

## Arms Sale to Saudis Would Be a Mistake

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Rothman: Arms Sale to Saudis Would Be a 'Terrible, Terrible Mistake'

Pictured (L-R): Reps. Robert Wexler (D-FL), Anthony Weiner (D-NY), Rothman (D-NJ), and Barbara Lee (D-CA) in the House Press Gallery on July 31, 2007.

(Washington, DC)—Earlier this week, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) joined more than a dozen other Representatives to announce their intention to stop the Bush Administration from selling \$20 billion in advanced arms to Saudi Arabia, among other Gulf States. Underscoring the danger of this deal, military officials reported that the majority of suicide bombers in Iraq are from Saudi Arabia and that about 45% of all foreign fighters are Saudi the same week Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that negotiations for the arms sale were underway.

"This arms deal is another foreign policy brainchild of President Bush and Vice President Cheney, the consequences of which Americans will have to live with for decades. The sale of \$20 billion worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia would be a terrible, terrible mistake," said Rothman.

According to early reports, Secretary Rice is negotiating to include Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM's) in the sale. JDAM's are satellite guided bombs accurate enough to shoot through the window of a building from jets in any weather. The U.S. has never sold such advanced munitions to Saudi Arabia before. The sale would also upgrade the capability of the Saudi Air Force and provide new naval vessels.

Outlining why such a policy reversal would be disastrous, Rothman said: "Saudi Arabia is one of the top financiers of terrorism around the world. Seventy percent of the most-wanted international terrorists are Saudi Arabians. The Saudi government also permits the steady flow of Saudi jihadists into Iraq and continues to fund thousands of madrassas around the world that preach hatred of America, Christians, and Jews. The Saudi regime is also unstable. How do we know that the weapons we sell to the Saudis today won't end up in the hands of al Qaeda tomorrow? How do we know that these arms won't ultimately be used to kill our troops?"

The Bush Administration is expected to formally present a final arms package for Congressional approval in September. At that time, Rothman will join Reps. Anthony Weiner (D-NY) and Robert Wexler (D-FL) in co-sponsoring a Joint Resolution of Disapproval, which will trigger a 30-day review of the deal. Congress may reject any large arms sale proposed by the President, according to the Arms Control Export Act of 1976.

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