

# Bomb explodes, kills five Americans

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — A powerful bomb ripped through a building filled with American and Saudi military personnel on Monday, tearing the facade off the building and engulfing the wreckage in flames. Six people were killed, including five Americans.

It was not clear whether the attack was aimed at the Saudis or the Americans. At least 60 people were wounded, more than 30 of them Americans.

King Fahd convened his Cab-

net, which "expressed its condemnation of this criminal act, which is foreign to our society, beliefs and religion," the Saudi Press Agency reported.

In Washington, President Clinton pledged to "devote an enormous effort" to bring those responsible to justice, calling it "a hideous act" of terrorism. A dozen FBI agents and evidence specialists were being sent to Saudi Arabia to help with the investigation.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, has been a

close ally of the United States for decades, and the two countries have extensive military ties. Some Muslim fundamentalists oppose the presence of the U.S. military and other Western forces in Saudi Arabia, home to Islam's holiest shrines.

Though open opposition to the ruling al-Saud family is not permitted, some underground groups have threatened to strike against the deeply conservative Saudi leadership and the Western forces.

Two groups claimed responsibility for the attack, but neither could be verified, said Raymond Mabus, U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

One group was the little-known Islamic Change Movement, which demanded last spring that Western forces leave Saudi Arabia or the movement would "exert all available means to evict these forces from the island of Islam." The second group was the previously unknown Tigers of the Gulf.

Mabus issued the casualty figures, saying the blast was caused by "an explosive device."

"We are outraged by this act," he said. A Pentagon official in Washington, speaking on condition of anonymity, said 34 Americans were injured and some were taken to hospitals.

The blast occurred outside the modern, three-story building used by American military personnel who help train the Saudi national guard.



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