

## No. 1542

780.022/11-2253; Telegram

*The Chargé in Saudi Arabia (Jones) to the Department of State*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

JIDDA, November 22, 1953—6 p. m.

244. Following are developments Buraimi issue:

(1) Hafiz Wahba, Saudi Ambassador to UK, informed me yesterday that in last conversation he had with British Ambassador Pelham he asked if UK Government would be willing remove their forces from posts established disputed territory if Saudi Government would accept extended scope arbitration (Embtel 205, November 6<sup>2</sup>). Pelham expressed doubt such proposal would be satisfactory British Government but promised ask for instructions. In reply question by Pelham, Hafiz Wahba said extended arbitration would not be acceptable SAG if British insisted maintenance recently established posts disputed area. Richard Young, American legal adviser SAG, confirmed to Embassy that British had established numerous posts in disputed territory after beginning Buraimi incident.<sup>3</sup>

(2) According Young, Hafiz impatient at necessity Pelham refer all Saudi proposals to London and appears prepared propose negotiations be transferred London.

(3) Hafiz Wahba also said prior his departure for Jidda Foreign Secretary Eden had told him complete mutual withdrawal forces both sides disputed area would be satisfactory to British. According Hafiz Wahba, Saudis could not accept this as it would not only conflict maintenance Saudi honor but would leave pro-Saudi adherents at mercy of Sagr Bin Sultan, local pro-British tribal chieftain. . . .

(4) Young informed Embassy Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast). Limited preparing sink deep test well at Jabal Dhannah, which is far within disputed territory. According Aramco official, this being done with Foreign Office approval. Action British this respect contrasts strongly with Saudi policy refraining from carrying out even preliminary exploratory work in disputed territory in accordance instructions given Aramco by Prince Feisal.

Hafiz Wahba also mentioned British plan sink well and said SAG planned make strong protest to British.

On basis information available from SAG and American advisers to SAG, Embassy inclined consider reasonable Saudi position agree extended arbitration provided all British controlled personnel withdrawn from area falling within scope arbitration except, of course, agreed number guards maintain order. Embassy also believe reported plan drill well in disputed area unfortunate, and will have

<sup>1</sup> Repeated to London and Dhahran.

<sup>2</sup> Document 1540.

<sup>3</sup> Despatch 206 from Jidda, Dec. 1, not printed, transmitted a list of British posts in the disputed area. (780.022/12-153)