

THE CROWN PRINCE OF SAUDI ARABIA

2 x 60, 1 x 113 HD



PBS
INTERNATIONAL

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On October 2, 2018, *Washington Post* columnist Jamal Khashoggi walked into the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey. He never walked out. Within a matter of days, it was revealed that he had been murdered and dismembered by a 15-person Saudi hit squad.

What role did Saudi Arabia's new crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, play in orchestrating the murder that shocked the world? And who is this young and powerful member of the Saud dynasty—portrayed as a modernizer with the firm support of President Donald Trump?

One year after Khashoggi's killing, FRONTLINE presents *The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia*—an epic, investigation into MBS's ties to the murder, his relationship with the U.S., his handling of dissent, and his vision for the future of Saudi Arabia. This two hour program features on-the-ground reporting from veteran FRONTLINE correspondent Martin Smith (*Bitter Rivals: Iran and Saudi Arabia*), who has been covering the Middle East for FRONTLINE for nearly two decades.

Smith tracked down MBS himself—who went on the record about his role in the murder for the first time. “It happened under my watch. I get all the responsibility, because it happened under my watch,” he said. When Smith went on to press the Saudi leader on how an operation like Khashoggi's killing could happen without him knowing about it, MBS's response was, “We have 20 million people. We have 3 million government employees.”

Drawing on dozens of interviews with key Saudi officials, dissidents, activists, intelligence community insiders and journalists, the documentary paints television's most comprehensive portrait yet of how MBS came to power, how he governs, and the events surrounding Khashoggi's murder—an assassination the Saudis maintain was “a rogue operation.” In a contentious interview, Smith presses foreign minister Adel al-Jubeir about the Saudis' conclusions and their changing stories about the murder.

The documentary also includes never-before seen FRONTLINE interview footage with Khashoggi himself that sheds new light on his transformation from supporter to critic of MBS. Initially, he praised the crown prince, including his military campaign in Yemen. But then, Khashoggi became dismayed by the acts of repression he saw happening under the young leader he once supported.

“I don't want to be a dissident, but in the same time, I don't want to go back home and be silent again,” the columnist told Smith months before his death.

The film traces how, after being named as the heir to Saudi Arabia's King Salman, MBS implemented widely praised economic and social reforms—but then moved to consolidate power in ways that included brutal crackdowns on activists, whose family members speak out to FRONTLINE.

In unspooling the story of how Saudi Arabia arrived at this moment and why Jamal Khashoggi was targeted, *The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia* also offers powerful insights into the relationship between MBS and the West—including the Trump administration.

As attacks on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia present a major new test of MBS's leadership, *The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia* is a gripping and riveting look at his ascent.

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CREDITS

A FRONTLINE production with Rain Media, Inc.

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