

liorate. Consequently I shall take up frankly with Crown Prince soonest and report outcome.

HARE

No. 1448

786A.5 MSP/1-1653

*The Officer in Charge of Arabian Peninsula-Iraq Affairs (Fritzlan)
to the Ambassador in Saudi Arabia (Hare)*¹

TOP SECRET
OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

WASHINGTON, January 16, 1953.

DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR: I find that one of the most pressing and difficult problems facing me at the moment is the question of grant military aid for Saudi Arabia. Although I am aware that you have been waiting some time for a response from the Department regarding developments over the past few months, it seems more practical to comment on the matter in this form rather than by telegram, for the situation has been and still is one of some complexity and sensitivity.

You will recall that in July NEA prepared documentation requesting a recommendation for a Presidential finding in favor of grant military aid for Saudi Arabia.² The case progressed as far as our people in S/MSA, where it ran into considerable opposition for a number of reasons, among which was the feeling that priority should be given the developing situation in Egypt. (See attached memorandum dated August 13, 1952 from Mr. Martin to Mr. Jerne-gan.³) My understanding of some of the background on the matter is that it was agreed in a talk with the S/MSA people that an effort should be made to get a more positive endorsement from either the MCS or Defense before presenting the case for Saudi Arabia to the Director for Mutual Security. Mr. Bryan of S/MSA and Mr. Daspit undertook an exploration of the possibility of obtaining a stronger endorsement, which resulted in a decision that the time was not opportune to request an endorsement. It was

¹ This letter was drafted by Sturgill and cleared by NE and NEA.

² Documentation on this topic is in Department of State file 786A.5 MSP.

³ Not attached. The memorandum listed a number of reasons why it appeared difficult to justify grant aid for Saudi Arabia, the main one being the "seemingly half-hearted endorsement" of the Department of Defense. (786A.5 MSP/8-1352) The Defense position is stated in the letter of June 13, 1952, from the Acting Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of State, Document 1438. On this topic, see also the memoranda of conversation by Sturgill, Documents 1441 and 1443.