Kerry for ten years, Kathryn Marks who had been policy director to Senator John Edwards, and Carol Browner who used to be director of the Environmental Protection Agency under President Clinton. The public affairs firm of former Secretary of State Albright was also mentioned. These names were mentioned with scrutiny.

Mr. Weldon told the DP World executive: “Everything was going well up until the process became public. Why would you have to hire those firms in the past?” He also said: “You obviously employed a council in this city and public affairs firms and lobbyists and I assume you hired them for a reason...” Dalton, the General Consul of DP World, answered: “Yes sir, as you call it we found it necessary to turn to certain firms. I understand that has been reported fairly in the press because we felt our

company followed all the US processes and in fact relied upon those processes in lifting our condition precedent as well as the other regulatory filing that we had done in a number of locations throughout. We relied on that process and we found ourselves in a difficult situation.” Weldon said to the COO: “Why would you hire all these high priced firms if there are no security concerns ...if there is no way to grease the skids? The answer of Bilkey was: “We need a liaison ... we don’t know the process...”

## **The president and DP World**

Though Bush defended the deal and threatened to veto any resolution to block the deal, his support was not enough to make the deal go through. The difference lay in the fact that at the time of the AWACS Reagan was a much stronger president than Bush at the time of DP World. The AWACS case occurred at the beginning of Reagan’s term. Reagan had scored a major victory in his election as he was able to win over an incumbent president. Additionally, he had large support from his party in the Congress. Republicans had taken 12 seats from the Democrats (Grossbeck et al.). In contrast, the DP World deal happened when Bush was midway through his second term and his popularity was going in decline. In November 2006, following the midterm elections, the Democrats ended up taking control of both Houses of the Congress.

The DP World incident happened shortly after Katrina, when the executive branch and the President showed incompetence and their rating plunged to a record low. A poll undertaken jointly by ABC and The Washington Post showed that a majority of 54% disapproved Bush’s response while an even larger majority of 57% said that officials should be held responsible for the problems caused by the hurricane (Morin, 2005).

This is why the statements of Bush were neither frequent enough nor strong enough to face the Congress and the American public. The press reports gave an indication of the Congress’ attitude towards Bush. The Washington Post reported: “The House

and Senate GOP leaders bluntly told President Bush that Congress would kill the U.S. portions of the company's \$6.8 billion acquisition of London-based Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co. (P&O), which has operations at six major U.S. ports, including New York and Baltimore” (Graham, 2006). The use of the word “blunt” shows the aggressive attitude the Congress was showing towards Bush.

The response of the President came as a press release issued on the 25 February 2006 under the title: “Fact Sheet: DP World: Myth Vs. Fact”. The press release was merely a clarification of certain misconceptions such as the deal was kept in secret or that foreign companies should not operate a US terminal, or the fact that the operator will be in charge of security, or that the review was not comprehensive... But in defense of the UAE, the document mentioned quotes by two generals who praised the country. The press release was not strong enough in defending the UAE against the accusations of the Congress, whereas Reagan’s tone in the case of the AWACS was much stronger in defending the deal and attacking its opponents (Laham, 2002).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion the three most important lessons learned from the DP World case study is that: first, foreign agents are not very effective when facing a public opposition; second, grassroots are key to successful lobbying, especially when the issue has high salience among the public; third, it is very difficult to lobby when the group or the issue has a negative image. Therefore a sound strategy would be to create a positive image for the group or overall issue before starting to lobby on small tactical issues.

DP World did not employ the right tactics to manage the crisis and to lobby for the deal. Firstly, they kept a low profile and did not present strong arguments. They also adopted a defensive attitude instead of being offensive and attacking Eller who used “unscrupulous” methods and played on the feelings of American citizens to block the deal. However, having said that, even if they had adopted better tactics at the time and were more proactive with the media and went to every outlet and pleaded their

case and even if they had been able to discredit Eller, the deal would not necessarily have gone through. This is simply because lobbying is a continuous long term effort that resides in building an image in the mind of the public and long term relations with legislators and this could not have been done in a very short period as a response to an incident.

Successful lobbying requires a long term proactive approach and this was not there. The team of lobbyists was hired to do damage control. This confirms the theme generated from grounded theory stating that Arab Gulf States have no proactive approach; they only rush to repair damage when it arises. One respondent, a communication specialist who had GCC governments as clients, compared them to someone trying to use his fingers to close holes; when one hole is closed another hole opens. They adopt this approach that does not stop the leakage, instead of doing an overall restructuring of the wall and bringing a team to cover the entire surface and fix it properly. Her description applies to the DP World case. They had this decaying wall caused by the negative image of Arabs and Muslims associated with September 11th, so when the public outcry came they rushed to close the holes on the spot, and no matter how many fingers they hired they could not stop the leakage. However, if from the start the wall had been well maintained such a leakage would not have happened. Therefore, even if better tactics had been used at the time, that does not necessarily mean the deal would have gone through because there is no underlying comprehensive narrative, no underlying lobbying to frame the UAE positively in the mind of the American people and in the mind of their legislators.

The AWACS case had many advantages that were lacking in the DP World case, the tactics employed for lobbying were better, and the general environment was better as it was the height of the cold war, and the president had a stronger position and the subject of lobbying was less sensitive as it involved selling arms to a foreign country, whereas in the DP World case it was a foreign country coming to mainland America and managing one of its sensitive facilities. However, despite all the

differences that put the AWACS at an advantage and put DP World at a disadvantage, the lack of consistency and the lack of continuous lobbying in both cases ultimately led to a failure. In the case of the AWACS, though the Saudis won the first round their subsequent lobbying failed.

In the hearing held on the 2nd of March in front of the Committee of Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs in the Senate (2006g) Kimmitt, the Undersecretary of the Treasury who was defending the deal, told Shelby the Senator from Alabama that he understood his dissatisfaction, however Shelby answered that it was not his dissatisfaction, it was the dissatisfaction of the people in the coffee shop in Montana “or Oregon or wherever you want to go. It’s of great concern”. The essence of Shelby’s statement was that when the issue went public and given that Schumer as well as the media and other politicians tainted the UAE with terrorism, the issue became very difficult to control. Bilkey in his hearing mentioned that he hoped that this “unnecessary political storm” would pass and then everyone would be able to focus on business. The fact is politics and business were intertwined and Eller started the process by pursuing an “unorthodox legal strategy” where “national-security concerns” were blended with details of a “very technical business dispute” (HITT, 2006a). The lawsuit that had been in place for three years (2006m) in the Florida and UK courts took a very different shape once the UAE came to the scene. Eller&Co found a scapegoat that could be stamped with the terrorism stigma. In the hearing, Senator Bill Nelson mentioned that press reports and information from embassies showed that similar acquisitions by DP World in other parts of the world had generated much less public interest. However, as mentioned in the hearing, the US lives in a post September 11th world. One Congressperson mentioned that had Britain been hit the way they had been hit they would have looked at things differently (2006b).

Mr. Weldon said, “They have been helpful and I publicly acknowledge that this deal has put us in an extremely difficult if not impossible situation. As I said earlier we are damned either way this goes. If we stop the deal we are damned because the

Emiratis will think we have done this to embarrass them, if the deal goes through then we will be blamed for not having done our homework. So either way we lose.” (2006m). His statement sums up the dilemma that faced the Congress people. Though they knew that the UAE was an important ally with a strategic value, they needed to cater to their constituents’ preferences. They could not appear to support a deal that might jeopardize national security. This tie in to what Shelby said: it is not the Congress’ opinion, it is the general public’s opinion on the deal that pushed the Congress to take such a position. The same applies to the AWACS case. It is popular support that led Congress to take the position it took in support of the deal. The analysis of Prince Bandar’s biography, as well as the other works that highlight the deal, shows how businesses and unions that had a stake in the deal pressured their elected officials to push for the deal. This is how the Saudis were able to defeat AIPAC.

Democrats had been blamed for being soft on security issues as opposed to President Bush whose marketing tool and main tagline were the security of the US. Schumer, who is a Democrat, saw in this transaction an opportunity to bash the president and his administration. Thomas Friedman expressed that Bush who emphasized security and accused his opponents of being soft on terrorism found himself the victim of his own rhetoric (OXLEY, 2006).

Both the administration and DP World were “surprised” by the intensity of public interest. One congressperson said: “The only surprise is that the administration is surprised by the intense reaction of the American people.” (2006b). They were not prepared for such a reaction from the American people and their representatives in the Congress. The element of surprise was visible in the answers of Bilkey as he appeared unprepared to answer the accusations. This tie up to the theme emerging from the interviews, that they did not have a long term strategy. They responded to things as they occurred and they did not have a long term consistent narrative and this was obvious from the testimony of DP World executives.

The testimony was more of answers to questions but they did not make a full comprehensive story that could convince the average American and his representative that they should back this deal. The testimony did not present a larger picture, such as the importance of having the UAE as an ally in the Middle East, and the progress made because of the UAE in the war on terror. The answers of Bilkey failed to offer opponents a comprehensive and cohesive narrative in defense of DP World, Dubai and the UAE. He mentioned facts such as that DP World had the US military as a client or that they were the first to implement a Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). He did not bring up the bigger picture on the economic front such as showing the positive effects of Arab-Gulf and Emirati investment on the national economy. In answering the questions regarding the nuclear smuggling, Bilkey's responses were sketchy and evasive, whereas it was known from previous briefings and from reports in the media that such issues would emerge. Also there were many arguments they did not use. They could have discredited their opponents by discrediting the source of the information, Eller & Co. According to one respondent who works for a lobbying watchdog, before the DP World issue, Eller & Co. tried to block a Japanese company from working in its ports. They used security as an argument. In addition to this maneuvering the respondent added that the company as well as its CEO had some shady dealings in the past. They could have looked into this area and tried to discredit the source. When discrediting the source they could have killed the credibility of the argument.

The Emiratis were not aggressive enough in their approach. Though this might not have totally affected the American people's security concerns, however when discrediting the source and showing how Eller had a history of distorting facts and playing on people's emotions, this could have led the American people to question these claims. All that was mentioned in the hearing was that P&O had a feud with Eller & Co that it had been going on for the last three years. Given the dodgy history of Eller & Co, Eller & Co should have been the point on which they started their defense.

Also described by one interviewer was that, once a crisis breaks, Arab Gulf States run and hire people to solve their issue and this is not productive. Here this was

proven as the DP World hired a large team of high priced lobbyists; however, this act was used against them in the hearing. Weldon said: "What I see here are leaders of both parties instead of coming to the Congress and letting the Congress come in and understand, which is what I would have done when I had this deal, knowing it was going to become controversial based on substance or not, after the fact all of these players including a former president are getting involved to push a deal through that the American people including my constituents are going bonkers over and that bothers me." The fact that they used these high caliber people to plead their case put them under even more under suspicion. Lawmakers are suspicious when a client uses lobbyists excessively (Smith, 1996).

This ties up with the themes emerging from the interviews that Gulf Arabs do not speak for themselves, they let others speak for them. And I have shown that they had very little appearance on the TV; we could only retrieve two interviews, one by Sharaf the CEO of DP World and one by Sheikha Lubna Al Qassimi.

Actually, this episode proves that hiring high priced lobbyists can sometimes be ineffective. Even sarcastically the Chairman asked Bilkey what Chairman Bin Sulayem thought after consulting with President Clinton, who probably got paid a handsome amount for his advice when Senator Clinton, his wife, criticized the deal. The Chairman: "Your chairman, did he make any remark in the wake of Senator Clinton criticizing the deal?"

Bilkey answered, "I have no knowledge of that, sir." The question left Bilkey perplexed as he answered that he did not know. Even the personal connections they had made with high caliber people in the government were used against them. For example, the business connection they had with Secretary Snow was put into question and was framed as a conflict of interest (2006m).

One year after the port deal, during a hearing, the Congressman Garrett said that perception is reality and explained why the deal failed. He said: "What the American

public had with this Dubai deal is that things did not look right. They might have been right, but there was the appearance of something less than perfect circumstances emerging from that transaction.” (2007b)

The UAE was framed as being an unreliable partner. Given the recent history of the US and the tragic event of September 11th it was very difficult to change this perception by using a few lobbyists, and the administration whose forte was to focus on security issues could not back it forcefully and seemed to be soft on security issues. As one interviewer, who works for a lobbying watchdog, said the support for the deal was not strong enough. Though the President spoke and said he would veto any resolution to block the deal, his support was weak compared to Reagan’s who was completely focused on reaching out to the American public and the Congress and going on TV to defend the deal at every occasion. Bush, on the other hand was not so vocal about his support. He did not show the perseverance and the aggression that Reagan showed in defending the AWACS deal.

In the course of this chapter I analyzed how DP World was taken by surprise and how hiring expensive lobbyists gives no result when the issue has no public support. The DP World is a classic case of a lack of a long term strategy where lobbying is undertaken only when issues arise, as opposed to a consistent and comprehensive long term effort to build a positive image and to reach out to the American public and government. In the conclusion, I will highlight the problems and the prospects that were presented in the case studies and I will reconcile the themes that emerged from the grounded theory with the theoretical framework to come up with propositions that are unique to this study. At the end, after laying down the findings of the study and their implications I will present further research needed to complement the study as well as an outlook to the future of Arab Gulf lobbying.

## ***Conclusion: Problems and prospects of an Arab-Gulf lobby***

The question that most of my American interviewees asked me was: “How come Arab Gulf states have not thought of establishing a lobby like the Armenians, the Greeks etc...?” As inferred from the two case studies and the themes that emerged from the different interviews, there is no entity that can be called an “Arab lobby “ but merely sporadic effort to lobby on different issues by different states at different points in time. Arab Americans do not advocate Arab Gulf issues. Arab Gulf states do their lobbying individually and hire foreign agents on an issue basis. Their lobbying has been successful on narrow issues, mainly involving American interests such as arm deals. However, on macro issues such as war and peace they have not been successful, whereas, according to Mitchell Bard, the Israel lobby has recorded a 100% success rate (Bard, 1991). There is nothing called an “Arab lobby” that focuses on the overall relationship of the US with the Arab Gulf.

I will start this chapter by highlighting the problems that face the establishment of an Arab lobby then I move to the theoretical part and examine the propositions that can be inferred from the research then I will feature the implications of the findings of the research. Following that I extrapolate to have a future outlook on Arab Gulf lobbying, given the changes in geopolitical parameters and changes in the Arab American scene. I end this chapter by highlighting the limitation of this research and laying down the research that should be follow and complement my work.

### **Problems**

There are many challenges that face the establishment of an effective Arab Gulf lobby. This is why an Arab lobby has not been formed naturally and grown the way other lobbies have naturally formed and flourished over time. The structure of the Arab-American community, characterized by a multitude of factions, represents one part of the problem: other challenges come from inter-Arab Gulf rivalries as well as priorities, from the relations of the Arab Gulf with the Arab-American community, and in the way the Arab Gulf conducts its politics.

Though the problems come from different sources they have one common element, which is disunity. The Arab Gulf, though homogenous, is disunited. Arab-Americans are also disunited and have different approaches towards American policy in the region.

### **Inter-Arab Rivalries**

On the Arab side, who will initiate a lobby? If you look at Israel, Armenia or Greece, each lobby is focused on one single country. Conversely in the Arab case, there are twenty-two countries in the Arab League, each with a different agenda and different priorities in its relations with the US. Even with the GCC countries, which represent a more homogenous group, an Arab Gulf lobby has still not been initiated.

The main reason is that Arab Gulf countries conduct their foreign policy independently on a bilateral basis. Though they face the same threats and are homogenous in character, their stances regarding different events vary and are sometimes contradictory. For example, in response to the rise of the Muslim brotherhood to power in Egypt, Qatar was very encouraging—they even proposed giving the government a grant (2012d) –while the UAE and Saudi Arabia distanced themselves. The UAE even had tensions with Egypt, as it accused the latter government of implanting brotherhood cells in Dubai (Duraid Al Baik, 2013).

The Arab Gulf inter relationship is characterized by rivalries that are partly fueled by border disputes that exist between the different states (Henderson, 2003). These border disputes have led in some cases to military confrontation, such as the war led by Saudi Arabia against Al Khalifa of Bahrain and Al Sabah of Kuwait and the capture of Buraimi from Oman and Abu Dhabi (Alkim, 1994).

Another problem emerges from what Gregory Cause calls the “transnational identities,” where some tribes extend across state borders. These leave the margin for ambitious leaders to interfere in their neighbor’s affairs (Gause, 2010). This is why each ruling family fears its neighbors will try to increase their control over its state and deals with them with skepticism. This skepticism and mistrust of neighbors has led each state to focus increasingly on enforcing its sovereignty (Partrick, 2011). This is perhaps why, after over thirty years since its inception, the GCC still has not resulted in any strong form of unity among the different states.

This mistrustful attitude has created what Gause describes as a “security complex” where the different states spend most of their effort and resources in monitoring each other instead of monitoring others. This explanation by Gause falls in line with a comment by one respondent, a former American statesman: “Why isn’t the GCC as strong as NATO?” This is because, though a formal cooperation exists, integration between the systems is non-existent. The different members are more worried about each other than they are worried about an external threat.

The same respondent mentioned the anti-ballistic missiles that the US has tried to convince the GCC to adopt for 30 years. Until now it has not been implemented because no country trusts its neighbors with its military secrets. This is why the field of foreign policy, which is central to national security, cannot be handled on a collective basis. The different countries formulate their foreign policy independently of their neighbors, while putting regime security as a top priority (Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, 2002). Also the relationship is complex as it is characterized by one large country with a large population surrounded by small states each having a population of one million people. Traditionally Saudi Arabia is considered the leader in the GCC as most initiatives come from Saudi Arabia and it is the state that sets the perspective for the other states on security (Alkim, 1994). However, this situation is changing as the smaller countries are trying to increase their prominence on the map. What had helped the emergence of the smaller states is that after September 11, the US started developing relationships with the smaller countries (Henderson, 2003).

Qatar is flexing its muscle by trying to play the role of the Arab mediator; it is trying to take the role that Saudi Arabia has played (Kamrava, 2011). The UAE is trying to raise its profile through philanthropic contributions and through raising the profile of the UAE and Dubai as a regional hub (2007c). Also many Gulf countries have launched foreign policy initiatives that have the appearance of being a collective effort by the Gulf, such as the peace initiative of King Abdullah in 2002 (2002) or the Fez communiqué (Ellis, 1981). However, these remain country specific initiatives and are not signs of a joint foreign policy.

In addition to the issue of sovereignty there is the issue of prestige; each country wants to have the image of the pioneer. One respondent, a head of an Arab American organization, said: "The problem is everyone wants to be the chief, no-one wants to be the Indian." This is visible domestically as individual countries compete to erect landmark projects that dwarf their neighbors' monuments (Langton, 2013). Though an institution that has equal distance from different parties and that does not fall under the control of one specific ruling family such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) should overcome the complexities of prestige and sovereignty, the GCC was not able to achieve this role. This is because the GCC does not have authority. Also the GCC does not have the executive power to undertake such a project as it remains a loose coalition between neighbors, when it is supposed to be a platform to integrate the different countries by incorporating different institutions. However, many of its projects, such as the single currency project, face the obstacle of the rivalries. This project, which has a pure economic aspect, did not materialize because of a dispute about whether the central bank should be in Riyadh or in Abu Dhabi (Pantin, 2009).

The GCC has no effective role in foreign policy though it gives collective statements and expresses collaborative positions. Many times member states have acted in ways that contradict the position of the GCC. For example the GCC has announced it is against a US attack on Iran, however Wikileaks revealed that King Abdulla requested an attack by the US in order to contain Iran's nuclear ambition (Tisdall,

2010). On the other hand, the UAE ambassador has publicly announced that the UAE supports such an attack (Lake, 2010).

Given this mistrust and given that they rely on the US for their security; this has created a state of competition in foreign policy. Each country wants to have a special relationship, and a superior relationship with the US to its counterparts. The general mood is to excel in the relationship with the US and not to cooperate with counterparts in order to improve the relationship for everyone and to have a better bargaining power with the world superpower (Shayji, 2013).

## **The relations of Arab Gulf states with the US**

Another part of the problem facing the establishment of an Arab Gulf lobby lies the relation of the Arab Gulf states with the US. The problem in this relation lies in three areas: they don't see the need for a lobby, they adopt a narrow short term simplistic approach with the US and they suffer from a negative image.

As shown in Chapter 4 the Arab Gulf does not properly understand the need for a lobby to maintain and enhance their relation with the US. This is due to two factors. First, as discussed in the introduction, lobbying as a concept is alien to the Arab culture. As shown in Chapter 4 and in the AWACS case study chapter, Arabs rely on their strategic value to the US. One respondent, a former statesman, said: "You have to ask them whether they want a lobby".

The Arab Gulf monarchies have depended on the US for protection from potential threats. In the sixties it was the Pan Arab wave, in the seventies it was the Soviet threat and then the Iranian threat that was embodied by Khomeini and his concept of exporting the revolution (UPI, 1981). Then came Saddam Hussein's expansionist ambitions. Facing all these threats, the US has been a supporter of the Arab Gulf states, whether by supplying arms or directly intervening as in the case of the Gulf War. They see that they have enough leverage through the strategic importance that emanates from the fact that the Gulf resides on the world's largest proven reserves

of oil, and on the fact that the US has bases in the Gulf. One American respondent, a former chief of staff of a prominent Senator, said: "Because as long as the world runs on petroleum the world economy is dependent on the price of oil, it is in our (US) interest to make sure there is a free flow of oil and that is why the US cares." Although the Arab Gulf has been an ally to the US since the inception of the nation states, the Gulf has shown that it can use this strategic advantage to create pressure on the US .The Arab oil embargo of 1973 represents a prime example (Major Bard O'Neill, 1977).

In addition to the strategic importance of the Arab Gulf states as providers of oil, they gained another strategic advantage when they became the US' allies in the war on terror. Post September 11, the US started strengthening its ties to the smaller Gulf States in order to bring them to its camp in the war on terror (Henderson, 2003). By virtue of providing those two strategic benefits to the US, the Arab Gulf states do not see a need to mobilize domestic politics to guarantee the support of the US.

Another reason why Arab Gulf states do not see the urgent need for a lobby is that they do not feel the existence of an imminent threat. The different Gulf States' ruling families enjoy legitimacy from the people (Abdulla, 2010) and even if they join a war they do not risk being swept away. This is unlike Israel that, as a government and as a people, constantly feels that it faces an existential threat. It is heterogeneous, with an environment that consists of surrounding Muslim and Arab countries, it has a large minority of its population that shares an identity with its enemy (Cohen, 2009), and large numbers of Palestinian refugees who are still emotionally attached to land that is now part of the state of Israel (Kissinger, 2001). Israel feels it needs US protection for the maintenance of the state.

Because they do not see the need for a lobby they have not invested in research to understand the dynamics of American politics nor in cementing a narrative in the mind of the average American nor have they nurtured a grassroots base that can push for their issues in a systematic and consistent manner on the contrary they

adopt a narrow approach whereas they focus on the executive power and on the president and use foreign lobbyists to open doors with lawmakers as issues arise.

Therefore there is no organization in the Gulf similar to the Jafee center in Israel whose whole purpose is to trace the impact of America's domestic forces on Mideast policy (Terry, 2005). The center also has an educational purpose, which is to educate the American public on the importance of the support of America to Israel (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). There is also no center similar to the Israel project whose mandate is to gauge the public opinion in the US and to give the Israel government as well as the pro-Israel lobby advise so that everyone works in tandem. Arab Gulf rulers mainly rely on individual advisors when dealing with American politics. However, few advisors no matter how well informed they are, cannot replace a full-fledged research center that continuously measures and accesses the different aspects of American politics.

The lack of informed decision and lack of understanding of the dynamics of American politics were very visible in the DP World episode where most of the responses of the UAE were off key. The Emiratis were, as described by one of the respondents who is a lobbying specialist, "totally taken by surprise" when Schumer held a press conference and denounced the deal.

Another problem facing the creation of the lobby is their short term approach in their relations with the US. The creation of a lobby is a long-term process that requires strategic planning in order to engage the American government and general public. One respondent, who was involved in public relations programs for Gulf Arab States, said they want everything there and then. Everything has to be immediate; they have no long term perspective.

Another respondent described Arab Gulf states as being reactive and not proactive in their approach, they wait till events take place and they decide on what action to take. This was visible in the DP World episode. As shown in Chapter 5, the UAE had

no underlying narrative to present to the American public and Congress to defend itself. When the crisis occurred they tried to control the damage, however, they had not worked beforehand on nurturing a comprehensive narrative in the minds of the American public and government in order for those defending the transaction, whether they were representative of DP World or members of the government, to relate to it.

As discussed in previous chapters, lobbying databases show that the lobbyists are chosen based on the issues they face. Their focus, even from their choice of lobbyist, is based on issues on which most of them have not been hired for the long term. Lobbyists are hired on an issue basis and not to build an overarching narrative for the Arab Gulf. Though at the time of the AWACS Crawford was commissioned to launch a campaign to promote a positive image of Arabs and Islam, this effort was confined to the AWACS episode and was not part of a long term strategy to engage the American public at large. This was visible in the DP World episode as they did not have an overall narrative to relate to when making their case. Their defenses merely consisted of responses to the accusations they faced.

As a result of their short term perspective and their lack of strategic approach they do not use all their assets to advance their political goals. The Gulf has decided to keep politics separate from business. Though the Arab Gulf is an important investor in the US, Arab Gulf corporations do not have PACs, despite the fact that the law allows foreign owned companies to establish PACs as long as the contributors are American citizens (2013a). The AWACS case represents an exception where the Kingdom marshaled all its assets to engage the US; they used business connections to generate grass tops that could influence policy makers. This was a case where the economic interests were subject to political interests. However, these actions were not institutionalized through the creation of PACs.

Given their short term approach and given they have no grassroots to advocate their issues, the Arab Gulf uses lobbyists to open doors, however activities of foreign agents fall under the Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA), which gives them very little room to maneuver. The lobbyist usually works on specific issues where the

foreign government needs help, namely with Congress, such as an agreement that needs a push to get ratified, or on human right issues, among others (Gelak, 2008). However unlike ethnic lobbies that represent American constituencies foreign lobbyists do not have the power to steer foreign policy in one direction or another

Moreover, the Congress views foreign lobbyists with “suspicion” (Smith, 1996) as opposed to domestic lobbies that represent American citizens’ aspirations. Hiring lobbyists is sometimes fruitful as they help put together a strategy and have connections with legislators and the media. In the AWACS case, lobbyists played an important role in the success of the deal. However, their contribution was the source of scrutiny. Their success attracted attention to foreign sources of funding and this was exposed in the media (Roberts, 1978). Whereas the Israeli side relied on ordinary Americans expressing their views in foreign policy, Arabs were regarded as relying on professional, sophisticated, highly paid agents with no grassroots support (Goott and Rosen, 1983).

Additionally, the DP World episode shows how relying on foreign agents made them subject to scrutiny. As shown in Chapter 6, during the hearing DP World executives were questioned as to why they used highly paid lobbyists if their case was totally legal and clear.

This is the reason why different Arab Gulf states have lobbied successfully on narrow issues that face no opposition and do not involve public interest. But when narrow business issues become of high salience to the average American, which happened with DP World’s acquisition of operations in US ports due to its purported security implications, highly paid lobbyists became ineffective.

The instances of success of Arab Gulf lobbying on major issues such as the AWACS episode were not due to the use of foreign lobbyists, but to other factors, including pressure from the President and the economic interest involved, as the deal meant jobs in the various districts. The role of the lobbyist is to formulate the right narrative in order to orchestrate a base in support of the issue at stake.

In the case of AWACS, foreign lobbyists generated a transient base so as to offset the “spontaneous” long term base that belongs to the Israel lobby (Smith, 1996). As explained above and in Chapter 5, Prince Bandar was said to offset Jewish votes with workers’ votes. Foreign lobbyists, by putting a strategy and reaching out to the different businesses involved, were able to generate a domestic base that had an economic interest in the deal.

Unlike the foreign lobbyists hired by Arab Gulf states, who work on an issue basis and who try to generate a constituency in support of the issue they are handling such as in the case of AWACS, ethnic lobbies such as the pro-Israel, Armenian, and Greek lobbies have a sustainable base and work on the basis of a relationship between the country of origin and the US regardless of the issues at stake.

In addition to the fact they have no grassroots support they have failed to communicate with the American public at large and to build a comprehensive positive narrative in the American psyche. One interviewee who has spent 12 years in the Gulf and has cemented important relations with high ranking officials in the Arab Gulf, told me that the friends he has made in the Gulf would give him an expensive watch but would not give him sponsorship for a research center because they do not see the need for it. They do not disseminate information about the region to the US government and people as opposed to the Israelis who are constantly raising the profile of Israel to the different layers of Americans, in order for them to feel familiarity with Israel. They make sure in each walk of life the average American knows about Israel and identifies with it. The Israeli government makes sure that even farming magazines in the US carry features about agriculture in Israel (Friedman, 1995).

This attitude is summarized by the quote mentioned previously by one of the interviewees who is a former American diplomat in the Gulf, who said: “The ministry of information is a ministry of non-information. They try to stop information instead of disseminating it. All they are interested in is protecting the reputation of the royal family. So they try to stop you from writing an article about a guy who tries to run

over another guy in the desert. It isn't about money, but what you get depends on what effort you put into it."

One respondent, a former American diplomat to an Arab Gulf country, said they have a narrow band of communication. He said that the ultimate example is Prince Bandar who focused on relations with the White House and asked "the president to fix things if anything went wrong." He added that "this does not work anymore". This is due to two facts. One is that, following the Watergate scandal, the political party structure was weakened and the party barons that dominated decision making in the Congress lost their power to the advantage of the individual legislators who no longer vote based their votes on partisanship but were more influenced by their constituency preferences (Smith, 1996). Therefore to push an issue one should reach out to the public at large.

The two case studies, as well as the themes emerging from interviews, show that the different Arab Gulf states mainly focus on the relationship with the White House and the administration. In both cases, DP World and AWACS, the Arab Gulf depended on the President. As shown in Chapter 5 Prince Bandar was quoted as saying that the president was putting up a fight on the behalf of the Saudis. In the DP World case one interviewee, the head of an Arab American organization, said that the Emiratis were advised to keep low a profile and to let the president fix the issue with the Congress. In the case of the AWACS, Saudi Arabia relied on President Reagan to garner support for the deal, though they also had a strategy and did lobbying on their own. The President was a main pillar in the success of the deal. In the case of DP World their reliance on the president did not materialize in a successful outcome.

In addition to the fact that the support from the president is not sufficient to pass an issue, the president has no longer has the power to rally people under the premise of national interest as was the case with the AWACS. This is due to the fact that national interest is no longer a well-defined concept in the mind of the average American. During the cold war, the national interest consisted in containing the Soviet threat; with the collapse of the Berlin wall the notion of national interest became fluid. Even fighting terrorism as promoted by Bush did not represent an overarching definition of national interest similar to the containment of communism

(Paul and Paul, 2009). Therefore the President could link an issue such the AWACS to the containment of the Soviet threat and rally members of the Congress as well as the American public around him. However, this is not possible anymore. This was visible in the case of DP World as the argument presented by Bush that the UAE is an ally to the US in the war on terror was not effective.

The other main problem is that they suffer from a negative image .The negative image has a double effect: on one front, efforts to reach out to the US badly received by the average American on the other hand it hinders the Gulf appetite to reach out to the US.

The negative image of Arabs goes back before September 11 and the stigma of financing Bin Laden; it dates to the time Saudi Arabia financed the PLO who were involved in terrorist operations such as hijacking airplanes (Smith, 1996). Even recently, Qatar was also under scrutiny for supporting the brotherhood in Egypt, Hamas or rebels in Mali (Abrams, 2013). Thus, the Arab Gulf states are intimidated by the fact that they will face scrutiny if they conduct any activity that might seem to be interfering with American politics. They also do not spend on anything that might have a political implication.

One respondent said they are very selective in the issues they support. This stems from accusations that the Arab Gulf finances terrorism (Kaplan, 2003). Even the most benign efforts have been subject to scrutiny, such as when the Zayed Center was accused of anti-Semitism. This led to the closure of the center as well as the late Sheik Zayed having to withdraw a donation he made to the Harvard School Divinity School to create a chair for Islamic studies (Jaffit, 2005) (2003). Another incident is the opposition that faced the campus expansion of the Saudi Academy in Virginia. The opponents said that the teachings were Anti-American, though most communities in the US have their own schools (2009). According to one respondent who is an American scholar, the local residents look on it as a school for terrorists.

Such accusations deterred Arab Gulf states from engaging in the US, especially in activities or projects that might have any political implications.

Given this pre-established negative image, any public relations activity might be used against Arab Gulf states. The lobbying they might undertake could be subject to scrutiny as was the case with the DP World. Their bad image has put the Arab Gulf states in a reactive mood that focuses on keeping a low profile and concentrating on damage control rather than promoting a positive image. This was shown during the DP World episode, as the UAE mostly adopted a defensive position and tried as much as possible to avoid confrontation

The negative image has created a Catch 22 situation: It poses a barrier to entry (Paul and Paul, 2009). It is very difficult to lobby for an issue when the issue or the group carries a negative stigma (Baumgartner et al., 2009a). DP World demonstrated the prevalence of the negative image of Arabs and their association with terrorism. And if they are not active on the communication front they will not be able to change this prevailing image.

The themes that emerged from my interviews show that the Arab Gulf states are reluctant to undertake an aggressive full-fledged lobbying campaign as they do not want to be seen as using what is commonly described in the media as “oil money” to buy American policy. Anti-Arab Gulf propaganda, where Arabs are described as using oil money to blackmail the US government or to buy illegal perks, is prominent. A typical headline is “Saudi-Led Oil Lobby Group Financed 2012 Dark Money Attack Ads” (Fang, 2012). This article mentions the contribution by the American Petroleum Institution to industry friendly politicians. However, the author used this provocative headline as one of the members of this institute is a subsidiary of Aramco. Another example is the movie *Fahrenheit 9/11* by Michael Moore, which questioned the relationship between the house of Saud and the Bush family (2004). Even during the hearing of DP World, the company’s executive was questioned for using foreign lobbyists. The implied message from the hearing was that the UAE, a Gulf country, is using money to get illegal perks from the US government.

This fear of extra scrutiny has rendered the Arab Gulf more passive in their outreach to the US. One respondent I interviewed, the head of an Arab-American organization, said that the Arab League asked him to conduct a study for a public relations plan to promote a positive image of Arabs in the US. Shortly after, September 11th happened; however, instead of putting the plan into action they shelved it as they feared a counter-reaction from the American public. Until now the plan has not been implemented. The respondent said that the contrary should have happened. September 11th should have been a reason to galvanize Arabs to work on their image in the US. The AWACS marked a departure from this passive approach.

The attitude of the Arab Gulf contrasts with the general attitude in the US, where groups tend to intensify their lobbying when they feel there is a bias against them. A study that was conducted by Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball, and Leech in 2000 and spanned four years and ninety-eight cases said that lobbies are most active when general policy is against them (Baumgartner et al., 2009a). During this period, although conservative citizen groups were very vocal in the public arena, they were limited in their activity when it came to policy making. Baumgartner et al. explain that when you have friends in the government you do not need to lobby much, however when the policy is against you, you need to defend yourself. Some groups such as the poor do not lobby, though general policy is not in their favor, because they lack the means (Tichenor and Harris, 2005). However, this is not the case with the Arab Gulf.

Another example that supports this theory is the creation of the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC). The ADC was founded by Senator Jim Abourezk following the ABSCAM scandal, when the Arab community felt they needed to create an organization to defend themselves from stereotypes.

In addition to fearing public opinion that is tilted against them, they do not want to give excuses to the American administration to interfere in their own internal affairs.

Though the US is an important ally to the Arab Gulf States, they try to make sure to keep it at arm's length. Two respondents, one a former high ranking American military officer and a former Arab Gulf diplomat mentioned the following adage: "If your house is made of glass you don't throw stones at others". The Arab Gulf states have always tried to keep a balance between preserving their alliance with the Americans while at the same time limiting US interference in their internal affairs.

This effort to keep the US at arm's length started with the resistance that Saudi Arabia showed towards the American administration's various requests to establish military bases prior to the first Gulf war (1981i). The Arab Gulf viewed Bush's pressure on the different states to introduce democratic changes as an "imposed democracy" and as interference in domestic affairs (Habtoor, 2006). Additionally, the recent criticism the American administration addressed towards Arab Gulf states (2011b) has increased Arab Gulf states' urge to limit American interference in their internal affairs.

Therefore they try not to "lobby" as they do not want American administrations to think that this gives them carte blanche to dabble in internal Arab Gulf state affairs. However, this is not the way American politics works; the reciprocity does not apply in this respect. One respondent, an American scholar, said: "You have one superpower and facing it six small states". Not engaging the American public and government in order not to entice the US to interfere in Arab Gulf states represents a simplistic way of looking at American politics.

The motives behind American interference in the Gulf depend on several factors other than reciprocity. For example, facing the turbulence in Bahrain, the US, which wants to be seen as supporting democracy, criticized the government. The fact that Bahrain does not have a lobby to influence American politics did not lead the US government to isolate itself from developments in Bahrain. On the other hand, the

Israelis use their lobby to stop the US administration from imposing restrictions on them with respect to the Palestinians. The settlement issue is a prime example. President Obama tried to impose a freeze on the settlements in Israel. To prevent this interference Israel mobilized its lobby, which put pressure on the Congress and hence on Obama, and the issue of the freeze on settlements was abandoned (Greal, 2010).

In addition to the stigma Arabs have, the way Arab Gulf states conduct their relations with the US make it very hard to convince the average American that they are the US' trusted allies. Kissinger described Arab Gulf states' relations with the US as "opaque" (Kissinger, 2001). This ties in with the fact that Saudi Arabia as well as the different Arab Gulf states will try as much as possible to dissociate themselves from American policy. This is why, on a primary policy level, they take positions that might contradict American decisions, while on the secondary practical level, which involves military, trade, and technical partnerships, they try, as much as possible, to cooperate. They keep the policy association low key while they develop the secondary association, because they do not want to look for inside and other Arab critics as clients for the United States (Safran, 1985). For example, while opposing the US war on Iraq, American troops used bases in the Arab Gulf (Otterman, 2003) While Qatar opposed the strike on Lebanon in 2006, it reportedly helped the US deliver bombs to Israel (Umrani, 2006).

They will only openly endorse the US when there is an Arab concurrence on an issue (Safran, 1985). Even in the case of Afghanistan, where the Soviet invasion was an eminent threat, they did not want to seem to be joining the US; they wanted to look as if they were adopting a parallel course (Safran, 1985). The fact that these policy positions are not always in line with US policy, though on the practical level they actually are, make it difficult for the average American to view Arab Gulf states as strategic allies to the US

## **The relationship between the Arab Gulf and Arab Americans**

In addition to their lack of perception of the need for a lobby to cement their relationship with the US, the Arab Gulf leadership does not have a good understanding of American politics and of the role of grassroots. One respondent, a former American ambassador to an Arab Gulf country, said: “There is a problem with the model of American politics in the minds of Gulf rulers. They think that American politics works the way their politics works. But we are not run by a family; we are enmeshed in a set of institutions.”

The problem, according to interviews, lies in the mentality of Arab Gulf rulers who do not understand the value of a grassroots base, nor do they understand institution building or the power of information. The case studies, as well as the themes that emerged from grounded theory, show that the Arab Gulf does not understand the value of having a long term base of American citizens to push for their issues as they arise. They fund generously whenever they have an issue at stake, but they do not invest in a long term constituency.

Ironically, the AWACS episode highlighted the importance of grassroots to AIPAC (Smith, 1996). Initially the coalition that Prince Bandar put together created a constituency to support the AWACS sale, though as shown in Chapter 5 this constituency was transient and only relevant to the arm deal. In his biography Prince Bandar was said to offset the Jewish votes for labor votes (Simpson, 2008). In the case of the AWACS, the economic constituency, the domestic constituency for jobs that the Saudis were able to gather, supported the president’s position and led to the success of the deal. In the case of DP World, it was the constituency that Eller & Co lobbyist was able to gather by raising the salience of the acquisition and by using fear appeals that pushed for blocking the deal, with there being no counter-constituency to support the deal. In the course of the hearing, Senator Shelby said that it was not him who was dissatisfied with the deal but the people in the coffee shop in Montana “or Oregon or wherever you want to go. It’s of great concern”. Despite the support of the president in both cases, the domestic base was crucial in winning or losing. AWACS passed while DP World failed. In analyzing and

comparing the two cases, I demonstrated the importance of a constituency in pushing for issues. However, in the two cases, the constituencies were not permanent ones that could make the base for a lobby; they were created in response to the issue at hand.

During the AWACS episode, Saudi Arabia supported Arab American organizations, namely the NAAA; however the support was confined to the AWACS deal. The AWACS episode shows that the Saudis started disengaging from Arab American organizations at the same time as AIPAC started reinforcing its engagement with grassroots. AIPAC worked on increasing their grassroots base and capturing this base by social services and institutionalizing relations, coupling grassroots with financial contributions, while the Saudis starting slowly disengaging from the Arab American organizations that had the potential to create a permanent base for them.

The AWACS episode taught AIPAC the value of grassroots. Prior to the AWACS, AIPAC had relied on the Jewish population concentrated in major states: New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania, California, Massachusetts, and Illinois. Their weakness in the Senate came from the Southwest, among conservative Republicans. To spread their base and reinforce it, they started focusing on social services: community relations councils, day schools, country clubs. This falls in line with Olson's theory that people are mobilized when they get an individual benefit from their engagement.

The pro-Israel lobby coupled this social engagement with financial engagement as they started creating PACs or 527 organizations that fund US candidates in elections. They were bi-partisan. Dine had learned from the AWACS episode as he saw the deficiency in the AWACS coalition that was temporary and was not institutionalized .By creating these PACs, he enforced a long term grassroots base that was independent of the individual issues that may arise. AIPAC's objective became to activate the grassroots. They ran political workshops and got local leaders to increase their contact with senators and congressmen (Smith, 1996) .

The Arab Gulf has not invested in nurturing an Arab American constituency to push for their issues for two reasons one being they don't understand the role of grassroots the second being is that they do not see successful organizations that are worth investing in. They do not see an organization that has a large captive audience of Arab Americans.

As a result, the Arab Gulf does not have a domestic base to plead for its cause, unlike other countries or regions such as Israel, Greece, Armenia or South America that have ethnic lobbies advocating strong American relations with their kinsmen. The power of these ethnic groups or lobbies, what Mathias calls the 'secret weapon,' does not reside in their tactics or money. Rather, it is their dedication, and the emotional ties that link them to their country of origin. What drives the members of an ethnic group is a 'passionate commitment' (Mathias, 1980). The two case studies, as well as the themes generated from the various interviews, show that Arabs have not invested in grassroots. Thus, while Arab-Gulf lobbying does not lack resources, it lacks a domestic base, an Arab American community that is united and committed to Arab issues.

One main initiator for a strong lobby is for the country of origin to have an interest in their kinsmen in the US. This is why, though the Irish are a large community in the US, they did not constitute a strong lobby on Irish independence (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). One reason why there is no Arab American lobby is because Arab governments are not interested in Arab Americans lobbying for them. They rely on foreign agents and they do the lobbying separately. Each country lobbies for its own narrow national interests, which are mainly to procure arms or to seal a business deal.

Arab Gulf governments have not invested in engaging Arab Americans. Though they give generously whenever any catastrophe hits the US(2013c), they channel very

little money to target Arab American organizations or groups. In contrast, Israel invests large sums to connect with Jewish Americans. One American respondent, a former statesman said: “You have to rekindle the love of their former lives. Look what AIPAC does: they send American kids to go spend summer in Kibbutz, create a link with their old lives. The Arab community has twenty times the money of the Jewish community. How much oil do they have in Israel? Let me ask you this question? How do you get grassroots support, by having the tallest tower in Dubai?” What the interviewee meant is that the Arab Gulf has the means and should invest in the Arab communities in the US in order to create grassroots support.

One respondent, the head of a prominent Arab American organization, said that “unfortunately” they get very little donations from Arab Gulf countries. He added: “We get some money from Gulf countries but it is limited, the whole budget is \$1.4 or \$1.5 million which is very small. If you go across town here there is a place called the ADL, Abraham Foxman, ADL has a fifty million dollar budget compared to our 1.5 million dollar budget. AIPAC has 75 million dollar budget compared to our 1.5 million dollar budget.”

One head of an Arab American organization said that Arab-owned businesses could contribute to Arab American organizations, but they do not. He tried to approach some but he did not get any response. Another respondent, a former American diplomat to the Arab Gulf, said that the Arab Gulf does not invest in building a constituency in the US. He said: “You get what you pay for. If you don’t pay anything you don t get anything.”

The fact that Arab Gulf states do not see a success story in Arab American organizations has further suppressed their appetite to fund them. As Walker noted, governments are usually the most conservative patrons. They rarely invest in start-ups, they would rather give maintenance funds. And so far, they did not see an effective structure that is worth investing in.

Even when they want to establish non-political lobbies to promote trade and investments between the US and the Arab Gulf, they prefer to do it directly rather than going through Arab American organizations .This was visible in the DP World .Facing the crisis the government of Dubai did not seek help from Arab American groups despite that fact that two members of the congress that stood adamantly against the deal Were Senator Carl Levin from Michigan and Debbie Stabenow from Detroit. Those two members have a large Arab American constituency .DP World did not try to go through ACCESS in order to generate grassroots support which can influence those two opponents, on the contrary they preferred to rely on high priced lobbyists .

The relationship between Arab Gulf states and Arab American organizations is characterized by inconsistency and a lack of trust. When asked what they think about Arab American organizations, respondents representing Arab states showed skepticism in the ability of Arab Americans to get organized or to exert influence on American policy, though they were described by one Arab Gulf diplomat as “friendly organizations.” At the same time, however, he belittled their effectiveness. Also the Arab Gulf states do not see the Arab organizations as united, they see them as groups fighting among each other and criticizing each other. One interviewee an Arab Gulf statesman said: “Who are the Arab Americans? They are like a drug, we do not see them. On the other hand there is no real representative of the Arab Americans who does represent the community.” What he meant by this comment is that they see the heads of these organizations, but they do not see the community at work. They do not see the community as a force. This was also visible in the AWACS episode. Though Prince Bandar engaged the NAAA, the organization did not have a grassroots base that it could be mobilized in support of the deal.

In addition to the lack of trust in the capabilities of the organizations they do not trust the people. One respondent said: “The Gulf governments don’t trust the Palestinians, the Lebanese, the Iraqis...” Another respondent, a former American diplomat to the

Arab Gulf, said: "If you are an Arab American, when you try to get to an Arab country they look at you with suspicion. You are not welcome. The Arabs generally prefer someone with no connection in the Middle East to someone with roots there." Also the fact that positions that Arab American organizations took were not always aligned with Gulf interests discourages the Gulf States from supporting Arab American groups (BARRINGER, 1990). The first Gulf War exemplified this situation, as some Arab American groups opposed the war. This led to the total drying up of funds coming from the Gulf (Shain, 1996).

On the other hand, when interviewing young, active Arab Americans, they mentioned that the Gulf cannot be relied on and that a strong lobby or a strong community cannot be built if it depends on resources from outside, especially when the resources are tied to issues on which Arab Americans might agree or disagree. One head of a young Arab American organization said the reason why some of the old organizations failed is because they relied so much on support from the Gulf and "bowed" to the Gulf instead of nurturing a domestic base. Gulf support has been conditional and inconstant as it was linked to political goals that are not always compatible with Arab American aspirations. They will finance them when they want something like the AWACS, but will give little money when they work on issues of interest to Arab Americans.

Various Arab American respondents said that the Gulf helps them only when they need their assistance on an immediate and narrow issue, they do not help Arab Americans to become strong in the American scene. However, this will eventually take away credibility from these Arab Americans or these organizations as they will be labeled as foreign agents. One respondent said that they do not understand that by promoting Arab Americans into positions of power, even if those do not work specifically in the Arab Gulf states' direct interests, they will be strengthening their position within the American system.

One of the founders of NAAA said that at the time of AWACS, money, foreign and domestic, was flowing to the organization. However, once the AWACS episode was closed and NAAA started focusing on an issue of importance to Arab Americans, which is Palestine, the foreign money dried up and with it the domestic money. This is unlike Israel, which has helped the Jewish-American constituency become a strong community inside the US (Friedman, 1995). The focus of the pro-Israel lobby is more on the relationship between the US and Israel and is not focused on narrow issues.

Another dimension to the problem is that Arab Americans do not identify with the Arab Gulf. A former American diplomat I interviewed said: “So, if you talk about Emiratis, they do not emigrate. So people who emigrate are people from the Levant. Lebanese, Syrians, people from Iraq, or Egypt. People from the Maghreb are beginning to emigrate, but not Saudis, not Kuwaitis, not Omanis. Here is the problem. Where is the money?” Those immigrants do not come from the Arab Gulf. A big group of them who come from the Levant and are Christians do not relate to the Arab Gulf (Feldman and ‘al Šēm, 1988) and do not identify or have affinity with Saudi Arabia or the UAE or Qatar, unlike a big portion of Jewish-Americans, who despite coming from different parts of the world identify with Israel. Though the new wave of immigration has brought more Muslims, as more immigrants come from Morocco and Yemen (Nagel and Staeheli, 2005), even they do not have emotional links to Saudi Arabia or the Emirates.

In addition to the issue of identity there is divergence of interests. Although , according to one respondent who is the head of an Arab American organization, Arab Americans act with a sense of “Arabness” and pride in their heritage, their interests do not coincide with each Gulf country’s narrow national interests. They are interested in an overall American policy towards the Middle East but they are not interested in whether the UAE or the KSA get fighter jets sales approved.

According to Feldman, to have an ethnic lobby the diaspora should identify not only with its country of origin but also with the government in the country of residence (Feldman). This is why, though the Iranian Americans are influential in the US, they do not lobby for Iran as they do not identify with the regime (Paul and Paul, 2009).

The Arab spring is another source for Arab Americans to distance themselves from Arab Gulf governments. A respondent said that some Arab Americans look with discontent towards the Gulf when they see the wave of democratization across the whole Arab world except for the Arab Gulf that is resisting democratic changes. The Arab Spring has actually generated lobbying against some Gulf state governments: Bahraini activists lobbied the US government for the cancellation of a 53 million dollar arms deal to the Bahraini government (Rogin, 2012).

A respondent who works for an Arab American organization said that some of its members demanded that it request the US government put pressure on Arab Gulf states for democratic changes. The organization refused their request on the grounds that they do not interfere with Arab states' internal affairs.

### **Problem within the Arab American community**

In the 1970s, the Arab American influence was expected to grow in consciousness and self-confidence and political development. It was backed by the Arab Gulf and started to turn public opinion on issues in the Middle East. However, quite the opposite happened (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). AIPAC metamorphosed from a lobby to a "super lobby" and enforced its position on Middle East issues (Smith, 1996). Politics is a factor for disunity in the Arab American community. It also creates disagreement with Arab Gulf countries, as was the case with the first Gulf war. Even the issue of Palestine, which interests the different Arab American groups, is not a uniting factor. The different groups disagree on the approach to solve the problem of the Arab Spring. Although it ignited pride among Arab Americans, it enforced the

division in the Arab community. Also different Arab American organizations take different attitudes towards the changes in the Arab World. Arab American organizations are divided on Syria. The Arab American Anti-discrimination committee (ADC) is trying to distance itself from the conflict saying it does not interfere with internal issues of Arab government. This has created discontent with many Arab American groups who see the need for intervention to stop the bloodshed. The Arab American Institute (AAI) has focused on the protection of minorities in Syria. Internal disunity has been the main problem of the Arab American community (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). Dr. Geoffrey Kemp from the Carnegie Endowment Fund for Peace said of Arab-American lobbying that in contrast to AIPAC the attempts of Arab organizations to embrace a collaborative Arab view is weighed down by internal disagreement.

The most important issue facing the Arab community in the US is the issue of common identity. A common identity is not clear given the differences in religion, common cultural heritage, history, and physical look. Not everyone identifies with the Arab identity and heritage, to start with. Some Lebanese will say they are Phoenicians and not Arabs, for example (Khoury, 1987). Some think of themselves as Arabs while others adopt a more local or religious identity. Many Lebanese Christians think of themselves as Lebanese and not Arabs, many Christians Egyptians think they are Copts (Shain, 1996). However, the new wave of immigrants coming from the Yemen Maghreb and Iraq are Muslims and identify more with their Arab heritage. Given the different factions, Arab Americans have different views on politics in the Middle East. They do not all share the same interests. For example, right wing Lebanese Christians will not have the same priorities on Palestine as Palestinians and Syrians. In fact at various times during the Lebanese civil war era there have been hostilities between Lebanese Americans and Palestinian Americans. This is why one respondent said that the organizations that are the most successful are the ones that are focused on a specific country and hence have a more cohesive target audience, such as American Task for Lebanon or Task Force for Palestine. The organizations that have premised their lobby on an overall Arab cause such as the National Arab American Association (NAAA) did not survive. The NAAA reached its peak with the AWACS, however once this episode was closed and

the foreign money dried up, they were not able to be self sustainable. In 1982, at the height of NAAA activity the various Arab American organizations could not gather more than 2.5 % of the total Arab-American population (Goott and Rosen, 1983). According to respondents who worked in the organisation, NAAA did not have a popular base large enough that was interested in Pan Arab issues. In 2000 the NAAA merged with the Arab American Anti-Defamation Committee (ADC).

In addition to the fact that different factions have different views on American foreign policy in the Middle East, the way they view politics differs between recent and earlier immigrants. These two waves have different perspectives on Middle East affairs. The new generation that has stronger ties tends to replicate the conflicts existing in the Middle East, while the early immigrants who came to the US at the turn of the century have no connection with these conflicts.

Earlier immigrants look at the Middle East from the point of view of heritage. They have a “larger” view of the region. One respondent gave the example of the current turmoil in Lebanon. While some recent immigrants sided with Geagea and some sided with Nasrallah, the third and fourth generations of Lebanese-Americans do not know who these politicians are and they do not take sides. They don t care whether one faction in Lebanon wins over the other, they care more about the end of the conflict and the prosperity of the country. One respondent stated that the internal problems that faced the NAAA board and led to its failure are mainly due to the fact that the board had two different waves of Arab Americans who had very conflicting views on the region. The second and third generations of Arab Americans look at the Middle East from an American perspective on how the policy should be in conjunction with America’s democratic values. They do not look at it from the perspective of the interests of the Arab World.

As discussed in the literature review chapter, Middle East affairs differ in salience from one faction to another (Wald, 2009). Therefore, donating to promote the welfare of the Arab World is not a very appealing cause to Arab Americans. They are more

interested in advocating issues directly related to their own well-being. One respondent who is a strong advocate of the Palestinian cause said that when he went to Arab American groups in Detroit and asked them to talk to their representative to support the Palestinian state, his request fell on deaf ears, as they are more interested in requesting a new road in the suburb of Detroit than in asking for support for a Palestinian state.

In contrast, Sheldon Adelson, one of the main contributors to the Mitt Romney campaign, said that his core belief is Israel (ZELENY, 2012). Very few Arab Americans will say their core belief is the Arab world or Palestine! This is why the issue of foreign policy has low salience among Arab Americans. It is interesting to Arab Americans only from the angle that a better view of the Arab world will reflect on their image and standing as a community in the US. However, foreign policy as a stand-alone issue is not of interest to them.

Another feature of the Arab American community that hinders the formation of a lobby is that political activism is as alien to them as it is alien to Arabs themselves. Abdel Nasser once asked whether lobbying was legal (Terry, 2005). Arab-Americans think of lobbying as a “cabal” or as a conspiracy to manipulate or to interfere in US internal affairs. However, in the American political system, lobbying is a legal institutionalized activity, a manifestation of democracy. Although the Arab American community is economically successful--it has a high rate of professionals and enjoys an above average income (2010a) --it does not donate much to Arab American political organizations. This is due to two factors: first, Arab Americans are assimilationists and foreign policy issues have low salience to them; second, Arab Americans do not have a culture of involvement in politics. Most Arab Americans came from societies where political activism is shunned (Lebanon is an exception) and most Arab Americans have historically not been politically active and this seems to be engrained in the Arab culture; whenever they make financial contributions or donations, these revolve around charities. They will rarely contribute to political causes. One respondent, active in several Arab American organizations, said that they would give money to Saint Jude to cure children who have cancer, to the poor

in Detroit, or send money to Syrian refugees, or to rebuild destroyed homes in Gaza but very rarely will you find an Arab American who will go to a fund raiser and write a check to a US political candidate and tell him: "Here is your check congressman, I really appreciate your position supporting this or that issue". Given this apolitical culture and given that it is difficult to get political issues on which to unite the community, funding Arab American organisations has been a difficult task and most organisations struggle with it.

Indeed, all Arab American organisations are struggling. One respondent, the head of an Arab American organisation, said: "Even though we are not a lobby organization we do government relations. We have contacts with the White House and Congress. We used to have a lobbyist but we could not afford her. We could do more but we have limited resources. We have over 700 cases of discrimination but only have three lawyers to handle them. Our government department relations does not exist .It is sad when you think about it."

The lack of fund has a created a state of competition among Arab American organisations which aggravated the problem of disunity and further weakened the community . This also existed among black organisations (Ainsworth, 2002). The problem is that the lack of financial resources creates a state of competition over funds. Each organisation wants to prove that it is the legitimate representative of Arab Americans. One of the respondents said in the course of the interview:"I am the 'legitimate' representative of Arab Americans". This statement shows the level of competition among Arab American organisations on legitimacy, because ultimately the one that can prove itself as "legitimate" is the one that is going to attract most of the scarce funds . This eventually weakens the already weak group of organizations.

Another problem is the political maturity of the Arab American community. Some communities such as the Chinese are very prominent in business but have a low involvement in politics. This applies also to Arab Americans (Sayigh, 1991).

Another factor that creates cohesion among a group is the fear from an existential

threat. One of the reasons for the unity of the Jewish community around Israel is that they feel that the maintenance of the State of Israel is the only guarantee for the survival of their race. The holocaust memory is still alive in their national consciousness. The maintenance of the state of Israel means their preservation as people.

One interviewee said that in the Arab world there have been many pogroms but not one holocaust that mobilizes everyone. Another respondent said that, while Jews had the holocaust and the Armenians had the genocide by the Turks, there is no similar tragic event in the Arab recent history. Arab Americans may feel some sympathy towards their Palestinian, Iraqi, Syrian, or Lebanese kinsmen, but in no way feel that their existence or identity is in jeopardy. Palestinian Americans represent the only exception. They are afraid to become forgotten people if the issue of Palestine ever slips out of public discourse. This is why Palestinian Americans are the most active among Arab American groups.

Also Arab Americans face a problem of leadership. They feel they have no real leadership to represent them and no one to address their concerns in the media or protect them from the FBI investigation that followed the Patriotic Act (Salaita, 2005). Though the community has the potential to be really influential, they do not see a strong organization with a strong leadership that can represent them and protect them.

One problem is that there is no infrastructure to rally the different organisations. There is no umbrella organization from which the different organizations take cues; each one operates in an independent mode. Also there has been no effective or consistent leadership in organizations like the NAAA. One respondent, previously a member of Arab American organisations, said that NAAA had times when it had strong leadership and times when it had weak leaderships. But there has been no strong leadership to attract the different factions.

## **Verification of theoretical framework**

I will discuss two kinds of implication in this chapter. The first kind consists of conclusions drawn from the case studies. I will label the conclusions that can be linked to the theoretical framework and those that can be proven with high level of evidence as dense theories in Arab Gulf lobbying. As discussed in the methodology chapter, a dense theory is a general theory that can be proven in a particular case. To illustrate, we can take the theory of Olson and the need for incentives to mobilize people. The AWACS case study shows how unions and businesses incentivized by the potential economic gain were mobilized, and therefore it validates the theory of Olson. However, the scope of my study does not extend to cases where Arab Americans were mobilized in response to an incentive, and I therefore do not have a case that validates the theory regarding Arab Americans. This is the reason why I could not come up with a dense theory stating that Arab Americans need incentives to be mobilized. I could only extrapolate from the AWACS case study and from the success of Arab American social services organizations to come up with a conclusion that Arab Americans need incentives to be mobilized. From this research I was able to come up with five dense theories regarding: need for grassroots, need for incentives, effectiveness of social services organization, barriers to entry and the possibilities of breaking these barriers. I also came up with proposition regarding patronage, the role of Arab American and the link between political and social services organizations.

The first dense theory entails the domestic base: the most important conclusion this research offers is that in order for Arab Gulf states to effectively lobby on major policy issues in the US, a domestic lobby with a sustainable constituency is fundamental. The two case studies show the necessity of the domestic element: a grassroots constituency was a main factor leading to success or failure of the issue. Therefore, as deduced from the AWACS case and from grounded theory and the literature, the most successful lobbying is when the Arab Gulf states have been able to align an American partner as in the cases of the arms deals. This allowed them to have a constituency to support their lobbying. Even Bard stated that on arm deals the Arab Gulf was at times able to beat the pro-Israel lobby (Bard, 1991).. The second dense theory we can deduct that Arab need to offer incentives in order to

mobilize people the two case studies directly prove this proposition. In the AWACS case, the arm deal generated its own constituency consisting of the contractors, subcontractors and the individuals whose jobs were involved. On the other hand, in the DP World case did not present any direct incentives for anyone to support it. The deal involved the acquisition of existing operations and not the creation of a new company or a large order of goods that could generate business and jobs for Americans, From this dense theory we can extrapolate to the proposition that in order for the Arabs to mobilize Arab Americans they need to offer them incentives. This can be inferred partially from the case studies that show us that people are motivated to support an issue when they are getting a direct benefit and partially from the success of the pro-Israel lobby that beyond the political ideology offers social services to its members.

Looking at the universe of Arab American organizations, one can see that the most successful organizations are the ones that focus on social services and hence bring direct benefits to their members in return for their contributions. The organisations that receive the most funding also tend to be non-political; they are social organisations such as the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) . ACCESS has grown steadily and today it has 270 employees. It even started an alliance called the Network for Arab American Communities (NNAAC), that gathers 23 Arab American community-based organizations. ACESSS has been able to raise substantial funds for its projects, among which 20 millions for the Arab American museum in Detroit, an amount that none of the politically oriented organizations was able to raise. Moreover, 60% of this money was raised from individuals.

However, the Arab American social services organizations are regional community entities that are not connected to the political Washington based organizations. When examining the success of AIPAC, we can see that the Jewish model brought direct benefits to its constituents by establishing councils, schools, and country clubs. Those establishments brought immediate benefit to the individual as well as strengthening the community. On the other hand, NAAA had nothing but a political aim. It represented no immediate benefits to its members. Comparing the success of AIPAC versus the failure of NAAA confirms Olson's theory stating that lobbies that have nothing but a political objective tend not to have a very committed constituency.

Our third dense theory concludes that traditional Arab American organizations do not have a captive active membership because their mandate is limited to a political goal and does not involve any direct services the theory also concludes that the organizations that can mobilize Arab Americans are the ones that offer direct benefits such as ACCESS.

The conclusion we discern from the failure of NAAA the success of ACCESS and the success of AIPAC is that the first step to a strong structure for a lobby is to create a link between political and social services organizations. A structure is needed to coordinate the activities of both types of organizations. A link between the organizations that provide social services and the political organizations will result in a more motivated constituency that can be mobilized and hence will lead to the empowerment of the Arab American community.

The failure of NAAA partially confirms Walker's theory of patronage. According to my interviews, Saudi Arabia's support was only linked to the AWACS deal and was not long term. After the deal was sealed, the support Saudi Arabia directly offered decreased and with it the domestic money that mainly came from companies that had interests in the Arab Gulf. Though the inconstancy of the Arab Gulf support contributed to the failure of the NAAA, this was not the main reason behind it. On this point, the answers in my interviews were not all consistent. However, the feedback received was that, after the AWACS episode, Saudi Arabia as well as American companies who have interest in the Arab Gulf decreased their support for NAAA. Here Walker's theory that patrons need to support the organization for an extended period of time in order for the revenues to be sufficient and the organization to become self-sustainable is partially relevant. It is not totally relevant because, as explained in the problems section, foreign policy as a stand-alone issue has low salience among Arab Americans. Therefore, even if it were generously funded by an outside patron, if the organization offering is not appealing enough it will not be able to generate a constituency. In addition to the fact that the model was not appealing to the average Arab American due to the low salience of foreign policy, the board had internal problems. One interviewee who was involved with Arab American organizations said that the Lebanese war created differences among the board. Another interviewee who was involved with the organization said that differences emerged between members of the board who were third generation Americans and

recent immigrants. The earlier immigrants were totally assimilated and looked at the Middle East as part of their background and with a more impartial view of the region, whereas Arab Americans who had recently immigrated carried the drain of the problems of their ancestral homeland and took sides in the inter-Arab conflicts. This echoes research that says that the main reason behind the failure of the pro-Arab lobby at the time of the NAAA was factionalism (Goott and Rosen, 1983), (Feldman and 'al Šēm, 1988). Therefore, even if the support of the Arab Gulf had been consistent, NAAA might still not have been able to succeed. The conclusion we could partially induct from the Arab case reaffirms Walker theory that for an organization to be successful the support should be sustainable and not linked to a short term goal.

The fourth dense theory that can be inferred from this study is that the negative image of Arabs and Muslims creates a barrier that hinders their ability to lobby effectively and to plead their case to the American administration as well as to the American public. The real barrier to entry is the negative image of Arabs and Muslims in the mind of the average American (Paul and Paul, 2009), as it is very difficult to lobby for an issue when the issue or the group carries a negative stigma (Baumgartner et al., 2009a). DP World demonstrated the prevalence of the negative image of Arabs and their association with terrorism

The fifth dense theory regards the breakdown of policy subsystems and changing the status quo. The current situation as inferred from interviews, as well as from the case studies, is that public discourse on the Middle East has been captured by the pro-Israel lobby. The pro-Israel lobby has been able to dominate the public discourse on the Middle East and has created a barrier preventing the Arab Gulf from voicing its views on the matter (Findley, 1989), (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007). According to interviews, as well to the hearings, testimonials and the available literature I have examined, the pro-Israel groups want to "drive a wedge" between the Arab world and the US in order to be the sole reference for matters on the Middle East. Those established relations with policy makers leave very little room for a pro-Arab lobby to voice its concerns. However, the AWACS episode shows that when the issue is properly marketed to the American public by raising its salience and framing it in the proper way and when enough pressure is exerted, policy makers can change their positions. The conclusion regarding Arab Gulf lobbying is that the real barrier to entry

is not the pre-established relationship with the pro-Israel lobby, which wants to have a monopoly on issues pertaining to the Middle East. The case of AWACS proved that this subsystem can be broken by raising the salience of the issue and framing it properly to the average American. When AWACS was framed in a way that appealed to the average American, the Saudis found groups that were willing to support it. In addition to framing it as an issue of containment of communism they hyped the economic benefits, and new groups and people took interest and pushed for the policy in a certain direction.

This also links to the theory of Kruger and Olson that in order to change the rent seeking behavior that some lobbies have over certain policy areas, which is represented by the benefit one group has at the expense of the rest, a larger group should be introduced to counter the effect of the dominant group. This rent seeking behavior is represented by the control that the pro-Israel lobby has over the public discourse on Middle East issue, where they are the dominant voice at the expense of other groups (Findley, 1985). To reverse such behavior a larger number of people should be interested. The AWACS episode proves this theory: as shown in the various publications pertaining to it (Simpson, 2008), (Emerson, 1985), Prince Bandar went and spoke to everyone, even the florists were targeted and were lured into the economic benefits this deal would bring to them, in order to reverse the rent seeking behavior the Israeli lobby had over Middle East policy. Ironically, the DP World case illustrates this, albeit the outcome was not in the Gulf States' favor. The acquisition was a technical issue that was controlled by established actors. When awareness about the issue increased and it reached the public discourse, those established actors lost control over the issue. Such transactions are normally handled by a closed system that includes the Treasury and other agencies involved in approving foreign acquisition. Here the view of Graziano is validated regarding issue networks where issues have vast policy implications and the actors are not well defined (Graziano, 2001). For the issue of DP World, the media, Eller & Co, a commercial company, the Congress, and the cities all ultimately had a say in the transaction. The issue did not stay confined to the established actors.

The Arab case of lobbying and its failure to create a lobby allows us to induct proposition about lobbying .On the theoretical front, I can conclude from the Arab case that lobbying is a discipline that is very much linked to the culture. One main hurdle for the Arab lobby is that lobbying is alien to the Arab culture therefore Arab Gulf countries are reluctant to lobby at the same time the Arab American are not politically active. This is also visible in other communities such as the Chinese community. Though relatively large and economically strong inside the US, and though the US and China have important relationships the, Chinese community does not constitute a lobby. This is the same case as the Arab one. Lobbying is alien to the Chinese policy makes as much as it is alien the Chinese American. The second theoretical conclusion we can infer from the Arab case is that in order for a community to lobby they need to identify with the government they lobby for. The Arab American in addition to the fact they don t identify culturally with the Gulf there is no government they identify with. This is why we see that though the Iranians constitute an important community in the US they do not lobby for the Iran simply because they have no affinity with it government. In the Cuban case, the lobby works against the government of Cuba and is a prime reason for keeping the embargo on the Cuban regime (LEOGRANDE, 2013).

The third theoretical conclusion I can make from the Arab case is that for a diaspora to lobby they cannot lobby for a country that is seen negatively by the American public. On the contrary the diaspora will tend to dissociate itself from that country's government. It was hard for the Arab American group to lobby or to show association with the government of Saudi Arabia given the terrorism stigma that marked the country following the tragic September 11 events. The same applies to the Iranian American; the Iranian community cannot lobby for the Iranian government that openly takes an antagonist position to the US.

## **Implications**

To start a lobby and prior to seeking to solve the different problems this task faces, the Arab Gulf should most fundamentally perceive the need for a lobby and the need for collective action. Beyond that, most importantly they should, first, understand the crucial role of a long term lobby that can cement the relationship between the US and the Arab Gulf and they should understand the value of collective approach when dealing with the US, second they should make an effort in engaging Arab Americans, thirdly they need to address the general public and work on their image and not solely rely on support from the president.

### **Need to understand the value of grassroots and of collective action**

In short, to start a lobby the main element that is missing is the domestic base. Though many scholars and journalists have pointed out the need to have a lobby, none have signaled that Arabs do not have the foundation to start such a lobby. For example, an article in the *Daily Star*, under the title “I have a dream” starts by stating the need for a lobby in order to have leverage with the US. However, on starting the lobby the author says: “You may ask, how do we start with such a big endeavor? Head hunt a lobbying executive and his team from one of the best firms in town; slap them with good incentives, rent out office space, and start. That simple”(Rifai, 2010). The previous chapters have shown that the task is not as simple as that. Creating an organization and hiring a few experienced lobbyists is the easy part; the hard part is creating the constituency behind it. AIPAC and AARP (American Association of Retired People) are strong not because they have in-house lobbyists but because they have constituencies behind them. Therefore when the AARP goes and speaks to a legislator, the legislator knows this lobbyist represents 38 million members . The Arab Gulf needs to understand this fact and the need to engage Arab Americans if it seeks to influence the US foreign policy towards the Middle East.

Additionally, the various Arab Gulf states should understand the need to adopt a common approach when dealing with the US. As inferred from interviews with American respondents, currently inter-Arab rivalries lead to an inconsistent narrative when dealing with the American government and this leads to confusion on the American front (although it characterizes all Arab countries and is not specific to the Arab Gulf (Findley, 1989)). The AWACS episode represents an exception as the different Arab countries had 25 registered lobbyists who were all geared to lobby for one issue (Simpson, 2008), whereas in the DP World episode the other Arab Gulf countries did not make any effort to help the UAE defend its position.

### **Engaging Arab American**

In order to cement a grassroots base, Arab Gulf states need to engage Arab Americans and need to go through Arab American organizations that have a captive audience. One interviewee for this dissertation, the head of an Arab American organization focusing on the social services, said that many organizations that have adopted some grandiose mandate failed because they had no constituency behind them. In his opinion, the key for Arab Gulf state is to help Arab American organizations work on their grassroots and the maturity of the political agenda as this is what constitutes the foundation of a lobby. If this foundation does not exist, creating an organization and hiring lobbyists will be void, will not generate any results, and will lead the Gulf to further mistrust Arab American organizations and their community. Therefore, in order to engage Arab Americans Arab Gulf States need to change their attitude towards Arab American organizations. Looking at other success stories, namely the pro-Israel lobby, their support has been consistent for an extended period of time, irrespective of the issues at stake. Support that is conditional and based on quid pro quo will not result in a sustainable base. The focus should be the relationship of the US with the Arab world, namely the Arab Gulf and not limited to a specific issue. Therefore the Arab Gulf should change its quid pro quo attitude towards the Arab community and look at the relationship with them from the perspective that a stronger Arab American community would give the Arab Gulf leverage with the US and would improve the Arab-Gulf image.

However, funding effective Arab American organizations and helping them gather a large captive constituency might not directly materialize in a constituency that is ready to promote Arab Gulf issues, however. This is due to a fact that was highlighted in the Problems section: First of all, Arab Americans do not identify with the Arab Gulf. As discussed in the problems chapter, the earlier wave came from the Levant and its members were mainly Christians. Though the second wave of immigrants that came from Morocco, Egypt and Yemen were mainly Muslim and have a stronger identification with their Arab roots they do not identify with the Arab Gulf.

The AWACS case study shows this fact. Though Saudi Arabia supported and mobilized Arab American organizations, the constituency that was mobilized was not Arab Americans. The mandate of Arab American organizations was to liaise with the business community and not to mobilize the Arab American constituency. The answer from one of the interviewees who worked for NAAA at the time was: "We did not have to do it all". Though in the case of AWACS, Prince Bandar understood the importance of a constituency and engaged the unions and the business community, he did not work on a long term constituency, which was a difficult long term task that required a lot of education and effort to engage a community that did not identify with the Gulf. It was easier to address companies and unions that had a direct interest in the deal.

This fact creates a Catch 22: Arab Americans are the best conduit for a lobby and they are the base that can make a constituency for a pro-Arab Gulf lobby, however they do not identify with the Arab Gulf. The way to solve this problem is by presenting the Arab Gulf to Arab Americans as part of the overall Arab world and by framing the pro-Arab Gulf lobby's mandate as the promotion of overall US relations with the Arab world. Arab American will be more responsive to the idea of a pro-Arab Gulf lobby if its mandate is to promote the relationship between the US and the Arab world, because, as shown in the literature review chapter, the Arab element remains a strong component in the identity of different factions of Arab Americans. (Nassar-McMillan et al., 2011)

Even if the Arab Gulf presents a pan Arab narrative, the different states have to be realistic about the degree to which Arab Americans identify with the Arab world. The

identification of Arab Americans with the Arab world cannot be compared to the degree to which American Jews identify with Israel, whereby they see the maintenance of their identity and “peoplehood” in the maintenance of the state of Israel (Ben-Moshe and Segev, 2007). Arab Americans are very different from Jewish-Americans: whereas Jewish-Americans look at the state of Israel as a source for their identity, Arab Americans look at the Arab world as part of their heritage. Therefore an AIPAC model or an organization that solely focuses on foreign policy will not have enough appeal to attract Arab Americans.

In this scenario, Catch 22 strikes again. Even if Arab Gulf states invested in Arab American organizations that embraced the whole range of Arab Americans, such as NAAA and focused on the US relationship with the Arab world, this might not mobilize Arab Americans. Even if the funding continued and was not linked to specific issues, such organizations might not be successful due to the fact that there are not enough Arab Americans who are interested in foreign policy. As discussed in the AWACS and problems chapters, NAAA represents an example of an organization that is solely dependent on inconsistent and conditional external support and is unable to generate a substantial base cannot survive (Chetkovich and Kunreuther, 2006).

Additionally, the different factions have different views on US foreign policy in the region. Therefore, investing in an organization similar to NAAA might not necessarily be a worthwhile achievement as it would not be appealing to Arab Americans. From the diverse interviews conducted for this research, the theme that emerged is that the issues that can unite the Arab American are not issues related to foreign policy, but issues related to their own welfare as a community, such as discrimination and racism. I conclude that the way to break this Catch 22 and to appeal to Arab Americans is to present foreign policy from the perspective that a better view of the region and having a positive image in the world will improve their image as a community in the US.

However, one respondent, the head of a successful Arab American social services organization, said that in order for a pro-Arab lobby to be successful, foreign policy should be part of an overall agenda to promote Arab Americans as a community inside the US. Therefore, in addition to promoting the fact that a better image of the Arab world will reflect on their image as a community, Arab Americans should feel that the lobby will lead to their empowerment as a community.

This can be shown in the case of AIPAC and the Jewish community. In his book *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, Thomas Friedman tries to analyze why American Jews are such ardent supporters of Israel and why the American Jewry's political focus shifted from championing liberal issues to backing Israel. He notes: "A Jew gets invited to the White House not to discuss prayer in schools but ...he finds himself consulted about a foreign bill." He notes, "American Jews realized that they could ride Israel and the Soviet Jewish issues into the corridors of power" (Friedman, 1995).

Engaging the Arab Americans also indirectly improves the Arab image in the US and hence the image of the Arab Gulf. Arab Americans are the best conduit to change public opinion. As discussed in the literature review chapter, they are assimilated and the average American relates to them. The average American will relate much more to Ray Lahoud and Paula Abdul than he will relate to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum or to Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, who, regardless of their achievements or philanthropic undertakings, remain alien to him.

### **Need for a broader communication**

At the time of the AWACS, Reagan used the appeal of the Soviet threat to sell the deal to the American public. As discussed in Chapter 5, at the time of the Cold War the national interest was a clear concept in the mind of the average American. Therefore the Arab Gulf could rely on its strategic importance and on the relation with the White House and the administration. The President and the State Department are more sensitive to the strategic value of the Gulf States as they have a more general view on foreign policy and are concerned with the entire country (Baumgartner et al., 2011). However, these close relations with the president have

frequently been criticized, as in the case of George W Bush with Prince Bandar after September 11. The criticism became the center of the narrative of a movie by Michael Moore that displayed Saudi Arabia as using business to build a close relationship with the Bush family in order to get favors with the US government (2004).

The president's strategic value is a strong argument when dealing with the executive branch but it is not as strong an argument when addressing the Congress, which is influenced by domestic preferences. Ultimately, the administration is accountable to the Congress. The extent to which Congress influences foreign policy has differed from president to president. Experience has shown that Congress has greater power in times of peace. In times of foreign threats, Congress is more likely to rally around the president and defer its powers in foreign policy to him (Lindsay, 2003).

While Congress opposed President Clinton on his major foreign policy initiatives, President Bush had a cooperative congress (Lindsay, 2003). The difference in the extent of cooperation between the Congress and the Presidents Reagan and Bush was mainly due to the fact that the US was directly attacked under the Bush administration. Ironically, the concept of national security that allowed Bush to rally the Congress on major policy issues such as going to Afghanistan or to Iraq, and that allowed him to increase spending in Iraq (CRUTSINGER, 2007), was used against him in the DP World case (OXLEY, 2006). By the time DP World occurred Bush's authority had diminished. Though initially in 2001 Bush had a cooperative Congress, this tide had turned substantially by 2006 and it led to his loss of his majorities in the 2006 elections. It occurred after Hurricane Katrina, when Bush was in his second term and his popularity had dropped significantly. This decline in popularity emboldened the Congress, in contrast to the case of Reagan who was popular and had high approval on his foreign policy (Holsti, 2009) which helped him garner concurrence from the media and the political elites.

In general, the strategy that the Gulf has adopted of focusing on the president and the administration and keeping the relationship confined to diplomatic country-to-country channels, works mostly in times of a fragmented Congress, where

presidents have more power to act unilaterally and issue executive orders.(Baumgartner et al., 2011). However, the DP World experience shows that, even in times where the president had a cooperative Congress, focusing solely on the president is not enough. This is why, in the case of DP World, the UAE was not able to position itself as the strategic ally of the US in its war on terror, despite the fact that President Bush advocated the deal and tried to highlight its strategic value as an ally in the war on terror. On the contrary, opponents of the deal used the argument that allowing the UAE to manage ports would make these facilities more likely to be subject to terrorist attacks.

Bush had to bow to the Congress on the DP World issue, which had negative repercussions on the US. It rendered the country more protectionist and sent a negative signal to the Arab world (2006j). In the case of DP World, the Treasury as well as Homeland Security departments testified that the deal posed no security threat but Senator Schumer used his clout with Congress and fear appeals to reach out to the American public and was successful in blocking the deal (curtiss, 2006).

Despite the fact that the strategic value argument does not pan out, the alliance between the US and the Arab Gulf seems fragile as it is based purely on common interest and not on common values, as interests change (Huwaidin, 2013). The strategic value of the Arab Gulf stems from the fact that the region sits on large reserves of oil. This might change with the discovery of shale oil as the Arab Gulf might lose its strategic advantage (2012c) and hence would lose its clout with the American administration. If the Arab Gulf loses its strategic value, it will not even be able to reach out to the administration and the president. A consistent narrative based on values on which the average American can identify is needed to cement the relationship with the US. Israel for example, positions itself as the only democracy in the Middle East. Additionally to this common value with the US, it highlights the different facets of life in Israel with which the average American identifies. The Israelis make sure positive stories about daily life in Israel are all over the media; even agricultural magazines in the US carry features on agriculture in Israel (Friedman, 1995). Though this is a different task as the Arab Gulf culture is

different, even alien, to the Western, the Arab Gulf needs to put in more effort to reach out to the American public at large.

### **Breaking the subsystem is possible**

A representative in Congress can currently vote favorably for the pro-Israel lobby on issues pertaining to the Middle East without fearing repercussion, as the subject has low salience to the rest of his constituency. However, he might change his attitude if his constituency became informed and interested in this issue, and if the entirety of his constituency and not only a faction of it judged him based on his votes on Middle East issues. Therefore raising the salience of US foreign policy in the Middle East and its implications for the US national interest is needed in order to have a more balanced American approach to the region. Here the role of communication is also paramount, including possibly changing the framing of national interest, as was the case with AWACS, where the deal was framed as falling in line with the national interest of the US by contributing to the containment of the Soviet Union.

Therefore to reverse the current course of US policy towards the region and in order for the US to adopt a more balanced approach, in addition to increasing public awareness about the Middle East, additional groups should be enticed to take part in the discourse

Therefore raising the salience of an issue is a two-edged sword. In the case of AWACS, raising the salience of the issue generated support for the deal and public awareness of the importance of equipping the Saudi Arabian military in order to insure it could contain the Soviet threat. It also put the opponents under scrutiny, as the loyalty of pro-Israeli groups was put into question. Here the slogan “Reagan or Begin” was very powerful as it framed the issue as a choice between loyalty to America and its president, who was fighting communism, versus loyalty to Israel. In the case of DP World, raising the salience of the issue had the opposite effect. The circumstances were different, as DP World happened a few years after September

11th, when the relationship with the Arab Gulf was put into question and therefore the salience of the issue was raised while framing the UAE as an unreliable partner and as a country that is soft on terrorism.

Paradoxically, the issue of national interest and national security was used in favor of the Arab Gulf in the case of AWACS and against it in the case of DP World. Therefore to change general American policy in the Middle East, more groups should take part, the salience of the issues at stake should be raised, and the implications of current American policy in the Middle East should be publicized to the average American.

### **Limitations of the research**

The scope of this research is limited to two case studies and to a series of interviews from which the grounded theory emerged. I tried to increase the evidence by resorting to triangulation in order to offset the deficiencies limiting the research. For example, I checked the propositions about Arab Americans and their role in Arab Gulf lobbying, trying to reconcile what Gulf Arabs said with the views of the head of Arab American organizations. In this research I resorted to methodological triangulation. The propositions inferred from grounded theories were tested in the case studies.

Another limitation to the research is that it cannot constitute a comprehensive study of Arab Gulf lobbying. As explained in the methodology chapter, I could not analyze in detail all aspects of Arab Gulf lobbying. For example, though the research tackles the problems facing an Arab American base, it does not go into detail in studying the typology of the Arab American organizations and their internal relationships. Therefore the findings of this study remain broad and do not offer a complete solution but merely give guidance on how to build a lobby. For example, the DP World case as well as the different interviews, reveal that Arabs have a negative image that raises a barrier to lobbying. However, my research does not say how to

overcome this negative image. I propose the involvement of Arab Americans but such a project involves many intricacies.

Even regarding certain aspects of lobbying such as communication, the research offers conclusions but not full answers. For example on the front of communication, I make several propositions, such as that Arabs need to highlight features of the Arab Gulf with which the average American identifies, that they need to promote Arab Americans as representative of the Arab Culture but those remain individual propositions and do not constitute an overall plan of action.

In a nutshell, the limitation is that my research does not offer a straight answer; it merely paves the way to future research and points to the problems facing Arab Gulf lobbying without giving a direct pointer to the actions they should take.

## **Outlook for the future**

### **Possible geopolitical changes**

The need for an Arab American lobby is growing by the day. The recent Syrian episode proved this fact, as the Arab Gulf was unable to push the US to strike the Assad regime following his use of chemical weapons on his own people. One Kuwaiti scholar commented on the attitude of Obama towards Assad by asking whether the Arab Gulf can really trust the US for future protection. He asked what would happen if Kuwait got attacked again and whether Kuwaitis really trust the president if every decision he makes has to go through Congress. The Gulf knows that he has no leverage with the Congress.

On the other hand, the emergence of shale oil as a rival to conventional fossil fuels might weaken the Gulf states' strategic position with the US (Cordesman, 2013). Though in the coming ten years the demand for oil from the Gulf will not be affected, (Niyadi, 2013) the average American as well as American policymakers are no longer terrified by the idea of being cut off from the oil supply coming from the Arab

Gulf (Ignatius, 2013). The National Intelligence report on how the world will look in 2030 shows that in the future, with the discovery of shale oil, the US will become the main energy exporter and oil producing countries will witness a sharp decline in their income (2012c). This might have repercussions on the willingness of the US to be actively engaged in the protection of the Arab Gulf from potential threats such as Iran.

In addition to the energy component, several factors signal a slow American disengagement from the Arab Gulf. Christopher Harmer, a former deputy director of future operations at the US Navy's 5th Fleet based in Manama said, "We've withdrawn totally from Iraq. We are in the process of withdrawing from Afghanistan. We have substantially curtailed our naval presence in the Middle East. And the US president has announced a foreign-policy pivot to Asia." He added, "Those are four actions that say to the GCC that, whatever the situation, you have to deal with it without a lot of help from America," (Dickinson, 2013). From this perspective, American support for the Gulf seems shaky. The Arab Gulf states are starting to feel the American disengagement. The first alarming signal was the attitude of the US towards their long term allies such as Mubarak with the Arab spring uprising; the second alarming signal was the treaty that the US signed with Iran. The US perceived that the thawing of relations with Iran might push Arab Gulf states to enter into a more collaborative mode—even some prominent figures such as Prince Turki Al Faisal are now calling to promote the GCC from a cooperation structure to a Union (Toumi, 2013). The perceived external threat embodied by the emboldening of Iran might create enough pressure to break the security complex through which the different Arab Gulf states compete and monitor each other. As a result the different countries may cooperate and embrace a common foreign policy towards the US. This would solve the first problem facing the prospect of an Arab Gulf lobby: consensus among Arab Gulf states.

Given that the geopolitical scene is changing, it is important to see how others have adapted. In the case of Israel its strategic value emerged with the rise of the Soviet empire. With the threat of Soviet influence on the Arab world, Israel was promoted as

a surrogate fortress to prevent communism from reaching the oil fields in the Gulf. This was Israel's strategic value to US. However, by the time the Soviet empire collapsed, the Israelis had already worked on an alternative plan. They cemented a relationship that cannot be uprooted by the winds of strategic changes (Mearsheimer and Walt, 2007). The polls conducted by Gallup in February 2012, found that 61% of Americans sympathize with Israel. In a nut shell, they were able to engage America, both as a people and as a government. The core to this integrated and comprehensive effort is the pro-Israel lobby. Therefore, the lobby protected the interests of Israel in the US, even when its strategic value decreased.

### **Changes in the Arab American community**

The nature of Arab American organizations is changing. Following September 11th, Arab American organizations that had solely focused on the issue of Palestine became more focused on improving their standing in American society and this resulted in the spreading of social service organizations. Social service organizations are community based and do not focus on a political objective but on immediate benefits to their constituencies. Examples include the Arab American Association of New York, that teaches English to newcomers, or the Network of Arab American professionals that helps young professionals find jobs. [www.naaponline.org](http://www.naaponline.org). The memberships of these organizations are more captive than those of organizations that solely focus on politics. Two respondents, heads of these social service organizations, said they are based on the Jewish model.

The most prominent among those social service organizations is the Arab Community Center for Economic & Social Services (ACCESS) , which has a strong grassroots base. Currently, the Arab American community is witnessing a wave of cohesion. In March 2013, the White House invited representatives of Arab American organizations to a meeting with President Obama. The representatives felt that they were not given enough importance by the administration as they were not granted an independent meeting; they were invited to meet along with some Muslim groups and

some Jewish peace activists. They felt that the community will be diluted unless there is a serious effort to coalesce and come up with a strong unified voice.

Therefore, the Arab American Anti-Discrimination and the Arab American Institute, two organizations that have been in a state of competition for the last thirty years over who is the real representative of the Arab Americans, have combined efforts to bring the community together. Every month there is conference call that gathers around thirty organizations, where the different participants share ideas and coordinate their activities. However, this effort is still in its early stages and this coalition is not structured or formal.

If this coalition materializes into a solid structure, especially if social service organizations are included, it could change the current attitude of the Gulf. The Gulf might see in it a potential winning horse and might be encouraged to support it. At the same time, the Arab Gulf fears being perceived as interfering in American politics and tries to be apolitical as much as possible and would be much more comfortable contributing to social services rather than to a political organization.

In a nutshell, the success of lobbying requires the mobilization of a domestic base and this base is most likely to be mobilized when members see benefits to their relations with the organization trying to mobilize them. The support should also be sustainable in order to result in a success. In addition, to succeed in changing general foreign policy towards the region, and for the mistreatment represented by the DP World incident not to be repeated, the average American needs to have a better understanding of the region. However, to accomplish that changing the negative image of Arabs is key.

Raising the salience of Middle East issues, if not coupled with enhancing the image of Arabs, is likely to produce a counter effect on American foreign policy towards the region. Arab Americans are the best actors to change the prevailing negative image as the average American relates to them.

## **Future research**

The research in this thesis depicts the factors for the success of lobbying and points to the deficiencies in Arab Gulf lobbying that need to be addressed. Additionally to the “content” value of this research, it has a transferrable value as the methods and tools used could be utilized for research on other lobbies in the US. For the overall structure of the research is applicable to other lobbies and could be replicated: starting with a theoretical framework that tackles the foundation of a lobby, then conducting research using two combined methods, and then merging this proposition with existing theories in order to come up with a dense theory regarding the lobby under research. Though this study looked at components of lobbying for the Arab Gulf states the components themselves are the same in other lobbies, e.g., the domestic base, strategy, issues, image, and funding.

The theoretical framework that tackles the foundations of any lobby in terms of a domestic base and the need to get it mobilized, and the hurdles that may prevent this base from getting mobilized could be replicated. The sampling as well the methodology mix to study the Arab American community could be used to study other communities... The case study which shows how the different elements of lobbying interact together can negate or validate assumptions made about lobbying by individual respondents. Additionally, the research questions, the method could be applied to study other countries’ lobbying, such as the patterns behind Indian lobbying and what contributes to Indian lobbying successes and failures.

In addition to the usability of the method for other research on lobbying, the methodology mix can be used to further research on the topic of Arab Gulf lobbying. Though the research used case studies of Arab lobbying, further research could use case studies of other lobbies and try to reconcile it with the Arab case in order to see what can work in the case of Arab Gulf lobbying. For example the Indians, similarly to the Arabs, have different factions, and despite their difference they were able to put together a lobby. Here, future research can elaborate on our research by looking on the winning formula of other lobbies and checking whether it is valid in the Arab Gulf lobby case. Though the methods used are transferrable for future research on the topic of Arab Gulf lobbying, coming up with more concrete answers to the

question on what is the winning formula to have an Arab Gulf lobby requires qualitative research.

In addition to methodological guidance for future research, additional substantive research is still needed. As discussed before, although this study depicts the basis for the success of lobbying, it does not offer all the answers regarding the establishment of a long term pro-Arab Gulf lobby that has an influence on public policy. Research is still needed to cover the following areas:

Starting a lobby is worth investigating. As discussed before, there are strong rivalries among Arab Gulf countries and these attitudes have spilled over to Arab Gulf relations with the US, where states compete on excelling in relations with the US instead of cooperating to achieve better bargaining power. Such an attitude will lead ultimately to the failure of any “lobby”. Coordination is essential, as having several Arab Gulf competing lobbies is worse than not having a lobby at all. If the different Arab Gulf countries support different groups and jockey for position so that each country selfishly improves its relations with the US and scores points with its neighbors, the effort is doomed to fail. This attitude will also increase the fragmentation of the Arab American community. The key is to keep the focus on general American policy toward the Arab world and to promote the relationship between the two, which will ultimately benefit the overall Arab world, the Gulf included.

More research is needed on who can start a lobby. The research should tackle whether the different GCC countries agree among each other and then start a lobby, or, given the rivalries among them, one country should start building the foundation. Once this country scores some success, it will entice others to join. A country undertaking such a role will automatically increase its leverage with its neighbors in increasing its leverage with the US.

Also further research is needed to see how to encourage the different Arab American organizations to coalesce. Such research would revolve around the structure that would integrate the different organizations. As explained before, having an umbrella

organization similar to AIPAC from which the different organizations take cues is not viable as foreign policy has low salience among Arab Americans. An alternative to integrate the different organizations needs research. The viability of a structure comparable to the AFL-CIO, the federation that brings together the different unions in America, is worth exploring.

Also the research in this dissertation has proved that benefits entice people to become active in organizations. However, further research is needed into the structure of the Arab American community to see what sorts of benefits are needed to mobilize Arab Americans. This should be linked to identification with the Arab Gulf and Arab identity. The possibility of engaging Arab Americans and the right formula that will make them tick is still to be researched. Researching a comprehensive program on how to engage Arab Americans is needed.

Though American foreign policy and public opinion regarding the Arab world has a direct effect on the Arab American community, research is needed to see how much the average Arab American is aware of this fact. A study to gauge the average Arab American awareness of this fact is worth conducting as well as exploring why it is low and testing different ways to raise it. Also additional research is needed to see how can we build a domestic coalition of Arab American organizations and how can we mobilize it to constitute a base for a pro-Arab Gulf lobby.

Research is also needed on what could be the pillar around which to unite Arab Americans and to create a link with the Arab Gulf. Looking at American Jews, who represent a prime example in community cohesion and dedication towards Israel, one can see that what unites them is not the settlement or the peace process or the lack of it: what unites them is the heritage. Research is needed to see what can galvanize Arab American and what can be the foundation on which to unite the different factions and on conceptualizing a model that can provide the inspiration to Arab Americans. The Arab Spring is still in a state of turmoil and the Arab world is witnessing a wave of violence fueled by sectarianism. Though initially it represented

a spring of democracy it has turned into a dark period of internal conflicts. The Arab world has few cases of success and Dubai is a prime success story. If any exchange is to be done between the Arab world and the Arab American, the UAE is the ideal place. The UAE could be the place to invite Arab American youth to do internships in a state of the art government department, for example. However, further research is needed to see if it can constitute a model for Arab Americans to identify with.

The purpose, that I hope this study will achieve, is to demonstrate to Arab Gulf governments the benefit of having a domestic Arab American lobby in promoting relations with their important ally, the US. Though starting a lobby is a difficult long term task, if it succeeded it would definitely be worth the effort, as it would bring a new dimension to the US-Arab Gulf and ultimately to the US-Arab relationships.

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<sup>i</sup> The two main books are *The Arab lobby* by Mitchell Bard and *The Arab Lobby and the Two States Solution* by Khalil Marar

<sup>ii</sup> Yin used the explanatory method approach to show how town meetings in Bordertown, USA, in 1992, led to a decrease in drug abuse. The problem was that the town had experienced a high and increasing rate of homicide, drug use, and drug related crimes. He showed how community meetings helped to fight drug abuse. He investigated how collaboration was planned, who was involved (residents, public works officials, police), activities, strategies to identify targets, and the outcomes. In 1994, the collaboration resulted in 1278 arrests, 311 weapons confiscation, and the seizure of \$678972 worth of narcotics. Arrests increased by 150% between 1992 and 1993, of which 43% were attributable to collaboration. Yin also resorted to validation by checking how crime that was unrelated to drugs evolved in Bordertown at the same time. This rate remained the same or increased. This shows that community collaboration was the reason behind the decrease in drug use and related crime YIN, R. 2003a. K.(2003) *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc..

<sup>iii</sup> Discourse analysis has been used to depict people's perceptions in the situation of a rocket fall. Discourse was used as a means to analyze the psyche of people in the Altai territory in Siberia regarding their perceived risk from the rockets launched from the Baikonur province in Kazakhstan. In this case, analysis of the discourse assembled from the various interviews and in discussion with inhabitants of the area showed how people perceived the risk involved (Profeta et al., 2010).

<sup>iv</sup> Jennifer Cohen resorted to discourse analysis to show how the media classifies teachers in the US. Teachers' identity was framed in terms of caring and accountability, but in her analysis she also took into consideration the general economic and political debate. She shows how accountability was more important than caring in terms of shaping education policy COHEN, J. L. 2010. Teachers in the news: a critical analysis of one US newspaper's discourse on education, 2006–2007. *Discourse: Studies in the cultural politics of education*, 31, 105-119.. Similarly, from interpreting representation in the media, we can depict the general conceptions that framed the DP World issue.

<sup>v</sup> Otan Ez and Stanton Glantz conducted a study to show how the discourse of tobacco companies, who were in a position of power relative to farmers, distorted reality and used it to influence opinions. They used films about the tobacco industry to push their political agenda that aimed at opposing tobacco control measures. Critical discourse analysis shows how these companies used films that portrayed tobacco farming as a family and a national tradition in order to overshadow the health hazards of tobacco, and the fact that it created dependency and the subordination of farmers and led to poverty and child labour, in addition to its impact on the environment OTAÑEZ, M. G. & GLANTZ, S. A. 2009. Trafficking in tobacco farm culture: Tobacco companies' use of video imagery to undermine health policy. *Visual anthropology review*, 25, 1-24..

<sup>vi</sup> The Sunlight Foundation is a nonprofit organization that posts online government information in order to insure greater transparency and openness. It has been acting as the lobbying watchdog. *SUNLIGHT FOUNDATION* [Online]. Available: <http://sunlightfoundation.com/about/>. ProPublica is an independent, non-profit organization specialized in generating investigative journalism on issues of public interest. The focus is on reporting abuses of power by government officials and businesses. *Pro-republica* [Online]. Available: <http://www.propublica.org/about/>.



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