

head Foreign Office he would be prepared see Yassin if latter desired but that he felt would be *infra dignitatem* to ask see him. Ambassador said only point in Yassin's observations to me with which he agreed was that matters definitely could not be allowed to continue in present state and that action was required—British action.

Discussion with Yassin and Ambassador brought out nothing particularly new except that both sides apparently suffering increasingly from frayed nerves.

HARE

No. 1509

780.022/3-3154: Telegram

*The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Aldrich) to the
Department of State*¹

TOP SECRET NIACT

LONDON, March 31, 1953—8 p. m.

5371. Strang asked me to call this afternoon re Saudi Arabian boundary problem. He said Eden had intended to discuss problem with me himself, but as he is indisposed he had asked Strang to speak on his behalf. Strang reviewed in some detail HMG's efforts obtain equitable settlement of dispute and its anxiety retain traditionally friendly relations with Saudi Arabia. UK had made determined effort get solution by bilateral negotiations in London in 1951 and at Amman [Dammam] in 1952, but Saudis never showed readiness settle on any other basis than their most extreme demands which made progressive leaps forward from time to time. British experience during negotiations prompts them to believe Saudis not interested in settlement, but eventually to extend domination over whole Arabian peninsula at expense lesser Arab rulers and HMG's position. For their part, British ready for fair compromise and showed conciliatory spirit by agreeing Saudi request restrict activities under *status quo* agreement.

Strang went on to say British suspicions confirmed by subsequent events, including Saudi incursion into Buraimi Oasis last August, which was undoubtedly attempt advance claims still further. HMG in spirit conciliation and after Ambassador Hare's intervention, had agreed stand-still arrangement which placed further restrictions on HMG's legitimate movements and activities but which also held out some hope restoring it to normal. HMG then proposed arbitration as manifestly fair way solving dispute of

¹ Repeated to Jidda.