

No. 1506

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Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Arabian Peninsula-Iraq Affairs (Fritzlan)

SECRET

[WASHINGTON,] March 16, 1953.

Subject: Meeting with the Saudi Arabian Ambassador on March 16.

Participants: The Under Secretary
The Saudi Arabian Ambassador
A. David Fritzlan, NE

General Smith stated that he had promised Prince Faisal on March 4 to make the Department's views known on certain questions the Prince had raised. He stated he had examined the Buraimi question and it was the Department's feeling that both sides should continue to adhere strictly to the standstill agreement. The Department had recently queried the British on this subject and had been informed that they still considered the agreement binding and effective. We had stated that we naturally expected them to make every effort to observe it scrupulously. General Smith had looked into the matter of solving the Buraimi problem and felt that impartial arbitration offered the best chances of a successful outcome.

General Smith went on to say that he was very pleased to inform the Ambassador that the President had approved grant military aid for Saudi Arabia;¹ and that it was also his pleasure to state that the President, the Secretary of State, and he wished emphatically to reiterate the statements in President Truman's letter to King Ibn Saud of October 31, 1950, concerning United States interest in the territorial integrity and independence of Saudi Arabia and the fact that any threat to it would be of immediate concern to this country. General Smith concluded his remarks by saying that while the news he had to offer was not all good from the Ambassador's standpoint, he felt that on the balance it was very satisfactory.

The Ambassador expressed his gratitude for the statements of the Under Secretary concerning grant aid and President Truman's letter and said he would convey them to Prince Faisal and his Government without delay. On the question of Buraimi he said that the King would not be pleased by the attitude we had taken, but he agreed with General Smith's further remarks that there seemed to be room for negotiation between the positions taken by the Saudis

¹ See footnote 2, Document 1451.