

(6) Should Saudi Government desire explanations and elucidations proposals Department believes direct discussions with British would be helpful.

DULLES

No. 1551

780.022/3-1754 Telegram

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

SECRET PRIORITY WASHINGTON, March 17, 1954—7:45 p. m.

269. Davies, Spurlock and Chapman of Aramco called on Murphy in Department today in order express Aramco misgivings recent developments Buraimi dispute.

(1) Aramco representatives indicated agreement with SAG interpretation that paragraph 3 British proposals intended operate in such manner that British will inevitably and despite Aramco opposition obtain oil concession in disputed areas passing to Saudi Sovereignty.

(2) Davies referred to Ohliger's recent talk with King (summarized in Jidda telegram 392)² during which King reportedly expressed disappointment in American leadership and guidance and reflected possibility that Saudi Arabia may look to British for leadership. (In this connection Department interested in receiving any evidence tending corroborate or explain such feeling on part of King.)

(3) Aramco representatives provided memorandum their position with regard current British proposals summary of which follows:

(a) Aramco has and will continue urge early determination boundary and Aramco prepared cooperate this end. Aramco has not been party to British proposals nor is it prepared surrender any rights under concession.

(b) Aramco continues believe boundary should be determined on considerations allegiance, tradition and political history rather

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

² Dated Mar. 15, not printed. It reported information received from Aramco officials who had recently spoken with the King. According to Aramco officials, the Saudi Arabian Government said it did not want to disregard Aramco's rights but felt it might have no alternative if the U.S. Government would not support Aramco or the Saudi Arabian Government against the British effort to "muscle in" on the concession in the disputed area. The King saw possible financial, territorial, and political advantages to having ties with the British, who gave aggressive support to their commercial interests and friends, in contrast to the U.S. Government, which imposed Israel on the Arab world and tied hands to conditions the Saudis felt infringed their sovereignty. (786A.00/3-1554)