

moba media

PO Box 4653
Portland OR
97208
1217 SW 19th
Portland OR
97205
(503) 223-1677

SAUDI TRADE

Channel 2 KATU-TV 4/6/84 5:22

Stan Wilson

Half a million jobs in the U.S. depends on trade with Saudi Arabia. That country is our largest trading partner in the Arab world and our sixth largest trading partner world-wide.

In an attempt to cash in on our business relationship, Oregon's Governor Vic Atiyeh recently led a state trade delegation to Saudi Arabia as you probably know.

Channel 2's political reporter, Lisa Stark accompanying the governor, she is with us tonight with the first of a series of reports on the Governor's mid east tour.

It must have been an interesting trip Lisa.

Lisa Stark

It was a fascinating trip as a matter of fact.

And Stan and Tracy, we will be bringing you a wide range of stories about the middle east tour over the next couple of weeks.

But tonight I would like to focus on the trade.

Saudi Arabia is a big market for the United States, it is a not so big market for Oregon. But some Oregon companies have been doing business there since the mid 1940's.

And there are a lot of room for increased trade as Governor Atiyeh and the Oregon trade delegation found out.

From the ports of Oregon to the ports of Saudi Arabia, flowed over \$34 million in exports last year. Saudi Arabia is far from the state's biggest trading partner but it is still provide a significant boost to Oregon's economy.

Over half of the goods which are imported into the country come into this port here in Jeddah. Everything from grain to camels.

(more)

Lisa Stark

Oregon can't help supply the camels, but Governor Vic Atiyeh feels that there is a lot this state can offer Saudi Arabia.

With that in mind, he recently led the first Oregon trade delegation ever to that country.

The governor and six business men spent nearly a week in the kingdom exploring trade possibilities.

They visited with high government officials, attended countless business dinners, and even checked out the local products.

Oregon and Saudi Arabia are half a world away so they might seem like unlikely trading partners. But Saudi Arabia is a coveted international market.

It is one of the few growing nations in the world with money to spend.

Development first began herein the 1930's, with the discovery of oil. But the country really jetison into the 20th century in the last decade.

After the OPEC oil embargo drove up petroluem prices. that made Saudi Arabia, that sits on the largest known oil reserve onæ of the wealthiest and fastest growing nations in the world.

From virtually nothing has sprung roads, hospitals, modern supermarkets. It has all been accomplished with the help of foreign exports and expertise.

Much of it from the United States.

It is the Saudi's reliance on foreign help and products that the Oregon trade delegation had hoped to cash in own. But in meeting after meeting with government ministers, the delegation learned that the Saudi trade picture is changing.

The world-wide oil glut has meant a drop in reveeneues and a cutback in imports. Also the Saudi's have nearly completed their government-sponsored building phase and they are now beginning to emphasize private enterprise and manufacturing.

(more)

3-3-3-3-

SAUDI TRADE, Channel 2, KATU-TV, 4/6/84

Lisa Stark
(cont.)

It is a move to diversification, less reliance on the oil dollar.

Still the Saudi Minister of Commerce says that there remains plenty of opportunity for Oregon companies.

Dr. Al-Soulemain

There will be emphasis on industry and agriculture. As you said, our (mumble) structures are almost complete.

So what ever (mumble) local industries, local agriculture needs, there will be a market for here.

Lisa Stark

The Oregon manufacturer of this playground equipment has already found a niched in the evolving Saudi economy.

Neidermeier-Martin was one of the first Oregon firms to do business with the Saudi's beginning back in the mid 1940's.

The timber firms sold poles and pilings here, it still does. But it also sells millions of dollars worth of playground equipment.

Neidermeier-Martin
Official

The government is through building the intra-structures and they are now turning toward amenities which include the playground equipment line that we handle.

They are going into human development, there will be more schools and of course this will mean more equipment hopefully. We actually see an increase in the market for our products.

Lisa Stark

A number of Saudi businessmen are also optimistic about Saudi/Oregon trade. One has even set up a Lake Oswego company, which smooths the way for Oregon firms which hope to do business here.

Amar Kassoghi

I think that Oregon has a lot to offer. There are many very good companies that have excellent products and there is a market for them here.

Lisa Stark

That was Amar Kassoghi, now he says that Oregon firms just need some patiences and a willingness to adapt their products to a Saudi market.

(more)

4-4-4-4

SAUDI TRADE, Channel 2, KATU-TV, 4/6/84

Lisa Stark
(cont.)

It is also helpful to develop a joint venture with a Saudi firm.

But despite whatever effort that you might put into it there is one product that Oregon will not be able to export to Saudi, that product is northwest wheat.

Stan and Tracy, we will look at why that is on Monday.

xxx