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I’ve learned that certain steps taken in life can lead down unexpectedly long paths. While working as an investment portfolio manager in 1977, I was given the “opportunity” to act as an investment adviser to a major bank in Saudi Arabia. This secondment was to last two years, after which 1 was to return to the United States and resume my career.

There were major changes in the script. Sixteen years later I’m still involved with a Middle East institution. The two-year stint in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, stretched to four years. This was followed by two years in Bahrain, where I faced the challenge of starting up a newly-formed bank.

For the last five years I’ve been back in Connecticut, running the U.S. office of the Bahraini bank I helped start in the early eighties. As one of my former roommates, Steve Ellis, once told me, “there is a thin line between terror and excitement.” Sitting in Bahrain in December of 1990 provided at least a whiff of the terror. Mostly, it has been fun.