

No. 1482

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Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Hart)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] October 6, 1952.

Subject: Problem of Buraimi.

Participants: Sir Oliver Franks, British Ambassador
Mr. B. A. B. Burrows, Counselor, British Embassy
Mr. David Bruce, Under Secretary, Dept. of State
Mr. James C. H. Bonbright, EUR
Mr. Parker T. Hart, NE

Reference was made by Mr. Bruce to the close relations between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia and to President Truman's letter of 1950 to King Ibn Saud.

Mr. Bruce stated that an urgent message had been received from the American Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Mr. Hare, now in Riyadh.¹ Ambassador Hare had been summoned by the King to discuss Buraimi and found the King extremely agitated since no effective action had been taken, in his opinion, to remedy the situation. We were worried over what the King might be planning to do next. It seemed likely, that if something were not done to ease the tension shortly, the matter would be made the subject of a formal request for mediation, or would be introduced by the Saudi Arabian delegate to the United Nations as a matter for cognizance by the Security Council. Regardless of the merits of the case (which the U.S. Government was in no position and did not wish to discuss) it seemed clear that the King was particularly irritated by the flights of the RAF planes out of Sharja over Hamasa, Buraimi. The U.S. Government had no desire to become involved in this affair and, therefore, hoped that the personal suggestions which had been made by Ambassador Hare at Riyadh might be seriously considered, since the King had expressed his agreement with them. These were:

"a. Termination of the RAF over-flights and such other measures and practices which are regarded by the Saudis as aggressive and provocative. This would be on the understanding that the Saudis would likewise agree to desist from provocative acts.

"b. Further direct message from the British that they are prepared to resume direct discussions immediately with Saudi Arabia on the frontier question and Buraimi in particular; and

¹ See telegram 91 from Dhahran, Oct. 6, *supra*.