

No. 1489

780.022/10-2752: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia*¹

SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, November 1, 1952—1:36 p. m.

272. SA Emb informed Dept Oct 25 tripartite comm proposal made to Brit in ltr Oct 23 (Jidda tel Dept 276 Lon 14² and Lon tel Dept 2452, Jidda 32, Dhahran 22³) but did not request official reaction from USG. Dept officer receiving info made brief comment very similar para 3 Jidda 276. On Oct 28 SA Emb informed Dept King requesting US respond to proposal. Response not yet given.

Dept feels latest Saudi moves (Lon 2452) are attempt enhance possibility obtaining perhaps undeservedly favorable settlement Buraimi dispute and reveal Saudi intent utilize help USG to maximum advantage and in ways not compatible maintenance smooth relations with Brit.

Dept had hoped for immed resumption direct talks which wld incl Buraimi. Difficult rationalize King's anxiety for quick solution (Jidda 276) with new requests (Lon 2452) all which will delay resumption talks.

Dept believes standstill agreement (Dhahran tel Dept 91, Jidda 70, Lon 5⁴) meant be applicable only Buraimi. Saudi desire extend neighboring area likely exacerbate situation, prolonging delay of solution and increasing rather than decreasing tension (Lon tels Dept 2214, Jidda 27, Dhahran 15,⁵ 2236, Jidda 28, Dhahran 16,⁶ and 2452).

¹ Drafted by Sturgill and cleared by BNA and NE. Repeated to London and Dhahran.

² Not printed, but see footnote 2, *supra*.

³ Not printed; it reported the British representative had signed a standstill arrangement with the Saudis for the Buraimi oasis. The Saudis, however, had then made three further requests: A resumption of the Damman conference and dispatch of a fact-finding commission to the disputed areas, with the exception of Buraimi; the extension of the standstill agreement to cover other disputed areas in the Buraimi region; and the sending of a tripartite commission made up of representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia to the Buraimi region to determine the allegiance of the inhabitants. The British Foreign Office was disturbed by the Saudi requests and was urgently considering suggesting arbitration of the whole boundary problem. If Eden agreed the matter should go to arbitration, the British Embassy in Washington would be instructed to consult with the Department of State to enlist support for the proposal. (780.022/10-2752)

⁴ Document 1481.

⁵ Not printed, but see footnote 3, Document 1485.

⁶ Dated Oct. 16, not printed. It reported the Foreign Office had instructed Pelham to try to finalize the standstill arrangement in Buraimi, but not to agree to Saudi requests restricting the Sultan of Muscat. (780.022/10-1652)