

ter informed the Ambassador his latest talks with British officials indicated that United States interest in the Buraimi settlement had had no effect on the British position, which remained "hard" and "inflexible." Yassin believed the questions of troop withdrawal and the size of the area to be submitted to arbitration could be resolved through direct negotiation with the British, but the question of oil operations in the disputed area could not. The next discussions between the two sides were expected to be held in London, with Saudi Arabia represented by its Ambassador to the United Kingdom, who agreed with Yassin that settlement would have to come through arbitration. (780.022/5-354)

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No. 1562

886A.2553/5-1454: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Turkey*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

WASHINGTON, May 14, 1954—6:07 p. m.

1257. For Wadsworth and Byroade.<sup>2</sup> In view statements by Yassin (Jidda telegram 454<sup>3</sup>) and recent Saudi overtures to British re Buraimi Department believes it most desirable that attention be focused again upon arbitration process.

Principal difficulty at present is British insistence continue oil operations disputed area and Aramco and SAG opposition. With onset hot weather these operations would normally be suspended in May and not resumed until late in year. This factor might enable British give informal assurances to Saudis that they would suspend operations in disputed area on temporary basis without waiving any right they may consider they have carry out such operations.

Department considering sounding out British this matter stating we would be prepared if their reaction favorable make energetic representations to SAG in favor acceptance British proposals and making immediate beginning arbitration. We would also endeavor obtain Aramco's acquiescence. In our discussion with Aramco we would emphasize urgency getting matter settled, our conviction Aramco position safeguarded by British proposals and our determination insure Aramco rights following arbitration fully respected.

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<sup>1</sup> Drafted by Fritzman and cleared by NEA. Repeated to London, Jidda, and Dhahran.

<sup>2</sup> Wadsworth and Byroade were at the Chiefs of Mission Conference at Istanbul. For documentation on the conference, see Documents 210-212 and 824.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed. (780.022/5-654)