

No. 1545

780.022/2-1654: Telegram

*The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Saudi Arabia*¹

CONFIDENTIAL

WASHINGTON, February 16, 1954—3:56 p. m.

246. Dhahran for Ambassador. Department informed by British Embassy Foreign Office instructed British Embassy Jidda convey through Hafiz Wahba to SAG latest British proposals regarding arbitration agreement as follows:

1. Arbitration tribunal would be authorized determine frontier between Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi and sovereignty over area included within circle 20 kilometers radius having center Buraimi village.

2. (a) Turki's forces and Trucial levies in Buraimi complex to be withdrawn to undisputed territory and replaced by small police group up to 15 men each side.

(b) UK to withdraw the five levy posts in disputed area (area between Saudi 1935 and 1949 claims) on condition Saudis introduce no armed men or administrative personnel into disputed area.

3. Oil operations IPC and AIOC in disputed area to proceed during arbitration. However, UK recognizes Aramco concession would extend over any territory decided by arbitration tribunal as belonging to Saudi Arabia and has no wish impair Aramco rights. In event tribunal determined these operations being carried on in Saudi territory British companies would be happy subject Saudi and Aramco concurrence assume concession.

Department considers these proposals go far to meet Saudi demands and authorizes Ambassador support them should opportunity offer.²

Memorandum conversation covering foregoing being air-pouches.³

SMITH

¹ Drafted by Fritzman and cleared by NEA. Repeated to London and Dhahran.

² Telegram 253 to Jidda, Feb. 26, informed the Ambassador this paragraph did not imply the Department of State supported the British proposal to obtain oil concessions for IPC and AIOC in the disputed area, but meant the Department felt the British proposals as a whole constituted a conciliatory gesture and a step in the right direction. (780.022/2-1554)

³ Memorandum of conversation, Feb. 15, not printed. (780.022/2-1554)