

No. 1498

780.022/12-2052: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Saudi Arabia (Hare) to the Department of State*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

JIDDA, December 20, 1952—5 p. m.

479. Deptel 377, December 17,² reached us immediately following sending Embtel 476, December 18,³ which would seem to have anticipated and covered points raised by Department.

Meanwhile unexpected opportunity discuss matter with Saudi official most immediately concerned was offered when Deputy Foreign Minister Yusef Yassin passed through Jidda yesterday en route Cairo to attend meeting Political Committee Arab League. Yusef Yassin afforded opening by referring to dispute over visit British political officer to Buraimi which he maintained particularly important because of principle involved and re which British Ambassador had apparently shifted ground. Re arbitration, said Prince Faisal had discussed with Secretary Acheson and Assistant Secretary Byroade⁴ following departure Eden and believed both American officials favorably impressed by Faisal's presentation.

I replied had been pondering matter constantly and particularly since being furnished copies recent SAG communication to British Ambassador, and, whereas I had originally felt direct talks would have been constructive, now appeared from my contact with both sides that neither so inclined. Re tripartite commission, recalled I had discouraged from outset and Assistant Secretary Byroade had fully explained our attitude to Saudi Ambassador in Washington. Basic fact was that closeness of our relations with both parties would make it extremely difficult for us to act as umpire. Now situation is British suggesting arbitration and I felt this was logical suggestion in circumstances which Saudis would do well consider seriously and not close door.

I realized that in situations of dispute one party is apt to regard suggestions of other as suspect but I saw no reason for such misgivings in which case since both parties would participate in drawing up terms reference. Furthermore, if my understanding was correct that Saudis only desired assert right which could be supported on

¹ Repeated to London and Dhahran.

² Document 1496.

³ *Supra*.

⁴ Prince Faisal was in New York in early December and spoke with Secretary Acheson on Dec. 2 and Edwin Plitt of the U.S. Delegation Advisory Staff on Dec. 4; see Documents 1493 and 1494. No record of the meeting with Byroade has been found.