

The GULF

and

The WEST

**Strategic Relations
and Military Realities**

Anthony H. Cordesman

Westview Press / Mansell Publishing Limited

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Military Realities

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Westview Press • Boulder

Mansell Publishing Limited • London

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Published in 1988 in the United States of America by Westview Press, Inc.,
5500 Central Avenue, Boulder, Colorado 80301

Published in 1988 in Great Britain by Mansell Publishing Limited,
A Cassell Imprint, Artillery House, Artillery Row, London SW1P 1RT, England

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Cordesman, Anthony H.

The Gulf and the West : strategic relations and military realities
/ Anthony H. Cordesman.

p. cm.

Bibliography: p.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-8133-0768-6

1. Persian Gulf—Strategic aspects. 2. Persian Gulf Region—
Defenses. 3. Iraqi-Iranian Conflict, 1980-. 4. United States—
Military relations—Persian Gulf Region. 5. Europe—Military
relations—Persian Gulf Region. 6. Persian Gulf Region—Military
relations—United States. 7. Persian Gulf Region—Military
relations—Europe. I. Title.

UA832.C67 1988

355'.033053—dc19

88-10752

CIP

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Cordesman, Anthony H.

The Gulf and the West : strategic
relations and military realities.

1. Western bloc countries. International
relations with Persian Gulf countries.

2. Persian Gulf countries. International
relations with western bloc countries

I. Title

303.4'82'1713'053

ISBN 0-7201-1990-1

Printed and bound in the United States of America



The paper used in this publication meets the requirements
of the American National Standard for Permanence of Paper
for Printed Library Materials Z39.48-1984.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**To friends whom I cannot thank by name—
in and outside government in the Middle East
and Gulf states and in the Department of Defense
and U.S. intelligence community**

Preface

The last two years (mid-1986 to mid-1988) have transformed the security problems in the Southern Gulf from theoretical threats to the West's main source of imported oil to a major military confrontation between the West and Iran. At this writing, there is no way to predict how this confrontation will end, any more than it is possible to predict the end of the Iran-Iraq War. It is clear, however, that virtually any outcome will leave a strong anti-Western regime in Iran, and an Iran that will remain a threat to all its neighbors.

It is equally clear that the problems in securing the safety of the friendly Southern Gulf states will grow, rather than diminish. The West needs to find solutions that can build up its military capabilities and needs to develop an effective power projection capability to deal with the threat from Iran and other radical states and with Soviet ambitions in the region.

The focus of this book is the problems the West and the Gulf states face in developing the kind of strategic relations that can deal with these threats and with the opportunities for cooperation. It examines the military capabilities of various potential threats, the capabilities of Saudi Arabia and other friendly Gulf states, and the capabilities of Western power projection forces. It examines the factors that had blocked the development of effective strategic relations in recent years, and how U.S. intervention in the Gulf has affected this situation. Finally, it examines the steps both the West and the GCC states will have to take to create the proper kind of strategic relations and military capabilities in the future.

This book draws heavily on the author's previous writings on the Gulf and the Middle East. Some portions are adapted from an earlier work, *Western Strategic Interests in Saudi Arabia*, which was published by Croom Helm in London, but which saw only limited circulation due to the problems of various mergers in the British and American publishing world.

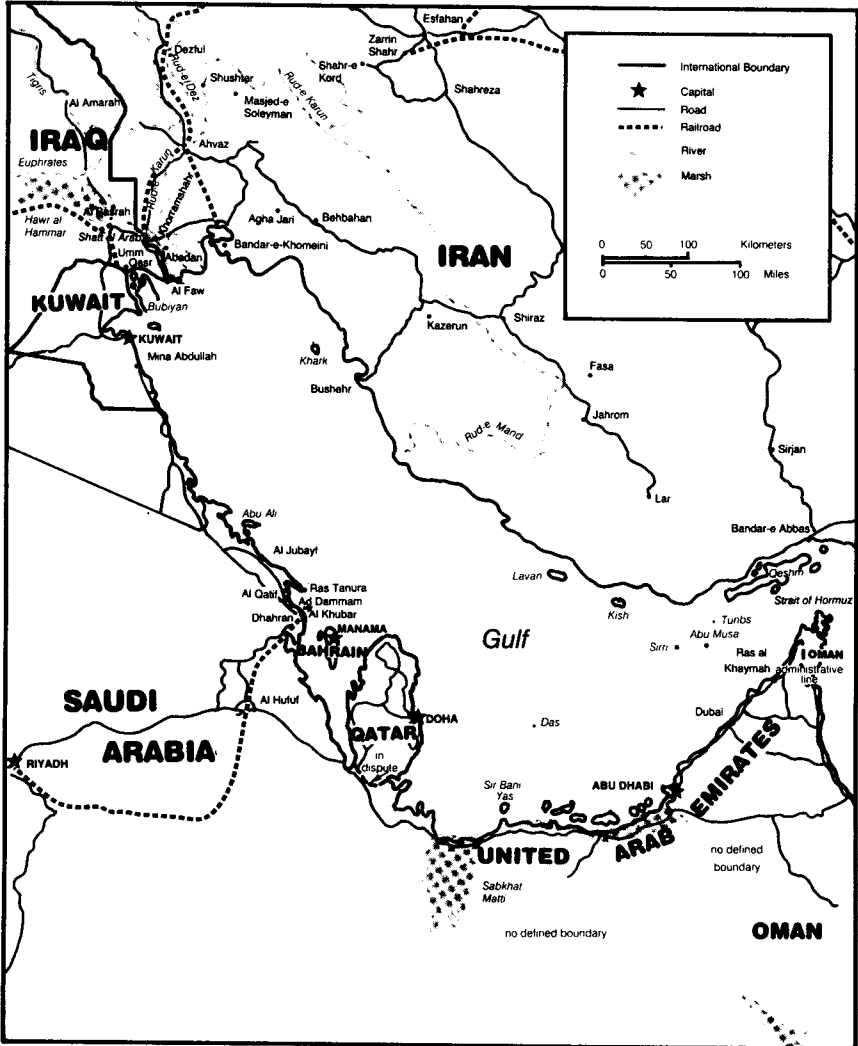
For those who are interested in the broader history of military developments in the region, this book supplements *The Gulf and the*

Search for Strategic Stability, Westview, 1984. A detailed account of the Iran-Iraq War can be found in *The Iran-Iraq War, 1984-1987*, Jane's, 1987. A detailed analysis of the Arab-Israeli military balance can be found in *The Arab-Israeli Military Balance and the Art of Operations*, University Press of America/AEI, 1986.

The reader should also be aware that this book is based on a wide range of interviews during the author's trips to the Gulf area and in the U.S. and Europe. At the same time, it draws heavily on computer data bases and news services. These sources cannot be referenced in depth, either because of the political sensitivity of the interviews or because computerized data bases are constantly in flux and do not lend themselves to precise references. In order to ease the problems other researchers may find in referencing source materials, alternative media sources are footnoted as references wherever possible.

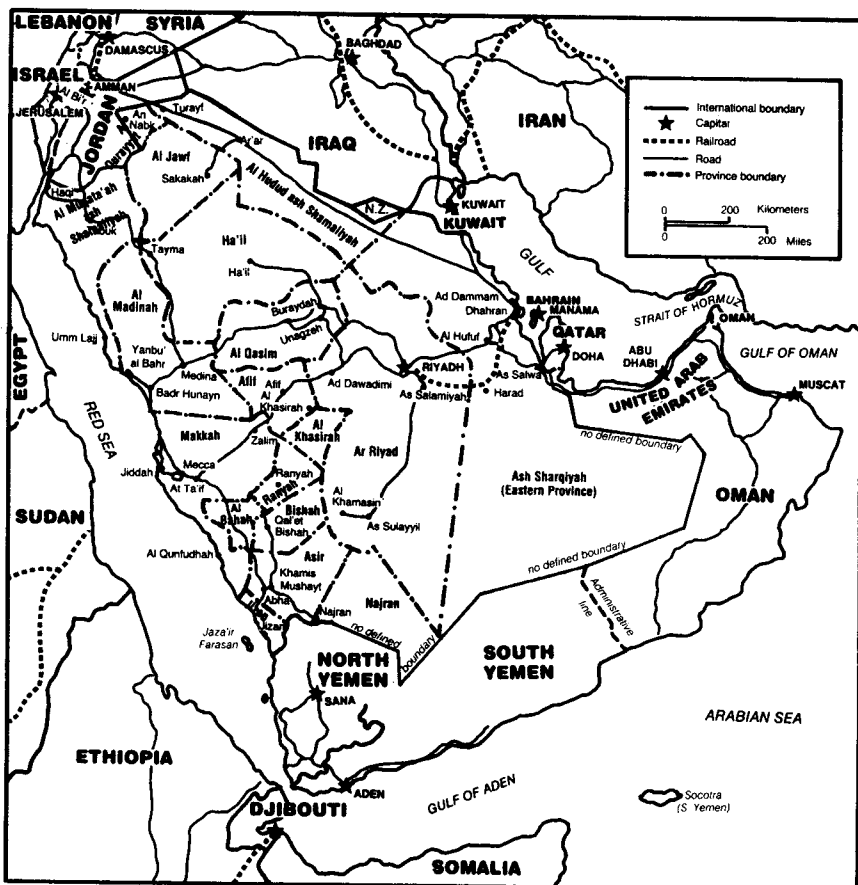
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Map 1 The Gulf



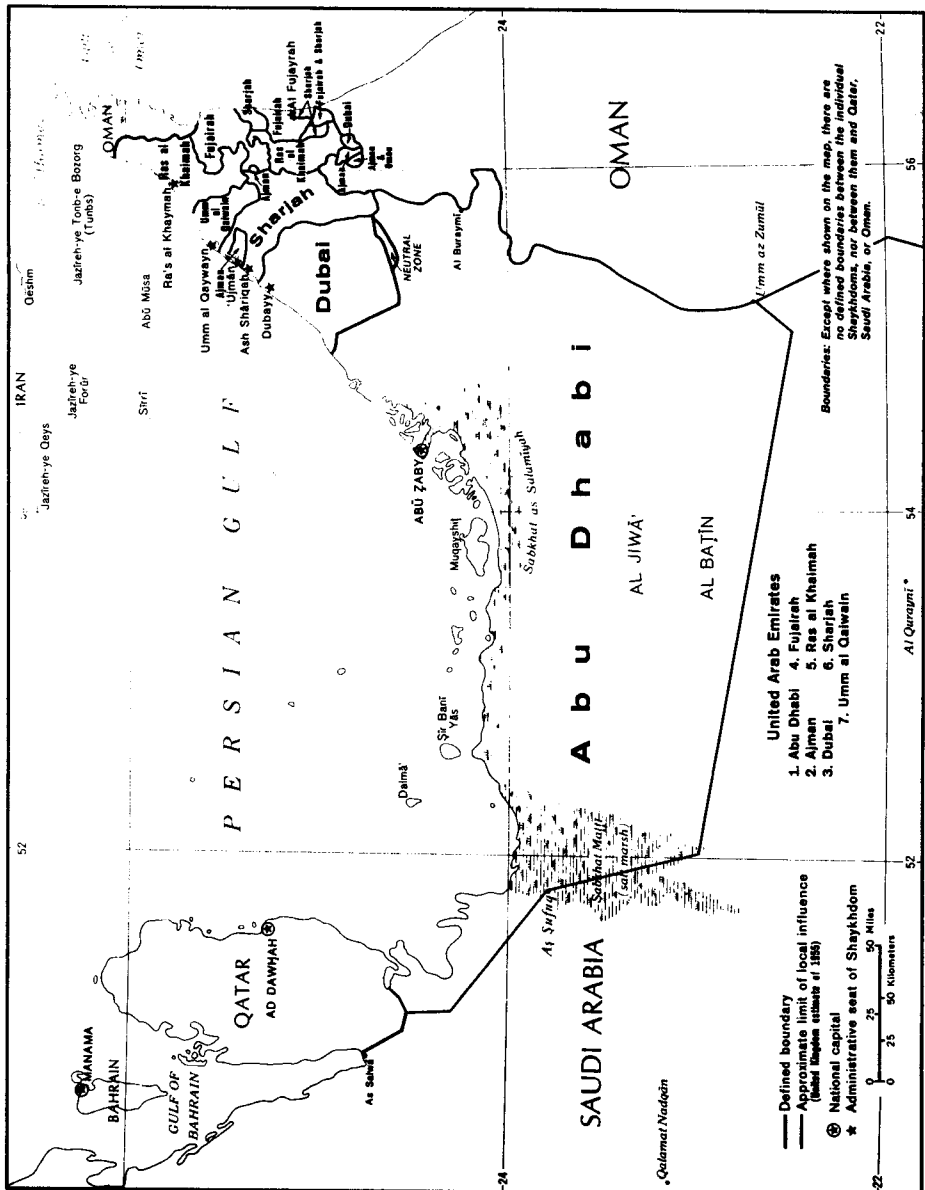
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Map 2 The Strategic Position of Saudi Arabia

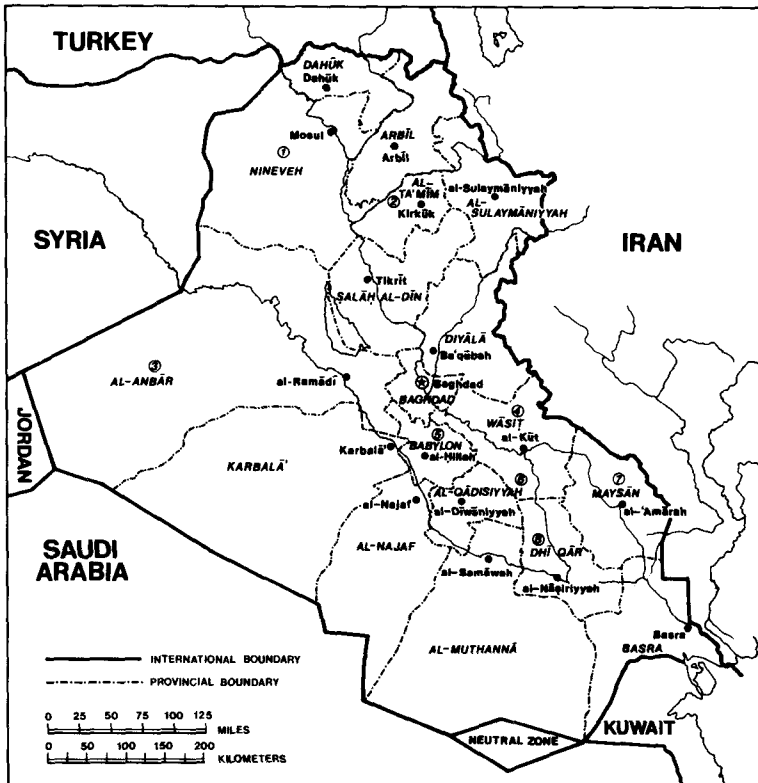


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Map 3 United Arab Emirates



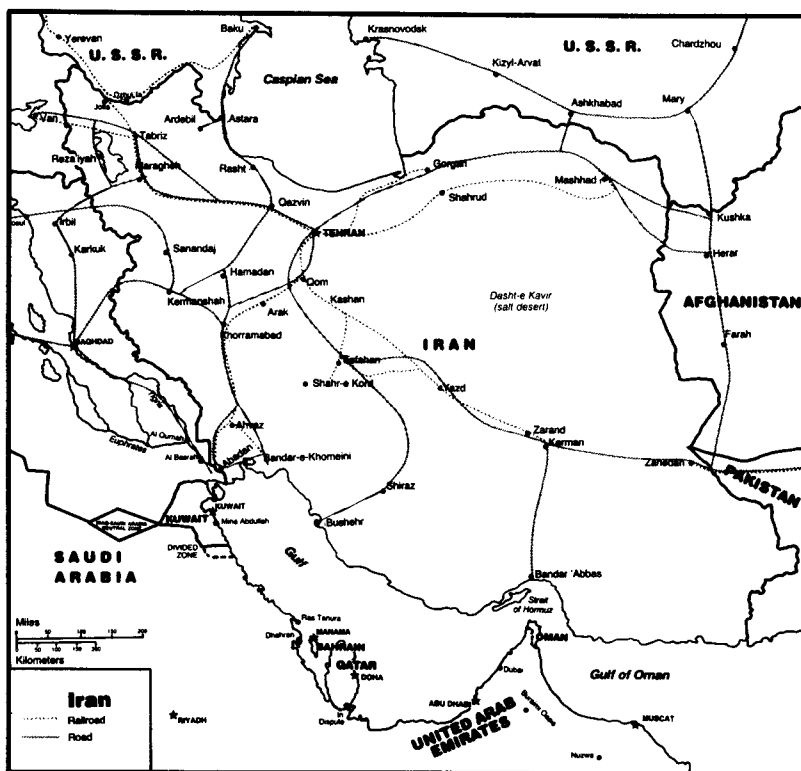
Map 4 Iraq



Source: Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985), p. 30. Reprinted by permission.

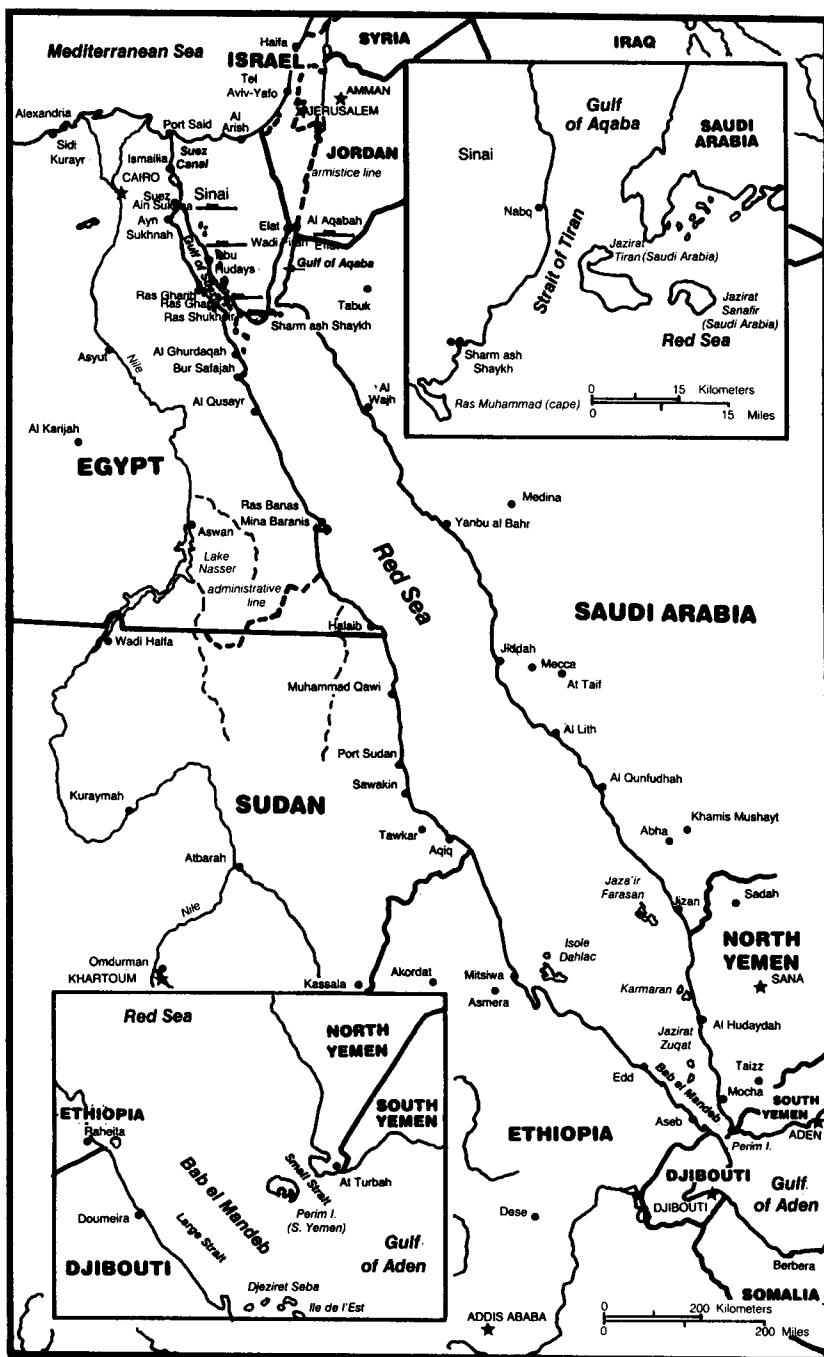
- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| ① formerly Mosul | ⑤ formerly al-Hillah |
| ② formerly Kirkūk | ⑥ formerly al-Diwāniyyah |
| ③ formerly al-Ramādī and al-Dulaym | ⑦ formerly al-'Amārah |
| ④ formerly al-Kūt | ⑧ formerly al-Nāṣiriyyah and al-Muntafiq |

Map 5 Iran



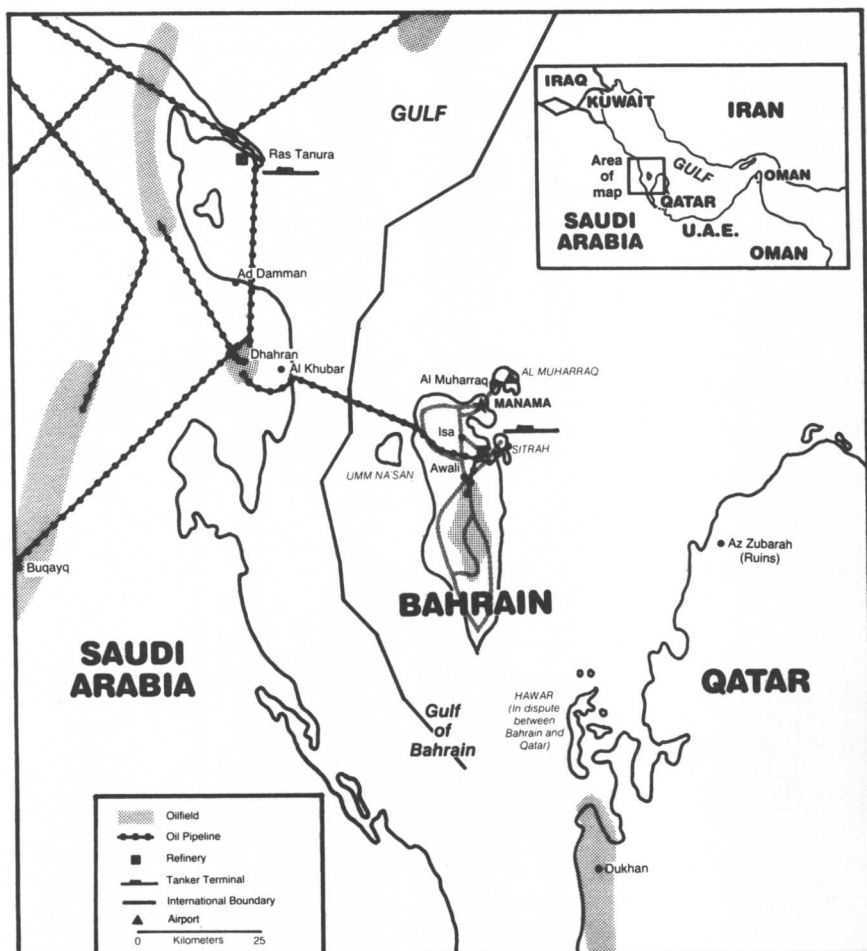
SOURCE: CIA 504190 (544499) 7-79

Map 6 The Red Sea



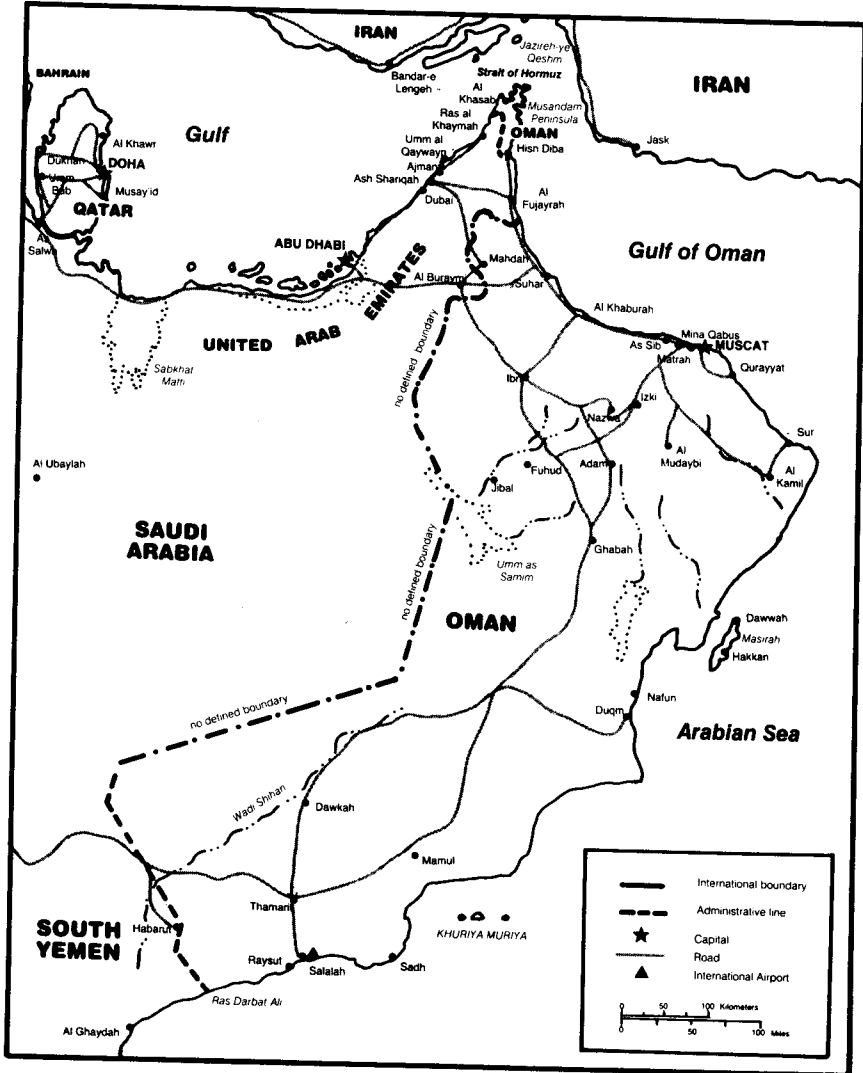
Adapted from Defense Mapping Service 504306 9-79 (541978)

Map 7 The Strategic Position of Bahrain



Adapted from CIA 626961 4-80

Map 8 Oman



Map 9 The Strait of Hormuz



Adapted from CIA 625450 7-79

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