

moba media

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

AMERICANS IN ARABIA

Channel 6 KGIN-TV 4/5/84 5:43

Mark Hendricks

There is no question, following Governor Atiyeh on his middle-east trade mission has been a real education for the delegates and the press corp.

Mark Sanchez saw that first-hand in Saudi Arabia. He spoke with a handful of Oregonians there.

He says that they all enjoyed their different way of life, a sheltered existence.

Mark Sanchez

About 50,000 Americans live here in Saudi Arabia and it is a fair statement that some are adjusting well, while others are, well. frankly, having problems.

For these Oregonians though, this little visit with Governor Atiyeh is something like a letter from home.

(music)

They call this section of Jeddah, Sixty Villa, this compound could just as well be Medford, Oregon, where Deon McGraw will return to when her husband's engineering job in Saudi Arabia is finished.

Deon McGraw

I like the weather, it is warm all the time. People are nice. We have just about the same conveniences here as we do at home.

We have Safeway...

Mark Sanchez

What about the relative level of freedom of access, freedom of movement. Does that bother you at all?

Deon McGraw

It doesn't bother me, No.

Mark Sanchez

These children may not fully grasp that fact that 60 Villa is largely beyond the grasp of the Saudi's. Here these Portlanders are subject to American law, other foreign nationals are covered by the laws back home and so it is something of a cocoon where the view out and in is opaque, indefinite.

(more)

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AMERICANS IN ARABIA, Channel 6, KOIN-TV, 4/5/84

Mark Sanchez
(cont.)

But Gisele El-Kahl never forgets where she is. In fact, she rather enjoys the relative security here.

Gisele El-Kahl

If you want to stay here, you have to learn the way that they live and be careful, that's all.

Mark Sanchez

And under these circumstances, you are happy here?

Gisele El-Kahl

Oh very much so, yes.

In fact, I would like to (mumble).

Mark Sanchez

Her husband Youssef wouldn't go quite that far, he is the governor's cousin and has been in the kingdom for 2 and 1/2 years.

El-Kahl says that it has been a positive experience for his family and will last another couple of years when his job ends with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

El-Kahl is an Arab but he feels that the offer is more effective when the local people just seem as another american.

Youssef El-Kahl

They are more helpful to a foreigner than they are sometime to the Arab (mumble) in Saudi Arabia.

Mark Sanchez

That's a little surprising perhaps?

Youssef El-Kahl

Yes it is. Like I said, sometime I just don't even tell that I am Arab.

Mark Sanchez

From the front rooms and sun decks of these (mumble) you will be hearing many Americans giving qualified praise for the kingdom.

But another thing here, they are clearly treated better than the other foreign nationals. Just ask all the Indians and Pakistani's whose lives we were not allowed to film.

In Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Mark Sanchez reporting for Newsroom 6.

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