

No. 1520

780.022/6-2953: Telegram

*The Consul General at Dhahran (Bishop) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET NIACT

- DHAHRAN, June 29, 1953—8 a. m.

250. From Hare at Riyadh. Arrived Riyadh yesterday and was received by King in afternoon. Presented President's letter.² Deputy Foreign Minister Yassin subsequently told me message very well received by King. Yassin commented especially on understanding approach and language of message and said appropriate reply would be prepared subsequently for transmission President.

This morning when we met discuss draft grant aid agreement we were handed text urgent message from King to President regarding reported British attack on village of Beni Kab Tribe (whose allegiance Saudis claim) which transmitted ConGentel 249.³ Following is additional information regarding attack elicited by questioning Deputy Foreign Minister:

(1) Incident occurred on June 27 in Nuweiji village which Yassin was unable to locate exactly but said somewhere on track between Sharja and Buraimi. Eight persons killed as result attack.

(2) According Saudi officials, there was no Saudi provocation for attack or any warning such attack was forthcoming.

(3) Source of report was Shaikh of tribe; message transmitted by Turki.

(4) Saudis had not yet protested to British but intended doing so immediately and informing British their approach to President.

General Grover has received first-hand reports British are building up troop complement Sharja and have recently moved planes that station.

This is, of course, a report from one side only but it is most specific with respect nature alleged attack, which, if substantiated, marks new departure from past pattern in that previous air operations were confined to demonstrations only. Consequently, it does not appear to be merely one more incident since it changes basic situation. We, therefore, recommend that it be taken up urgently with British, particularly since it is type operation which, judging by past experience, might well serve exacerbate situation beyond point susceptible harmonious settlement. Moreover, it has bearing on passage in President's letter that developments progressing to

¹ Repeated to London and Jidda.

² Document 1517.

³ *Supra*.